Whither a North Sea Macro-region?

"New territorial development model:
macro-regions and cross-border
cooperation"

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Europe 2020: a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

Interest in

- territorial coverage of the regional policies and complementary EU activities,

- performance and effectiveness of such policies,

- efficiency of governance structures and implementation arrangements, and

- relationship between cohesion policy and other EU structural policies.

Europe 2020

- *Smart growth*: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation
- *Sustainable growth*: promoting a more efficient, greener and more competitive economy
- *Inclusive growth*: fostering a high-employment, where all communities and regions participate and flourish.
- *Place-based* but broader

Lisbon Treaty and Cohesion

- Economic and social cohesion focuses on regional disparities in competitiveness and well-being
- Territorial cohesion reinforces the importance of access to services, sustainable development, 'functional geographies' and territorial analysis

Fifth Cohesion Report

- broad orientations embrace this approach of defining geographies which extend beyond national borders and conventional 'Territorial Cooperation' collaborations, but within specifically defined quadrants of the continent
- Macro-regions

Macro-regional strategies in the European Union

- *"an area including territory from a number of different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges"* (European Commissioner Pawel Samecki, 2009)
- *"Three No"s – **no new funds, no new legislation, no new institutions***
- *"All relevant policy areas, EU, national, regional and local should be included. IFIs, NGOs and the private sector should also be fully involved"*

Functional geographies and EU macro-regions (definitions)

- Definitions of regions: formal, functional or vernacular

- may coincide for some cases, in others there may be little correlation between the definitions

- Constructed ~ lack of identification eg Jensen and Leijon, 1999; EU admin ~ Keating and Hooghe, 2001; pre-existing (federal) or created (aggregations)

Trans-national regions and cooperation (examples)

- Programmes and projects ~ constructed regions transitory or continuing? (Perkmann, 2003)
- Virtual regions (Herrschel, 2009)
- Historical, rediscovered, new?
- Øresund Bridge => "Öresund citizens"
- Dublin-Belfast corridor; Bratislava-Vienna; etc.
- Cross-border macro-regions
- Baltic Sea and Danube area – new trends?

Coverage and aims of macro-regions

- Several regions, several countries; flexible geographies (and beyond EU)

- Address market failures

- 'tragedy of the commons' (e.g. fishing and oil, both involving non-EU countries), and where positive externalities would mean under-production

- Successful macro-region ~ about actions aimed at tangible achievements with demonstrable added value; in geographies tolerated to have "flexible, even vague, definitions of the boundaries"; and focused on using existing resources and funds more effectively.

European North Sea Strategy/ Macro-region

- Committee of the Regions proposed a "European North Sea Strategy" (Kuhn report, 2010)
- Regions and countries cooperate on flagship cross-border projects dealing with a range of issues
- Solutions for problems that one country is unable to tackle alone and which are too specific for general EU rules
- Committee of the Regions (CoR), Conference for Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), North Sea Commission (NSC)

