

**CENTRE FOR REGIONAL STUDIES  
OF HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**

**DISCUSSION PAPERS**

**No. 77**

**Territorial Planning, its Actors  
and Instruments. The Portuguese  
& Hungarian Planning System**

**by  
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**Series editor**

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**Gábor LUX**

**Pécs  
2009**

ISSN 0238–2008  
ISBN 978 963 9899 23 0

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Technical editor: Ilona Csapó. Language editor: Zsuzsanna Márkusné Zsibók.  
Printed in Hungary by Sümegei Nyomdaipari, Kereskedelmi és Szolgáltató Ltd., Pécs.

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## 1 Introduction

Territory as we know it is in constant change; distances shorten, new synergies are established, and new challenges make mankind search for answers and ways to develop in a sustainable and environment-friendly way. New contacts with people having different experiences are important because they give the opportunity to learn from others.

The European Union is a great example of what is described above. Borders are open, people can freely move within the Schengen Area, territorial harmonisation is an objective of this community in order to provide better living conditions for all citizens, strengthen the economy and equilibrate disparities among regions in each country and all European members.

The present study is a result of a European programme called *Leonardo da Vinci*, which offers work experience for post-graduates. In this case the synergy is between Universidade de Lisboa – Faculdade de Letras (Departamento de Geografia) – Letters Faculty of Lisbon University – and Magyar Tudományos Akadémia – Regionális Kutatások Központja (Dunántúli Tudományos Intézet) – Centre for Regional Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Transdanubian Research Institute).

The objective of the report is to provide a comparative work on the Portuguese and Hungarian territorial planning system. It is divided into three parts: first, the explanation and comprehension of the Portuguese territorial management system, its instruments and institutions are presented, which is followed by the discussion of the same issues for the Hungarian territory – we identify instruments and institutions responsible for territorial organisation in connection with planning; and finally, a comparison of the two systems is given.

Considered as a comparative work, one of its objectives is also to share information, especially about the Portuguese planning system and, in addition, to provide new ideas and point gaps in both systems. By taking the first step towards a future deeper research, this report articulates the need to the comprehension of both systems.

After a preliminary research, it was clear that both countries have the same issues, and for that, it became interesting for the author as a researcher to identify the similarities, the problems within the planning system of both countries and the European Union's responsibilities on that matter. It was clear that both countries deal with similar problems since there are big regional disparities and asymmetries and debates about the policies to be applied on them (regionalism?). Both have similar history – change of the political systems in the past century –, centralised policies and a high dependency on European Union subsidies.

This work is partly descriptive and partly critical, and will provide suggestions. Hopefully, it can be regarded as a benchmark report, realising the best of both systems.

## 1.1 Defining of Territorial Planning and ‘Region’

A definition of territorial planning was given by ESPON: “territorial development is an integrated and proactive approach to shaping the future of cities, regions and larger geographies – to some degree it can also be referred to as spatial planning. It goes beyond traditional regional policy as it brings together economic, social and environment opportunities and concerns as well as other factors which influence where activities takes place, how different places function and are connected, and what conditions are offered for living and doing business.”<sup>1</sup>

According to *Faragó* (2004, p. 19), “planning is a cyclical learning and rationalising process meant to shape the future and built on ‘experimenting’, a well-structured instrumental mode of success-oriented social action and also a tool for governance (management).” The author considers a plan as a “picture of intended actions, fixed at a given moment, a medium of communication (...)”.

If we consider the concept of territorial planning, we can assume that this is not a new issue; cities and territorial organisation as well as connections (roads, for example) are only a few cases that can support that this approach has been used since the Greek and Roman empires.

Territorial development strategies can help explore potentials for economic growth and jobs and at the same time support an enhanced quality of life by helping to meet the challenge of sustainable development. This principle was used, for example, in the 1930s when the United Kingdom was in deep economic crisis and it started to implement Keynesian theory in public policy.

What is a region? Throughout this work, the concept of the region will be often used, therefore it is important to define it.

According to the Porto Editora Dictionary online (*Dicionários*, 2008), a region is a “portion of territory that can be distinguished from others by its morphologic structure, climate, economic profile, products, costumes, etc.”<sup>2</sup>

The term “region” originates in the ancient Rome and it refers to a portion of territory under control of a legion. The truth is that the objective has not changed that much since then, it is still to guarantee the own interests of the region and the respective population, as a factor of national cohesion and promotion of development.

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<sup>1</sup> ESPON: European Spatial Planning Observation Network (29th of May 2008) (ESPON, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> [www.portoeditora.pt/dol/](http://www.portoeditora.pt/dol/) (March 11<sup>th</sup> 2008) – translation by the author.

In order to give a more geographical definition of the region (*Portugal.veraki*, 2007), we can describe it as a territorial collective person, endowed with administrative autonomy and financial as well as representative organs.<sup>3</sup>

It is also important and relevant to draw a difference between political region and administrative region; otherwise, this situation can generate misunderstandings over the regionalism issue.

Specifically, a *political region* is a higher level of autonomy, ample legislative and regulation power that also has financial independence.

An *administrative region* has an objective to better adjust the solutions over the issues of regional policy by creating an intermediary level of decision-making.

Since all territorial and regional policies need to consider the specific potentials of a territory or place, in order to be successful, a deep exploratory work on the ex-ante part providing a diagnosis of the studied area is very important. This work will now present the diagnosis of Hungarian and Portuguese planning instruments and institutions, but it is important to emphasise that the Portuguese part is slightly more developed than the Hungarian due to the difficulties in accessing the information in English.

## 2 The Portuguese Territorial Planning Background

The Portuguese national and regional planning and territorial divisions go back to the Roman Empire, with a special empowerment between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> century. But it was in the 1970s (after the Revolution of April 25<sup>th</sup> 1974) that the main legislation was passed and the real process of creating a national and regional planning system was initiated.

Since then, the Portuguese system has taken a long way by evolving, developing new plans and programmes and starting new policies. From those days on, territory is now seen as a whole which requires a common policy for its organisation, and demands the participation of multiple actors, multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral teams. Almost a decade's time was needed to specify the meaning of territorial planning. In the 80's, Portugal defined it as an erudite process with scientific and cultural bases with the purpose of organising the distribution of different uses and functions in space and time, contributing to the development of all human communities.

In order to explain the Portuguese national organisation in terms of plans and entities that make and implement them, it is necessary to invoke the law 48/98 of August 11<sup>th</sup> titled *Urbanism and Territorial Planning Politics Base Law* (Lei de Bases da Política de Ordenamento do Território e Urbanismo – LBOTU). It

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<sup>3</sup> From <http://portugal.veraki.pt/regiões> (March 11<sup>th</sup> 2008).

defines the policy and instruments for territory management and regulates several levels of public administration, therefore it is the government, the administrative regions and the local authorities, with the participation of all citizens and their associations that are subjects of those regulations (*DGOTDU*, 2008).

As it was discussed, the Portuguese planning and management system goes back to the Medieval Era. We can learn that the management of cities and their surroundings was conducted by important and wise people at that time and specific areas were defined for different uses – the planning system has taken the first steps in Portugal.

Time has changed and new opportunities and challenges have opened new doors in planning and management affairs. The change from a dictatorial state to a democratic system (1974), joining the European Union (EU) in 1986 (called the European Economic Union) and other evolutions brought new challenges for the years to come.

Consequently, the paradigm of territorial planning required some adjustments. This report will now focus on the organisation of those subjects and explains the meaning behind each one of the inherent issues of the system itself.

## **2.1 The Portuguese Stakeholders of the Planning System**

According to LBOTU article No. 4, the state, autonomous regions and local authorities must promote the policies of territorial management and urbanism, according to their competences, public interest and respect for the rights, liberties and guaranties of the citizens. They are obliged to join efforts for the consolidation of the Territorial Management System, considering the secondary effects that those policies may have on sustainable territorial development.

In terms of organisations and stakeholders, Portugal has on the top of the hierarchy, besides the government itself, the “Environment, Territorial Management and Regional Development Ministry” (MAOTDR). This governmental department (that normally changes its name each time the government changes) is responsible for defining, executing and coordinating environmental policies, territorial and urban management and regional development, as well as coordinating the national cohesion policy, with the perspective of sustainable development and territorial unity. It is accountable for QREN coordination, with the perspective of sustainable development, to promote the citizenship, welfare and quality of life, as well as promote the balanced development of the country’s regions.<sup>4</sup>

Connected directly to this ministry, the General Directorate of Territorial Management and Urban Development (*Direcção-Geral do Ordenamento do Ter-*

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<sup>4</sup> For more information about MAOTDR, see : [www.maotdr.gov.pt](http://www.maotdr.gov.pt)



ritorio e Desenvolvimento Urbano – DGOTDU) is responsible for the execution of territorial management and urban policies, and it promotes the integrated evaluation of national territorial division. Its mission is to have an actualised vision of the government's role, focusing on the normative and regulatory functions, and also to define and evaluate national policies.

According to Regulation Decree number 54/2007; DGOTDU's main activity is to support the definition, accompaniment and evaluation of public policies in the field of territorial management and urban development. Within this regulation new competences emerged: regular monitoring and evaluation of territorial management system; normative and regulative functions providing orientation and technical support on territorial transformations; benchmarking and workshops in the fields of formation, information and disclosure; and the organisation also represents the country internationally.

Earlier in this report QREN was mentioned, therefore it is relevant to explain who is responsible for its coordination. Though it is not an instrument or actor of planning, it is a pertinent issue for the planning management. According to Decree-law number 137/07, the Financial Institute for Regional Development (IFDR) was created to replace the General Directorate for Regional Development in May 2007. IFDR's mission is to execute regional development policy through the financial coordination of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund of the European Union; to coordinate, manage and financially supervise the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF); and it is responsible for the payment and control of those funds' interventions.

