

Keyword Phrase: Territorial Impact Assessment

Adrian Healy
ECOTEC Consulting
May 2001

Background

The concept of Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) has been proposed in the European Spatial Development Perspective (Policy Options 29, 42 & 52 refer specifically to the use of TIA). Whilst the concept itself is not defined, it is suggested in the ESDP that it should be used as an instrument for the spatial assessment of large infrastructure projects, including those for large-scale water management, and as the basis for integrated spatial development strategies for environmentally sensitive areas.

TIA can currently best be described as “a tool for assessing the impact of spatial development against spatial policy objectives or prospects for an area” (ESDP Action Programme Progress Reports). In the ESDP, the concept is clearly related to the assessment of the impact of projects, rather than plans or programmes. As a spatial planning instrument, it is expected that TIA can be applied to any spatial scale.

The conceptual root of the term TIA can be traced back to German, and Austrian, practice (see Box below). Both countries have long standing formal procedures which relate specifically to TIA. In the case of Austria, TIA procedures date back to 1959, pre-dating by several years the introduction of environmental impact assessment, which only occurred in the context of the incorporation of the *acquis* in preparation for accession.

In most other EU member states the concept of TIA is new to planning practice, although in several it is possible to identify major planning studies, which are perhaps comparable in terms of scope and purpose. This may occur, for example, whenever national planning bodies have needed to evaluate possible new airport locations or other major infrastructure proposals.

The conceptual roots of TIA

Territorial Impact Assessment comes from the same root as the term ‘spatial planning’ which expresses in the English language a concept of planning whose intellectual roots are essentially German, Dutch and French. In effect TIA can be understood as spatial impact assessment. The term TIA itself is a direct translation of the German term *Raumverträglichkeitsprüfung* (abbreviated to RVP in German). RVP could also be translated as regional or spatial impact assessment. For present purposes, the English words spatial and territorial can be regarded as interchangeable as translations of the ideas behind ‘Raum/räumlich’. The statutory definition of the term RVP is set out in Section 15, para 1 of the Federal Regional Planning Act (1997).

ESPRID Short Summary

References to Resources listed for this Key Phrase or Topic are identified by their ID number. For Resources under other Topics or Key Phrases, the relevant Topic or KP is indicated.

A list of related Topics and Key Phrases is provided at the end of the Short Summary

Another German term should also be introduced: *Raumordnungsverfahren* (ROV), literally spatial planning procedures. ROV is referred to in law. It is the legal procedure that has to be pursued by authorities wishing to evaluate the spatial impact of proposed development projects.

However, comparable procedures do exist in other EU countries. For example, TIA can be recognised, albeit indirectly, in the planning systems of Portugal and the Walloon region of Belgium. There is a similar provision in Portuguese legislation. In Finland, environmental assessments of plans and programmes commonly consider broader social and economic impacts as well.

In those planning systems, where TIA is a recognised procedure, it is a tool or procedure for assessing the impact of proposed spatial development against spatial policy objectives or prospects for an area. In principle, TIA includes all aspects of spatial planning whether they are environmental, social, economic or cultural in their impact. Thus a TIA could consider the impact of a proposed policy on, for example, job opportunities, the housing market, the regional economy, the cultural heritage or tourist attractions.

Useful follow-up material

See Report: Territorial Impact Assessment: A scoping study, funded by DETR for the Committee for Spatial Development (available on request from the ESPRID Office, contact Petra.Connolly@ncl.ac.uk).

Other relevant keywords

Other relevant topics

700, 741

[1] CEC (1999) European Spatial Planning Perspective: Towards balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the EU

ESPRID Short Summary

References to Resources listed for this Key Phrase or Topic are identified by their ID number. For Resources under other Topics or Key Phrases, the relevant Topic or KP is indicated.

A list of related Topics and Key Phrases is provided at the end of the Short Summary