Understanding Europeanisation from Within

The Interpretation, Implementation and Instrumentalisation of European Spatial Planning in Austria and Finland

Eva Purkarthofer

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Aalto University
School of Engineering
Department of Built Environment
Spatial Planning and Transportation Engineering

Supervising professor
Professor Raine Mäntysalo, Aalto University, Finland

Thesis advisors
Hanna Mattila, Aalto University, Finland
Alois Humer, Aalto University, Finland

Preliminary examiners
Professor Andreas Faludi, TU Delft, The Netherlands
Senior Lecturer Olivier Sykes, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom

Opponent
Associate Professor Giancarlo Cotella, Politecnico di Torino, Italy

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Author
Eva Purkarthofer

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Abstract

Despite more than two decades of debate about European planning policies, the ways in which the European Union affects urban and regional planning in its member states remain ambiguous. Under the terms Europeanisation, European spatial planning and territorial cohesion, researchers have investigated activities at the European level and, to a lesser degree, their effects in different countries. However, a focus on the legal status of policies and the issue of competences between the EU and its member states often prevents research from picturing the outcomes of European policies accurately.

This dissertation thus suggests understanding Europeanisation from within and asks how domestic actors interpret, implement and instrumentalise European spatial planning. Interpretation here asks which European policies, programmes and documents the domestic actors consider relevant for spatial planning. Implementation and instrumentalisation address the domestic applications of European spatial planning, i.e. how actors respond to European inputs. The dissertation highlights how actors both implement European policies according to European level intentions, and instrumentalise them to support their own policy goals and interests.

To answer these questions, this dissertation presents a conceptual framework that understands European spatial planning as a broad and multi-faceted process that includes both intergovernmental and supranational policies, recognises three types of policy intervention (regulatory, remunerative and discursive) and investigates the influences of European spatial planning at different spatial scales. In order to gain a rounded understanding of the outcomes of European policies, special attention is paid to soft spaces and soft planning processes that lie outside the statutory planning systems. Based on expert interviews, this dissertation presents examples of the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning in Austria and Finland.

The findings suggest that Europeanisation is an active, spatial, contextual and complex process. Domestic actors and their institutional practices play a crucial role in determining the outcomes of European spatial planning. They can ascribe importance to "soft policies" such as European strategy documents and they can tie policy interventions to planning practice that lie outside the subject area of planning, as happens in the course of EU Cohesion Policy. Moreover, Europeanisation is a spatial process supporting for instance the creation of new soft spaces. The comparison between Austria and Finland suggests further that Europeanisation is highly contextual, as language, education, administrative structures and legal frameworks delineate the scope of action and the self-conception of actors in different national, regional and local contexts.

Acknowledgements

When reading the acknowledgements section of doctoral dissertations, I noticed that most authors describe the road towards their PhD as a cumbersome journey with a multitude of ups and downs along the way. It might be the sentimental feelings associated with the upcoming graduation or the survival instinct of suppressing traumatic memories, but somehow I feel quite the opposite. Although there were undoubtedly easier days and harder ones, looking back, everything seems to have fallen into place quite nicely on the way to pursuing my doctoral studies. I know that this smooth journey is to a large part not the result of my own actions. Instead, I owe a lot to the stimulating work environment I have encountered at Aalto University and want to take the opportunity to thank the amazing people who have tirelessly supported me along the way.

First of all, things have quite literally fallen into place, or rather into a considerable number of different places, which I had the pleasure of visiting during the last years. My research has taken me to Tallinn and Tampere, to San Diego and Sankt Pölten, to Kaiserslautern and Cambridge, to Ristijärvi and Rio de Janeiro, to name only a few. Whether research visits, conferences, workshops, empirical studies or team seminars, I have always greatly enjoyed these trips. They have provided interesting encounters with fellow academics, opportunities to come up with new ideas in new environments and insights into the practice and reality of spatial planning – after all travelling to new places can always be considered educational for planners. I have felt very lucky to have had all these opportunities, which always resulted in unforgettable experiences, and sometimes even in scientific outputs.

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I also want to thank all the planners, administrators and practitioners whom I had the pleasure of interviewing in the course of this dissertation. Their views and opinions have been crucial and invaluable for my understanding of the topic at hand and I hope that this work does justice to our interesting conversations.

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source of information and inspiration for me. He agreed to supervise me when I could offer little more than a vague research idea and I am very grateful that with his help and guidance I could turn that idea into this thesis. I hope our scientific collaboration will continue in the years to come.

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And then of course one has to note that there is life outside the office, and even if most of my favourite people probably cannot make much sense of the contents of this thesis, they have nonetheless been a great source of encouragement and happiness during the last years, if only by providing at times much appreciated distractions from work life. Therefore, thanks to all my lovely friends in Finland, Austria and the rest of the world!

And last but definitely not least I want to thank my family for their never ending support. My parents Monika and Walter are wonderful people in every respect, who have been enthusiastic, caring and supportive for as long as I remember, no matter what ideas I came up with. A big thank you goes also to my sister Judith and my brother Florian, for whether as a child or an adult, I have always looked up to these two. To me they represent the real academic spirit by showing interest in virtually everything and their contagious enthusiasm in the end motivated me to do my PhD.

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Lauttasaari, October 2018   Eva Purkarthofer

Contents

List of Publications and Author's Contribution

This doctoral dissertation consists of a summary and of the following publications which are referred to in the text by their numerals:

I. Purkarthofer, Eva. 2016. When soft planning and hard planning meet: Conceptualising the encounter of European, national and sub-national planning. European Journal of Spatial Development, 61.

The author was solely responsible for writing the article.

II. Purkarthofer, Eva. 2018. Diminishing borders and conflating spaces in Europe: A storyline to promote soft planning scales. European Planning Studies, volume 26, issue 5, pages 1008-1027. DOI: 10.1080/09654313.2018.1430750

The author was solely responsible for writing the article.

III. Purkarthofer, Eva. 2018. Investigating the partnership approach in the EU Urban Agenda from the perspective of soft planning. European Planning Studies. DOI: 10.1080/09654313.2018.1527294

The author was solely responsible for writing the article.

IV. Purkarthofer, Eva; Mattila, Hanna. 2018. Integrating regional development and planning into "spatial planning" in Finland: The untapped potential of the Kainuu experiment. Administrative Culture, volume 18, issue 2, pages 149-174.

The author and Hanna Mattila were jointly responsible for developing the article idea, conducting the interviews and writing the article.

List of Abbreviations

AT	Austria
CEF	Connecting Europe Facility
CLLD	Community-Led Local Development
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
ESPON	European Spatial Planning Observation Network (currently: European Territorial Observatory Network)
ELY Centre	Elinkeino-, liikenne- ja ympäristökeskus (Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment)
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
FI	Finland
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investment
LAG	Local Action Group
LBA	Land Use and Building Act
LEADER	Liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale (Actions for the development of the rural economy)
MAL(PE)	Maankäytön, asumisen, liikenteen, (palvelujen ja elinkeinojen) sopimus (City-regional agreement regarding land use, housing, transport, services and economic development)
NUTS	Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques (Classification of Territorial Units for Statistics)
ÖROK	Österreichische Raumordnungskonferenz (Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning)
ÖREK	Österreichisches Raumentwicklungskonzept (Austrian Spatial Development Concept)
PARAS Act	Laki kunta- ja palvelurakenneuudistuksesta (Act on Restructuring Local Government and Services)
TAEU	Territorial Agenda for the European Union
TA2020	Territorial Agenda for the European Union 2020
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Networks
TIA	Territorial Impact Assessment

List of Tables and Figures

1. Introduction

This dissertation draws upon the scholarly discourse around European spatial planning, understood as the policies framing spatial development and territorial governance at the European level and their effects and impacts in the EU member states. Both processes are often referred to as the Europeanisation of planning (Clark & Jones, 2008, 2009; Dühr, Stead, & Zonneveld, 2007; Faludi, 2012, 2014; Giannakourou, 2011). This dissertation aims to stretch the concepts of European spatial planning and Europeanisation across two dimensions. On the one hand, it understands the realm of European spatial planning as broad and complex, encompassing several intergovernmental and supranational policy fields, which in turn are implemented through three types of policy interventions. On the other hand, it understands Europeanisation as a set of processes taking place at several spatial scales and being driven by several actors. This complex network of scales and actors is not necessarily identical with a country's formalised planning system. Instead, the Europeanisation of planning can take place in soft spaces (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2009) and through actors outside the formal planning system, if these actors actively use European inputs. It is thus crucial to understand the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning within the member states, rather than focusing only on the planning systems that European policies encounter.

What, then, is meant by the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning? *Interpretation* refers to the concept of European spatial planning itself and the policies, programmes and documents that domestic actors associate with it. There is no general agreement regarding what European spatial planning comprises, neither in the academic discourse nor in the administrative practice. It is sometimes understood in a narrow sense, focusing on the intergovernmental processes which have led, for example, to the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). With the introduction of territorial cohesion as one of the goals of the European Union (EU) in the Lisbon Treaty, the concept of European spatial planning was frequently equated with, or expanded to include, EU Cohesion Policy (Faludi, 2010b). Other EU sectoral policies, such as environmental policy or transport policy, have also been acknowledged for their spatial effects and relevance for planning, though they are seldom addressed with one common term (Dühr et al., 2007). The interpretation of European spatial planning is not only reflected in the scholarly discourse but takes place in planning practice in different national and regional contexts, albeit mostly in

a subconscious manner. It is these domestic interpretations of European spatial planning that this dissertation intends to shed light on. *Implementation* refers to the application of European spatial planning in the member states. In order to understand the implementation, it is crucial to identify the domestic actors addressed by and responding to European spatial planning. *Instrumentalisation,* in turn, refers to how these actors use European spatial planning to support their goals and further their interests. The difference between implementation and instrumentalisation can be derived from the relation between the intention behind a European policy intervention and its application in a specific context. If European inputs are applied in the way envisioned at the European level, this dissertation speaks about implementation. However, if they are applied in other ways than envisioned, the term instrumentalisation is used. In many cases, however, implementation and instrumentalisation occur simultaneously, by the same or different actors. Correspondingly, European policies can be implemented according to European intentions, while being used as instrument to further other interests or policies.

The distinction between interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation can be clarified with an example. Rail Baltica is one priority project within the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T). The European Union has defined these networks to be of high importance and provides funding for the construction of transport infrastructure along these specified corridors. As part of the Rail Baltica corridor, the construction of a tunnel between Helsinki and Tallinn is under consideration. Finnish planning organisations, such as the Ministry of Environment, the Regional Council of Uusimaa or the City Planning Department of Helsinki regard this project as highly relevant for spatial planning and refer to it in their planning documents. According to their interpretation, TEN-T is thus part of European spatial planning, if European spatial planning is understood not only as the European input but also as its outcome in the member states, as is the case in this dissertation. There is no certainty yet whether the tunnel project will in fact be realised. Nonetheless, several actors, working together, for instance, under the FinEst Link initiative, are keen to implement the rail connection between the two cities, if an agreement regarding the amount of funding contributed by the EU can be found. However, the transport project is also used as an argument and leverage in contexts that transcend the construction of a railroad tunnel between Helsinki and Tallinn. The Helsinki-Tallinn tunnel has thus been instrumentalised to support images of different growth corridors in the region, as well as concrete urban development projects in the two cities.

Nonetheless, research about the role of the European Union within spatial planning in its member states often sets out from the issue of competences. The EU has no competence for land use planning, but it shares the competence for policy areas with potential spatial implications with its member states. These include environmental policy, transport policy, or economic, social and territorial cohesion. However, setting out from the issue of competences might not be sufficient to understand the complex relationship of the EU and spatial planning in its member states. In order to grasp the influences of the EU on

planning, it is thus not enough to scrutinize the European level and elaborate on what the EU is legally entitled to do. Although the legal framework is undoubtedly of importance, it represents only one side of the story. This dissertation claims that in order to understand the Europeanisation of planning, we must not only address the legal framework behind European spatial planning, but its interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation by domestic actors. This requires viewing the Europeanisation of spatial planning not only from the EU level but also considering the planning processes and governance structures within the member states. In other words, we must aim to understand Europeanisation not from above but from within and not as a passive but an active process.

This approach has several challenges. The European Union, a complex construct *sui generis* to begin with, becomes significantly more complex when viewed through the administrative structures and planning practices of its member states. Generalisations prove almost impossible – the effects in one country might be considerably different from the effects in other member states. Even more so, influences might differ within a country, as regions or cities might have their own administrative practices and planning cultures. This is undoubtedly a challenge for policy makers who would prefer to be able to predict the effects of certain policy measures, and researchers who would like to be able to transfer their findings to other contexts. In this thesis, however, this is not so much a hindrance as indeed its core argument: Viewing Europeanisation as a top-down process will never be able to do justice to the EU's effects on planning in its member states.

While focusing on the domestic interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European policy might yield interesting results in all policy fields, it is crucial in European spatial planning for two main reasons. On the one hand, European spatial planning is a fragmented and complex policy arena for which no simplification or formalisation is to be expected. Faludi (2010b, p. 172) thus claims that "if European planning has a future, then it is soft." As this softness entails considerable leeway and widens the scope of action for domestic actors, we must pay increased attention to their actual and potential use of European inputs. This is in line with the endorsement of an actor-centred perspective in planning research by Cotella and Stead (2011), who argue that differential responses of planning systems to external stimuli, such as the influence of the EU, appear to be linked to domestic actor constellations. On the other hand, spatial planning is a policy domain which traditionally ascribes much authority and discretion to the sub-national level (Sykes, 2008). While this is still true, planning is currently also undergoing a transformation from government to governance, resulting in public sector activities becoming layered and fuzzy (Mäntysalo & Bäcklund, 2018). This is certainly the case for European spatial planning, which is frequently associated with multi-level governance, thus making it necessary to investigate its outcomes at various spatial scales.