The Portuguese Constitution considers the existence of Regional Administration, but those are not yet implemented (see footnote number 4). Because of that, there is an “organised disorder” on the regional level coexisting with several organisms.

Either way, there is an organisation which is highly important in terms of regional planning, because it is a peripheral service of MAOTDR. Coordination Commissions for Regional Development (Comissão Coordenação para o Desenvolvimento Regional – CCDR) is an organisation endowed with administrative and financial autonomy, charged to execute, at the level of its geographic area of intervention, the policies of regional and urban development, environment, territorial management, nature and biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of natural resources, urban requalification, regional strategic planning and support to local municipalities and its associations, pursuing an integrated development of each region.

By participating in the strategic planning process, enhancing partnership between local agents and elaborating programmes aiming the cohesion and territorial competitiveness, CCDRs make their contribution to Social and Economic Development Policy in a regional level. The nuclear entities of the commissions

are Regional Development, Territory Management, Environment, Juridical and Local Administration Support, Financial and Administrative Management and General Surveillance Services.

For example, CCDRs are responsible for the elaboration and correct implementation of corresponding PROT and all the decisions from the municipal level must be presented and approved by these commissions. There are five CCDRs, one for each region, as illustrated in *Figure 1* [Algarve, Alentejo, Lisboa and Vale do Tejo, Centro (Center) and Norte (North)], equivalent to the NUTS II division of the country.

As it was discussed, there is no regional administration in Portugal (excepting Azores and Madeira Islands<sup>5</sup>), but there are districts that will be substituted by the regions as soon as they are implemented, with administrative divisions established on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 1835 according to Law 252/99 of 1999. Their mission is to represent the government at the district level, to be a link between administration and citizens, and also to have competencies in public security and civil protection. In terms of regional planning, districts are pertinent because they collaborate in the dissemination of sectoral policies' through workshops and formations, for example. It is also their competence to develop the necessary conditions of a competent cooperation between all decentralised public services at the district level.

In Portugal, there are eighteen districts with a civil government in each (see *Figure 2*), each one has a deliberative assembly, composed of a delegate from municipalities that constitute the district, and the governor is nominated by the government at the Ministries' Council after the proposal of the Minister of Internal Administration on whom the governors depend hierarchically and organisationally.

In order to have a better coordination and optimise the advantages, Portuguese Laws number 10 and 11 of 13<sup>th</sup> May 2003 establish that municipalities can work together as an association or community.

The Law 10/2003 defines Metropolitan Grand Areas (Grandes Areas Metropolitanas – GAM) and Urban Communities (ComUrb). The differences between them are only in the size; GAM is a cluster of minimum nine municipalities with a population not lower than 350 000, the ComUrb must have at least three municipalities with a population not lower than 150 000. Municipalities may choose not to be part of these organisations, but in this case they will not benefit from the advantages: development and territorial management become more harmonious, and the capacity to apply and promote larger projects revealed

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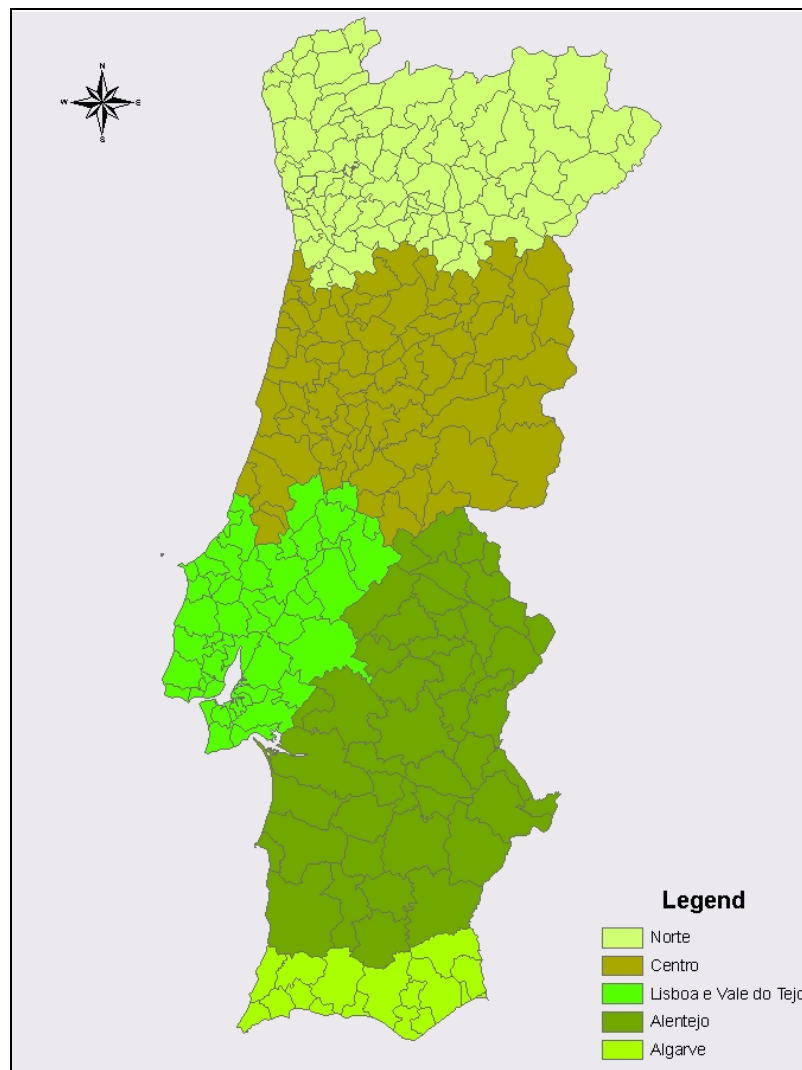
<sup>5</sup> The so-called Governos Regionais (Regional Governments) have several powers and demands to the region: they are submitted; they execute laws and make efforts for regional development in all areas. These governments are elected by the inhabitants of the islands, their mandate lasts four years, but they have to submit to and execute the national laws.

to be easier, therefore the application to funds from EU or state financing is more profitable.

Both of them have the same organisation constituted by the Assembly, the Council and the Consultation Board.

Figure 1

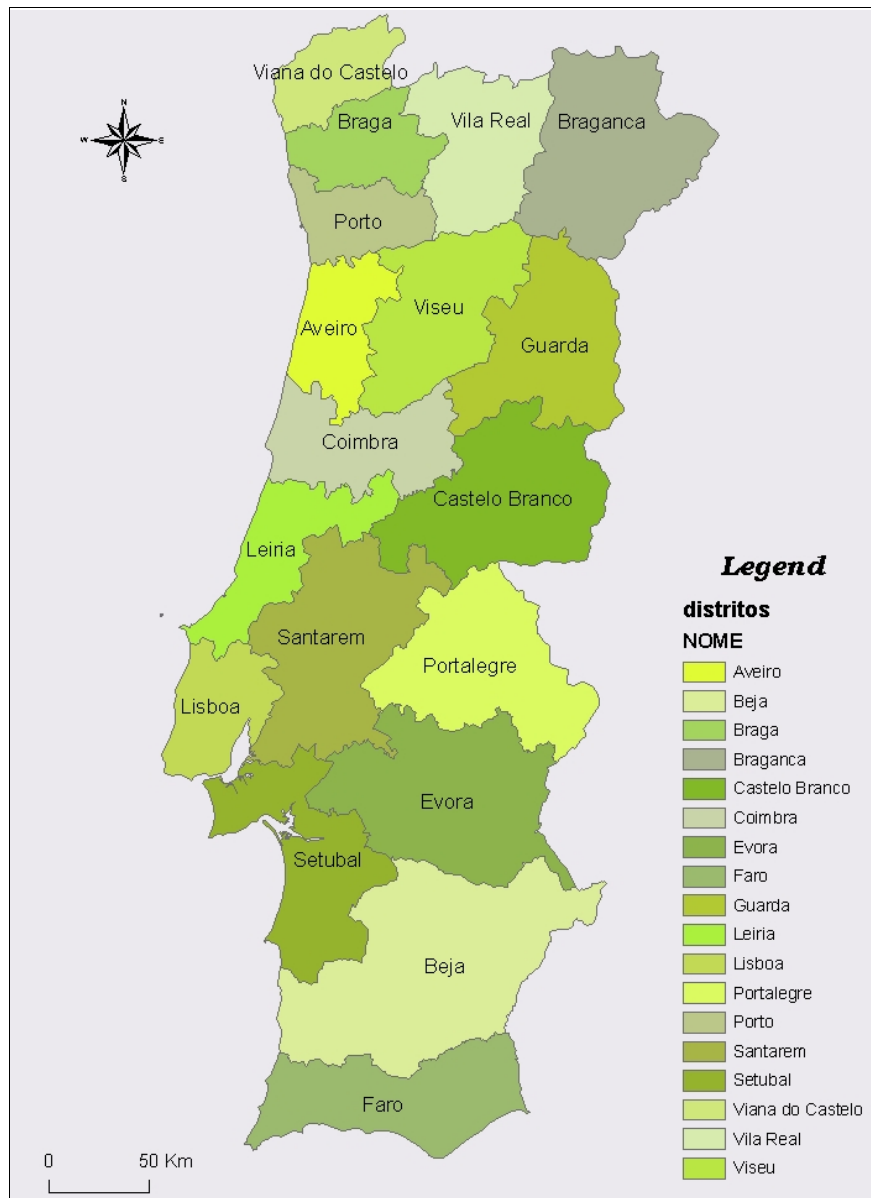
*Portuguese Regions and CCDR's*



Source: Author's elaboration.

Figure 2

*Portuguese Districts*



Source: Author's elaboration.