North Sea Macro-region: foundations

(a) Historical and geographical contexts
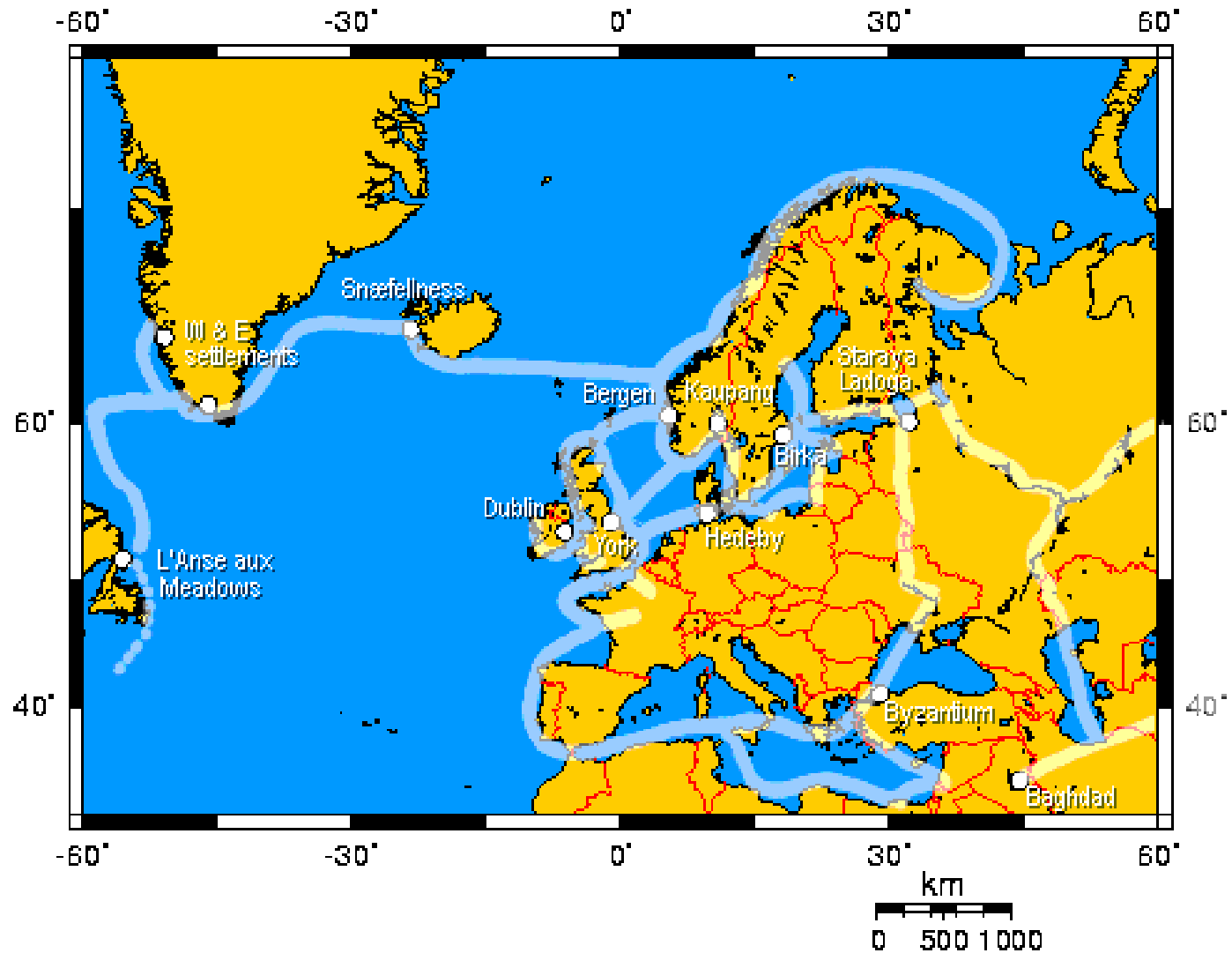
(b) peripheral and marginal concepts

(c) essential elements of EU territorial cooperation

In this sense, small-scale CBRs [cross-border regions] in particular are part of the multi-level governance structure of EU policy-making but are far from posing an imminent threat to the authority of the member-states over these policies (Perkmann, 2003)

Context

- History and geography of North Sea (NS) are important, not just politics and policy

- 1000 years ago – NS=highway, connections between communities on coasts and estuaries i.e. heart of society and economy of nations around NS

- These nations = origins of important elements of European history, culture, language, identity … diversity gives strength to the European community and economy

- Now = air, container ports, bridges and tunnels changed contexts and positions

- Imagined regions – virtual regions

Trading Routes 1000AD

Peripheral and marginal

- Communities, regions, nations around NS ~ many peripheral by geography but also peripheralised and marginalised within Europe, within own nations and within own regions
- Due to reorientation of trade, restructuring, deindustrialisation
- Competitiveness agenda at all levels => cities/city-regions/agglomeration economies : privileging the core s.t. many around NS become peripheral and marginal
- So: history and geography not make these areas around NS on the edge cf. economic and political changes

