



**13<sup>th</sup> European Week of Regions and Cities**  
**OPEN DAYS** Brussels  
12 - 15 October 2015



# OPEN DAYS University Master Class

## Proceedings





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## Introduction

From 12 to 15 October 2015, the OPEN DAYS was accompanied for the third time by a Master Class aiming to improve the understanding of EU Cohesion Policy and its research potential. Organised by the European Commission's DG for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO), the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the Regional Studies Association (RSA), together with the European Regional Science Association (ERSA) and the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP), the Master Class focused on PhD students and early career researchers from all over Europe and aimed at:

- present recent research on European regional and urban development and EU Cohesion Policy;
- enable PhD students and early-career researchers to exchange views with EU politicians, officials and senior academics;
- facilitate networking among participants from different countries and with the wider EU policy and academic communities; and
- raise awareness and understanding of the research potential in the field of EU Cohesion Policy.

Based on a call for paper proposals, 24 participants from universities in 15 EU Member States and three non-EU countries attended the Master Class and discuss three themes in particular:

- EU Cohesion Policy and the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;
- Institutional relations, governance and EU Cohesion Policy;
- Places and spaces: the contribution of EU Cohesion Policy to integrated urban, rural and territorial development.

30 speakers and moderators from the partnering institutions were involved and the selected participants attended the different modules of the Master Class: lectures and networking sessions, OPEN DAYS opening session, in the European Commission, interactive debates, world café session and social events. This report presents short accounts of these sessions in chronological order, together with the results of a feedback exercise and an online evaluation.

The organisers would like to thank all participants and speakers for their active involvement.

*Brussels, January 2016*

## Welcome

The Master Class started on the morning of Monday, 12 October 2015, with a two-hour city walk, guiding by **Stefan De Corte**, academic coordinator of the Master's Programme on "Urban and spatial planning" and associate director of Cosmopolis, the Centre for Urban research – Free University of Brussels. Participants were given the opportunity to walk around and view some of the main sights in the centre of Brussels and to understand them from a spatial and urban development perspective, taking the city's history into account.

The tour ended at the Committee of the Regions, where the participants were welcomed by the organisers. **Professor John Bachtler** from the Regional Studies Association (RSA) highlighted

the increasing importance of the OPEN DAYS as a meeting point for leading academics. **Richard Kelly**, European Regional Science Association (ERSA), and **Izabela Mironowicz**, Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP), both appreciated the good cooperation during the preparation of the Master Class and confirmed their interest in deepening it in the future. **Tony Lockett**, European Commission, DG for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO), mentioned the DG's interest in a close link to researchers in order to gain a better understanding of the impact of EU Cohesion Policy. Finally, **Wolfgang Petzold**, European Committee of the Regions (CoR), spoke briefly on the lessons learned from the 2013 and 2014 Master Classes and thanked RSA, ERSA, AESOP, and DG REGIO for their support.



## Thematic discussion 1

**Professor John Bachtler** chaired the first session of presentation of students' research projects, during which selected papers were discussed with **Peter Berkowitz**, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy; **Daniel Mouque**, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy and **Thomas Wobben**, European Committee of the Regions.

The three papers selected under the theme **EU Cohesion Policy and the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth** was presented. **Niall Crosbie**, Waterford Institute of Technology, Department of Management and Organisation, Ireland, presented his paper called *Investigation of the regional innovation paradox*. **Marta Dobrzycka**, Warsaw School of Economics, Collegium of Socio Economics, Poland, discussed

about *Smart specialisation strategies in Poland. Smart specialisation and the public sector: the challenge of institutional learning in Puglia and Sicily* was the topic for debate of **Giulia Lazzeri**, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Institute of Law, Politics and Development.

It was followed by the discussion about two papers of the theme **Institutional relations, governance and EU Cohesion Policy**: *The dynamics of the regional development agencies in post accession Romania* from **Alina Dragos**, West University of Timisoara, Department of Political Science, Romania; and *Institutional relations in the governance of Cohesion Policy: a principal-agent analysis of the implementation of financial instruments* from **Claudia Gloazzo**, University of Strathclyde, School of Government and Public Policy, European Policies Research Centre, United Kingdom.