Having their own properties and finances, the objectives of GAM and ComUrb are the alignment of municipal investments with the community interests, planning and strategic management in social and economic aspects, territorial management at the scale of municipals' associations, and the coordination of activities between municipals and the central administration in the following areas:

- Sanitation and public provisions;
- Infrastructure;
- Health care;
- Education;
- Environment, nature conservation and natural resources;
- Security and civil protection;
- Accessibility and transport;
- Public use equipments;
- Support for tourism and culture, as well as sports, youth and leisure activities.

There are seven GAMs in Portugal (Viseu, Algarve, Coimbra, Minho, Porto, Aveiro and Lisboa) and twelve ComUrbs (Beiras, Médio Tejo, Douro, Tâmega, Centro Alentejo, Valimar, Trá-os-Montes, Baixo Alentejo, Lezíria do Tejo, Leiria, Vale do Sousa and Oeste).

The legislation is the same for *municipals' associations or intermunicipal communities* according to law 11/03, only the scale changes. These associations (42 in all) are useful to smaller municipals with less population, and in some cases in rural areas. The organisation of intermunicipal communities is the same as that of the ComUrb or GAM, but in the case of the municipals' association there are differences: their main organs are just the Intermunicipal Assembly and the Council Board.

It is important to mention that the municipals can integrate two associations or communities at the same time, although they can leave the association or community, but only after a certain period – normally four or five years. These associations can be dissolved if they reach an agreement, nevertheless, municipals recognise the advantages that these types of associations bring, and for this reason they are becoming more and more important, especially where municipal management and planning is concerned.

Referring to the Portuguese Constitution, Article 235, *local authorities* are territorial collective persons endowed with representative organs, whose aim is to pursue the respective population's best and own interests. There are three types of local authorities: administrative regions (not implemented), municipals and parishes. The organisation is common to all local authorities: there is an assembly elected by the population, endowed with deliberative power, and an executive organ constituted by an adequate number of members (depending on the

inhabitants of the region, municipality or parish), with a designated president who is the first candidate of the most voted list.

Table 1

*Portuguese Local Self Government Organisation*

Local Authority	Deliberative Organ	Executive Organ
Parish	Parish Assembly	“Junta de Freguesia”
Municipality	Municipal Assembly	City Hall
Administrative Region	Regional Assembly	“Junta Regional”

*Source:* Author’s elaboration.

Concerning *municipal* divisions, they are the oldest and more consistent form of sub-division that Portugal have had throughout over 900 years of history. They come from the “Foral” letters, which granted lands without an owner for collective use of the community, regulated taxes, fines and established protection rights and military obligations of the royalty, to avoid being taken by aristocrats. Today, we can count 308 municipals. According to Article 250 of the Portuguese Constitution and decree-law 142/85, 48/99 and 169/99, the municipals are represented by an Assembly and a Municipal Council. The first is the deliberative organ comprising elected members, and the Municipal Council is the executive organ. Municipal Councils have their own tax incomes and also a budget assigned by the government according to the number of citizens and assignments for the mandate, among other issues and projects.

The smallest local authorities are the *parishes*, so called “Freguesias” in Portuguese, which in many cases overlap the medieval ecclesiastic units. In Portugal, there are 4259 parishes distributed within the 308 municipalities. Municipals are constituted by at least one parish, and are the ones who are responsible for the implementation of those, obeying several rules established by law. Concerning territorial management, they participate in the elaboration process of the PMOT; they basically help the co-ordination, elaboration and implementation of plans and they consult with the interested parties; they also approve urban allotments and urbanisation constructions on the parish private properties, in addition, execute acts on the PMOT options with adequate financial endowment in the provisional management instruments (approved by the deliberative organ).

We can consider three types of parishes:

- Urban: with population density  $>500$  inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>, or that integrate a settlement with resident population  $\geq 5\ 000$  inhabitants;

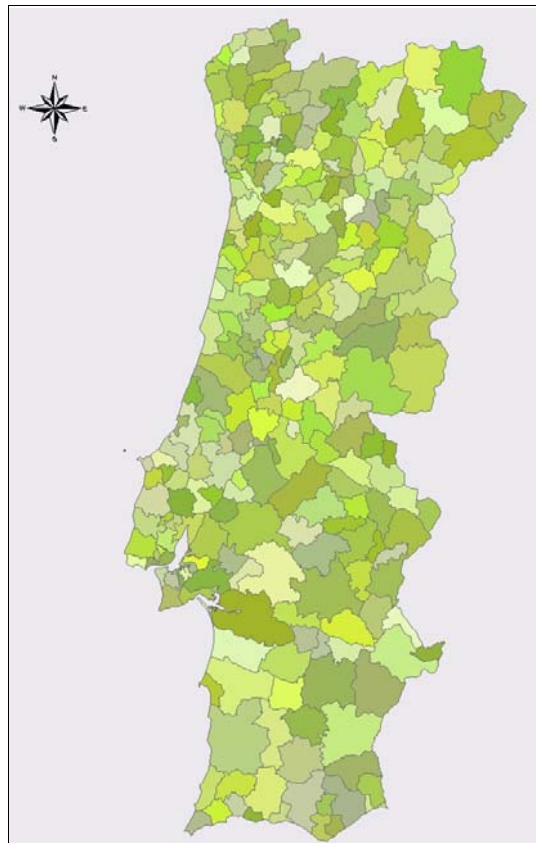
- Semi-Urban: non-urban parishes with population density  $>100$  inhabits/km<sup>2</sup> and  $\leq 500$  inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>, or that integrate a settlement with resident population  $\geq 2\ 000$  and  $< 5\ 000$  inhabitants;
- Rural: the remaining.

The majority of territorial development plans are constructed at a large scale (national or regional scale), which present difficulties concerning the efficiency and effectiveness on a smaller scale, especially on rural spaces.

Widely spread at the end of the '80s and the beginning of the '90s all over the country, but particularly in rural areas, actually there are more than 70 local development associations (Associações de Desenvolvimento Local – ADL) or local action groups.

Figure 3

*Portuguese Municipals*



Source: created by the author.

The vision and objectives are common to all of them, including the creation of dynamism in backwards areas, the establishment of local partnerships between different actors (such as cooperatives, cultural associations, local authorities, schools, among others) in a balanced way, among several social-economic means of the territory.

They were established to answer positively to an EU initiative called LEADER. This programme allows the use of different intervention approaches in rural space, promoting those that are integrated, conceived and implemented by active partnerships working at the micro-level/local scale.

According to the Portuguese LEADER website, beneficiaries of these EU initiatives (the ADL) must elaborate development strategies for their local territories and are responsible for the application of those strategies. The population served by an ADL must not go beyond 100 000 inhabitants nor be below 10 000 inhabitants, although exceptions can be made. Financial income comes mainly from initiatives of the LEADER programme, an initiative from the EAGGF – G Fund (further explained), and partnerships established between financial entities.

## **2.2 The Portuguese Territorial Instruments and Regulation Documents**

The Portuguese territory can be divided into a national or central level and a local level.

The national or central level is represented by the government and it corresponds to the strategic aspects of all national space, giving directions and orientations for the regional and municipal development. In order to achieve cohesion, coordination is needed between the several sectoral development policies, applying, if needed, specific arrangements or some special schemes for planning.

The local level stands for the municipal level and other local public powers and services that provide the strategic development for municipal space and land-use (if it is agricultural, rural, for construction...).

Between those two levels, there are decentralised entities of central administration with the purpose of having better cooperation among central and local authorities. The regional strategies have to be in complete agreement and cooperation with the national ones, and they are who give directions to the municipal planning system. However, it is important to note that there aren't any regional authorities, since regionalisation was not implemented in Portugal<sup>6</sup>, and consequently, there are no regional governments or autonomous powers in any form.

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<sup>6</sup> After a national referendum on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1998, with 51,7% abstention, the regionalisation had a blackball of 63,51%, which means that only 36,49% voted "yes" to implement administrative regions within the Portuguese territory.



These entities (which will be explained later in the report) only function as transitions from national to local authorities, and vice-versa.

The coordination of the presented levels is only possible with an integrated management and instrument capacity for the organisation of the relevant territorial issues.

There are four large groups of instruments. The *territorial development instruments* have a strategic nature and provide extensive measures for the national territory organisation. The two kinds of *territorial planning instruments*, namely, the National Politics of Territorial Management Programme and Regional Plans are considered as master plans, both are characterised by a regulative nature that regulates territorial land use. The *sectoral policy instruments* come from governmental ministries and provide the programming action and plan for fields like energy, healthcare, education. Also important are the *special instruments* that are used as links between the large-scale national instruments and the smaller plans for areas that have very specific issues, challenges or demands.

In order to implement the instruments or to give expression to strategic orientation provided by the instruments, plans are developed either by public or private institutions. In both cases they have to be voted and approved by the local or national government depending on the scale and importance of the plan.

Although it is not quite a plan in its name, the *National Policy for Planning and Territorial Management* (in Portuguese: Política Nacional de Planeamento e Ordenamento do Território – PNPOT) is a strategy concerning territorial development instruments on the national level, which is superior to the remaining Territorial Management Instruments (PNPOT, 2007). According to the law 380/99 of 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1999 which defines the coordination between several actors, the PNPOT establishes the national options with special relevance for territory organisation, and becomes the reference instrument considering the elaboration of the Territorial Planning Instruments like PROT. It establishes a reference guide for the configuration of the urban system, networks, infrastructures and national interest equipments, as well as maintenance and valorisation of areas of national interest in environmental, patrimonial and countryside development fields. It is also an instrument to enhance cooperation with EU member states in the field of the European territory organisation matters. It is the DGOTDU's task (explained later) with the help of a project team. PNPOT is effective since 5<sup>th</sup> September 2007, and it is also the DGOTDU that is responsible for the correct implementation of this policy, asserting that the provided guiding is followed in the correct way.