This dissertation is not concerned with evaluating European spatial planning, in a sense that it would highlight positive or negative effects of EU policies, or

praise or condemn certain ways of implementation. Instead, its approach is in line with the idea of discussing performance rather than conformance to evaluate planning (Alexander & Faludi, 1989; Faludi, 2000; Faludi & Korthals Altes, 1994; Mastop, 1997). This idea is built around the assumption that actors do not merely execute or follow a plan, but interpret and apply it according to their own agenda and context. Planning is thus not a technical but a communicative process, which often has indirect rather than direct impacts and is characterised by learning. Thus, whether a plan is considered relevant and how a plan is used as a reference for decision-making becomes more important than the execution of the plan itself. While the discourse around performance originates from the context of strategic spatial planning in the Netherlands, it has also been discussed with a view to European spatial planning. Faludi (2001) refers to the application – not implementation – of the ESDP, claiming that it may be "anything but a paper tiger" (p. 663) and emphasising that the important issue is whether strategic documents are used in deliberation and decision-making, not whether a plan or strategy is followed. These ideas are reflected in this dissertation, yet, instead of using the term application itself, application is broken down into three elements: interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation.

1.1 Aims and Scope

In order to understand Europeanisation from within, this dissertation is concerned with one overarching research question:

> How is European spatial planning interpreted, implemented and instrumentalised in the member states?

The overarching research question begets three more specific research questions, referring to the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning. The three research questions can be simplified as addressing the *what*, *who* and *how* of the application of European spatial planning respectively.

Interpretation

> **RQ1:** What is understood as European spatial planning, i.e. which policies, programmes and documents are considered relevant by domestic actors?

Implementation

> **RQ2:** Who are the actors and organisations in the member states addressed by/responding to European spatial planning?

Instrumentalisation & Implementation

> **RQ3:** How is European spatial planning applied in the member states? Do domestic actors implement European inputs, i.e. following European level intentions, or instrumentalise them, i.e. using European spatial planning to support their own policy goals and interests – and how?

The distinction between interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation is of course not clear-cut and, correspondingly, the research questions should not be viewed as entirely independent from each other. What is understood as European spatial planning clearly affects which actors respond to the European inputs. Moreover, the relations between the application of a policy at the member state level and the European level intentions are not always easy to identify. Thus, at times, the distinction between implementation and instrumentalisation is unclear. Nonetheless, as this dissertation sets out to show, a distinction is feasible to understand whether domestic actors are motivated by European demands and incentives or by their own interests and agendas. Despite the claim that the term implementation invokes a linear, deterministic understanding of the outcomes of plans which is not applicable to the nature of planning (Faludi, 2001), this dissertation distinguishes between implementation and instrumentalisation. This is not to suggest one more "objective" and one more "subjective" way of application, but to draw attention to the argumentative power of European spatial planning and how it is put to use. Thus, instead of intending to evaluate whether European policies are "implemented correctly", this dissertation aims to highlight how diverse effects European policies can have when they are applied by domestic actors and integrated in contextual and institutional practices. Table 1 outlines how the individual articles contribute to answering the different research questions.

Table 1. Contribution of the articles to the research questions

	RQ1 Interpretation *What?*	RQ2 Implementation *Who?*	RQ3 Instrumentalisation & Implementation *How?*
ARTICLE I	x	x	
ARTICLE II		x	x
ARTICLE III		x	x
ARTICLE IV	x	x	x

This dissertation has two main aims, one conceptual and one empirical. The first aim is to present a conceptual framework to understand Europeanisation from within. The conceptual framework draws upon two main theoretical discourses and establishes connections between them: (1) Europeanisation and European spatial planning and (2) soft spaces and soft planning. Elaborations on the theoretical and conceptual framework can be found in Section 2. The second aim is to offer examples of the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning. In order to reach the depth required to understand Europeanisation in national and regional contexts, a limitation on specific cases is necessary. As a result, this dissertation focuses on two countries, Austria and Finland, without claiming that it pictures the Europeanisation of planning in its entirety in these two countries. While both countries joined the EU simultaneously in 1995, they show fundamental differences in their administrative structures, making a comparison especially interesting. In Austria, a federation consisting of nine federal states, many

decision-making powers lie with regional actors while in Finland, the central government and municipalities are the most important levels of government. These differences in the administrative and political system are also represented in the countries' planning systems and cultures, ascribing certain tasks, roles and behaviours to specific scales and actors. Yet, as this dissertation sets out to show, while the systems delineate a scope of action, they are not sufficient to explain reality, as actors still have a certain leeway in how to interpret their tasks and implement their actions. A more detailed account of the reasons for focusing on examples from Austria and Finland is presented in Section 3.

1.2   Structure

Besides this introductory synopsis, the dissertation consists of four peer-reviewed journal articles. Each article focuses on a different research question and highlights specific issues. ARTICLE I presents a conceptual framework for understanding the encounter between European, national and sub-national planning, emphasising the need to take soft spaces and soft planning into account. ARTICLE II uncovers how the EU promotes a storyline on diminishing borders and conflating spaces and how actors in the Austrian city region of Graz instrumentalise this storyline to further their own interests. ARTICLE III introduces the partnership approach in the EU Urban Agenda from the perspective of soft planning and investigates whether this governance arrangement could succeed in committing domestic actors to the Urban Agenda despite its legally non-binding status. ARTICLE IV scrutinises a regional governance experiment in Kainuu, Finland, and identifies missed opportunities to develop a broader understanding of spatial planning, overcome ambiguities at the regional scale and strategically use EU funding instruments.

Although each article focuses on a specific theme and presents empirical findings related to that theme, the dissertation is based on a broader conceptual framework and knowledge base. The following section elaborates on the conceptual framework as well as the theories and discourses feeding into it. The third section presents the empirical material that forms the base of this dissertation. It elaborates on the selection of the case countries and the execution and analysis of the expert interviews. The fourth section presents the results and discusses the findings with a view to the conceptual framework and the research questions. The concluding remarks summarise the main findings, highlight the contribution of the dissertation, present recommendations and considerations for researchers and policy makers and disclose avenues for future research.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This section presents the theoretical discourses feeding into this dissertation. It first briefly summarises the discourse on Europeanisation and introduces the most relevant research for this study. Subsequently, it elaborates on the understanding of European spatial planning in this dissertation and presents the conceptual framework. Finally, it discusses the importance of the theories on soft spaces and soft planning for European spatial planning.

2.1 Europeanisation

A vast body of scientific literature has used the term Europeanisation in the last decades. While Europeanisation research was initially mainly concerned with European integration and international relations, the terminology has subsequently been adopted to describe processes of institutional adaptation and the adaptation of public policy in the member states (Featherstone, 2003). Despite an increasing interest in the effects of the European Union on public policies such as planning, Europeanisation has not matured from a concept to a theory (Lehmkuhl, 2008) and has thus seldom been defined precisely (Featherstone, 2003). Several scholars have understood Europeanisation as the adaptation of domestic institutions and policies to pressures emanating directly or indirectly from the EU (Featherstone, 2003; Knill & Lehmkuhl, 1999). However, as this thesis sets out to demonstrate, speaking about "adaptation" conveys a rather passive understanding of Europeanisation and conceals the active dimension of agency associated with the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of EU policies. A more useful definition is provided by Radaelli (2003), who sees Europeanisation as

> processes of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things', and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public policies. (p. 30)

Radaelli's definition hints towards the complexity associated with the entanglement of European and domestic policy-making and includes softer mechanisms of influence. In recent years, more dimensions have been added to Europeanisation research by, among others, social scientists, geographers and

planning scholars (e.g. Böhme & Waterhout, 2008; Clark & Jones, 2008, 2009; Cotella & Janin Rivolin, 2011; Dühr et al., 2007; Faludi, 2012, 2014; Giannakourou, 2012; Luukkonen, 2011c, 2011a, 2011b; Stead, 2013). For instance, Clark and Jones (2008, 2009) suggest addressing the spatialities of Europeanisation and conceptualise Europeanisation as "an on-going continually evolving territorially mediated process" (2009, p. 209). Böhme and Waterhout understand Europeanisation as a discursive context which creates a frame of reference for domestic actors (2008, p. 227). Faludi (2014) distinguishes between the EUropeanisation of planning, i.e. planning becoming part of EU policy-making, and Europeanisation as processes of mutual learning about planning in Europe.

In most of these contributions, Europeanisation is pictured as a process, typically as policy or knowledge transfer, which has a clear beginning and endpoint. Scholars argue that Europeanisation has a top-down and bottom-up dimension (Faludi, 2014), that it consists of uploading and downloading (Radaelli, 2003), or even occurs along three dimensions: top-down from the EU to nation states, horizontally between states, and in a roundabout/cyclical manner from the states to the EU and back to the states (Böhme & Waterhout, 2008; Dühr et al., 2007; Lenschow, 2006).

However, this dissertation understands Europeanisation as a matter of perspective, not direction. It suggests addressing Europeanisation from within, setting out from domestic actors concerned with planning and investigating the contexts in which they are affected by European issues and policies. Consequently, it is interested in how domestic actors apply these European policies. By comparing different responses to European inputs, this dissertation aims to find answers about the degree of Europeanisation of domestic planning, i.e. the role that European policies play in specific national, regional and local contexts. This is in line with some earlier scientific writings, for example by Luukkonen, who understands Europeanisation as multidimensional discursive process that is not traceable to hierarchical patterns of governance but taking place in various everyday practices, struggles and discourses among actors (2011a, p. 10). Similarly, Stead and Cotella (2011) argue in favour of investigating the role of actors and actor communities in order to understand the differential influences of the EU on planning and territorial governance.

Admittedly, a focus on understanding Europeanisation from within neglects the role of domestic actors in the creation and negotiation of policies at the European level. While the relevance of these processes is acknowledged, as European policies do not exist independent from domestic actors but are clearly shaped by them, they lie outside the scope of this dissertation. Several studies have addressed the uploading dimension of Europeanisation and the negotiations at EU level (Evans, 2011; Faludi, 1997, 2004, 2016; Faludi & Waterhout, 2002; Hajer, 2006; Williams, 2000).

2.2 The Realm of European Spatial Planning

At the core of this dissertation lies the question of what is understood as European spatial planning and, inherently, what is understood as spatial planning. Although both concepts originate from EU policy circles, they have since developed in somewhat different directions. Spatial planning was introduced as a neutral expression to discuss different styles of planning at various spatial scales without being directly linked to any member state's planning system (Böhme, 2002; Williams, 1996). However, it has also turned into a synonym for a more integrative approach towards planning through horizontal and vertical coordination of spatially relevant policies (Shaw & Sykes, 2005). At the same time, the term European spatial planning[1] was used to debate large-scale spatial development processes in Europe. During the preparation of the ESDP in the 1990s, European spatial planning, then also referred to as European spatial development, gained momentum: it was no longer only a framework for debate but an arena for policy-making – though the policy remained intergovernmental and legally non-binding rather than being turned into a supranational policy. In 1999, the ESDP was enacted by the responsible ministers of the then 15 member states. However, this did not result in a formalisation of spatial planning competences at the EU scale, as was considered possible at some point (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002; Jensen & Richardson, 2001). Rather, a few years after the publication of the ESDP, the terms European spatial planning and spatial development were increasingly replaced by the term territorial cohesion. As territorial cohesion is an objective rather than a policy field, the term was met with less resistance than "European spatial planning", a term which led some member states to believe that EU-wide planning-related activities would be at odds with their sovereignty regarding planning. Since the Treaty of Lisbon, territorial cohesion is, thus, together with economic and social cohesion, anchored as a shared competence between the EU and its member states. The Territorial Agenda of the European Union (TAEU) and the Territorial Agenda 2020 (TA2020), published in 2007 and 2011 respectively, are considered successors to the ESDP. However, these inter-governmental documents were less redolent of spatial strategies and were not received as enthusiastically as the ESDP by planners across Europe. Although territorial cohesion is nowadays a widely known concept among policy-makers and academics, its exact meaning as well as its implications for planning practice remain unclear. These doubts were never quite dispelled, leading some scholars to believe that the "deliberate obfuscation helps fuzzy the European Commission's mandate to include spatial planning when no such actual mandate currently exists" (Allmendinger, Haughton, Knieling, & Othengrafen, 2015, p. 13). Although this interpretation of the changing terminology might overstate the European Commission's "hidden agenda", it is true that the term territorial cohesion represents an objective rather than means, thus causing less resentment among the member states fearing for their authority in the field of planning (Dühr, Colomb, & Nadin, 2010).

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[1] While this section only gives a brief overview, many scholars have described the historical development of European spatial planning and territorial cohesion in detail (e.g. Faludi, 2010b).