## OPEN DAYS opening session

The second module of the Master Class was attending the OPEN DAYS Opening. Under the title "Europe's regions and cities: partners for investment and growth", the opening session took place in the afternoon in the Charlemagne Hemicycle and was attended by some 800 participants. Commissioners **Corina Crețu**, responsible for Regional Policy, and **Carlos Moedas**, responsible for Research, Science and Innovation, launched the Seal of Excellence - a new initiative to ensure that taxpayer money is spent efficiently by improving the synergies between EU funding for regional policy and for research. **Markku Markkula**, President of the European Committee of the Regions, backed the efforts of boosting synergies between Horizon 2020 and the European Structural and Investment Funds, referring to a Knowledge Exchange Platform

for local and regional authorities, which would be established by the European Committee of the Regions together with the Commission. The audience was also addressed by **Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso**, Vice-President of the European Parliament and NAO, the robot developed in the frame of ERDF-funded project "JULIETTE", joined on stage for this innovative opening session. The session concluded with Roberta Capello, Professor of Regional Economics, Politecnico of Milan; Philip McCann, Professor of Economic Geography, University of Groningen; and Slavo Radošević, Professor of Industry and Innovation Studies, University College London who debated on the challenges for EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 and its move towards smart regional specialisation strategies and "smart implementation" of the policy.

## EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020: the state of play

On Tuesday, 13 October 2014, the Master Class continued in the morning with module 3, which offered insights the results of the programming of EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 including aspects of its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. A first discussion with **Eric von Breska**, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy, and **Manuela Geleng**, European Commission, DG

Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion was followed by a speech and discussion with **Walter Deffaa**, European Commission, Director-General for Regional and Urban Policy

Manuela Geleng and Eric von Breska gave a joint presentation on





the central elements of cohesion policy reform. First, the different linkages between the European semester and the cohesion policy programming were presented: stronger link to economic governance and European semester processes by linking policy and funding; stronger linkages between CSRs and cohesion policy investments. Then other driving principles of the cohesion policy were highlighted: the Ex ante conditionalities and the stronger result orientation.

The speakers highlighted that monitoring performance with common indicators and performance frameworks ensure accurate reporting and a programme implementation focused on results. They also analysed the allocation of European structural funds with regards to the thematic objectives before presented the measures linking effectiveness of ESI Funds to sound economic governance. The importance of integrated delivery modes for territorial development (especially sustainable urban development and ITIs) and the strong expectations towards financial instruments that improve the leverage effect of cohesion policy were emphasized.

The programme evaluation for which each Member States has the main responsibility was the last point of the presentation and the discussion with participants was opened.

**Walter Deffaa** began his speech by reminding that the political priority attached to the reduction of geographical disparities was present right from the foundation of what is today known as the European Union (initially the European Economic Community), in the original Treaty of Rome of 1957. In the integration process that has unfolded since the Treaty of Rome, involving both deepening – more sharing of sovereignty – and widening – expansion from 6 to 28 member states – the idea of fiscal federalism, and the creation of a fiscal equalization system, was declined opting instead for a system – proposed by President Jacques Delors (1985-1994) – based on supporting the economic growth and development of the weaker member states and regions through the channelling to them of investment funds from the central EU budget, so that they could share in the results of (or at the very least not unduly suffer from) economic and monetary union.

In the early phases, from 1989 to the beginning of this century, it could be said that the emphasis was placed on the redistributive role of EU regional policy dimension, so that there was perhaps too much effort devoted to securing resources under cohesion and regional policy, and perhaps insufficient attention paid to making the most successful use of those resources at a later stage. It is this that changed in order to create the modern paradigm. The rationale of the policy became one of a source of investment to help in the realisation of the succession of (related) competitiveness strategies guiding the whole of the Union after 2000 (the Lisbon Strategy (2000), the Growth and Jobs Strategy (2005), and the Europe 2020 strategy (2010)).

Indeed, out of the 10 priorities set by President Juncker for the new Commission that took office last year, the cohesion policy contributes to 8 of them:

1. A new boost for jobs, growth and investment
2. A connected Digital Single Market
3. A resilient Energy Union with a forward-looking climate change policy
4. A deeper and fairer Internal Market with a strengthened industrial base
5. Economic & Monetary Union
6. Migration (including refugee crisis) and Integration
7. Global actor (13 agreements formalized on international cooperation through the world)
8. Democratic change (supporting efforts to raise activity rates)

Cohesion policy has 4 different ways to contribute:

- •through our regional and urban investment programmes with our restricted number of key thematic priorities;
- •through the implementation of ex-ante conditionalities;
- •through the link with the Stability & Growth Pact where the Member States are helped in maintaining investment without adding to the internal deficit;
- •through the support providing for the structural reform process in the EU, for example, by improving capital – financial instruments – and labour mobility.