The *Regional Management Plan* (in Portuguese Plano Regional de Ordenamento do Território – PROT), according to the LBOTU, is an instrument for territorial development with a strategic nature. Together with PNPOT, it gives the most relevant options for the territory organisation, by setting up general direc-

tives for the implementation. Because of this, they have to be considered as a reference for the elaboration of territorial management instruments like PMOT – Municipal Plans.

The main function of the PROT is to give directives for land use and territorial transformations in a strategic decision frame established on the regional level; to regionally promote the integration of sectoral and environmental policies in the territory arrangement; to promote the efficiency of the interventions; and to orient the elaboration of the municipal plans.

The main goals are to develop, in a regional framework, PNPOT's and the sectoral plans' main figures; to translate spatially the major objectives of social and economic sustainable development laid down in regional development plans; to define measures and interventions to attenuate inter-regional development asymmetries; to become a reference frame for the PIMOT and PMOT.

But PROT's are more than a frame to the policy of territorial development; they are also the basic documents to determine the action programmes to be integrated in the next period of interventions co-financed by the structural and cohesion funds of the EU.

### ***2.2.1 The Influence of the European Union over the Portuguese Planning System***

To take best advantage of EU funds, a strategy is delimited, and in Portugal it is now called *National Strategic Reference Framework for 2007 – 2013* (Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional or QREN). With a strategic orientation and operational feature regarding cohesion policies, this document has special focus on structural development.

QREN's core is to define objectives for development and organisation of the use of Community funds. It establishes the framework for operational programmes, provides a financial background for those programmes and plans that might be a result of them. In Portugal, there are three thematic programmes (Competitiveness Factors, Manpower and Territory Valorisation), and nine regional programmes (five for the continent and four for the islands) (QREN, 2008). In sum, it is an extremely essential financial instrument to boost economic recovery in order to give strong foundations for a sustained evolution.

This financial support, correctly called Structural Funds and Cohesion Funds, originates from the economic and social cohesion aim of the Treaty on the European Union.

According to information from the previous Community Support Framework (2000–2006) all four structural funds were used, with a special emphasis on the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) which represented 65% of all

financial support. The remaining was divided between the ESF (European Social Fund) with 23%, EAGGF-G (European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund – Guidance) with 11% and finally FIFG (Financial Instruments for Fisheries Guidance) representing 1% of the European Union grants.

ERDF is definitely the most important and relevant fund used by the Portuguese government because it corresponds to the country's main difficulties: different stages of modernisation and infrastructure implementation; support for small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, as well as I&D (Innovation and Development) promotion.

### ***2.2.2 The Direct and More Influential Instruments in the Portuguese Planning System***

To preserve natural resources and other values, Portugal has *Special Plans for Territorial Management* (Planos Especiais de Ordenamento do Território – PEOT). These regulative instruments are elaborated by the central administration and used by the government to uphold objectives of national interest with territorial repercussions. PEOTs are liable for congeniality with PNPOT and PROTs prevailing over PMOT and PIMOT, which will be explained later. There are five types of PEOTs applied in regulation:

- 1) Public Water Lakes (POAAP – Plano de Ordenamento de Albufeiras de Água Pública),
- 2) Archeological Parks (POPA – Plano de Ordenamento de Parque Arqueológico),
- 3) Coastline Border (POOC – Plano de Ordenamento das Orlas Costeiras),
- 4) Protected Areas (POAP – Plano de Ordenamento de Área Protegida)
- 5) Rivers (POE – Plano de Ordenamento de Estuário).

*Sectoral plans* (Planos Sectoriais or Progamas Operacionais in Portuguese) are instruments for the programming or operationalisation of different sectoral policies, with territorial organisation respect used to reach the special objectives of each sector. They include the territorial expression of sectoral policy from the ministries, and different scenarios for each field of public administration (e.g.: transportation, energy, tourism). Sectoral plans establish the sectoral options and objectives to achieve the goals laid down in the national directive frames. It defines actions for the operationalisation of those objectives and sets up the territorial dimension of the sectoral policies and assures the conformity with the existing instruments of territorial management. These plans are made by public or semi-public authorities of central administration and are approved by the government.

For a better coordination of social-economic development strategies between two or more contiguous municipal areas, the *Inter-Municipal Management Plans* (in Portuguese: Planos Intermunicipais de Ordenamento do Território – PIMOT) are developed. It is a territorial development instrument assuring the correct coordination between PROTs and PMOT (explained later) in case of existing interdependence issues which requires integrated coordination. PIMOT aims to harmonise development strategies in the inter-municipal level generally, for protection and environmental quality guarantee, to coordinate different types of network plans (like equipment, infrastructure, the distribution of industrial activities, tourism) existing in higher lever programmes and to clarify the goals for equipments' accessibility and public services. They give directions for the integrated use of the territory, and also define inter-municipal networks for infrastructures, equipments, among other issues. The plan is composed of a report and maps (using GIS programmes) that illustrate the guiding. Although it is not explicit in Portuguese law, the implementation of these kinds of plans became necessary for a better coordination after the municipal partnership initiatives appeared. It is essential to set a guiding orientation and apply financial support in order to implement the projects that came from the PIMOT.

The Portuguese planning system is completed with *Municipal Plans of Territorial Management* (Planos Municipais de Ordenamento do Território – PMOT). This instrument, approved by municipalities, has a regulative nature and establishes the land use, defines evolution models for human occupation, network organisation and urban systems, as well as a set of parameters for taking the best advantages of the land and environmental quality guarantee. PMOTs set arrangements for the translation of the guiding provided by national and regional strategic instruments to a smaller scale, which expresses, territorially, a local development approach. They must correctly coordinate the sectoral policies and create a programmed management basis for the municipal territory. The definition of land use is very important in these plans, consequently, they define municipal ecological structure, establish regulations and guarantee rules for environmental quality and preservation of cultural heritage, and also institute principles and underlying criteria for infrastructure, equipment, services and location of the different sectors. PMOTs can have a period of validity defined previously, but they are valid until the approval of new modifications or a review. The effectiveness of this plan can be conditioning to make programme-contracts, as well as to obtain funds and special loans.

Within the PMOT, there are three small-scaled types of plans.

Municipal Main Plans (Plano Director Municipal – PDM) define the organisation of a municipal area, constitute a synthesis of local development and management strategy, and locally integrate the options of the major national and regional plans. A spatial structure model is implied on the land qualification and it devel-

ops from that same qualification, for example, it creates regimes of use and activities, identifies several networks like transportation, equipment, communication, and so on.

These plans are constituted by a regulation report, a management map<sup>7</sup> and a conditioning plan<sup>8</sup>, followed by a descriptive study, a report introducing the options adopted and a programme containing information on predicted intervention and executions as well as their financing.

Urbanisation Plans (Planos de Urbanização – PU) are developed in order to organise a specific part of the territory within an urban perimeter which demands exact intervention. The plan has similar structure and characteristics to the previous one.

The last group of these plans include the Detail Plans (Plano de Pormenor – PP) which define and specify the special territory organisation proposals, in any specific area of the municipality, define in details the conception form of occupation, and the plans are also used as a pillar for the execution of infrastructural projects, buildings' architecture and also exterior spaces, according to the PDM and PU. Its structure is the same as those of the previous two.

It is important to note that both PU and PP plans change the PDM, because they actualise and implement new territorial organisations or classifications.

According to the law 380/99, there are strict relations between the national and regional plans, specified in six parameters:

- 1) PNPOT, PS, PEOT and PROT: Mutual compromise on respective action coordination by sharing the same principles and objectives, which means that the regulations are the same for these instruments;
- 2) PNPOT, PS and PROT: Establish regulations and guiding to be defined on new PEOT;
- 3) PEOT is changed by PNPOT;
- 4) Sectoral plans are conditioned by PNPOT guiding and have to be in accordance with the PROT;
- 5) PROT integrates the options of sectoral plans and PNPOT;
- 6) If more than one sectoral plan or PEOT has influence in one area, it is the sectoral plan's responsibility to indicate which rules to abrogate.

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<sup>7</sup> Management map: Represents the model of spatial structure according to the land use classification, as well as the defined operative units of planning and management.

<sup>8</sup> Conditioning Plan: Identifies the constraints and easements that might be limitations or encumbers to any specific form of use.

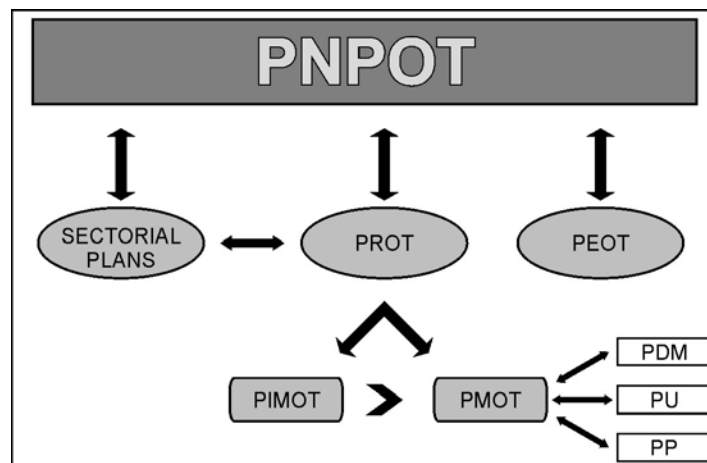
We can also learn from that law that there are relationships between regional plans and municipal plans:

- 1) PNPOT and PROT define the strategic board for PIMOT and PMOT;
- 2) PIMOT and PMOT are responsible for the programming and operationalisation of politics on social, economic and environmental development, promoted by sectoral plans;
- 3) PEOT prevails over the PIMOT and PMOT.