While the term European spatial planning seems to become less prominent, spatial planning has transcended its EU-related origins and has turned into a common term in planning in many countries, albeit not necessarily associated with the exact same meaning. In the UK, for instance, spatial planning became a widely used term in the late 1990s and early 2000s despite being originally a Euro-English term. During those years, spatial planning was not only used as a new term to replace town planning or land use planning but indeed for a new conception of planning as a whole, associated with an integrated understanding of spatially-relevant policies (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2010; Haughton, Allmendinger, Counsell, & Vigar, 2009; Nadin, 2006). A few years later, however, the term was discarded again in the course of political changes and "all references to 'spatial planning' were expunged from government publications" (Lord & Tewdwr-Jones, 2014, p. 352). Instead of integrated spatial planning, often associated with the regional level, the key messages after 2010 revolved around localism, devolution and decentralisation of decision-making (Sykes & O'Brien, 2018). Similar (yet often less extreme) processes can be observed in other countries, though the variety in language across Europe makes it difficult to say with certainty whether spatial planning has evolved into a common understanding of planning or just into a common translation.

Although spatial planning is often understood as an integrated approach to frame and coordinate spatial development, the academic debate around European spatial planning has frequently remained restricted to intergovernmental processes, e.g. the making of the ESDP or the TA2020. While the importance of sector policies, such as regional policy or environmental policy, is frequently acknowledged, these policies are often viewed as separate from spatial development processes. However, if spatial planning is understood as a comprehensive concept intertwining and coordinating different policies, why is European spatial planning not viewed in similar terms? In this dissertation, European spatial planning is understood in a comprehensive manner, entailing both intergovernmental and supranational activities, comprising strategies as well as regulations and funding mechanisms and considered at not only the European level but all spatial scales. In other words, European spatial planning is not only understood as the input created at the European level, but also as its outcome at the national and sub-national level. This is in line with Abrahams (2014), who claims that when it comes to concepts such as territorial cohesion, emphasis should not be put on defining the concept but rather on pragmatic questions like what the concept "does" and "might do" (Abrahams, 2014, p. 2152).

Figure 1 (Purkarthofer, 2016) presents a conceptual framework which delineates the realm of European spatial planning, as understood in this dissertation. The following sections elaborate on the three elements that ought to be considered when aiming to understand European spatial planning and its effects on planning systems and planning practices in different contexts in a comprehensive manner.
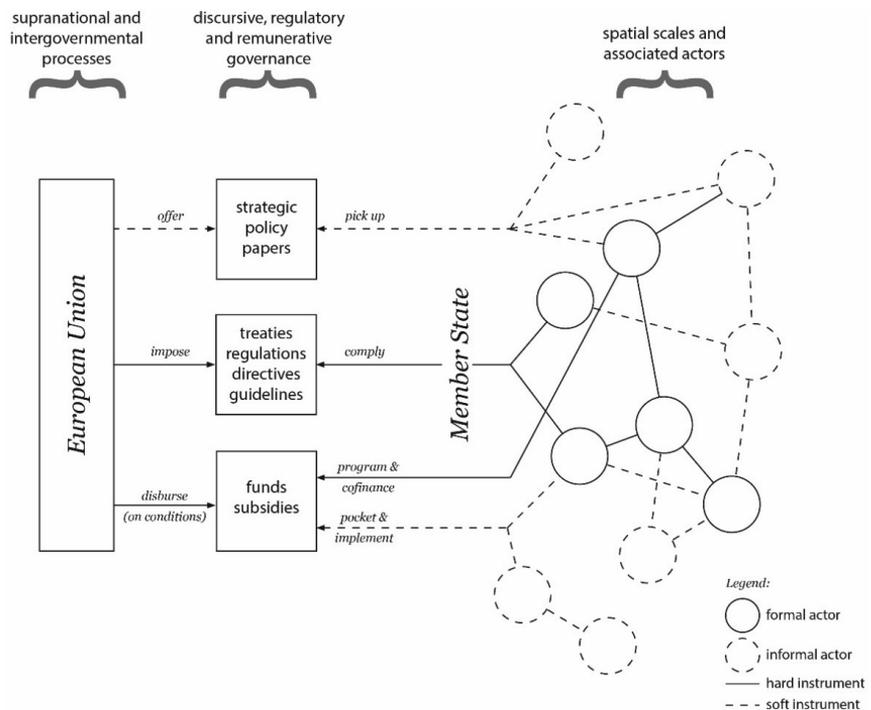
Figure 1. **A conceptual framework to illustrate the encounter of European and domestic planning** (Purkarthofer, 2016; additional markings above)

2.2.1 Supranational and Intergovernmental Policy-Making

The distinction between intergovernmental and supranational policy-making is not emphasised in this dissertation, as it focuses on the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning in domestic contexts instead of policy-making at the European level. Consequently, this dissertation refers to both intergovernmental and supranational policy-making when talking about the European level and European policies. Nonetheless, it has to be noted that substantial differences between the two processes exist. Supranational policy-making represents the "default" policy-making process in the EU. Policy proposals are initiated and drafted by the European Commission, and subsequently commented on and ultimately approved by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU, while several other bodies are consulted in the process. As this simplified description shows, the European Commission is the main initiator of supranational processes. However, representatives of the member states play a decisive role through the approval of proposals, both by the publicly elected members of the European Parliament and the heads of state in the Council.

Intergovernmental policy-making, in turn, brings together national represent-atives responsible for a certain policy field who, although they have no authority beyond their national jurisdiction, discuss, negotiate and potentially enact le-gally non-binding policy papers, which are then acknowledged in the whole EU. Intergovernmental policy-making is common in the field of European spatial

planning and the informal ministerial meetings of the ministers responsible for spatial planning and urban development have brought about the most important milestones in European spatial planning, such as the ESDP or the EU Urban Agenda. Although the European institutions are not directly involved in the decision-making processes in these meetings, the processes are usually framed by the respective EU presidencies and partly driven by the European Commission.

Though both supranational and intergovernmental processes are commonly referred to as policy-making at the European level, national and sub-national actors clearly play a major role in these processes. In addition to formal mechanisms in which political representatives approve or disapprove policy proposals, national (and to a lesser degree regional and local) actors contribute by "uploading" policy ideas to the EU level (Stead, 2013). These actors can have a significant influence on both supranational and intergovernmental processes, as was shown for example in the context of the ESDP (Faludi, 1997; Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). Although policy uploading clearly shapes European spatial planning and can also be of importance in understanding the implementation of European inputs by domestic actors, it is not discussed in this dissertation. Understanding these processes of negotiation would require focusing empirically on negotiations at the European level rather than the implementation of policies by domestic actors.

2.2.2 Discursive, Regulatory and Remunerative Policy Interventions

Understanding European spatial planning as a broad issue highlights the fact that it originates not from one but indeed from several policy fields. At the EU level, these policy fields differ regarding their content as well as their form of policy intervention. EU policy-making has been frequently described to work with "carrots", i.e. positive stimuli such as financial incentives, and "sticks", i.e. restrictions and regulations, a dichotomy that has also been applied to European spatial planning (Dąbrowski, 2013; Ravesteyn & Evers, 2004). According to Vedung (1998), however, the distinction between carrots and sticks provides no category related to the provision of information, which could entail "plain knowledge, normative appeals, emotional persuasion, or recommendations for action" (p. 28) but involves neither incentives nor penalties. Vedung thus suggests a threefold classification based on Etzioni's differentiation between three types of authoritative power: coercive, remunerative and normative (Etzioni, 1975). In the context of policy-making, Vedung claims that normative power, i.e. the transfer of knowledge, moral suasion, exhortation and persuasion, "is an important and largely overlooked category in the debate on governing instruments" (Vedung, 1998, p. 29). He thus suggests adding the "sermon" to the "carrot" and the "stick", resulting in a trichotomy of policy interventions: information, economic means and regulations. The type of policy intervention determines the relationship of governor and governee: regulations oblige the governee to do what the governor demands, yet also bind the governor to stick to the mandate defined by the regulations. Economic means do not demand a specific action from the

governee, however, compliance with a suggested action results in gain of material resources while non-compliance results in the deprivation thereof. Information, in turn, does not oblige the governee to act in a specific way. This of course does not imply that it is as such neutral or value-free. The information category can cover knowledge and data as well as advertising, educational efforts, judgements and recommendations, and also shapes and frames attention as it affects what is considered worthwhile of knowing. However the governee is not mandated to act in a specific way in response to information (Vedung, 1998).

Although Vedung's trichotomy explains governing interventions on a general level, it can also be applied to a specific policy field, especially cross-sectional policy fields characterised by complexity and fragmentation, e.g. transport policy (Givoni, Macmillen, Banister, & Feitelson, 2013). In Article I, the same typology is used to characterise the different European policy interventions relevant for spatial planning and territorial governance (see Figure 1, p 19).

First, strategic policy papers can be understood as the "sermon" of European spatial planning. The documents are developed at the European level, either in intergovernmental or supranational processes, and are legally non-binding. Domestic actors can thus choose to pick up ideas and rhetoric offered in these documents, give them meaning in a specific context and decide upon their implementation. However, if domestic actors do not attach importance to these policy papers, there are no legal or financial consequences.

Second, in certain policy fields, the EU has the competence to develop legislation, i.e. use the "stick", typically in the form of regulations and directives. These legally binding acts vary greatly with regard to their impact. While some have immediate spatial implications (e.g. Habitats Directive), others limit the leeway of domestic authorities (e.g. Environmental Noise Directive) and others again affect the development of cities and regions (e.g. State aid guidelines). If domestic actors fail to implement the directives correctly or infringe upon the regulations, the EU can take legal action or impose sanctions against the member states.

Third, the EU also disburses funds and subsidies, i.e. offers "carrots", to support its goals in certain policy fields. The most relevant EU policies for planning that use remunerative interventions are regional policy, common agricultural policy (through support measures for rural areas) and transport policy. If domestic actors do not use the funding opportunities the EU provides, there are no immediate negative consequences. However, if a country or region does not fully exploit its allocated funding, it is de facto losing resources by not utilising all of the money it would be entitled to pocket. Countries have thus been very keen to keep their absorption rate, i.e. the share of used allocated funds, as close to 100 percent as possible.

For each of these categories, a multitude of examples can be found in EU policy-making (Table 2). While it might be flawed to view all these policy interventions as planning policies, they nonetheless affect spatial development and territorial governance, thus making it important to take them into account when mapping the EU's effects on planning. Table 2 provides a list of examples

for EU policy interventions relevant to spatial planning and development, but by no means is it exhaustive, nor does it give a full historic account. Moreover, as EU policy-making is ever-changing, new policies are constantly developed and negotiated. Each of the policy interventions is different in character and complex in itself. This dissertation will not elaborate further on the contents of specific policies, except those addressed in the individual articles. There exists, however, a lot of scholarly work on EU policy-making and specific policies undertaken by planning researchers, geographers and political scientists. Several books have addressed European spatial planning and territorial governance in a comprehensive manner (Adams, Cotella, & Nunes, 2011; Dühr et al., 2010; Faludi, 2010b; Williams, 1996), while other scholars have scrutinised specific aspects or policies (Table 2, right column).

Of course, the three types of policy interventions cannot be viewed as entirely independent from each other. Strategies and funds often emphasise the same objectives, as can be seen for instance in the TA2020 strategy and the structural funds during the 2007-2013 programming period, both focusing on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (CEC, 2011, 2014). Non-binding strategies are often – though not always – the first step towards the extension of EU competences and the enactment of binding regulations. The rules for the disbursement of funds and subsidies are stipulated in binding regulations. The same actors are involved in the preparation of all types of policies, suggesting a certain degree of convergence regarding themes, objectives and terminology. The combination of different policy interventions, i.e. policy packaging as described by Givoni et al. (2013), might in fact be an interesting concept to explore also in the context of European spatial planning. While this dissertation does not elaborate on policy packaging at the European level, it describes similar processes of combining different policies at the local and regional level in the member states (see e.g. ARTICLE II).

2.2.3 Spatial Scales and Associated Actors

The distinction between supranational and intergovernmental and the typology of policy interventions refer mainly to the European level. However, it is crucial to also include different spatial scales and associated actors and organisations into the realm of European spatial planning, especially if it is understood not only as the European input but also as the concrete outcome of these policies on the ground. The EU is "region-blind"[2], meaning that the EU only addresses nation states, thus its policies are practically the same for all member states. Yet, the outcomes of certain policies might differ considerably in different member states. This is also the case for European spatial planning. It is thus crucial to not only observe what happens *between* the European Union and its member states, i.e. the different types of policy interventions discussed earlier, but how European input is dealt with *within* a country (Purkarthofer, 2016).

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[2] Some scholars have questioned the region-blindness of the EU and argued that the legal order and policy implementation of the EU in practice have profound effects on different governance patterns (Cloots, De Baere, & Sottiaux, 2012; Weatherill, 2005).