Transport mode: Multi-modal logsum road, rail, air. **In European Accessibility and Peripherality: Concepts, Models and Indicators** Klaus Spiekermann and Jörg Neubauer

Legend:

■	0 < 25	extremely peripheral
■	25 < 50	very peripheral
■	50 < 75	peripheral
■	75 < 100	intermediate, below average
■	100 < 125	intermediate, above average
■	125 < ...	central

EU = 100
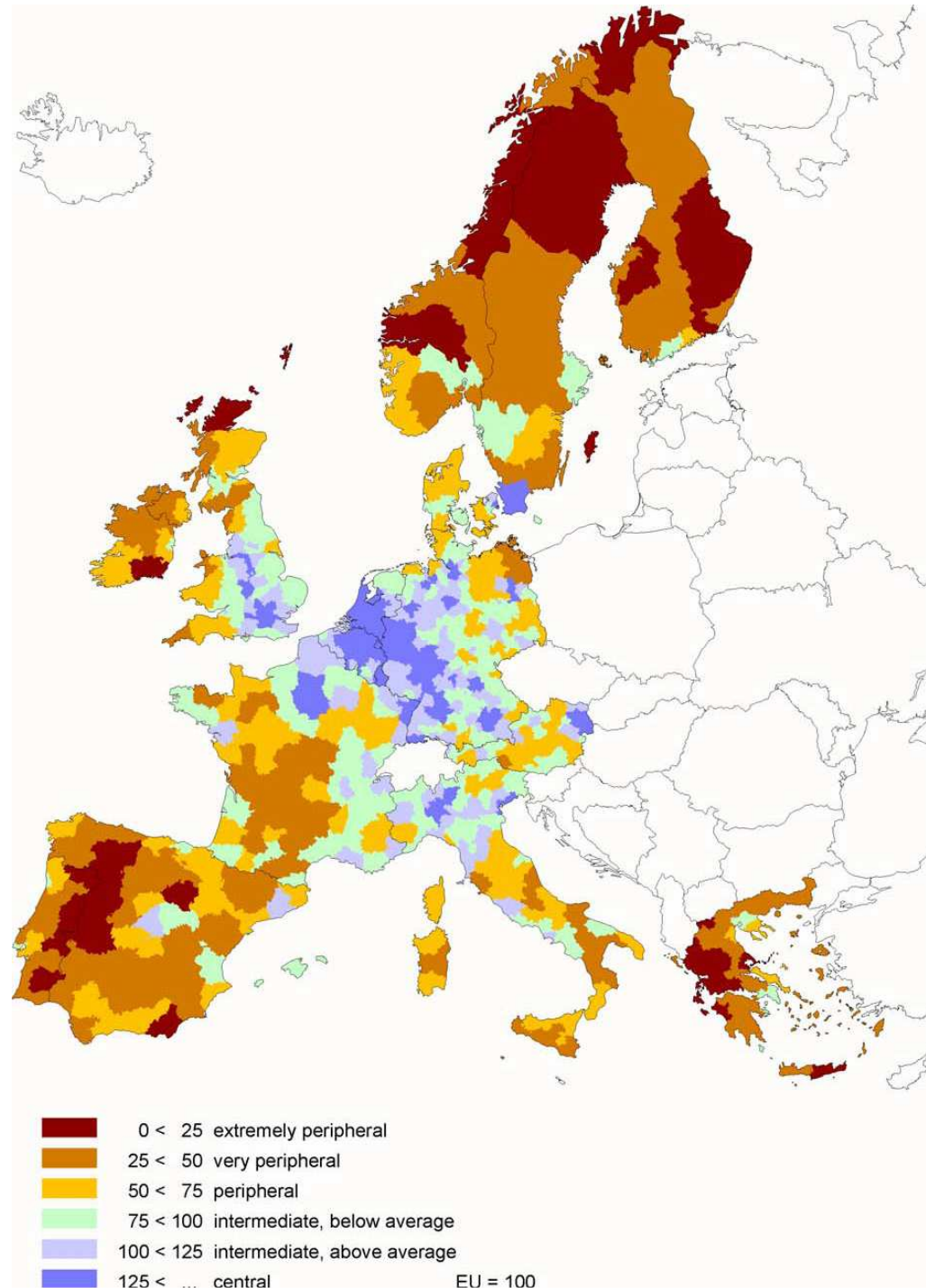
Opportunities for NS Regions, nations and for Europe of refocusing on NS