In order to deliver the European investment to contribute to the realisation of these strategies, changes to the delivery system have been essential so as to translate European priorities into the real investment decisions taken at the regional and local level. This has led to introduce a major strengthening of the conditions accompanying cohesion and regional policy programmes beginning with the preferential earmarking of key investment fields in the requirements for the drawing up the strategic programmes for 2007-2013. These conditions have been reinforced, at least in legislative terms, for the period just beginning, 2014-2020.

Moreover, not only is the policy now guided or conditioned by the need to contribute to achieving the objectives of the current version of the EU's competitiveness strategy – Europe 2020 – it has also become, in post-crisis Europe, an instrument to help to ensure the stability of the economic and monetary union as a whole with sanctions possible (transfers suspended) for the non-respect of the Union's limits for national macro-economic magnitudes.



The result of this new paradigm is that more than ever our economic and monetary union will need cohesion and regional policy in the years ahead as an instrument to underpin its success.

Research is an essential element of this process. Exchanges between practitioners and academics on Cohesion policy are key both for the effective implementation and for the further development of the policy. It is essential to make policy officials and practitioners aware of the research being conducted on

Cohesion policy, and to give academics a better understanding of the concerns and priorities of the policy Communities at EU and national levels. **Walter Deffaa** concluded in saying this is a big challenge that requires continuous efforts from both sides.

In the afternoon of 13 October, two sessions were held: the presentation of research projects and thematic discussions was followed by a round table discussion with senior researchers on **current and future research on EU Cohesion Policy**.

## Thematic discussion 2

**Chaired by Phillipe Monfort**, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy, the session involved a discussion between the selected students and discussants **Peter Berkowitz**, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy; **Daniel Mouque**, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy; and **Thomas Wobben**, European Committee of the Regions

In continuity with the presentations of the 12th and linked to the theme Institutional relations, governance and EU Cohesion Policy, the two following papers were presented:

- **Changing modes of EU governance. Implications for Cohesion Policy** Telle, Stefan, Slovak University of Technology, Institute of Management, Slovakia
- **Mapping of interest groups mobilization in cross-border cooperation programmes**, Marsida Bandilli, University of Antwerp, Antwerp Centre for Institutions and Multilevel Politics (ACIM), Department of Political Science, Belgium

Then, discussants and students debated on four other papers

selected under the theme **Places and spaces: the contribution of EU Cohesion Policy to integrated urban, rural and territorial development**

- **Spatialities of labour policies in Hungary**, Márton Czirfusz, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary
- **Investing in lagging regions is efficient: a local multipliers analysis of European regions**, Jasper J. Van Dijk, Oxford University, New College, United Kingdom
- **Measuring demographic impact of the regional and cohesion policy actions: example of Latvia**, Aleksandrs Dahs, University of Latvia, Centre for European and Transition Studies, Latvia
- **How does the net impact of the EU Regional Policy differ across countries?** Riccardo Crescenzi, London School of Economics, Department of Geography and Environment, United Kingdom and Mara Giua, Roma Tre University, Department of Economics, Italy.

## Current and future research on EU Cohesion Policy

The second session during the afternoon of 13 October addressed the issue of current research trends and on recent regional and urban policy developments at EU level. Moderated by Professor Anna Geppert, University Paris IV Sorbonne, France, a roundtable discussion included the following academics:

- **Prof Kevin Morgan**, Cardiff University, United Kingdom, Governance and Development, School of Planning,

- **Prof Lisa De Propriis**, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom
- **Prof Andrés Rodríguez-Pose**, Visiting Professor at the College of Europe, Professor of Economic Geography at the London School of Economics

**Prof Andrés Rodríguez-Pose** introduced the debate presenting



the challenge for the research on EU cohesion policy. The first challenge is about governance and development. A balance between the strategies and the institutions is essential. However governance is often overlooked. Measuring regional governance is the second identified challenge: the importance of knowing the quality of government and the within- and cross-country differences was highlighted. Other highlighted challenges are:

- poor governance in lagging regions and infrastructure investment;
- poor governance and the returns of regional development policies: unequal distribution of Cohesion expenditure. In order for greater cohesion investment to overtake the advantages of quality of government, EU cohesion budget would have to be multiplied 2.7 times
- rethinking development strategies.