Table 2. Examples of EU policies relevant to spatial planning

TYPE OF POLICY INTERVENTION	POLICY	FURTHER READINGS
Discursive: Strategic Policy Papers	European Spatial Development Perspective	Faludi, 2006; Faludi & Waterhout, 2002; Richardson & Jensen, 2000; Shaw & Sykes, 2003, 2005
	Territorial Agenda	Böhme & Schön, 2006; Faludi, 2007, 2009; Gualini, 2008; Sykes, 2008
	Europe 2020	Böhme, Doucet, Komornicki, Zaucha, & Swiatek, 2011; Doucet, Böhme, & Zaucha, 2014; Faludi & Peyrony, 2011; Stec & Grzebyk, 2016
	Urban Agenda	Atkinson, 2001; Geppert & Colini, 2015; Mamadouh, 2018
	Macro-regional Strategies	Metzger & Schmitt, 2012; Sielker, 2016b, 2016a; Stead, 2014a
	TEN-T	Bröcker, Korzhenevych, & Schürmann, 2010; Fabbro & Mesolella, 2010; Gutiérrez, Condeço-Melhorado, López, & Monzón, 2011; van der Heijden, 2006
	ESPON	Böhme, 2016; Evrard, Schulz, & Nienaber, 2013; Faludi, 2012; van Gestel & Faludi, 2005; Vogelij, 2014
Regulatory: Regulations and directives	Natura 2000 (Birds Directive & Habitats Directive)	Bock et al., 2005; Gaston, Jackson, Nagy, Cantú-Salazar, & Johnson, 2008; Marot & Golobič, 2013; Turnhout, Behagel, Ferranti, & Beunen, 2015; von Haaren & Reich, 2006
	Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive	Marek, Baun, & Dąbrowski, 2017
	State Aid Guidelines	Colomb & Santinha, 2014
	Strategic Environmental Assessment	Barker, 2006; Barker & Fischer, 2003; T. B. Fischer, 2010; González, Gilmer, Foley, Sweeney, & Fry, 2011; Say & Yücel, 2006
	Environmental Impact Assessment	Barker & Wood, 1999, 2001; Pinho, McCallum, & Santos Cruz, 2010; Torriti, 2007
Remunerative: Funds and subsidies	ETC/INTERREG	Dühr & Nadin, 2007; Fabbro & Haselsberger, 2009; Faludi, 2008; Medeiros, 2018; Stead, 2014b
	URBAN	Atkinson, 2002; Dukes, 2008; Hamedinger, Bartik, & Wolffhardt, 2008
	LEADER	Dax, Strahl, Kirwan, & Maye, 2016; Dillinger, 2014
	ITI	Havlík, 2018

In other words, it is important to understand how European inputs relevant for spatial development and territorial cohesion are linked to the complex network of actors and organisations within the member states. These connections can determine the effects of European policies on the ground, as domestic actors are responsible for their interpretation, implementation and potential instrumentalisation. Although the same links to the European level exist for all countries and regions, they might thus deal with European inputs in an entirely different manner. Despite its claimed "region-blindness", the EU is widely acknowledged as a driver for rescaling processes. Especially regions are frequently associated with the EU. On the one hand, the EU has introduced NUTS regions (French: *Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques*) as a consistent, hierarchical system of statistical units across Europe. In addition to existing political and cultural regions, these NUTS regions also reflect economic concerns, as they quickly turned into a spatial framework for EU regional policy, making the exact territorial demarcation and location of boundaries crucial for the disbursement of EU Cohesion Policy funding (Paasi 2009). EU regional policy shaped not only the territorial dimension of regions but also their governance arrangements, as it requires some form of administration at the regional scale. Member states thus needed to establish, reinforce or redefine regional organisations upon accession to the EU in order to meet the requirements associated with regional policy. While some countries integrated new tasks into existing structures, others built regional administration from scratch, a process that in some cases led to problems and inefficiencies (Bruszt, 2008; Dąbrowski, 2013; Dąbrowski, Bachtler, & Bafoil, 2014; Hughes, Sasse, & Gordon, 2004; Pálné Kovács, Paraskevopoulos, & Horváth, 2004).

On the other hand, the EU has promoted regions on a discursive and sometimes emotional level, as manifested, for example, in the "Europe of the Regions" narrative which emerged in the 1990s (Elias, 2008; Keating, 1997, 2008). Although the narrative is less prominent today, regions still enjoy a special connection to the EU. Since 1994, the Committee of the Regions exists as an advisory body to the European institutions, aiming to give a voice to regions in EU policy-making. In recent years, sub-national actors have shown an increasing interest in the EU, expressed, for example, in the rising numbers of regional representations to the EU in Brussels (Tatham, 2008). Though the involvement of sub-national actors with EU policy-making should be welcomed with a view to democracy and multi-level governance, it does not always come without problems in practice. Although empirical data assessing the involvement of regional actors at the European level is scarce, a few studies have shown that opportunities for regions to affect EU policy-making are not always exploited, or exploited successfully (Högenauer, 2014; Rodríguez-Pose & Courty, 2018). Despite challenges for regions to participate at the European level, scholars agree that Europeanisation is partly a regional phenomenon. Elias (2008) claims that "there are numerous ways in which the EU remains highly important for regions, and in which regional politics plays a significant role in shaping the nature and direction of European integration" (p. 487). As this dissertation focuses on the application of European policies rather than

their negotiation at the European scale, it follows the understanding of regions as "spaces of politics" (Carter & Pasquier, 2010) characterised by their own power structures and logics of action for which the EU acts as driver of change. In many cases, processes of regionalisation and changes regarding territorial governance also affect planning, in particular planning at the regional level (see also ARTICLE IV). It is thus crucial to consider sub-national scales when discussing the influence of the EU on spatial planning.

Spatial scales, however, only gain meaning when the dimension of agency is added. Actors, in most cases organisations rather than individuals, ultimately determine the power relations inherent in planning. They decide upon the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of policies, shape the visualisation and language of planning documents and define the relation to other spatial scales. The importance of actors becomes apparent when understanding planning systems and their spatial scales not as linear, hierarchical, top-down systems but as multi-dimensional and multi-scalar networks of governance. In order to understand these networks and the links between different spatial scales and associated actors, it is necessary to take both formal and informal actors into account, as the following section will demonstrate.

2.3 Including Soft Spaces and Soft Planning in European Spatial Planning

The EU can be regarded as an important driver of rescaling. Rescaling is a complex and multi-dimensional process, reshaping practices, redefining scales and reorganizing interactions between scales (McCann, 2003). Spatial rescaling through Europeanisation should, however, not be understood as a simple transfer of powers from the national to the EU level (Stead, 2014a). Instead, we can observe shifts in three directions: *upwards* to the supranational EU level or international institutions, *downwards* to sub-national actors, and *sideways* to civil society actors (Stead, 2014b). As these power shifts do not only occur between formalised levels of government but create "new scales of intervention, new actor constellations and variable geometries of governance" (Stead, 2014a, p. 681), Europeanisation has frequently been viewed in connection with soft spaces.

The notion of soft spaces was developed in the context of British politics and planning from 2007 onwards (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2007; Haughton & Allmendinger, 2007). Initially based on the analysis of processes in the Thames Gateway, a complex regeneration and urban development area east of London, soft spaces started to serve as an analytical concept to understand planning scales and processes, which did not coincide with the statutory processes typically framing UK planning. Haughton and Allmendinger describe the difference between hard and soft spaces as follows (Haughton & Allmendinger, 2007, p. 306):

> Hard spaces are the formal, visible arenas and processes, often statutory and
> open to democratic processes and local political influence. Driven by a myriad of

policy concerns – such as the hierarchy and co-ordination of national policy and development plans, their co-ordination with community strategies and the significance given to community involvement – they are characterised by complexity and delays.

'Soft spaces' are the fluid areas between such formal processes where implementation through bargaining, flexibility, discretion and interpretation dominate. Once alerted to it, signs of this tendency are not hard to find – such as the growing preference for using fuzzy boundaries in establishing new 'sub-regions' (for instance in the Wales spatial plan, and the Northern Way's 'city-regions').

They claim further that soft spaces, as opposed to static, regulatory tools such as land use plans, hold the potential to reflect the real geographies of problems, to ensure flexibility and speedy delivery of policy responses and to bypass bureaucracies and rigidities associated with political and administrative boundaries (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2009).

While acknowledging the emergence of soft spaces, Allmendinger and Haughton warn not to disregard the importance of hard spaces and highlight the shortcomings of soft spaces regarding legitimacy and citizen involvement. Instead of ensuring democratic accountability, soft spaces thus entail a strong element of pragmatism, focusing on "*getting things done and not worrying too much about tidiness around the edges or administrative clutter*" (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2009, p. 619). Instead of shifting from one set of spaces to another, planners thus need to be able to work within both hard and soft spaces, and even use soft spaces and fuzzy boundaries in a tactical manner if they help to deliver planning objectives (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2009).

Soon after the first mentions of soft spaces in the context of the United Kingdom, connections were drawn with the scientific discourse on Europeanisation and European spatial planning. Faludi (2010a) describes the EU itself as a soft space, changing its spatial delineation following accession processes and according to different cooperation agreements, e.g. the Schengen Area or the Euro-zone, and transcending the hard spaces of nation states. He identifies soft spaces created through EU policies, such as the macro-regional strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, and claims that "[t]hese soft spaces require soft planning" (Faludi, 2010a, p. 14). Consequently, the Baltic Sea Region strategy does not resemble a binding scheme or a master plan but a series of particular issues with varying spatial dimensions, creating not one neatly defined space but many overlapping spaces (Faludi, 2010a, p. 20). Besides the spatial fuzziness, Stead (2011) identifies a "complex, overlapping, 'soft' patchwork of activities, relationships and responsibilities" (p. 165) in the Baltic Sea Region. Moreover, the EU also contributes to dissolve formerly hard spaces such as nation states by reducing the importance of borders, making it increasingly difficult for countries to act autonomously (Faludi, 2010a; Purkarthofer, 2018).

In addition to the creation of soft spaces, the EU can also be understood to act as driver of soft planning. Instead of binding plan-making, for which it lacks the legal competence, the EU promotes coordination, cooperation and learning in

the field of spatial planning. While it seems that the European level is limited to developing informal strategies in the field of planning, there is also a strategic informality inherent to these activities: Due to their non-binding character, these strategies are generally met with less resistance than regulatory interventions. European spatial policies might even be especially powerful because of their lack of a formal or high-level political status, as the "seemingly non-political, evidence-based management of spatial development" (Luukkonen, 2015, p. 188) enables policymakers to justify their actions as necessities for the common good.

The existence of hard and soft spaces and planning processes is not a phenomenon unique to the European Union but can also be found within its member states. When aiming to understand Europeanisation from within, as this dissertation sets out to do, soft and hard processes need to be taken into account, both at the European level and within the member states. Domestic actors have an active role in Europeanisation processes: the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European inputs is often at the discretion of "hard actors", i.e. organisations that have specific, formalised tasks within a country's statutory planning system. While their leeway might be comparably smaller when implementing EU regulations, they are barely bound by rules when it comes to interpreting and instrumentalising informal strategies. Remunerative incentives might even put them in a proactive position, either as administrators of or applicants for funding. Similar roles can, however, also be taken up by "soft actors", i.e. organisations that are not part of the statutory planning system. While the legal ratification of directives and the administration of funds is typically associated with a clear mandate, "soft actors" can apply for EU funds and subsidies and refer to EU strategies. Through EU policy interventions, new actors can thus contribute to framing spatial development and planning practices – even if they have no legal mandate to do so. It is thus imperative to pay increased attention not only to the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European policies through actors in the statutory planning system, but also through new actors who might gain a foothold in the planning arena through European spatial planning.

In this context, the realms of hard and soft actors should not be viewed as separate spheres. Instead, together they form an intricate network of organisations, operating at different spatial scales and characterised by complex relations, which ultimately shape the outcomes of European inputs. While research on European spatial planning has frequently considered which actors and organisations encounter specific EU policies in a particular country, it has seldom traced how the policies continue to be addressed within a country's complex network of hard and soft actors. A more comprehensive view is, however, necessary to understanding how European input translates into planning activities within the EU member states. The same input can either be stalled quickly within a national planning system or reach a plurality of actors and scales. Accordingly, the effects of European policies can differ significantly in different national and regional contexts.

Eva Purkarthofer: Understanding Europeanisation from Within

3. Methodological Background and Research Material

This section presents the reasons behind selecting Austria and Finland as case countries to study Europeanisation from within. Moreover, it elaborates on the literature review, document analysis and expert interviews conducted in the course of this study.

3.1 Selection of Case Countries

In addition to the conceptual framework, this dissertation provides examples of the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning in Austria and Finland. The choice to focus on examples from these two countries was made for several reasons. The two countries have a comparable level of wealth and recent geopolitical history and joined the EU simultaneously, while at the same time they have distinct administrative systems (federal and unitarian with strong local government), which are also represented in their planning systems. This combination of similarities and differences makes them an ideal testbed to study national responses to European spatial planning. The socio-economic context ensures comparability, while different legal-administrative systems provide an interesting frame to investigate the influences of the EU and the application of European policies.

Austria and Finland, together with Sweden, became member states of the EU in the 1995 enlargement. In the course of accession, both countries held a referendum asking citizens to confirm their government's intention to join the EU, which in both cases they did. While the Austrian population approved the accession in all federal states, adding up to a nationwide two-thirds majority, Finns in the northern regions voted against the accession (Moisio, 2008). However, they were ultimately outvoted by the southern, more populous Finnish regions, resulting in a nation-wide majority of 56% in favour of accession.

Although, as I argue in this dissertation, EU influences are not imposed on member states when it comes to planning, the same accession date results in an equal exposure time to EU influences, even if the actual effects might differ. In the 1990s, when Austria and Finland prepared for their accession to the EU, European integration as well as European spatial planning were on the rise. With the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, Europe faced a time of transition that resulted in a transformation of the continent's political landscape. The 1988 reform of the EU Cohesion Policy introduced the INTERREG community

initiative, a funding instrument for territorial cooperation, which is frequently understood as a connecting element between EU regional policy and spatial planning (Dühr et al., 2007). In 1992, the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive, commonly known as the Natura 2000 network, were enacted, representing an EU environmental policy with an explicit spatial dimension, which until today directly concerns plans and planning authorities in the EU member states. At the same time, intensive debates about spatial planning in Europe were underway and attempts to create an intergovernmental strategy document framing spatial development ultimately resulted in the publication of the ESDP in 1999.

