

# Spatial Planning and Regional Competitiveness (SPARC)

Helping projects deliver the Lisbon  
and Gothenburg agendas

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# Introduction to SPARC

- Transnational collaborative project funded by INTERACT and the UK and Luxembourg governments
- Module (distance learning) was developed by consortium comprising Heriot-Watt University (Lead Partner) and Universities of Luxembourg and Ljubljana, and Politecnico di Milano

# The SPARC Module

- A trans-national collaborative Module to enhance skills and knowledge for European co-operation projects
- Funded by INTERACT, with the Governments of the UK and Luxembourg
- Involves HWU (lead partner), the Universities of Luxembourg and Ljubljana, and the Politecnico di Milano

# Rationale and goals

- Rationale: the Module is necessary in view of the clear need for enhanced skills and knowledge for effective trans-national and cross-border co-operation, particular for newer EU member states
- Goals: to increase the capacity of territorial development practitioners to participate in European co-operation projects, and to thereby contribute the achievement of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas

# Skills and knowledge components of SPARC

- Skills: project management and assessment, partnership and co-operation, integrated territorial development
- Knowledge: key trends in European territorial development, key concepts such as polycentric development, key elements of Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas and implications for project development

# Case studies

- These cover several issues and areas ie
- Regional innovation strategies (east of Scotland example)
- Cross-border national park management (Germany-Luxembourg example)
- Trans-national infrastructure development (Slovenia-Italy example)
- Polycentric city-region development (Milan example)

# Enabling the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas

- The Module aims to enable projects to address needs in relation to Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas
- Lisbon: by including aspects such as key trends, encouragement of innovation, and regional development implications
- Gothenburg: by including aspects such as sustainable development requirements, key trends in Europe, environmental assessment, territorial cohesion and regional development

## Further joint actions

- The Module involves generic material (covering for instance partnership, territorial development trends, project development and assessment)
- It also includes case studies provided by the partners, showing practice examples
- Partners are looking at options to extend the case studies provided

# Expected goals

- 100 students completing by 2008
- Polycentric network of deliverers/case study providers
- Clear contribution to enhancing capacity for participation in EU co-operation projects, particularly for newer member states

# Skills needs in Europe

- ASC identifies similar needs
- Address competitiveness/cohesion agendas
- 'Bristol accord'
- Sharing lessons/clarifying terminology
- Technical skills: grant application, audit control, evaluation

# Lessons

- Potential for internationalisation of the curriculum – identification of core concepts and principles, and application via case studies and associated assignments
- Ensures generic core content but also awareness of context sensitivity

# But:

- Differential institutional and regulatory requirements (eg expectations of students) – vary between institution and in particular between member state
- Transferability of language

# Conclusions

- Potential demonstrated for common platform for development of knowledge and skills
- Implications for other policy areas
- But need for more common approaches to educational delivery and regulation
- Implications for full time delivery in UK and elsewhere