## OPEN DAYS official reception

On the evening of 13 October, Master Class participants and lecturers, together with about 1,500 OPEN DAYS participants, were invited to attend the official reception at BOZAR, Brussels' Centre for Fine Arts. This year, for the first time, the European Commission's RegioStars Award Ceremony was included in the Open Days evening programme. During the ceremony, European

Commissioner Corina Crețu and MEP Lambert van Nistelrooij, President of the RegioStars panel of judges, announced the winners of the prestigious RegioStars Awards. These awards aimed to celebrate the most inspiring and innovative projects supported by European cohesion policy funds.

## Smart (city) governance

On Wednesday 14 morning, participants were free to either attend other OPEN DAYS seminars and/or to organise meetings. Then, in the afternoon, they met Dr Tassilo Herrschel, University Westminster, London, during a session organised by the Free University of Brussels/VUB and Cosmopolis, Centre for Urban Research.

Tassilo Herrschel introduced the session about smart (city) governance. Everyone seems to be claiming to do 'smart' things or being 'smart' when it comes to presenting and discussing policy making or political processes. This applies in particular to governance, because 'who wants to be dumb', as a referee commented on a recent paper draft of mine on 'smartness'. The speaker wondered about the meaning of this term actually. Indeed, signs and, especially, websites, advocating 'smart cities', 'smart regions', 'smart policies', etc., seem to pop up ever more frequently. But while this may suggest that 'smartness' has become the new paradigm de rigueur to characterise 'new' ways of doing things in urban policy and governance, the actual meaning is none the clearer. Rather, it may be viewed as a sign of 'jumping on a bandwagon' in order to be considered 'trendy', 'on message' and part of the innovative crowd.

Yet, there remains a distinct impression of a generally rather 'fuzzy' understanding of what 'smart' may mean, as it tries to be 'all things to all men'. Thus, while the website of 'Smart Brussels Capital Region' clearly focuses on efficient transport management as a sign of 'smartness' in making things work, 'Smart Berlin' seems to see smartness as engaging internationally and use that as a way of 'doing better' as a city. Here, it is this latter, broader, understanding that is adopted. 'Smartness' is being taken to mean searching for new ways of doing things. This includes stepping back from routines and engrained practices and rationales, and looking for different, novel, even 'radical', ways of doing things – with the tools one has: just using them in a different way. Throwing away old tools and demanding spanking new ones as an automatic key to success is the easy thing: No new tools – no new policies. Yet, using old tools imaginatively for a new purpose and in a new way may well enable the formulation of effective answers to novel challenges. It also means that actors cannot simply hide behind the claim 'oh, we do not have the 'right' tools to do anything about that.

So, it is innovation, enterprise, risk-taking and imagination that may go under the banner of 'smartness' as a sign of shifts in policy-





making and governance. In other words, 'smartness' is taken here to stand for 'policy innovation' or, at a more fundamental, structural level, - 'political innovation'. This involves critical reflection and more 'outside-the-box' thinking, possibly redefining societal and political norms and paradigms. But it also means for actors to take political, as they leave behind established 'safe' practices and formulas, and venture instead to try out novel perspectives and

ways of doing things. The often seeming gap between application-oriented IT approaches and discursive-conceptual imaginations (whether realistic or not) in social sciences, marks out one such case of going beyond established mindsets and practices, while being shaped by particular local conditions and political milieux. The outcome may be new types of policies and ways of doing them, as will be illustrated with some examples.

## A 'SMART' EXERCISE

Students were divided into five groups. They had about 20-25 minutes to prepare a 1-slide presentation (akin to a 'poster') on the concept of 'smart cities', in response to the introduction provided by Tassilo Herrschel. They were encouraged to use their smart phones, tablets and other such devices to find information online to help them formulate their own 'take' on this term. This included the use of an example they know. For the presentation, any format was fine as long as it respects the limit of 1 slide in PowerPoint – including: images, texts, graphs, embedded short video, etc ...

In the second part of the workshop, each group of students presented their works that will be discussed collectively

with Tassilo Herrschel, Dirk van de Putte from ADT/ATO (the Brussels regional development agency), and Shenja van der Graaf (iMinds, VUB).