3.1.1 Austria and Finland: Economic, Societal and Administrative Context

In addition to their common date of accession, Austria and Finland share some socio-economic and historical characteristics that make a comparison feasible. Both countries can be classified as similar when it comes to size and wealth within Europe. With 8.6 and 5.5 million inhabitants Austria and Finland rank as 15th and 18th most populous countries in the EU respectively (2016), while their GDP per capita are the 6th and 7th biggest in the EU (IMF, 2016). Both countries acknowledge the ideal of the welfare state, in which a market economy is combined with strong labour unions and a universalist welfare sector financed by heavy taxes. According to a classification by Esping-Andersen (1990), Finland employs the social-democratic welfare model, aimed at universal access to benefits and services, while Austria employs the Christian-democratic welfare state model, based on decentralisation and social stratification. Several other attempts of developing welfare state typologies have followed, all of them classifying Finland as Nordic-Scandinavian and Austria as continental-corporatist type (Nadin & Stead, 2008). At the moment, neo-liberalism seems to be on the rise at the expense of the welfare state in both countries (Ahlqvist & Moisio, 2014; Mäntysalo, 1999; Mäntysalo & Saglie, 2010; Mattila, 2018; Moisio & Leppänen, 2007). Nonetheless, Austria and Finland are still among the countries with the highest share of social expenditure worldwide, accounting for 27.8 % and 30.8 % of the GDP respectively in 2016 (OECD, 2018).

After World War II, both Austria and Finland were neutral countries, geographically located at the Eastern edge of Western Europe. This situation changed fundamentally with the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and even more so after the 2004 enlargement of the EU. While Finland can still be considered geographically peripheral and its border to the Russian Federation is still of economic and political importance, Austria's relative location in Europe was altered completely when its neighbouring countries to the East joined the EU. However, almost 30 years after the fall of the iron curtain and 15 years after the Eastern enlargement of the EU, the long-term effects of the formerly closed borders are still visible in the spatial patterns, population development and economic structure of the border regions, many of which are structurally weak

and depopulating (ÖROK, 2011). Finland's peripheral and sparsely populated border regions face similar problems (Laine, 2007; Moilanen, 2012).

The fundamental differences between Austria's and Finland's administrative and legal structure make comparison especially interesting for the research questions posed in this dissertation. Austria is a federation consisting of nine federal states and approximately 2100 municipalities. By definition, the federal states are vested with all legislative and executive powers, except for certain issues of nationwide interest, specified in the constitution and delegated to the federation. The municipalities have no legislative power, but execute administrative tasks on behalf of the federal states as well as issues of local concern as independent administrative bodies.

Finland, like other Nordic countries, is a unitarian state with strong local government (Sjöblom, 2010), consisting of 18 regions and 311 municipalities. The central state is solely responsible for the legislative process, while the municipalities enjoy a monopoly of self-governance regarding certain policies. The regions, in their current form, are joint municipal organisations, consisting of municipal representatives. Plans to reform the Finnish regions towards more independent administrative entities are currently under way and are expected to come into effect in January 2021. However, at the time of writing, there is a lot of political uncertainty associated with the regional reform (YLE, 2018).

3.1.2 The Planning Systems in Austria and Finland

These differences in the Austrian and Finnish administrative system are also reflected in the respective planning systems. In Austria, the federal states are responsible for spatial planning (*Raumplanung* or *Raumordnung*), thus planning legislation is enacted at the federal state level, resulting in the existence of nine planning laws within one country. As spatial planning in Austria is by definition a cross-sectional matter (Dinka, 2010; Purkarthofer, 2013), other policy areas are also relevant for planning. These include environmental protection, railroads, aviation, water management, agriculture and forestry. The fact that some of these policies are dealt with at federal state level while others are addressed at the federation level results in a fragmentation of competences, creating ambiguity and inconsistencies (Semsroth & Dillinger, 2002). At the national level, planning is based on a voluntary agreement between the federal state governments and nation state organisations, e.g. the Federal Chancellery[3], in the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning (ÖROK) (Faludi, 1998).

While there are differences between the nine planning laws, especially regarding terminology, the planning instruments and the roles ascribed to each level of government are similar. Table 3 provides an overview of the planning scales and documents in Austria (for a more elaborate overview see e.g. ÖROK, 2018b). Except for the legally non-binding national development concept, the planning system follows a hierarchical structure in which federal plans limit the

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[3] Recently, in a 2018 reform, the national-level coordination unit responsible for planning matters was transferred from the Federal Chancellery to the Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism.

Table 3. **Planning scales and documents in the Austrian planning system, drawing on the sub-national example of the Lower Austrian planning law (Land Niederösterreich, 2014).**

AT	planning document: name and function	legal status	issued by
national	sectoral plans (e.g. rail roads) *specifies spatial dimension of a sectoral policy*	variable	responsible ministry
national	Österreichisches Raumentwicklungskonzept (ÖREK) [Austrian Spatial Development Concept] *specifies nation-wide development trends, objectives and measures*	non-binding	ÖROK
regional / federal	Landesraumordnungsprogramm (LROP) [Federal Spatial Planning Programme] *specifies development trends, objectives and measures for the federal state*	binding	federal state
regional / federal	Regionales Raumordnungsprogramm (ROP) [Regional Spatial Planning Programme] *specifies planning restrictions and development areas*	binding	federal state
regional / federal	Sektorales Raumordnungsprogramm [Sectoral Regional Planning Programme] *specifies spatial dimension of a sectoral policy*	binding	federal state
regional / federal	Regionales Entwicklungskonzept (REK) [Regional Development Concept] *coordinates regional spatial development issues*	non-binding	federal state
sub-regional	Kleinregionales Entwicklungskonzept (KEK) [inter-communal spatial development concept] *specifies development trends, objectives and measures for several municipalities*	non-binding	several municipalities in cooperation
local	Örtliches Raumordnungsprogramm (ÖROP) [Local Spatial Development Programme] *specifies development trends, objectives and measures*	binding	municipality
local	Flächenwidmungsplan (FLWP) [Local Land Use Plan] *specifies land uses and intensities*	binding	municipality
local	Bebauungsplan (BP) [Local Construction Plan] *specifies construction guidelines and styles*	binding	municipality

leeway of regional and local plans. In addition to the scales specified in the planning laws, other processes also affect and frame spatial development, for instance the establishment of Regional Managements. The task of Regional Managements is to provide information, as well as advisory and project managing services in the context of EU Cohesion Policy. Though these organisations are not part of the planning system, they are often understood to affect spatial development at a regional scale by serving as a platform for networking activities, coordination and place branding.

In Finland, corresponding with its administrative structure, the central state and the municipalities are the most important actors in the planning system.

Table 4. Planning scales and documents in the Finnish planning system, drawing on the Land Use and Building Act (Ministry of Environment, 1999).

FI	planning document: name and function	legal status	issued by
national	Valtakunnalliset alueidenkäyttötavoitteet (VAT) [National Land Use Guidelines] *specify spatial development guidelines for issues of nation-wide importance*	binding	Ministry of Environment
regional	Maakuntakaava [Regional Land Use Plan] *specifies development goals, zones and restrictions*	binding	Regional Council
regional	Alueellinen kehittämisohjelma [Regional Development Programme] *specifies aims regarding regional development*	binding	Regional Council
sub-regional	Kuntien yhteinen yleiskaava [Joint Municipal Master Plan] *specifies land uses and intensities, development goals and measures*	binding (if enacted) but voluntary	several municipalities in cooperation
local	Yleiskaava [Local Master Plan] *specifies land uses and intensities, development goals and measures*	binding*	municipality
local	Asemakaava [Local Detailed Plan] *specifies land uses and intensities, building styles and restrictions*	binding	municipality

*The Local Master Plan (Yleiskaava) is usually binding. However, according to the LBA, it can be given a non-binding status, too.

The legal provisions regarding land use planning (*maankäytön suunnittelu*) are specified in the Land Use and Building Act (LBA) (Ministry of Environment, 1999) which defines three planning levels (see Table 4). At the national level, the Ministry of Environment enacts the National Land Use Guidelines, which frame spatial development issues of nation-wide importance. In addition, the ministry is responsible for the preparation of spatial planning legislation. Other ministries affect spatial development indirectly with regard to their specific sectoral focus. At the regional level, the Regional Council prepares the Regional Land Use Plan and Regional Development Programme. At the local level, the municipality is responsible for enacting the Local Master Plan, as well as Local Detailed Plans for areas within the municipality. Additionally, municipalities can voluntarily enact a joint master plan if they wish to do so.

Although the planning system is designed to be hierarchical, i.e. the regional plan determines the content of the local plans, the Finnish system has been claimed to show an asymmetrical distribution of powers in favour of the local level (Hirvonen-Kantola & Mäntysalo, 2014). Regional plans often reflect local interests instead of steering local planning (Kilpeläinen, Laakso, & Loikkanen, 2011). This is partly due to the weak political constitution of the Finnish regions, which are not independent authorities but joint municipal boards, and thus consist of local political representatives rather than directly elected officials. It

remains to be seen whether Finland's ongoing regional reform will rectify imbalances in the planning system, as discussed also in ARTICLE IV of this dissertation.

In addition to the planning scales and documents stipulated in the LBA, spatial planning in Finland has in recent years seen an increase in strategic and legally non-binding processes framing spatial development (Mäntysalo, Jarenko, Nilsson, & Saglie, 2015). While these new tools have frequently outlined new geographies, such as city regions (Bäcklund, Häikiö, Leino, & Kanninen, 2017; Mäntysalo, Kangasoja, & Kanninen, 2015) , they are often governed by traditional administrative entities (Luukkonen & Moilanen, 2012).

3.1.3   Context for Comparison

Austria and Finland share economic and societal characteristics, while at the same time the two countries show significant differences regarding their administrative structure and planning systems. In previous studies, they were classified as belonging to the Germanic and Scandinavian planning family respectively (Newman & Thornley, 1996), and as employing a comprehensive integrated planning approach (CEC, 1997). However, as Nadin and Stead have shown, a finer classification of planning systems is needed as "very similar arrangements can be developed in practice in quite different settings" (2008, p. 44). This very much highlights the need to understand the Europeanisation of spatial planning from within. Due to their similarities and differences, Austria and Finland provide an excellent testbed for comparing the applications of European spatial planning in different national, regional and local contexts. The two countries are comparable regarding their socio-economic context and their administrative capacity. Actors in Austria and Finland thus can be expected to have similar capabilities to apply European policies. However, their different legal-administrative systems, the resulting characteristics of the planning systems, and the roles ascribed to specific actors in these systems make a comparison especially interesting. Investigating the different types of policy interventions in two similar yet different countries offers valuable insights regarding whether domestic actors exploit the opportunities provided by European policies and utilise the leeway that they entail. It also sheds light on the importance ascribed to different European policies in different contexts.

This section has elaborated on the reasons for comparing the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning in Austria and Finland. While these reasons were relating to the nation state level, this dissertation also acknowledges the importance of investigating the sub-state dimension, which plays a major role in spatial planning and regarding transnational policy processes (Sykes, 2008). Comparisons between Austria and Finland are thus not only drawn at a state level, but also at the regional and local level. Comparing the application of European policies in different contexts allows us to draw conclusions relating to the importance of the legal framework and the planning system as well as to the role of specific organisations and individual actors.

3.2 Research Material

This dissertation is based on two types of research materials, which were analysed simultaneously and exploratively, thus continuously contributing to reshaping the research questions and hypotheses. First, policy documents and scientific publications were used to develop the conceptual framework presented in the previous section. The analysis of the documents has also contributed to answering the research questions within all four articles as well as the overarching research questions presented in this introductory synopsis. Second, 40 semi-structured interviews with experts in the field of spatial planning were conducted, transcribed and analysed in the course of this study.

3.2.1 Literature Survey and Document Analysis

Written materials, primarily scientific publications and policy documents, have played a role in shaping the research focus of this study, developing the conceptual framework for analysis and answering the research questions. Similar to the definition of European spatial planning used in this dissertation, the scope of relevant documents was not determined at the beginning but expanded according to the themes uncovered in the research process. The expert interviews and the interpretations of European spatial planning by domestic actors thus also affected the selection of documents analysed in the course of this study.

In addition to the use of scientific literature to provide a grounding in the scientific discourse, different policy documents were used for analysis in the four articles. In ARTICLE I, policy documents enacted at the European level were analysed to classify the types of policy intervention and develop the conceptual framework. In ARTICLE II, European policy documents were studied following Hajer's (1993, 1995) theory of discourse analysis in order to identify the European storylines connected to spatial planning. Additionally, policy documents from the city of Graz, the federal state of Styria and the Central Styrian Region were considered. In ARTICLE III, strategic policy papers published at the European level were scrutinised, primarily the Urban Agenda including its specifications regarding the partnership approach. In ARTICLE IV, regional planning and regional development documents enacted in the Finnish region of Kainuu were analysed, as well as reports from different governmental organisations addressing the Kainuu experiment and the upcoming regional reform in Finland.

All textual materials, i.e. policy documents and transcripts of the expert interviews, were analysed following the method of qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2014). However, within the umbrella of qualitative content analysis, different approaches were used. The idea of *structuring content analysis* guided the coding of interview materials according to specific themes. This process was supported through the qualitative analysis software ATLAS.ti, which allows coding, sorting and referencing textual elements in order to answer specific research questions. Additionally, *summarising content analysis* was employed to reduce materials according to certain themes in order to allow for

generalisations. In other cases, *explicative content analysis* was used to clarify ambiguous or contradictory passages by analysing additional materials (Flick, 2011, 2014).