Briefly, we can say that PNPOT is the “big umbrella” of the Portuguese planning system. Being the top level plan, all others have to be coordinated in order to respond to the PNPOT objectives. Due to the fact that the planning system is not static, the society dynamics, economy and other fields engender new arrangements. However, one thing has to be stated; normally, the objective remains the same or has only a slight new nuance, what usually changes is the way to reach the objective. *Figure 4* represents, in a concise pattern, the way all plans are organised and all the connections they have with each other. Because of what has just been exposed, arrows point in both directions on the first level. The connection between sectoral plans and PROT appears because they have to be compatible with each other. The other connection not always exists in case a PIMOT (Inter-municipal Plan) does not exist, but if it exists, PMOT has to be also compatible with the previous one.

Figure 4

*Portuguese Planning Organisation*



Source: Author's elaboration.

### 3 The Hungarian Planning System

In the Hungarian case, the planning system is also not novel, but there had been significant changes over the past twenty years. Not entirely, but in part this is due to the European Union's requests in terms of regional organisation and planning; changes are now in course and new approaches to the planning system are being pursued.

According to the Regional Operational Programme of the National Development Plan (2004–2006), the late 1990s was the time of the fastest upswing in the economic, social and development respect, when the country was living an unwavering period. Unfortunately, at same time regional disparities were increasing, leading Hungarian regions and micro-regions to tremendous disparities in economic and social development.

Centralisation has been the main feature of the Hungarian state throughout 1000 years of history; in fact we still can characterise the structural organisation by centralisation. The country's administrative units – municipals and counties – have remained centralised until the change of the political system. However, it has to be noted that the Hungarian system of councils gave more space and freedom to local actors than the systems prevailing in the neighbouring socialist countries (especially after the reform of mechanisms in 1968 and modifications of the 'Council' Act in 1971) (*Pálné Kovács et al., 2004*).

Regionalism emerged in the 1970s, embraced by a Soviet type of regionalisation and it was only used for the purposes of national planning, which is a reason behind why they weren't so relevant in the development issue. Before 1990, regional policy as a governmental function was of secondary importance; the economic system basically gave support to protected weaker regions at the expense of strong ones. These tendencies hindered the dynamism of the economy while led to the mitigation of regional imbalances (*VÁTI, 2002*).

But it was in the transition period – from socialist regime to EU – that regions saw an upgrade of importance. Government took measures to perform regional development tasks in order to compete with other eastern countries and to focus on the crisis management of regional disparities by curbing spontaneous degradation processes in depressed areas. After the change of the political system new requirements emerged for regions; a new institutional system was established, and the decentralisation of decision-making and a better coordination of resources took place. In order to join the EU, it was necessary to modernise the practice of regional development and implement European Union principles on regional policy, in which field Act XXI of 1996 on Regional Development and Regional Planning meant the first step.

But these changes were fragile; primarily the transition period was focused on the management of crises (disparities), but then the situation deteriorated by the

predominance of targeted transfers from the centre as a policy tool, the lack of coordination between policy sectors and the poor ability of territorial partnership to enforce their interest. The result of this situation was territorial fragmentation, the doubling of local government units (more than 3000 municipalities replaced the former 1600 local councils) and the low level of efficiency (*Pálné Kovács et al.*, 2004).

The Hungarian Constitution defines in the 41<sup>st</sup> Article the country division of administrative units, and the acts – like Act LXV of 1990 on Local Self-Governments or Act XXI of 1996 – give new territorial approaches and arrangements for Hungarian Planning system and their stakeholders.

Efforts are now on track to attenuate issues; therefore the meaning of a good planning system and coordinated actors are essential to avoid future problems in crucial areas like environment, economic and social matters.

### **3.1 Hungarian Territorial Planning and Management – Layers and Layouts**

According to Chapter IX of the Hungarian Constitution (enacted in 1949 and entirely amended in 1989) on Local Governments, the territory is constituted by administrative units, including the capital, counties, cities, towns and villages.

The Hungarian territory can be divided into seven regions, nineteen counties, about 3100 municipalities and 174 micro-regions and associations. It is now important to clarify the role of these divisions in territorial planning and management.

The first level of public administration for the planning system is performed by the central government itself, especially by the ministry responsible of local government. It defines *local governments*, which can operate at two levels: municipality and county.

Local government means “autonomous and democratic management of local affairs by the communities concerned and exercise of local public authority in the interest of the population”. According to the Constitution referred above, the representative bodies of the local governments “regulate and administer matters that belong to the competence of local authority; exercises ownership rights in regard to local-authority property, independently budgets the incomes of the local government and may start ventures on their own responsibility; authorises, within the limits of the law, local taxes, their type and measures; and may freely form associations with other local representative bodies.”

In 1990, a decentralisation of the local governments took place, for which the legal support was provided by Act LXV of 1990 on Local Governments. This process took place in two major stages:



- 1) Act LXV of 1990 itself created a new system of local democracy through establishing general rules, rights, powers and obligations for local authorities;
- 2) Act LXIII of 1994 amended the Local Government Act and introduced the direct election of mayors in all settlements and county assemblies and guarantees of publicity and forms of citizen participation. The same act regulated or modified obligations of local representatives (through which they became clearer), the rules for local governments became better elaborated, and the act increased the role of the county as an institution of territorial local government.

Local governments do not have hierarchical relations between them, therefore county governments aren't superior to municipal governments nor have superior authority over them. The difference between them lies in the administrative tasks that had been delegated to each one.

According to Act LXV of 1990, all local self-governments have the same characteristics and status, but undertake different competences, depending on the size of the settlement, its population and other criteria. From Section 1 of the above mentioned act we can learn that local self-governments perform independently in local public affairs (public utilities or their organisation, personnel and financial conditions), manage the public's affairs freely within the jurisdiction. Concerning local governments' finances, the Parliament designates the resources, they have an own budget, although they can freely dispose of their municipal property and revenues. They have independence to set their organisational structure and operational procedures, and may freely form associations with other local self-governments, regional or national associations.

### ***3.1.1 The Local Governments' Importance in the Planning System***

Local authorities are responsible for local development and local planning, protecting the environment, whether it is built or natural. Within other responsibilities, they are in charge of housing management, water resources planning and drainage, sewer system, maintenance of public roads and areas as well as traffic, public sanitation and ensuring cleanliness of the localities, provision of education, health and other social services, promoting conditions to provide the community a healthy way of life.

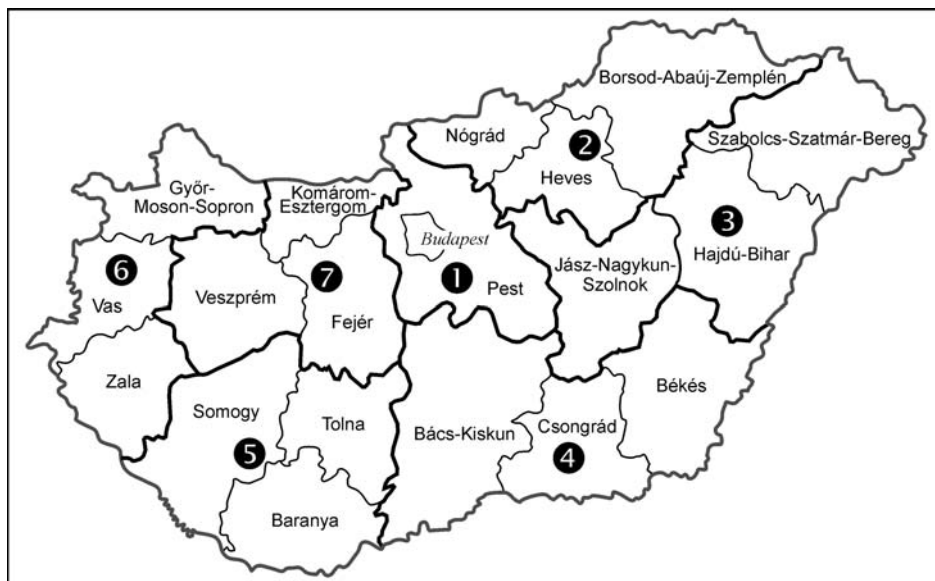
With the actual powers and obligations, the nineteen *counties* are local governments with a mainly subsidiary role in the provision of local services. They perform tasks that the municipalities are not obliged to perform, maintain the institutions that provide public services such as hospitals, museums, libraries, theatres, secondary schools, among others.

*Municipalities* as self-governments are the basic units of the overall system. There are about 3200 municipals that are set up by settlements (villages, cities and cities with county rights), and they must provide public services to the settlements according to the duties laid down in Act LXV of 1990.

It is important to focus on the state of the capital city, Budapest. It has two government systems, the capital government as a whole and the district governments (twenty-three, in total). The government of the capital performs those mandatory and voluntary municipal government functions and powers that affect the whole city or more than one district. The district governments independently execute functions and powers of the municipal government. From an outsider's eyes, they look like municipals within the municipal.

In between counties and municipalities, there have been 174 *micro-regions* since 2004. Although they do not have any directly elected governments or any kind of own power, they combine a group of municipalities as associations and work for a coordinated development of those places. Presently, the tendency is to empower them in terms of the coordination of the communities' development. The main positive features are the development of the micro-regions' relations and cooperation based on the free municipal cooperation of local governments.

Figure 5  
*Hungarian territorial division at the NUTS 2 level and the counties, 1998*



Key: 1 – Central Hungary; 2 – North Hungary; 3 – North Great Plain; 4 – South Great Plain; 5 – South Transdanubia; 6 – West Transdanubia; 7 – Central Transdanubia.  
Source: Pálné Kovács, 2005.

In between counties and municipalities, there have been 174 *micro-regions* since 2004. Although they do not have any directly elected governments or any kind of own power, they combine a group of municipalities as associations and work for a coordinated development of those places. Presently, the tendency is to empower them in terms of the coordination of the communities' development. The main positive features are the development of the micro-regions' relations and cooperation based on the free municipal cooperation of local governments.