They suggested different ways of looking at the Smart City concept:

- as common denominator is the need to make sense to inhabitants and to include the aspect of risk management
- importance to take into consideration the capacities of the citizens; of level of digital literacy; of young-old generations;
- need to train citizens for the future: to continue to discuss the

interpretation of 'smart' (Smart is more than 'tech'); society as a group of individuals vs civil society groups;

The results also included:

- an idea for "Smart Neighbourhood" app (connect and help your neighbour);
- 2 definitions: smart city is hard to manage but easy to live, including elements of governance (engage, react, decide) of resources and ICT; Smart City matches the existing needs (applicable, flexible, easily maintained, inclusive), is open (accessible and participatory) and includes a long term plan (which is manageable).

## Reflecting on the reform of cohesion policy for 2014-2020

On the evening of the Wednesday 14, Masterclass students attended an informal conversation reflecting on the process of the reform of Cohesion policy, focusing on the cycle of debate and negotiations that produced the budget and policy reforms agreed in 2013 for the 2014-2020 period. This is a subject that is not well understood by many academics working in the Cohesion policy field, in particular the PhD students and early career researchers (ECRs) involved in the Open Days University Master Class. The panellists were Professor John Bachtler (moderator); Eric von Breska, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy; Krzysztof Kasprzyk, Ministry of Regional Development, Poland;

Marc Lemaitre, European Commission, Office of Administration and Individual Entitlements; Nicholas Martyn, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy and Lynsey Moore, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy.

The key issues, milestones and experiences in the reform process - both in the preparatory period of policy development (2007-11) and the negotiations (2011-13) were discussed.





## World Café session

Following a welcome by European Committee of the Regions' Secretary-General, **Jiří Buriánek**, and an introduction by Professor **John Bachtler**, the final module was presented in the form of a World Café session focusing on the three themes of the 2015 OPEN DAYS. The session took the form of managed discussions in six small groups (two per theme). At each table, a table manager and a facilitator, European Commission and CoR officials, helped in the discussions according to their areas of expertise. Participants changed three times and finally returned to the table of their initial field of interest in order to have an exchange on lessons learned. The exercise was closed with short presentations by each table and a final wrap-up by the coordinator.

The exercise closed with short presentations from each table and a final wrap-up by John Bachtler.

The sessions at tables 1 and 2 focused on the **EU Cohesion Policy and the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth**. Between 2014 and 2020, EU Cohesion Policy will invest around a third of the EU budget in key areas in line with the Europe 2020 strategy through concentration on thematic objectives. Earlier in 2015, Eurostat has presented progress made towards the Europe 2020 indicators at national level, achievements at regional and local level were presented in a recent publication of DG REGIO, and the Committee of the Regions follows runs a Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform. Discussions were guided by three main questions:

- EU Cohesion Policy, Europe 2020 and economic governance: an ever-closer relationship?
- Europe 2020 and/or economic governance: how will thematic concentration be followed up?
- What's next in research on the relationship between EU economic governance and economic, social and territorial cohesion?

Debates at tables 1 and 2 were facilitated by **Peter Berkowitz** (DG REGIO), **Manuela Geleng** (DG EMPL), **Amélie Cousin** and **Pauliina Mäkäraäinen** (both CoR).

About the first question, participants highlighted the need for a strong link between cohesion policy and broader economic governance: the economic governance should be linked closer with fiscal policy and ECB and rescaled. They also discussed about better links between the Cohesion Policy and other EU funds and instruments; on certain cases the integration of funds could be a constraint. They also raised wider issues about governance, e.g.

ability to foster networking and collaboration for innovation; and about the urban-rural divide - different regions, different needs. They finally wondered if a EU-wide approach is possible and desirable.

About the Europe 2020, economic governance and the follow-up of thematic concentration, Master Class students debated on the thematic concentration already applied in some Member State that may be constraining short-term priorities in some MS, about the issue urban vs rural areas. They also asked if the thematic concentration is even feasible or right.