3.2.2 Expert Interviews

Analysing planning systems and documents would not be sufficient for the purpose of identifying the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of EU inputs by certain actors and in specific contexts. Thus, this dissertation is largely based on expert interviews (see Table 5 for details). In total, 40 semi-structured expert interviews were conducted between December 2016 and January 2018. Each interview lasted between 40 and 90 minutes and was recorded, fully transcribed and, where applicable, translated to English. After the transcription, the interviews were analysed with ATLAS.ti (see 3.2.1).

In Austria and Finland, the selection of interviewees represents a cross section of actors involved in planning and related policies at different spatial scales, ranging from national to local. In addition, five persons in Belgium and the Netherlands were interviewed about the Urban Agenda, a specific policy within European spatial planning, and its implementation. The vast majority of interviewees (37 out of 40) are public servants, i.e. they are employed in governmental organisations at different spatial scales. The remaining three interviewees are employed by consultancies and lobby networks. Table 5 gives an overview of the number of interviewees, their employment background, the language the interviews were conducted in and the themes discussed. It also specifies in which article the interviews were primarily used as empirical data. In addition to the individual articles, the interviews also contributed to shape the conceptual framework presented in Section 2 as well as the results and discussion presented in Section 4.

Table 5. **Expert interviews: Details on interviewees, themes discussed and use of information**

	Count	Language	Interviewees employed at	Themes discussed	Article
Austria	17	German	- Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning (ÖROK) - Federal Chancellery (BKA) - Federal State Governments - City Planning Departments - (City-)Regional Managements - Association of Towns and Cities	- Planning system and relation of different planning scales - EU accession and changes for planning practice and discourses - Relevance and future of regions for planning, relationship between regional planning and regional development - New planning scales: City regions, cross-border regions, macro-regions - EU funding systems (e.g. ERDF, ITI, CLLD, INTERREG) - EU strategy documents, e.g. ESDP, Urban Agenda - Perception of spatial planning, role of planners - 3 different strands of EU influences and their implementation	II, III
Finland	18	English, Finnish	- Ministry of Environment - Regional Council - ELY-centre - City Planning Departments - City-Regional Association - Consultancies		III, IV
Belgium & Netherlands	5	English	- European Commission - Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations - EUROCITIES - International Union of Tenants	- Development and meaning of the Urban Agenda - Relation of Urban Agenda to other policies and strategies - Partnerships: formation, expectations, implementation	III

4. Results and Discussion

This section addresses the research questions posed earlier by presenting results from the articles as well as additional findings surfacing from the expert interviews. In accordance with the research questions, this section elaborates on the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning. At the end of the chapter, the findings are discussed with a view to overarching themes contributing to understanding Europeanisation from within.

4.1 Interpretation: The Conceptions of (European) Spatial Planning

The interpretation of European spatial planning adopted and advocated by the author is presented in Section 2, as well as in ARTICLE I. However, this broad view, including three types of interventions from several policy fields at the European level as well as both soft and hard spatial scales in the member states is not necessarily identical with the interpretations of domestic actors. Thus, this dissertation investigates how European spatial planning is understood, i.e. which policies, programmes and documents domestic actors associate with it. To answer this question, it is also necessary to elaborate on the understanding of spatial planning itself, as terminology and wording play a crucial role in creating associations and shaping interpretations.

4.1.1 Spatial Planning in the Austrian and Finnish Contexts

As demonstrated earlier, European spatial planning has itself undergone several linguistic transformations and reinventions. The Euro-English term spatial planning has also shaped and questioned interpretations of planning in the member states. There is ambiguity as to whether the term is a mere translation for planning or whether spatial planning transcends land use planning and instead refers to shaping spatial development and coordinating the spatial impacts of sector policies and decisions (Nadin, 2006). In the United Kingdom, for instance, spatial planning was understood as a new planning paradigm distinctive for long-term visions and policy integration in the early 2000s (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2010), characteristics associated with strategic planning in other contexts (Albrechts, 2001; Albrechts & Balducci, 2013). In Austria and Finland, the two case countries of this dissertation, spatial planning enjoys its own interpretations and linguistic associations.

In Austria, spatial planning can most accurately be translated as *Raumplanung*. While this term captures the original meaning well from a language perspective, it is often used synonymously with the term *Raumordnung*, which emphasises the regulatory land use dimension. This is, for example, the case in the nine Austrian planning laws at the federal state level, some of which use *Raumplanung* and some *Raumordnung* to talk about the same types of policies and instruments. In addition, the term *Raumentwicklung* (spatial development) is in use. However, it usually refers to softer, legally non-binding processes and documents, such as the Austrian Spatial Development Concept (ÖREK). The plurality of terms, in combination with the fragmentation of competences within the country have contributed to a relatively broad understanding of spatial planning in Austria. Planning is thus not seen as one specialised field but as a cross-sectional matter, bridging different disciplines such as urban design, transport planning and environmental sciences. This is also reflected in the interdisciplinary university education for planners (Semsroth & Dillinger, 2002).

In the Finnish language, an accurate translation for spatial planning does not exist. Though on some academic occasions the literal translation *spatiaalinen suunnittelu* (Kanninen, 2017) has been used, *maankäytön suunnittelu* (land use planning) is still more common. However, the meaning of this term is rather precise, usually referring to local and statutory planning processes. Additionally, the Ministry of Environment uses the term *alueidenkäytön suunnittelu* to indicate land use planning also on the national and regional scales in addition to the local. Other related terms used in the academic discourse include *yhdyskuntasuunnittelu* (urban and regional planning), used in architecture-related disciplines, and *aluesuunnittelu* (regional planning), mainly used within planning geography. Neither is there an exact translation for the term spatial development. The ESDP was thus titled *Euroopan aluesuunnittelun ja aluekehityksen suuntaviivat* in its Finnish translation, which literally means "European regional planning and regional development guidelines".

Despite this plurality of terms, or rather due to the multitude of word choices, planning is usually understood in a rather narrow sense, referring to a specific field, discipline or even scale. Traditionally, planning has been equated with land use planning in Finland. In addition, environmental policy and local and regional development have existed as separate policy fields. With Finland's accession to the EU, these policy fields have been partly integrated into a broader field of spatial planning, mainly driven by the establishment of Regional Councils responsible both for regional planning and regional development. However, cultural barriers between the fields exist (Eskelinen, Lapintie, & Kokkonen, 2000) and divisions are still visible, for example at the level of ministries. At the regional level as well, the integration of different policies is seldom successful, as ARTICLE IV demonstrates. In the Kainuu case, although regional planning and regional development reached a state of mutual acknowledgement, their design and implementation remained detached.

Despite this seemingly narrow conception of land use planning and its clear distinction from other policies, some interviewees highlight the discretionary leeway for planners in Finland derived from the ambiguity within the LBA. The scope of planning is thus defined by the planners themselves, resulting in potentially different conceptions even within Finland:

> If you read the LBA, you quite fast notice that it is pretty vague. [...] So everything is negotiable. And it's funny to work in different regions in Finland, because they understand the same words in really different ways. So it becomes a cultural issue.
> [City Region of Tampere, FI]

> The LBA is actually quite flexible legislation, it gives a lot of leash what to do. Almost everything. At the end of the day, it is always about the people, who are applying the legislation.
> [ELY-centre Uusimaa, FI]

Even if the integration of policies under the umbrella term *spatial planning* seems unsuccessful in the Finnish context, the notion of planning has been broadened to include more strategic and innovative planning practices. As ARTICLE I highlights, this turn towards soft planning reflects a general trend across Europe. While the importance of regulatory land use policy is unquestioned, processes of cooperation, coordination, negotiation and learning are increasingly applied and acknowledged in planning. This trend can be observed in both countries studied in this dissertation.

4.1.2 Interpretations of European Spatial Planning

The differing interpretations regarding the scope of spatial planning in Austria and Finland affect the respective understanding of European spatial planning. The broad conception of planning allows Austrian actors to regard many different European inputs as relevant for planning and spatial development, thus – according to the framework of this thesis – part of European spatial planning. In the interviews, Austrian actors made clear references to the subsidiarity principle and the fact that the EU has no formal competence regarding spatial planning. Nonetheless, they see planning affected by several European policy interventions. The most frequently mentioned European inputs relevant for planning include strategic documents such as the ESDP or the macro-regional strategies, directives such as those within Natura 2000, as well as funding programmes such as TEN-T, INTERREG or LEADER. Especially the INTERREG programmes, nowadays officially subsumed under the term European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), seem to be accessible and relatable for many Austrian planners, although they are perceived as distinct from formal planning processes.

> The cross-border cooperation programmes are definitely not spatial planning, in the sense of land use planning, but at least they represent joint activities, which can be subsumed under a broad understanding of regional policy and spatial development. We often justify our responsibility for transnational programmes and macro-regional strategies by emphasising that they are not concerned with

foreign policy or sectoral policies but with an integrated form of spatial development to which Austria contributes.   [Federal Chancellery, AT]

Finnish actors seem to interpret European spatial planning in a more narrow sense than their Austrian colleagues do. The EU is most often associated with regulatory interventions, primarily the Natura 2000 directives. The directives have resulted in immediate implications for planning also at the local scale, for example, through the protection of bird or mammal species (Leino, Karppi, & Jokinen, 2017). Another EU policy that has lately received an increasing amount of attention in the planning field is the TEN-T with its priority corridors, especially in the context of the potential construction of a tunnel between Helsinki and Tallinn. Funding schemes such as INTERREG seem generally less important to Finnish actors, which can partly be explained through Finland's geographic position in Europe. While their interpretation of European spatial planning is focused on a few policies, several Finnish interviewees admitted – almost apologetically – their lack of knowledge about other policies, such as the Urban Agenda, ESPON or specific regional policy funding programmes. On several occasions, their interest to learn more about these policies was mentioned:

> Most of the Finns, even those who operate in planning, are similar to me, they don't know about the European Union instruments. So if you know, then it would be quite good to deliver that information.   [Lobby network, FI]

The interviews have shown that neither in Austria nor in Finland there is a nation-wide agreement regarding the importance of specific European policies. Which policies are considered important or relevant depends strongly on the place of employment, the job history and the understanding of spatial planning of individuals. Nonetheless, statements about the importance of specific types of policy interventions can be made. In both countries, interviewees were asked to assess which of the three types of policy interventions (discursive, regulatory or remunerative) is most influential for spatial planning and development (see also ARTICLE III). In Austria, approximately half of the interviewees regarded regulations and directives as most influential, while the other half regarded funding programmes as most important. Not a single interviewee claimed that strategic documents are a predominant influence for spatial planning. In Finland, a vast majority of interviewees regarded regulations and directives as most relevant for planning. While funding instruments were mentioned as important influences by a few interviewees, strategic documents were considered almost insignificant.

4.2   Implementation: The Actors Responding to European Spatial Planning

In order to understand the implementation of European spatial planning, it is crucial to determine who the actors and organisations responding to it are. The EU does not have actors "on the ground" implementing its policies in the

member states. Instead, as European policy-making is based on agreements between national governments, its implementation is frequently in the hands of national, regional and local authorities[4]. A divide between organisations responsible for policy development and those responsible for policy implementation is not unique to the EU, yet it is a significant difference to e.g. local authorities. Policy implementation through actors at different spatial scales, often termed multi-level governance, is considered a structuring principle of EU policy-making (Van den Brande, 2014). The implementation of European inputs thus fundamentally depends on the involved actors and organisations, which is why this crucial theme is addressed in all four articles of this dissertation.

4.2.1 Statutory Planning Systems and Formal Actors

The involvement of specific actors in European spatial planning is partly stipulated by legal requirements. When looking at the formal planning systems as presented in Section 3, clear differences can be identified between Austria and Finland. The EU primarily interacts with the national level, i.e. governments and ministries. In the Austrian case, statutory spatial planning is the responsibility of federal states and municipalities. At the national level, the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning (ÖROK) coordinates planning issues. However, the ÖROK cannot enact legally binding plans but only give recommendations (ARTICLE I). With Austria's accession to the EU, the ÖROK gained importance as a communication and coordination platform, yet its informal status remained. Additionally, until 2018, a small division within the Federal Chancellery supported the implementation of EU regional policy. In the beginning of 2018, the division for regional policy was incorporated into the Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism[5].

Despite these para-constitutional mechanisms for coordination at the national level (Faludi, 1998), federal states have been involved in the implementation of European inputs. For instance, as environmental protection lies within the responsibility of the federal states, the Natura 2000 directives have been incorporated into nine different nature protection laws within Austria. In the field of EU regional policy, the federal state governments have developed their own programmes until recently. During the current programming period 2014-2020, a single operational programme for the whole of Austria has been enacted for the first time. However, individual federal states have defined special priorities within the programme, such as a focus on the urban dimension in Vienna and Upper Austria, or a focus on the territorial dimension in Styria and Tyrol (ÖROK, 2018a).

The involvement of municipal actors in European spatial planning differs greatly within Austria. Vienna is a special case as it is at the same time a federal state and a municipality and thus possesses its own administrative unit for

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[4] This is not necessarily the case for all EU policy fields. In some areas, e.g. Foreign Policy, EU policies are not directed at the member states but at third countries.
[5] As this change occurred after the expert interviews were conducted and analysed, this dissertation still refers to the Federal Chancellery when speaking about this division.