- Throughout history region made the most of its geographical handicaps (e.g. by becoming maritime traders) but distance = obstacle
- Highly innovative part of the world [*smart growth*]
- Renewable energies ~ climate change, production, jobs and wider economic impacts [*sustainable growth*]
- Other resources and issues of NS communities ~ forestry, fishing, oil & gas, climate (e.g. datastores), leisure, … [*inclusive growth*]
- www.northsearegion.eu/home/
  www.northseacommission.info/
  http://www.kimointernational.org/Home.aspx
  http://www.nsrac.org/

How realise strengths and generate changes

- Lessons from elsewhere show can promote change in imagined and virtual regions for the better:
- Baltic and Mediterranean (Seas are significant in making Europe different)
- Trans-border regions – (i) renewal/re-establish old regions [e.g. Berlin, Vienna and Bratislava]
- (ii) new connectivity – bridges and tunnels create new regions [Oresund]
- (iii) refreshing and revising past linkages [e.g. German-Polish border; Dublin-Belfast]
- Partnerships and networks ~ +ve impacts and synergies; lessons and good practices => European programme for NS [Promoting 'Motorway of the Sea' in the Trans-European Network ; Nordic Council; Small Towns network]

Political drivers, Europe 2020 and Member States

- Multiple policy networks with an interest in the North Sea and regions surrounding the North Sea
- KIMO (Kommunenes Internasjonale Miljøorganisasjon also known as Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation) to policy communities with a more integrated role in the European Commission decision making process (eg North Sea Regional Advisory Council for fisheries)
- Complex eco-system of organisations

Key players

- Bottom-up cf. Baltic Sea and Danube
- North Sea Commission (a geographical arm of the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions) ~ pivotal
- "me too", "shopping list", too orientated around the North Sea *per se* rather than about the economic development of the regions surrounding the North Sea
- Rationalisation and prioritisation was needed ~ evolution

Different macro-region foundations north and south

- Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt 'that debate among northern countries *"differs a little sometimes from discussions in central and southern Europe"* '

Reaction to EU failures?

- inter-governmental approaches to EU decision making failed northern regions? (Keating, 2009)

- *"growing recognition that sectoral policies do not always take account of local challenges and opportunities and can have negative impacts on local communities and indeed other sectoral policy objectives."*(North Sea Commission, 2010)

- improve the partnership and governance model on a transnational scale

North Sea Region proposals

- "North Sea Region 2020" (rebranded) to align any future resulting Communication with the aspirations of the Europe 2020 with accompanying Action Plan (contribution to 2020 strategy)
- Five themes: Increasing Accessibility and Attractiveness; Tackling Climate Change; Promoting Innovation and Excellence; Sustainable Communities; and Managing Maritime Space (March 2011)

Progress

- *North Sea-English Channel* Inter-group within COR

- Unanimity ~ Opinion on 'A Strategy for the North Sea-English Channel area' calls on Member States through the European Council to task the European Commission with drawing up a strategy with an emphasis on maritime policy, the environment, transport, industry and science

- 'politician spillover' and to some extent 'ideas spillover' (NSC and COR) [Danish Presidency?]

Economic drivers, efficiency and strategic decisions

- Member States have not really engaged with the idea of a North Sea Strategy to any great degree. But:

- "UK Nordic Baltic Summit" suggested 23 November 2010 takes place in London 19-20 January 2011

- *"intriguing mix of PMs, tech types, green activists and wonks"*

MS interest or parallel?

- *"today we've created a hugely valuable new network... We face similar economic and social challenges; we have a huge amount to learn from each other...I believe the UK, Nordic and Baltic countries can be the avant-garde, can be in the guard's van of delivering jobs and growth"*. He also said *"I think one of the outcomes of this should be that so many of the ideas that we have talked about should be part of Europe's growth agenda, whether it's about **green growth, about entrepreneurialism, about the digital economy**, all of those issues need to be in the European programmes and I'm sure we'll all drive that forward."* (David Cameron, Speech 20 January 2011).