### **3.1.2 The Stakeholders of Spatial Development**

When we arrive at the question of integrating the highly fragmented network of municipals, it becomes quite clear that the system is not that simple. With an abiding research it is easy to comprehend that other divisions exist and they also have powers in the decision-making concerning territorial management and development. They make arrangements and are considered as *spatial development institutions*, have a defined scale and duties that give them a good position in the planning system according to Act XXI of 1996 on Regional Development and Regional Planning.

Four major levels can be defined concerning these spatial development institutions: national, regional, county and micro-region level (according to a document from the National Agency for Regional Development – 2002).

The national level is represented by the government and the ministries. Operating as a government advisory and coordinating body, the *National Regional Development Council's* main duties are the harmonisation of the National Regional Development Concept, the expression of its opinion over government issues, and the creation of a consensus in the implementation of the regional policy. The council is also responsible for planning and coordination of national and transboundary infrastructure.

On the regional level there are seven *regional development councils*, one for each region. Their tasks are the promotion of the regional economic and infrastructural development, preparation and coordination of the execution of the Regional Development Concept and other programmes, helping the counties (that constitute the region) to identify development priorities, respecting the interest of both. They take part in the fulfillment of governmental duties related to regional development and planning, and make decisions in the cases defined in Act XXI of 1996.

*Regional development agencies* established by the regional development councils participate in the execution and control of the implementation both of council and central governmental duties related to regional development and planning, and also have the task of providing professional assistance and information.

Immediately below that level, *county development councils* work at the county level. Their focal task is, or, rather, recently was, to allocate most of the central financial instruments, promote spatial development and coordination within the settlements' activities, governments and regional administrative agencies and other public and professional organisations, as well as planning (physical organisation) and territorial development. The role of the county development councils is declining due to a power shift towards the regions.

The importance of *micro-regions' associations* is more and more emphasised, because, as we have mentioned, they establish cooperation between local governments. The document cited above highlights that this level has the ability to directly encourage local governments, through offering partnerships of municipalities to participate in allocation of county-level fund decisions. Micro regions have nowadays more and more public service competences, too.

According to the National Spatial Development Concept of 2005, the micro-regional level is considered as the most important form of "auto-organisation"; therefore, micro-regions' empowerment is justified in order to have a pro-active role in the planning and implementation of the concepts. It is important to emphasise that several of these associations do not have sufficient management and professional capacities which adversely affects, for that reason, the quality and efficiency of their work.

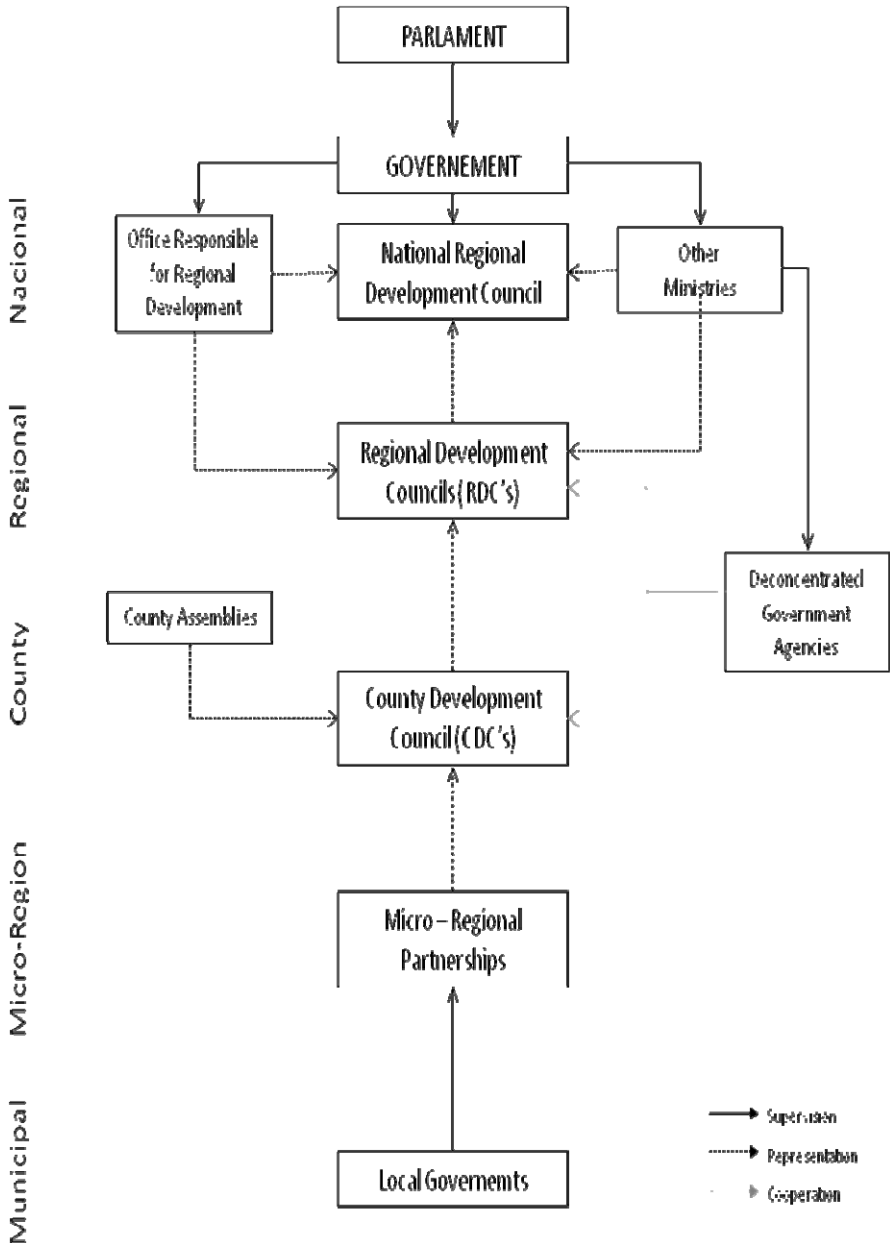
The following figure presents the Hungarian organisation in what spatial development is concerned. It is adapted by several sources, mainly Act XXI of 1996 on Regional Development and Regional Planning, and we can see that most of the decisions are *top-down*. Regional and micro-regional levels are weak, although new synergies are now arising. Either way, it is possible to identify the way that the "machine" works, in terms of stakeholders and relationships between them.

### **3.2 Instruments of Hungarian Territorial Planning and Management**

The importance of a written document expressing the will, tendencies, programmes and actions for spatial development is immeasurable. These written documents assert that, at least for the period they are conceived, policy lines are followed and objectives are accomplished. For this reason, we shall now learn on what base the Hungarian system is organised, also in terms of the specific plans.

*Regulatory legal documents* constitute an essential piece of spatial development instruments. They intend to regulate all spatial development activities, define frameworks for the different actors' operations to implement spatial development policies, identify tasks that facilitate the accomplishment of strategic objectives of those policies, control the efficient operation of other components of the network (institutions and other spatial instruments) (*Pálné Kovács et al. 2004*).

Figure 6  
*Hungarian Spatial Development administrative organisation.*



Source: Adapted by the author.

However, these regulatory documents have experienced a long journey, for this reason we shall now expound some of the main legislation that gave birth to the concepts and plans.

### **3.2.1 The Legal Influences**

In the early 90s, *Act LXXXIII of 1992 on Certain Separated State Funds* was the highest legal document for government decisions, because it identified, for the first time, the major future directions in spatial policies.

Nevertheless, *Act XXI of 1996 on Regional Development and Regional Planning* is one of the most important regulations in connection with the subject discussed here. The purpose of this act is the establishment of fundamental objectives and rules of regional development and the planning and setting up of the institutional system. It also defines goals, objectives and duties related to the subject, as well as providing basic definitions.

Either way, before the enactment of Act XXI of 1996, the legal sources were provided by parliamentary resolutions and government decrees. The conjugation of those resolutions and decrees resulted in the *Spatial Development and Organisation Fund*. The necessity of this act stemmed from the pre-accession process and the new challenges of European Union accession. With this act, which was a general framework law, related laws emerged, and a consistent implementation of the National Regional Development Concept was promoted. Unfortunately, this special fund no longer exists, making unsure the proportion of allocation for regional policy targets among other governmental branches.

*Act XXXVI of 1998 on the Enumeration of the Ministries of the Republic of Hungary* is also important because it establishes among the competences of each ministry, that spatial development concepts, programmes, substantive criteria of spatial plans and registration of rules of the plans themselves had to be regulated by the minister responsible for regional policy. This act, once more, was created to harmonise with European Union general organisation.

*Act XCII of 1999*, which amended Act XXI of 1996, gave a clear and unambiguous regulatory framework for spatial development by implementing substantial changes in three main areas: the composition of councils was changed; the supervision over councils was clarified; regional development councils were distinguished from the development councils of special regions.

The act was also amended in 2004, further detailing the procedures of fund allocation and planning, and establishing special fora for civil interest reconciliation.

Considering these acts, it is also important to emphasise that the process of pre-accession for European Union forced Hungary to elaborate, create and implement legal documents in order to be able to correctly apply for the funds. For

that reason, two major tasks were identified: the first was to create legal and institutional conditions of spatial policy (to coordinate the utilisation of funds) and the second was to implement a different financial plan to have better access to international financial resources. On this basis, it can be affirmed that spatial planning and development structure is new, the implementation of new reforms have started since the beginning of the 1990s due to the European Union's requests.

### ***3.2.2 The Territorial Planning Instruments***

The planning instruments for Hungary are identified by three types of spatial development works, with a hierarchical structure between them.