About the future in research on the relationship between EU economic governance and economic, social and territorial cohesion, the participants answered:

- Research on demographic changes (ageing etc. and implications to CP)
- Research about what territorial level certain instruments should be implemented at
- Research on the use and effectiveness of financial instruments
- Research on the scale of (urban) planning
- More comparative (deep) case studies needed
- More research for the setting up the "right" indicators for 2021-27

Tables 3 and 4 focussed on Institutional relations, governance and EU Cohesion Policy. The recent reform of EU Cohesion Policy has recognised the importance of good governance as crucial for the success of regional development policies. This has been reflected in a number of studies presented by the OECD, DG REGIO and the European Parliament. Strengthening administrative capacity has become a priority and "thematic objective" for a number of countries and significant resources have been set aside in this respect. They addressed key questions such as:

- What constitutes 'administrative capacity' for managing and implementing Cohesion Policy and how can it be measured?
- How can national/regional variations in administrative capacity be explained?
- What are the priorities for research on governance and management of EU Cohesion Policy and how could such research best be organised?

Facilitators and moderators of tables 3 and 4 were: **Pascal**



**Boijmans** (DG REGIO), **Agnieszka Widuto** (European Parliament Research Service), **Florian Hauser** (DG EMPL), **Milica Neacsu** and **Bert Kuby** (both CoR).

PB spoke in the introduction about the Competence Centre for Administrative Capacity Building, which was established 2.5 years ago, with the aim of helping regions and cities facing difficulties with absorption rates. He referred to question no.1 as the “million dollar question”:

About the first question, one of the main challenges highlighted was to find good indicators. The EC relies mostly on the World Bank for that. EPRS representative emphasized that the EP was advocating for a bottom-up approach and called for introducing the regional dimension into European strategies. The Mid-Term review of the Europe 2020 strategy found that the ownership at regional level was quite low. The EP was preparing a resolution on Europe 2020, pushing for regional based indicators. EP also supported the shifting from compliance orientation to result orientation in the implementation of policies. The OECD definition on administrative capacity was limited to planning and delivering infrastructure and public services – was that it, or was there more to administrative capacity? It is a waste of time to focus on changing the approach (e.g. centralized versus organic, more dialog-based), because of the factors determining it (history, culture, etc.) – there are ways in both approaches to engage the same actors. The key to strengthening regional administration were discussed: more power; more people; better planning? The Simple structures perform better – not more people in the administration, but more skilled people (good training and motivation fighting turn-over), together with the involvement of more stakeholders. Strategic planning should not be done for the sake of it (because the EC is asking), but a strategic approach needs to be kept throughout the implementation process. A good monitoring system needs to be put in place, both focused on finance and result orientation.

The pillars to success are: structure, skills, systems & tools, good governance (operate in a context in which politics play a role). An interface should exist to promote increased input from research.

About the national/regional variations in administrative capacity, participants said that local and regional authorities are many times confined to follow guidelines from the national level, it is thus a question of competences as much as it is of budget. They also wondered if all Member States are ready for financial instruments.

On the priorities for research on governance and management of EU Cohesion Policy and how such research could best be organised, the following elements were highlighted:

- The unit of analysis is important.
- Priorities are different for academics and applied research.
- DG REGIO should have a research unit.
- Research and policy –makers need to meet half way in the question of timing. Research often takes too much time and the European Commission is under political pressure to deliver. What could help: more operational conclusion from research.

The pillars to success are: structure, skills, systems & tools, good governance (operate in a context in which politics play a role). An interface should exist to promote increased input from research.

Tables 5 and 6 discussed the issues of **places and spaces and of the contribution of EU Cohesion Policy to integrated urban, rural and territorial development**. The recent reform of EU Cohesion Policy has been underpinned by a “territorial discourse” surrounding the “Barca Report”. Related debates have been both influenced and influential with regard to controversies on “place-based” vs. “space-blind” economic development models. Concerning EU Cohesion Policy, such discussions will be continued in the context of the EU's Territorial Agenda 2020, the Urban Agenda and the ESPON 2020 programme. The questions for debate were the following:

- How influential has the territorial discourse been for the reform of EU Cohesion Policy and what's left of it when it comes to implementation?
- Convergence, competitiveness, well-being: what's the state of debate on region? development indicators?
- What are themes for academic research with regard to the territorial dimension of EU policies and how could such research best be organised?.

**Prof Lisa De Propris** (University of Birmingham, United Kingdom), **Fiona Wieland** (DG REGIO), **Christiaan Van Lierop** (European Parliament Research Service), **Gordon Modro** and **Marc Kiwitt** (both CoR) moderated the discussion at tables 5 and 6.