Table 1 – Comparison of priorities

Europe 2020	UK Nordic Baltic Summit [growth]	North Sea Commission [regional hinterlands]	Committee of the Regions [sea focus]
Employment	Families, *jobs* and gender equality		Maritime Safety & Skills
R&D & innovation	Technology and innovation	Promoting innovation and excellence	Science, Research & Industry (blue growth)
Climate change & energy	Environment and sustainability	Tackling Climate Change Managing Maritime Space	Climate change Environment Energy (North Sea Grid) Maritime policy
Education	*Families*, jobs and gender equality		
Poverty & social exclusion	Families, jobs and *gender equality*	Sustainable communities	
		Increasing Accessibility and Attractiveness	Transport (shipping & ports)

North Sea Commission - Strategy

Challenges and opportunities

Challenges	Opportunities
• Mobility (costs, lack of access, focus on road) • Energy (safety, environment, investments) • Environment (pollution of ecosystem) • Risks and safety (flooding, exhaustion of natural resources, marine safety) • Socio-economic (demography, urban migration, declining sectors)	• Transport & trade links (short sea shipping, ports, transport and energy network) • Energy resources (renewable energy) • Environmental assets (natural resources, unique ecosystems, planning and protection) • Culture and human resources (education, exchange, mobility) • Innovation/economic development (innovation, knowledge sharing, green growth) • Marine resources sustainable managed

Response: priority strategic areas

No	Priority	Focus Area
1	Managing Maritime Space	• Maritime spatial planning • Exploitation of marine resources • North Sea Stakeholder Forum
2	Increasing Accessibility and Clean Transport	• Promote development of multimodal corridors • Optimise performance of multimodal logistics chains • Clean transport • Clean shipping
3	Tackling Climate Change	• Climate change adaptation • Low-carbon technologies and energy efficient/green technologies • Renewable energy and North Sea energy grid
4	Attractive and Sustainable Communities	• Competitiveness of sectors and enterprises (tourism and maritime) • Demography • Development of skills and employability
5	Promoting Innovation, Excellence and Sustainability (a horizontal priority)	

Contribution of NSR 2020 to Europe 2020 strategy flagships

Priorities of NSR 2020	1. Managing Maritime Space	2. Increasing Accessibility and Clean Transport	3. Tackling Climate Change	4. Attractive and Sustainable Communities	5. Promoting Innovation, Excellence and Sustainability
Europe 2020 Strategy Flagships					
Innovation Union	●	●	●	●	●
Youth on the Move				●	●
A digital agenda for Europe		●			●
Resource efficient Europe	●	●	●	●	●
An industrial policy of the globalisation era	●	●	●	●	●
An agenda for new skills and jobs			●	●	●
European Platform against poverty				●	●

Requirements for implementation cooperation and coordination

Action Plan	Principles	Cooperation	Coordination
• Develop a rolling action plan • Data gathering and analysis • Includes the timeline • Monitoring provisions • Targets for strategy and priorities	• Funding from existing EU (including Interreg) and public sources, • Using existing funds in a better way including PPP etc. • No new legislation • No new structures	• Improve current cooperation • Better coordination avoiding isolated and uncoordinated actions • Governance mechanisms should focus cross sec-toral coordination and multilevel governance • NSR stakeholder forums	• At policy level (Europe 2020 Strategy etc.) • Introduce priority area coordinators to strengthen links (BSR and Danube strategies)

Discussion and dialogue

- *"does not matter whether a CBR is built upon cultural or ethnic commonalities, a common historical background, existing functional interdependencies or a mere community of interests, as it is precisely the process of construction that matters"* (Perkmann, 2003) confirms that strategic discussions and dialogue around creation of CBRs is critical.