The *Spatial Development Concept* is the *piece du resistance* of spatial planning. It defines, within the represented area, development objectives and establishes priorities for the elaboration of development programmes. Considered as the first in the hierarchy, the Spatial Development Concept sets the directions for the decision-maker, providing information necessary for spatial planning and spatial development. Every level or unit must have a development concept and from that instrument elaborate the following.

*Spatial Development Programmes* follow the concept plan because they are the strategic and operative part of the previous instrument, and they are divided into sub-programmes and partial programmes. The objective is to identify short and medium-term tasks, identify parts involved in the implementation of those tasks, specify methods of execution as well as scheduling and financial organisation.

*Physical Plans* are important because they define the long-term physical-technical structure of a given region. These plans provide information for the utilisation and protection of regional features, resources and the environment. They also coordinate the location of infrastructure networks, land use system and offer means of regulation for those issues.

The document that sets fundamental policy guidelines and objectives on spatial development policy in Hungary is the *National Regional Development Concept*, adopted by the Parliament with Resolution number 35/1998 (March 20). Although it cannot be deemed as a legal document, it has a strategic significance in shaping and harmonising national and regional development. This concept determines the most important sectoral development priorities and tasks related to the government's spatial development policy. This document-plan basically establishes and influences the comprehensive long-term development of the country, determines the long-term, overall development objectives and principles necessary for the preparation of development programmes, and further ensures information for the connected sectors and regional planning and regional develop-

ment stakeholders. According to the National Regional Development Concept, the main objectives of the concept are to determine the basic long-term regional development principles, policies and goals which are to be followed by the government in its own regional development activity; give details on those spatial goals by specifying which to be supported by the government in the sectoral development policies; and promote the task fulfillment of the new institutional system introduced by the act and create harmony among county and regional development plans. Generally, it provides orientation for decentralised regional development activities without their restriction or determination.

As it was mentioned before, Act XXI of 1996 sets three important instruments to use: the Regional Development Concept, Regional Development Programme and Physical Plan. These three instruments shall serve as the basis of regional planning (but it has to be mentioned that these types of plans exist at county level as well).

The *Regional Development Concept* is a document plan used for “establishing and influencing the comprehensive and long-term development of the county or region, it defines the long-term and comprehensive development goals of a region, sets further guidelines required for the elaboration of development programmes, and provides information for participants in the sectoral and related regional planning and regional development”.

The *Regional Development Programme* is a “medium-term action plan worked out on the basis of the previous which is built on strategic and operative programmes”.

The *Physical Plan*, established only at county level, defines the land use forms applicable to the county in harmony with the goals established within the development concept.

### ***3.2.3 Embracing the European Influences***

Like in the Portuguese case, Structural Funds from the European Union are also the basis of the agenda concerning territorial planning and management. In the Hungarian case, pre-accession funds have been very important, and because accession is recent, they still have an influence on the territory.

Started in 1992, the *PHARE* programme (Poland–Hungary Assistance for Reconstruction of the Economy) was one of the most important programmes of the European Union in the pre-accession period. The main objectives in territorial management were to develop a network of decentralised institutions for spatial development. From that point on, regional and county councils along with their agencies are expected to play an important role in PHARE implementation and other plans by giving preference to projects which, in line with the development



strategies of the given county or region, offer a feasible solution of the needs of the target area.

The first plan that emerged after accession, in order to apply to funds, was the first *National Development Plan* which aimed the designation of the development policy and objectives for the period between 2004 and 2006. Although this period has already expired, it was a relevant plan because of operational programmes connected to it that set goals and objectives to reach in that period. It is important to note that in the first National Development Plan, the whole country was considered as only one region; therefore, only one single Regional Operational Programme was implemented.

Again, the *Second Hungarian Development Plan for 2007-2013* (the second which was elaborated) is one of the most important reports where territorial development is concerned. It came from the need to better integrate European Union space and policy, and to develop capacity in order to better apply for structural funds. The objective of the plan is to expand employment, creating conditions for long-term growth. To achieve this, the plan launches a coordinated state and European Union development in six priority areas: economy, transport, renewal of the society, environment, energy, regional development and state reform. Both plans have the same purpose – applying for structural funds –, but they have a settled period of action.

Not like the first, the second generation of Development Plans considered all of the seven regions, the NUTS 2 level as we now know it and previously shown in Figure 5, which means that seven regional operative programmes were elaborated. An additional important operational programme is the *Regional Development Operational Programme*, in which the target is the regional development and the support of spatial structural transformation of Hungary, and the adjustment to the regional policy of the European Union. It provides funding within the framework of nine measures in three areas of intervention (tourism, infrastructure and human resources) for implementing projects that target regional development.

It is relevant to mention that these “regional” plans also, like the remaining European plans are elaborated and accepted centrally by the central government and the National Development Agency (NDA).

## 4 Portuguese and Hungarian Planning System: The Differences and Similarities

After describing the two systems, it is now interesting to compare them, creating a relation chain that will prove the differences or similarities.

One of the biggest differences is the fact that in spite of lot of similarities concerning the scales and levels both are organised differently. Portugal and Hungary have common divisions like the municipals, inter-municipal organisms (although they are not so relevant yet in Hungary) and regions.

Table 2

### *Portugal and Hungary – Territorial Division*

	Parishes	Municipals	Inter-Municipal or Micro-Regions	Counties	Regions
Portugal	X (4257)	X (308)	X (62)		X (7)
Hungary		X (3200)	X (174)	X (19)	X (7)

*Source:* Author's elaboration.

The maps presented in the description prove this fact, therefore the countries' organisation, like institutions and instruments, have some differences. As it is shown in *Table 2*, both countries use four main levels of division, although Portugal has an additional "lower" division (parishes) when compared with Hungary. This situation has the result of better communication between inhabitants, entities and, consequently, instruments. On the other side, we can see that the Hungarian territory has a level that Portugal doesn't use where territorial planning is concerned, which is the county level (comparable with Portuguese districts but having different purposes).

However, the list of contrasts can be extended if we analyse this situation from a different perspective. If we considered numbers, we could assert that what is called municipal in Hungary is considered to be parish in Portugal. As we can see in *Table 1* and the description in the previous chapters, both Portuguese parishes and Hungarian municipals have the same rights and obligations, and if we pay attention to the numbers we have a better proof of this situation.

On the other hand, the Portuguese municipals are comparable to the Hungarian micro-regions. Although micro-regions have different obligations and ways of functioning, they still can be linked to the second Portuguese territorial division. Continuing the analysis of the micro-regions, we can also compare them to the

Portuguese municipals' associations. We can roughly affirm that Portuguese municipals and municipals' associations are comparable to the Hungarian micro-regions, even if those do not have elected self-governments like the Portuguese municipals, but according to the numbers we can establish a connection, especially if we consider that the relevance of the micro-regions is growing in Hungary.

The Hungarian county level is very important, while this level does not exist in the Portuguese case. However, if we consider the numbers and parameters according to which these territorial divisions are established, they are comparable to Portuguese districts. It is true that districts do not have deliberative duties in territorial planning and management, but the remaining responsibilities are similar. They both have self-governments (in the Hungarian case they are elected by the inhabitants, while Portuguese districts are nominated by the Minister of Internal Administration with the approval of the Ministers Council) and responsibilities regarding the municipals in providing them help to perform several tasks.

As *Table 3* indicates, the regional level is equivalent in both countries, although they have some singularities in the constitutional legal status. Both are trying to implement regional governance, but the regions are mainly statistical units and their major role is to apply for European Union funds as well as to perform some territorial planning and management tasks.

Table 3

*Portugal and Hungary – Connections between territorial levels*

Portugal	Hungary
Parishes	Municipals
Municipals & Municipals' Associations	Micro-regions
Districts	Counties
Regions	Regions

*Source:* Author's elaboration.

Continuing with the investigation of relations between the two countries, on the basis of what was described in the previous chapters we will now present a comparison among the institutions responsible for territorial planning.

It is important to remark that the institutions have some differences in the work they perform, but again, on the basis of their territorial influences and basic functioning as well as their duties, it is possible to outline this relation.

As presented in *Table 4*, in terms of institutions (though simplifying, yet considering those who are more relevant), we can see that the differences are not that expressive. Divided by levels again, we can see that the Portuguese local level has two institutions to implement the rules of territorial planning – one (the parish)

only helps in the implementation and municipals elaborate and stipulate rules and practices. In the Hungarian case, on the same level, the municipals combine both of these characteristics, as it has already been discussed.

Table 4

*Portugal and Hungary – Institutional review*

	Portugal	Hungary
Local	Parishes Municipals	Municipals
“Middle”	Municipals’ Associations	Multi-purpose Micro-regional Associations County Councils
Regional	CCDR	Regional Development Councils
National	DGDTU Ministry	National Regional Development Council Ministry

*Source:* Author’s elaboration.

In the middle level, flanked by the municipals and regions, Hungary has two major kinds of organisations –county councils and the multi-purpose associations working on the micro-regional level. As it was told before, the Portuguese municipals’ associations and counties can be easily compared and, in this approach, the same can be done since they provide services for municipals and respect orders from the superior level – the regions.

Above this, on the regional level, differences are not that expressive. Neither country has found its way to regionalisation, having, instead of governments, councils and commissions that provide plans and regulatory parameters for the lowest levels.

The next and final step of this compilation of parallels between the countries is the documents and instruments used for territorial planning and management. This task is more difficult because both countries present different types of plans and regulatory instruments; but still, a comparison can be made if we just consider the more effective and used programmes/instruments.

*Table 5* intends to show similarities of instruments for territorial planning, establishing parallels between the cases of study. After systematisation, it becomes clear that, again, the two countries have a similar organisation concerning the instruments. In both cases, if we consider all the concepts, there are too many regulatory and implementation programmes, plans or concepts.