European affairs. Other state capitals have similar, though smaller divisions. In the vast majority of Austrian municipalities, however, there are no actors concerned with European issues. Yet, the direct involvement of municipalities with European spatial planning is possible. One example concerns the implementation of URBAN+ between 2007 and 2013, when the federal state of Styria delegated its responsibilities to the city of Graz, which served directly as the administrative body for the initiative (ARTICLE II). Actors from the city of Graz regard the direct involvement in European issues as highly successful:

> For us, the projects in which we could go around the federal state of Styria and the state of Austria and in which we could communicate with Europe directly, those have always been the most successful ones.   [City of Graz, AT]

In Finland, responsibilities at the national level are more clearly defined. However, the divide between different fields associated with spatial planning becomes apparent. While the Ministry of Environment is responsible for land use planning and environmental issues, EU regional policy and national regional development are handled by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. European policy interventions relevant for planning are thus implemented by different organisations at the Finnish state level, frequently resulting in a detached view of the policy fields.

At the regional scale, however, tasks associated with regional planning, regional development and EU regional policy are all dealt with by the Regional Councils. The establishment of Regional Councils can be seen as the biggest change regarding the formal system of government in the course of Finland's accession to the EU (ARTICLE I). However, almost 25 years after their establishment, the Finnish Regional Councils are still caught in a state of ambiguity. Instead of representing a self-contained regional level of government, the regions are characterised by the involvement of national and local actors. An upcoming administrative reform proposes to strengthen the Finnish regions politically. However, if the reform brings similar results as the preceding Kainuu self-government experiment, ambiguity at the regional level might persist (ARTICLE IV). As the Kainuu experiment has shown, changing the legal status of an organisation does not necessarily change the actors' interpretation and implementation of their tasks.

Municipalities in Finland enjoy a high degree of autonomy regarding planning issues. Like in Austria, their interest in European issues typically correlates with their size as well as their financial and personnel resources. Big cities like Helsinki thus have the administrative capacity to deal with European issues, while smaller municipalities usually have little resources to respond to European inputs. Often, the Regional Councils, together with their liaison offices in Brussels, are viewed as links between the Finnish municipalities and the EU. Yet, as the Kainuu case has shown, the lack of personnel resources and expertise persists at the regional level, especially in the smaller and peripheral regions (ARTICLE IV).

4.2.2 Soft Planning Processes and Informal Actors [6]

The picture gets more complex when the involvement of actors is not limited to the statutory planning system, but broadened to include soft planning process. As argued in ARTICLE I, this broad view is necessary to fully understand European spatial planning from within. European inputs gain importance when they are picked up, reproduced and implemented by domestic actors, both within the formal planning system and outside of it. In the Austrian case, several examples of informal actors responding to European spatial planning exist. Regional Managements represent one such informal yet institutionalised type of organisation. Although there was no need to formally adapt regional governance structures in Austria with the accession to the EU, Regional Managements as new organisations were established at the regional scale. While Regional Managements have close ties to EU regional policy, they are neither responsible for programming nor distribution of the EU funds, but instead for services relating to information, consultation and project management (Semsroth & Dillinger, 2002). The Local Action Groups (LAGs) governing LEADER regions are another example of an informal organisation that does not overlap with a formal jurisdiction. Though they are required for the establishment of LEADER regions and the disbursement of associated payments, they are new organisations consisting of public and private actors relevant to the region, e.g. representatives from municipalities, local businesses and citizen associations. While neither Regional Managements nor LAGs are part of the statutory planning system, they contribute to frame spatial development and create a link between European and domestic policies. In the current programming period, federal government actors in the state of Tyrol have decided to strengthen this link by using the framework of community-led local development (CLLD) to implement LEADER and ERDF funding in a combined manner. While the national government was initially sceptical, Tyrolean actors argued successfully and proactively in favour of the CLLD approach. While the federal state of Tyrol played an active role in arguing in favour of this approach, the LAGs as informal actors are together with the federal state responsible for its implementation. In Austria, federal actors thus have an active say in defining their priorities and involvement in European spatial planning, and can furthermore delegate tasks to other actors and organisations if they wish to do so.

While LEADER regions and associated LAGs also exist in Finland, they are seldom considered in the context of spatial development. Other new planning scales such as city regions are gaining importance in Finland. However, they are not frequently related to European processes, although interviewees did voice different opinions regarding this theme. Instead, support for soft planning at the city-regional scale has been mainly coming from the Finnish national government, for instance through the PARAS act or the MAL(PE) agreements (Bäcklund et al., 2017; Hytönen et al., 2016; Puustinen, Mäntysalo, Hytönen, & Jarenko, 2017; Salo & Mäntysalo, 2017). Both state-level initiatives support new

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[6] Informal actors in this context refers to actors and organisations who do not formally have any responsibilities stipulated in the statutory planning system.

functional geographies, albeit in a different manner. The PARAS act aimed to reform municipal structures and increase efficiency of service provision through mergers of smaller municipalities (Sisäasiainministeriö, 2007), while the MAL(PE) agreements support city-regional cooperation regarding land use, housing and transportation (in some cases also regarding services and businesses). As an incentive for cooperation in the course of MAL(PE), the state provides financial support for costly infrastructure projects (Bäcklund *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, in the city region of Tampere, Finland's second biggest agglomeration, eight municipalities have established the first city-regional organisation in Finland aimed at framing cooperation on certain issues, including spatial planning. Currently the Tampere city region focuses on mediating and supporting inter-municipal cooperation between the municipalities and does not deal with European policies.

4.2.3   Organisational Ambiguity in New Planning Scales

In other cases, the crucial question is not whether certain actors can be considered part of planning practice but who the actors and organisations responsible for the implementation of spatial policies are. Following Hajer's (2006) concept of institutional ambiguity, which describes the lack of clear rules in new policy fields, we could correspondingly speak about organisational ambiguity, when it is not clear who the actors responsible for new planning scales are. The need to address functional areas such as city regions, for instance, has turned into a widespread discourse, supported also by the European storyline on diminishing borders and conflating spaces (ARTICLE II). In the Austrian system, however, it remains unclear who is responsible for city-regional policies. Due to the lack of planning competence at the national level, there exists no nationwide urban or agglomeration policy (Humer, 2018). Nonetheless, a non-binding policy document on city-regional governance, titled *Agenda Stadtregionen* (ÖROK, 2016), was developed in a cooperative process including actors from the ÖROK, the Federal Chancellery, the federal states and the Austrian Associations of Cities and Towns. When it comes to the implementation of concrete measures, however, the Austrian city regions encounter ambiguity, both on a political and administrative level, as two interviewees describe:

> The question is who is responsible for city regions in Austria? The Association of Cities and Towns is doing something, but who are they? They have two part-time positions dedicated to planning issues – there is only so much they can do.
>
> [Federal state of Styria, AT]

> Regarding city-regions, our expert from the Federal Chancellery told me the other day that they actually still haven't figured out who is responsible for that theme on a political level.   [City-regional management Vienna/Lower Austria, AT]

Amidst this organisational ambiguity, different actors have thus seized the opportunity to actively create a connection with the European level, as ARTICLE II demonstrates. Even if these processes increasingly address new soft spaces,

such as city regions, cross-border regions or macro-regions, the implementation of policies frequently takes place through governmental actors who stretch their authority to new planning scales. While this extension of authority and legitimacy has been criticized for example in the context of Finnish city regions (Bäcklund et al., 2017; Bäcklund & Kanninen, 2015), it seems less problematic in the context of European spatial planning. As there is no competence for spatial planning issues at the EU level, legitimacy can only be created by anchoring EU policies to domestic structures. European discourses thus become meaningful if domestic actors create a connection with the European level and transform European ideas into policies within their scope of action.

With the partnership approach, the EU Urban Agenda (EU Ministers Responsible for Urban Matters, 2016) has deliberately created a mechanism to ensure anchorage and commitment of the domestic actors to European policies (ARTICLE III). Though at this point in time one can only speculate about the success of these partnerships and the long-term effects of the Urban Agenda, the partnerships represent an attempt to ensure the implementation of EU policies by defining the actors responding to the strategy document. The partnerships are expected to develop an action plan, suggesting concrete actions for different spatial scales and associated actors. Different actors should then implement these actions within their own jurisdiction. Through this mechanism, the partnerships comply with principles of subsidiarity and legitimacy, while enabling international discourse and cooperation across administrative and organisational boundaries.

4.3 Instrumentalisation and Implementation: The Applications of European Spatial Planning

This section discusses the different ways in which domestic actors apply European spatial planning. To do so, it distinguishes whether domestic actors implement European inputs according to European level intentions, or instrumentalise them to support their own policy goals. A distinction between implementation and instrumentalisation is of course neither exclusionary nor clear-cut. Domestic actors can both implement European inputs according to European level intentions and at the same time instrumentalise them to further their own interests. Nonetheless, this distinction was chosen to highlight the multifaceted effects European policies can have, given that domestic actors ascribe meaning and importance to them.

4.3.1 Implementation

When it comes to implementation, it is feasible to return to the three types of policy interventions and the conceptual framework presented in ARTICLE I. First, domestic actors can pick up European strategic policy papers and reference and reproduce them. Second, they need to comply with EU regulations and incorporate EU directives into national and federal laws. Third, they need to develop programmes and projects, and in most cases provide co-financing resources if they want to receive funds and subsidies from the EU.

While these different ways of implementation seem fairly straightforward, they get increasingly complex when being put into practice. As the previous section has demonstrated, there is a broad range of actors participating in the application of European inputs, leading to diversification and increased fuzziness regarding implementation.

Regarding the implementation of strategies, the European intentions remain relatively vague. This has led to a situation in which European strategy papers are often regarded as having only a minimal influence on spatial planning and territorial governance (ARTICLE III). One potential exception is the Urban Agenda, which has introduced partnerships as a framework for implementation. However, it remains to be seen how the partnerships will affect concrete outcomes of the Urban Agenda in the member states (ARTICLE III). Several interviewees agree that European strategies are applied indirectly, affecting the minds of actors and subsequently plans and policies:

> One cannot expect that European ideas affect the land use plan in a direct manner. Those are just different scales. But at the European scale, the strategic discussions, the actors who participate there, or those who listen to lectures that we organise, they then take these ideas into their working lives.   [ÖROK, AT]

> I think that the influence of the European policies has been more indirect. [VASAB and ESDP] are still recognised, Europe 2020 and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, they are recognised in our regional strategy and regional development plan. The regional land use plan, if you understand it as a physical setup of the strategy and development plan, indirectly those documents are there.
> [Regional Council of Tavastia Proper, FI]

These comments are in line with earlier findings, claiming that "applying any strategic planning document aims at shaping the minds of actors involved" (Faludi, 2001, p. 664) rather than shaping spatial development directly.

It seems that the discretionary leeway of domestic actors is considerably smaller in the implementation of EU regulations and directives. While this is true for many legally binding inputs, counter-examples can also be found. In the course of the Natura 2000 directives in Austria, for instance, many experts criticised mistakes made during the implementation phase in the course of EU accession. The federal states defined protection areas without mutual consultation and coordination, undermining the idea of identifying consistent natural habitats. Moreover, several states were convinced that financial subsidies would be disbursed based on the size or number of protection areas resulting in an exaggerated designation of protection areas and causing obstacles for spatial and economic development later (Purkarthofer, 2013). This already highlights a (failed) attempt to instrumentalise the Natura 2000 directives beyond their initial intentions, though it seems that the Austrian actors at that time might also have misunderstood European intentions.

The implementation of European funding instruments is the most challenging type of policy intervention to assess. Within EU regional policy alone, there are a few different funds which are being implemented through several different programmes and a multitude of concrete projects. The rules for

implementation, as well as the programmes themselves, undergo fundamental changes with each programming period. In addition, funding relevant for spatial development could come from sources outside the European Structural and Investment Funds, for example through the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) or the HORIZON2020 programme. Although spatial planning is not funded through European initiatives as such, there are opportunities to align planning goals and funding schemes. Several Austrian federal states, for instance, have successfully lobbied at the national level to stipulate specific priorities in the Austrian Operational Programme, allowing them to fund projects relating to city-regional cooperation as contributions to the goal of ensuring competitiveness and employment. In Finland, the six largest cities are cooperating to tackle common urban challenges and receive funding through the new Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) tool within the ERDF (6Aika, 2018). Both examples show that it is possible for domestic actors to implement European funding instruments in a manner directly contributing to spatial planning and development.

4.3.2 Instrumentalisation

There are, however, also opportunities for actors to instrumentalise European inputs, i.e. to use them to support their own policy goals and interests. Acknowledging the instrumentalisation of European spatial planning is necessary for understanding its real impacts on the ground – even if they differ considerably from the impacts envisioned at the European level. One interviewee captures well how European and domestic intentions might differ:

> I would put it like this: The ideas coming from the EU, for example anything that relates to EU regional policy, I am sure those things are smart and well-thought-out, but at some point, when it goes into the member states, the outcome is sheer coincidence, because every "regional emperor" picks out whatever s/he wants.
>
> [Federal state of Styria, AT]

There are many different ways in which actors can instrumentalise European inputs. This dissertation presents some examples from Austria and Finland, and identifies four different forms of instrumentalisation: impetus, self-promotion, justification and challenge. Boundaries between these forms are of course blurry, and the same policy can be instrumentalised in various ways, either by the same or different actors. It also has to be clarified that instrumentalisation should not generally be seen as a dishonest or improper practice. Actors can implement policies in accordance with European intention while at the same time supporting the goals or policies of their organisation.