- NS ~ driven mainly by regional and local governments (cf. BSR, DR)

- Research arms of triple helix absent to date

Conclusions

- Strong interest in NS macro region
- Bottom up initiative
- Aligned with Europe 2020
- Consistent with EC vision for macro-regions
- But as: *"Three No"s – no new funds, no new legislation, no new institutions*
- Opposition from within?
- Peculiar Scottish dimension?

Issues and support for transformation I

- Functional region ~ imagined, virtual but benefits for all Europe
- Funds help as a lubricant
- Expectation that no new funds and no new institutions for macro-regions
- As important but not alternative to € = prominence, priority, pooling [Baltic Sea; UK Enterprise Zones]
- Rebalancing within Europe and countries
- Markets fail and policies fail / law of unintended consequences
- Strategies and policies [NS grid, NS programme, …]

Issues and support for transformation II

- Understand and improve knowledge exchange and transfer/ from innovation to commercialisation : require strategy and funds to gain synergies and economies of scale & scope [*smart growth]*

- Recognise strength of agglomeration drivers and of concentration/competition policy: need countervailing powers to monopoly powers of the industrial and geographical core [*inclusive growth*]

- Review of resource strategies ~ markets fail work differently in different contexts [*sustainable growth*]

Arctic
Decrease in Arctic sea ice coverage
Greenland ice sheet loss

European seas
Sea-level rise
Higher sea surface temperatures
Northward movement of species
Increase in phytoplankton biomass
Higher risk for fish stocks

Northern Europe (boreal region)
Less snow, lake and river ice cover
Increased river flows
Higher forest growth
Higher crop yields
Northward movement of species
More energy by hydropower
Lower energy consumption for heating
More (summer) tourism
Higher risk of damages by winter storms

North-western Europe (maritime climate)
Increase in winter precipitation
Increase in river flow
Northward movement of freshwater species
Higher risk of coastal flooding

Central and eastern Europe
More temperature extremes
Less summer precipitation
More river floods in winter
Higher water temperature
Higher crop yield variability
Increased forest fire danger
Lower forest stability

Mountain areas
High temperature increase
Less glacier mass
Less mountain permafrost
Higher risk of rock falls
Upwards shift of plants and animals
Less ski tourism in winter
Higher soil erosion risk
High risk of species extinction

Mediterranean region
Decrease in annual precipitation
Decrease in annual river flow
More forest fires
Lower crop yields
Increasing water demand for agriculture
Higher risk for desertification
Less energy by hydropower
More deaths by heat waves
More vector-borne diseases
Less summer tourism
Higher risk of biodiversity loss

Main biogeografic regions of Europe (EEA member countries)

- Arctic
- Arctic — Greenland (not EEA member)
- Boreal region
- North-western Europe
- Central and eastern Europe
- Mountain areas
- Mediterranean region

0 500 1000 1500 Km

Renewable electricity around the North Sea

Current and potential future undersea cables
connecting renewable international energy
projects, as proposed in the European Wind
Energy Association's 20-year masterplan

In operation
Planned/under construction
EWEA recommended by 2020-2030
Offshore node
Application area/lease/licence for wind farm
Application for approved wind farm area
Proposed wind farm area
Offshore wind farms in operation/under construction
Offshore wind farms planned/proposed

FINLAND

NORWAY   SWEDEN

ESTONIA

LATVIA

LITHUANIA

UK

BELARUS

POLAND

GERMANY

FRANCE

Typology of knowledge profiles
17 clusters

- H01 Metropolitan regions
- H02 North high tech regions
- H03 North scientific regions
- H04 British services profile
- H05 German high tech industrial profile
- H06 Secondary metropolises profile
- H07 North industrial regions
- H08 North Italian and Spanish industrial profile
- H09 French agro-industrial profile
- L01 French food profile
- L02 British low tech profile
- L03 North low urbanized regions
- L04 German Low tech profile
- L05 Italian textile profile
- L06 Spanish profile
- L07 South agricultural profile
- L08 East European Profile

Statistical data : Eurostat-Regio, OST
Map : Eurostat-GISCO, 2006

Kilometers
0 100 200   400   600   800   1 000