## Feedback and evaluation

Moderated by **Giulia Amaducci** (DG REGIO) and **Wolfgang Petzold** (CoR), Master Class participants were asked immediately after the World Café session to summarise their first impressions of the event in one word, reflecting on both positive memories and possible improvements to the format. The word clouds below indicate that “networking” and “knowledge-exchange” was ranked as most memorable while “feed-back” and “more interaction” notably during the students’ presentations and “informal moments with EU officials” were suggested several times among the areas to be changed.

After the Master Class, participants and lecturers were invited to take part in an online evaluation, to which 15 of the 24 participants responded. For 80% of them, Master Class is a real opportunity to meet EU institutions representatives and to network with their peers. Participants’ main expectation was to learn more about EU

Cohesion Policy. This expectation was met in some 86% of cases. The session about current and future research on EU Cohesion policy, the informal discussion at the Brussels University Club and the World Café session were the most appreciated module, with 73.3% rating it ‘excellent’. The academic programme was perceived as ‘excellent’ by 66.6% and ‘good’ by 33.4% (as compared to 38.5% and 61.5% in 2014). About communication tools, the OPEN DAYS website was the most useful tool (66.6% finds it “very useful”), while the feedback social media platforms and social media platform was very mixed. The sessions of presentation of PhD students’ research will be rethought as it was the main recommendations for future events: ‘more opportunity for feedback on all participants’ research papers’, ‘more time for discussing PhD students’ research’, ‘everybody [should] get the chance to present their paper’. The European Parliament involvement and the informal discussions (on World Café format for instance) are other suggestions.

# List of Master Class 2015 participants

(in alphabetical order)

## **Marsida Bandilli**

Paper: Mapping of interest groups mobilization in cross-border cooperation programmes

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Paper: Investigation of the regional innovation paradox

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Paper: Spatialities of labour policies in Hungary

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## **Jasper Jacob van Dijk**

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Paper: Smart specialisation strategies in Poland

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Paper: The dynamics of the Regional Development Agencies in post-accession Romania

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Paper: Institutional relations in the governance of Cohesion Policy: a principal-agent analysis of the implementation of financial instruments

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Paper: Respond on fuzzy responsibilities in the cross-border management of Alps-Carpathian eco-biocorridor

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Paper: Places and spaces: urban and rural development; urban-rural integration

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Paper: Smart specialisation and the public sector: the challenge of institutional learning in Puglia and Sicily

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Paper: Do institutions of the euro area converge?

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**Ana Isabel Matias Louro Martins**

Paper: An integrated approach of territorial development in EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 – new instruments for old challenges

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**Mandy Lalrindiki**

Paper: The influence of regional level institutional frameworks in the evolution of an inter-regional innovation system: a conceptual paper

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**Dr Jorge Tiago Mira Canhoto Duraes Martins**

Paper: Relational capabilities to leverage new knowledge – an empirical analysis of firms embedded in UK and Portugal old industrial regions

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Paper: Economic and political bias in the distribution of EU funds in East Central Europe

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Paper: European Territorial Cooperation effects on the promotion and use of solar energy in the Mediterranean area

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**Eva Purkarthofer**

Paper: When 'soft planning' and 'hard planning' meet: the encounter of European and national spatial planning

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Paper: Place-based innovation in EU Cohesion Policy

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Paper: Changing modes of EU governance. Implications for Cohesion Policy

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**Sebastian Schulz**

Paper: Examining the link between innovation as a key concept in EU Cohesion Policy and socio-spatial polarisation in CEE regions

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**Dr Tamara Edyta West**

Paper: Cultural heritage, digital innovation and SmartCulture Regional Clusters: addressing the distinctiveness of the spaces and places of EU Cohesion Policy

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**"Best paper" winners**

In the context of the conference "Challenges for the New Cohesion Policy in 2014-2020: An Academic and Policy Debate", held by DG REGIO, the RSA and the Latvian EU Presidency on 4-6 February 2015 in Riga, three researchers won a best paper award, which includes participation in the OPEN DAYS 2015 Master Class.

**Dr Riccardo Crescenzi**

Paper: How does the net impact of EU regional policy differ across countries? (together with Mara Giua)

Associate Professor of Economic Geography

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**Aleksandrs Dahs**

Paper: Measuring demographic impact of the regional and cohesion policy actions: example of Latvia

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**Dr Mara Giua**

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**13<sup>th</sup> European Week of  
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