The connections on the first level can be found between the Hungarian Physical Plan and the Portuguese version which is the PDM (obligatory plan for all the municipals, respecting PMOT norms). On the other levels, the connections are

quite simple and understandable if we consider the descriptions in the previous chapters.

One interesting connection between the two countries could also be the level of Europeanisation, which can be “associated with democratisation and modernisation processes”, which in the regional policy “has led to substantial administrative restructuring, involving devolution, institution building and network creation at the national and, more importantly, at the sub-national level of governance” (Paraskevolpoulos et al., 2004).

Table 5

*Portugal and Hungary – Instruments*

	Portugal	Hungary
Local	PMOT (PDM)	Physical Plan
“Middle”	PIMOT	County Physical Plan, Concept and Programme Micro-regional Plans
Regional	PROT	Regional Operative Programmes Regional Conception, Plan and Programme
National	PNPOT (EU: QREN)	National Regional Development Concept (EU: National Development Plan 2007–2013)

Source: Author’s elaboration.

In the Portuguese case, the same authors point to colonialism, the strong tradition of the corporatist state, and relative isolation from Europe as the main areas that generated strong “adaptation pressures”.<sup>9</sup> These pressures are linked to significant institutional changes, primarily at central state level, and especially in the areas of planning and regional development, also affecting the position of both autonomous island regions and municipalities within the governance structures and their role in policy planning and implementation.

Hungarian regional policy has also been an area of high adaptation pressure. Periphery relation, decentralisation and regional development constitute, according to the authors cited above, the key areas affected by the conditionality principle and need for compliance with Copenhagen criteria<sup>10</sup>, as well as the challenge of transforming a highly centralised system of governance since the year of the so called “systemic” change in 1989.

<sup>9</sup> These “adapational pressures” are used to classify the main fields of change in order to achieve the Europeanisation.

<sup>10</sup> To join the EU, new member states must meet three criteria: political criteria, economic criteria and the acceptance of the Community *acquis* (source: [http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/accession\\_criteria\\_copenhagen\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/accession_criteria_copenhagen_en.htm) [23th June 2008]).

The reports from the Commission underline the Hungarian “weakness of sub-national institutional structures with emphasis on the predominant role of political parties in policy-making, corruption and problematic cooperation among public sector actors” (*Paraskevolpoulos et al.*, 2004).

The comparison could go on in other fields, not only regional or territorial policies. Both countries share interesting similarities, and different kinds of approaches could be made, but since this is mainly a descriptive report of territorial planning, supplementary information will not be added.

## **5 Portuguese and Hungarian Planning System: Misses and Matches**

After this analysis it is easy to learn that both countries have a lot of similarities in territorial planning instruments and institutions. Some of them are more significant than others, but still, parallels can be found.

After revealing these similarities, now it becomes relevant to articulate a criticism.

Perfection is something that is sometimes just impossible to reach, especially when so many stakeholders and instruments have to work together in a harmonised method and system. But in the case that is approached in the report, a long path must be completed in both countries in order to fetch a simpler and more functional planning system.

In this part of the work, an effort will be made to, on one hand, identify the weaknesses of the systems and, on the other hand, present some alternatives to reinforce the system in both countries. It is now relevant to assert that this part of the report mainly expresses my points of view, shared indeed with some authors, but still they are a set of personal thoughts supported by some bibliographic sources.

The first observation must be in connection with the institutions; the plans/instruments do not work without a coordinated and well prepared institution/organisation which elaborates and implements them.

The existence of solid institutions with qualified personnel, endowed with flexibility and a budget adjusted to the real necessities is essential for stronger and better plan elaboration and implementation. Social capital combined with social networks is, probably, the most important and relevant issue, because without them the entire process does not work.

In some cases, there are too many plans without a proper hierarchy between them. In other cases there are “large-scale” plans (like the Portuguese PNPOT or the Hungarian National Regional Development Concept) that are posterior to

plans of “smaller scale” (for example the Portuguese PDM or the Hungarian Physical Plan) (*Quental, 2007*).

Those situations must be fought by the complete implementation of the “large-scale” plans and the revision of the “smaller scale” plans, in order to integrate the options of the first level plans. It is not logical or rational to have a national level plan recently loaded with new guidance, and have, at the same time, physical plans dated ten years ago. It is incoherent and leads to misunderstandings and overlaps of information.

Another critical situation that occurs in both countries is the lack of coordination between plans. This situation leads to a hindrance regarding the real perception of the priorities from the decision-makers and territorial managers. This is visible in the case of the Forest Management Plans; there is a specific plan, but in the PROT, PMOT, PIMOT (all Portuguese examples) the information is repeated, and in some cases it presents different strategies for the same area (*Quental, 2007*).

Even the *ex-ante* evaluation of QREN – the Portuguese National Strategic Reference Framework for 2008–2013 – points out the lack of coordination as a weakness of the territorial and management system.

In order to avoid this situation, it would be prudent to abridge in the regional plans (for example) the options, settings and objectives, and submit the remaining information necessary and adequate to the specific plans.

With so many plans, so many categories (strategic, management, regulatory, and so on) it is sometimes hard to identify the real character of the plan in the analysis.

To prevent that situation, it is convenient to establish rules and “formulations” of what should be included in every plan, not falling in the temptation of including e.g. implementation options in the strategic plans. Because these plans are not the same; “implementation” is not the same as “strategic” – (the strategic plans should be endowed with action plans, management with the correct agenda). In the Hungarian case, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences represented by the Centre for Regional Studies proposed the acceptance of a general law about the planning as a whole, identifying all the differences, like the Portuguese LBOTU.

The final critic for the plans/instruments is in connection with the “perfection” (*Quental, 2007*) that they describe. There are plans that offer one perspective of the reality quite different from what it really is, embellishing the truth. Adjoining this, there are times when the timetable for the implementation of those plans/instruments is too short, compromising their success.

To fight this situation, two simple options are proposed: increasing the realism of the description or *ex-ante* evaluation of the plans, increasing at the same time the pragmatism of the objectives of the instrument; and, the other option is to extend the calendar of the plan implementation.

In order to have better results from the instruments, it is needed to invest in the cycles of planning as well as in the cycles of action. There are times when the plan is elaborated but is not completely considered as a cluster of measures that must be accomplished.

A good database, accessible to all stakeholders, including the population, using for example the Internet, where all the plans/instruments of “superior” order (like the national plans), and from those connections to the “inferior” strategic plans were found in an easy and costless way, working as a cooperation and better understanding measure. Everyone who might be interested in the information could have access to it, checking timetables of the projects, responsible entities, budgets, financial sources and progression indicators, involving the population in a process that normally is not contemplated, using the principles of public participation in the decision-making processes.

Another gap that must be showcased is the fact that the majority of relations with the institutions are slow, very bureaucratic and unregulated. This issue allows to hold back some processes as well as access to information; delays processes, and even sometimes makes it impossible to use the information. As a result, it is also possible that this difficulty in the disposal of the information creates barriers to actualise studies and monitor policies.

The European Union is, in both countries, partly responsible for the incoherency of the planning system. In some cases, the uncertainty on planning and territorial management leads to a coordinated chaos, arranged by all the member states. An example of this disarray is the possibility to change the regions formation and allow the elaboration of plans that only aim for the structural funds’ obtainment, having no long-time strategy for the projects. It is true that the EU cannot change the member states’ constitution, and for that reason, it can not assume all the blame, since each member states’ government and parliament should legislate and regulate the planning system. An example of this situation is the case of the Hungarian Regional Development Associations that existed and operated before EU accession, while afterwards, they lost their power even if they are still considered in the Hungarian Act XXI of 1996, one of the main acts on regional planning.

As explained previously, the Europeanisation of the member states leads to disarrangement, and management changes that in most cases are not properly adapted to the new dilemmas. The importance of the EU is unquestionable in both countries, especially in terms of financial help, but if we consider the territorial planning system, it became fragmented with the new organisation overlapping the old.

According to *Mafra et al.* (2004), there are authors who argue that Portugal should only have three regions (mainland, Açores and Madeira). They sustain this thesis by saying that there are regions of the same size as Portugal mainland and



Hungary – like Lombardia or Ile du France – that present an equal or even higher GDP (Gross Domestic Product). This is not a new idea and it has been proven already by Ireland in 1987, when the country was considered one large region. This reality showed its results, and now they have “normal” regional authorities for planning and territorial coordination. According to the author, Portugal could be considered as a “big region instead of a little member state”.

If we consider this option, it is an opportunity for both countries – Hungary and Portugal – since they have approximately the same size and regional distribution as well as similar regional problems (only the regions that include the capitals, Budapest and Lisbon, have a GDP superior to the EU average). The country would be considered as a whole unit, all policies would be the same, and better harmonisation could be accomplished. The most developed regions could behold a progress delay, but the more important profit of this option is the parallel evolution of all countries, at the same time, with the same objectives, forswearing the individualism and specification/specialisation of the regions.

## **6 Conclusion**

Internally, each country must go through a process of restructuring, which is in the Portuguese case in a slightly more advanced stage than in the Hungarian. This restructuring should contemplate the EU requirements in order to avoid possible overlapping or abrogation of powers.

It is a long and lingering process, which involves hundreds of stakeholders, but is a necessary path in order to promote a balanced and sustainable development allowing, therefore, each region to grow according to their characteristics promoting the best of them – this is the great purpose of territorial planning.

The next step should be promoted by local territorial actors and the governments themselves to establish better and more organised rules for the planning process according to the European level. We can never forget that governance should be reinforced in both countries, and a participative way of planning should be promoted.

In this initial phase of a deeper project, in my personal belief and as a response to the challenge of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme, the objectives were accomplished in spite of all the hurdles and limitations from the bibliographic point of view.

As it was said in the introduction, the description of the planning system, the actors, instruments, the comparison and judgments is done. This report has opened doors leading to a more profound report and research based on the same main subject – territorial planning.

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