Impetus: Putting European funding to use
European inputs are frequently used to give impetus to domestic policies, most often through financial incentives and seed capital. Giving impetus to specific ideas and developments can be seen as the form of instrumentalisation closest to implementation, as in fact the intention behind EU funding programmes is to trigger long-term effects with a limited amount of funding. However,

domestic actors enjoy considerable leeway regarding which ideas to support. Several interviewees claim that they were successful in using EU funding to create incentives, e.g. for municipalities to cooperate on a city-regional level (ARTICLE II). Giving impetus does not necessarily require large amounts of funding, as several actors highlight:

> And even if the funding amounts are not that big, we have seen many times that the EU funding gives impetus and boosts cooperation and project development in the long run. [ÖROK, AT]

> We would have never succeeded [with this project] if it hadn't been for the EU funding. I think we received around 80,000 Euros, so really not a lot of money if you think about it, but still, this amount was the driving force. […] I think EU funding is a "non-suspicious" way to do something… and it can develop quite a lot of leverage. [City-regional management Vienna/Lower Austria, AT]

Many actors regard European funding opportunities as a means to an end, which can be tailored to support their policies, also in the field of spatial planning and regional development. Based on the interviews conducted in the course of this study, it seems that Austrian actors are more active in making use of this opportunity. In Austria, giving impetus to specific policies seems common practice at all spatial scales, ranging from the local to the national level. In contrast, Finnish actors rarely mentioned this opportunity.

Self-promotion: Waving the European flag
Another way of instrumentalisation is for domestic actors to use European inputs in order to promote their own organisation or jurisdiction. The European level is thus used as an arena to showcase achievements and accomplishments internationally. Especially cities and regions make use of this opportunity in order to boost tourism but also to establish their position as forerunners regarding a specific concept or technology, e.g. the notion of smart city.

> Another thing we learned, which we are also actively using nowadays, is to use this as a way of promoting our city. So at the European level and through the tools offered by the EU, for example in international conferences, we advertise what we are doing back home. […] So it goes both ways, for example when we talk about smart cities. […] But of course, one has to actively make use of those things. [City of Graz, AT]

> My personal impression is that on a political level, in the regions, the point is to put on a show, to do some marketing, to show that you are "doing something". [Federal Chancellery, AT]

> Being part of a European project is also about enhancing prestige, about saying "I am part of a research project, of a European project". This is something I have started to appreciate. [City-regional management Vienna/Lower Austria, AT]

All types of European policy interventions can be instrumentalised for self-promotion and actors once again enjoy a considerable amount of freedom when

applying European inputs. However, the EU also launched several initiatives, which are deliberately aimed at the promotion of cities and regions, such as the European Capital of Culture and the European Green Capital. These initiatives have also been viewed as having a clear spatial impact, for example as drivers for spatial development and urban regeneration (Cömertler, 2017; Parkinson, 2016; Sohn, 2014; Varró, 2014).

Justification: Turning European inputs into arguments
Among the most common forms of instrumentalisation of European inputs is their use as justification for planning decisions. Justifications can be derived from regulations, strategies, funding priorities or general ideas and discourses, as long as domestic actors succeed in making an argument for their cause. Actors provide several examples for turning European inputs into arguments:

> The local territorial and urban planners can always use the EU directives as an explanation for their planning decisions, whether they are fair or not.
> [Ministry of Environment, FI]

> We haven't forced anyone to cooperate just because there is a macro-regional strategy. [...] But those who have been interested and committed already were provided with an additional framework of legitimation. And many regard this as something positive. [Federal Chancellery, AT]

> The macro-regional strategies also affect other regional strategies. [...] They are often used as justification for spatial decisions, or to justify a project. For example regarding the distribution of ports along the Danube, if Lower Austria wants to support the development of a port in Krems, then those who are behind this idea will make a reference to the Danube Strategy, emphasise how it contributes to the strategy – which of course it does. [Federal state of Lower Austria, AT]

The justifications are characterised by a varying degree of persuasive power and liability, ranging from platitudes, references to documents and anchorage with funding schemes to giving concrete reasons for planning decisions.

The use of such justifications has in some cases resulted in planning conflicts. In Finland, the Siberian flying squirrel (*Pteromys volans*), which is protected under the European Habitats Directive, is frequently associated with the EU and often contributes to bring urban development projects to a halt. However, the strict conservation criteria have been criticised for the relative commonness of the flying squirrel in certain areas and the difficulties in delineating the actual habitats of the shy animals. On several occasions, concerns have been voiced that certain actors, e.g. residents living near a planning area, use the flying squirrel as an unjustified argument to delay or prevent unwanted projects.

Another example for the controversial use of European justifications concerns the *Autostrada d'Alemagna,* a highway in Northern Italy. Italian actors, mainly from the region of Veneto, are in favour of a highway extension via Austria to Munich, Germany. With the enactment of the Alpine Convention, an international territorial treaty for the sustainable development of the Alps entering into force in 1995, the extension was regarded as impossible due to

environmental concerns. Nonetheless, the establishment of an EU strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP) provided supporters with a new opportunity to justify the extension of the highway as a contribution to the strategy. In this case, however, the European Parliament clarified that an extension would not be in line with a sustainable transport vision for the Alps and should thus not be funded by the EU (Die Neue Südtiroler Tageszeitung, 2016).

Challenge: Renegotiating competences and relations via Europe
Ultimately, actors also instrumentalise European policies to challenge their administrative context by renegotiating competences and relations between different spatial scales. These processes of renegotiation include both cooperation and competition between different jurisdictions. In Austria, for instance, European inputs have led to an increase in cooperation, not only internationally in the course of ETC, but also within the country. The need to speak with one voice at the European level and implement European inputs in Austria required an increase of communication between the federal states, e.g. regarding planning issues. Moreover, the EU provides instruments for municipalities in different federal states to cooperate, as one interviewee describes:

> The EU helps us to cooperate with our neighbouring municipalities, across administrative boundaries. The boundaries are quite persistent, especially since there are two different planning laws. [...] That's just one example how the EU supports regional cooperation. CENTROPE is another one, and there we received even quite a lot of funding.　　　　　　　　　　[City of Vienna, AT]

At the same time, European inputs are also applied in a competitive manner, for example to increase the profile of cities or regions at the European level or to strengthen the relative position of regions vis-à-vis the central state. These considerations often involve the propagation of specific content-related issues when in fact political motives dominate the instrumentalisation.

> In some countries, the macro-regional strategies are used to strengthen the role of regions and regional actors. In Italy, some of the politicians say openly to newspapers and so on, "this is our freedom, away from Rome".
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[Federal Chancellery, AT]

> There are very big differences regarding the competences, what kind of cooperation regions can engage in, how they are involved in European politics, how they cooperate internationally. [...] And thus these European instruments are also used to discuss competences within a country.
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[Federal Chancellery, AT]

Examples of this form of instrumentalisation can also be found in the articles included in this dissertation. ARTICLE II describes the successful attempts of Graz to cooperate with its surrounding municipalities using EU discourses and funding instruments. ARTICLE IV highlights the role of the European Union for

the Kainuu region, especially with a view to the tensions with the Finnish central state.

4.4 Discussion

The previous sections have presented results in response to the research questions. Subsequently, the findings are discussed with a view to the Europeanisation of spatial planning. In this dissertation, Europeanisation is understood as processes taking place within domestic contexts and determining the role European policies play at the national, regional and local level. As the findings of this study have shown, Europeanisation needs to be understood as an active, spatial, contextual and complex process.

4.4.1 Europeanisation as an Active Process: Actors as Key Figures

This dissertation has highlighted that the effects of European policies depend on their interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation by domestic actors. Europeanisation should thus be understood as an active process, which takes place in states, regions, municipalities and the soft spaces in between. In the scientific discourse, the importance of the dimension of agency in European spatial planning has been highlighted, for example, in the context of the ESDP (Faludi, 2001) and the concept of territorial cohesion (Gualini, 2008). For Faludi (2001), the term application signifies that only through the agency of others, strategic planning documents can achieve something (p. 664). Thus, EU spatial policies "can only develop through actively engaging in innovative subsidiarity-based forms of agency" (Gualini, 2008, p. 2). This dissertation argues further that agency is crucial not only in the application of strategic documents but also regarding the application of regulatory and remunerative European policy interventions. Although the EU is nowadays a driving force for communication, cooperation and policy-making in Europe, there are no European actors in the member states. Domestic actors are needed to ascribe importance and meaning to European policies and link them to institutional practices. This is especially true for "soft policies" such as European spatial planning. However, as this dissertation has shown, agency also shapes the outcomes of formalised policies, such as environmental legislation and regional policy funding.

The success of European policies thus requires interest building among domestic actors to convince them of the ideas behind the policies and to entice them to actively participate in their implementation. Several interviewees seem to be well aware of their active role regarding European spatial planning.

> I understand the European level as a big support that one has to use. This addition is important. If you don't use it, then you'll get nothing. And when someone complains, about how much one has to pay to the EU, but then they don't participate in the bids to get something back, well, then it's their own fault.
>
> [City of Graz, AT]

> And again, it all comes back to the EU framework. Sometimes, even though the EU framework might not be so explicit, it's how you interpret it.
>
> [City of Helsinki, FI]

Often, it depends on the administrative culture in certain organisations or even the capabilities and interests of individual actors, like "Mr. URBACT" in ARTICLE II, whether a connection to the European level is established. Individual actors play an especially crucial role if the legislation leaves room for interpretation, as one interviewee highlights:

> It is also our legislation, which is kind of loose, so it means that individual planners, politicians, whoever, they can make a difference, especially since we have small organisations. [...] It is really so that one person can make a difference, if he or she does it right.   [Regional Council of Uusimaa, FI]

Actors thus represent key figures in the process of Europeanisation and essential links between the European level and domestic structures. However, in the field of European spatial planning, there exist several hindrances to convince domestic actors of taking up an active role. Strategic documents are often disregarded quickly as abstract and weak as the EU has no competence for planning issues. The bureaucratic processes associated with the European funding instruments are increasingly complex, especially regarding accounting and evaluation. European policies, strategic, regulative and remunerative alike, have often lost their spatial dimension, replacing maps and visuals with abstract and aspatial goals, such as competiveness or cohesion. Moreover, the lack of resources hinders domestic actors from engaging with European policies. For many, addressing European issues represents an additional task with uncertain yields. This proves even more difficult at a time when the public sector is facing budget cuts and personnel reduction in many countries. As European spatial planning is a fuzzy and complex field, many actors are anxious about not being able to see through the jungle of documents, regulations and funding mechanisms. Moreover, many countries experience a decreasing enthusiasm about the European Union and its policies, to which European spatial planning is no exception. All these hindrances have led to frustration and fatigue among many domestic actors concerned with European spatial planning.

  As a result, some European policies have few domestic actors behind them, thus not tapping their full potential. The ESPON programme is one example of a promising policy, which does not find much anchorage among domestic actors despite its clear connection with the planning field. However, ESPON should not be understood as an attempt of planning for Europe. Instead, it "promotes shared learning, not only among expert researchers, hundreds of whom are involved in transnational project groups formed around a lead partner, but also among the practitioners involved as stakeholders" (Faludi, 2015, p. 284). Yet, practitioners interviewed in the course of this study see little connection between ESPON and public policy:

> This ESPON map, it's beautiful! I could maybe even use it and show it to a member of our government [...] but then he would ask, "Okay, what do we do with

it? What are the measures behind?" And that's the real question. Because otherwise it always remains quite superficial.

[Federal state of Lower Austria, AT]

I am not sure [about the relevance of ESPON], I do not know if municipal planners or regional planners use it on a day-to-day basis. Or in reality, most of them don't even know about ESPON I guess.   [Ministry of Environment, FI]

The lack of actors interpreting ESPON as relevant for their work, implementing projects in the course of the programme and instrumentalising ESPON to support their planning policies thus seems to result in a lacking policy dimension. If we understand European spatial planning as the output relevant for planning practice, empirical evidence suggests that ESPON does not play a major role in Austria and Finland.

Using the terminology of the performance school of planning, this clearly represents an "implementation gap" (Mastop, 1997), i.e. a mismatch between the intentions of a plan or policy and the interventions in the real world. This implementation gap is opened by the fact that the receivers of a message, in this case domestic actors in Austria and Finland, do not understand or respond to the message sent by actors at the European level. The EU thus has the opportunity to change the message, to change the way of transmitting it or to change the instruments made available to the receivers (Mastop, 1997, p. 809), all of which seem to be applied occasionally in the context of European spatial planning. The introduction of partnerships as implementation framework for the EU Urban Agenda, for instance, suggests that policy makers at the European level are well aware of the importance of domestic actors and their lack of response to some European policies (ARTICLE III). While concrete outcomes are uncertain at this point in time, the partnerships clearly represent an attempt to "make the message heard", both by defining the actors addressed by the Urban Agenda and presenting an instrument for implementation.

4.4.2 Europeanisation as a Spatial Process: Standardisation and Diversification of Regions

Although this dissertation emphasises the governance dimension of European spatial planning and the crucial role of actors, it also encourages viewing Europeanisation as a spatial process. As Section 2 has demonstrated, actors and organisations often derive their legitimacy from jurisdictions and are associated with specific spatial scales. As the EU has no authority to create organisations or bring new actors into planning, it cannot create administrative entities. Nonetheless, European spatial planning has contributed to reshaping the spatial dimension of planning systems and challenging underlying assumptions of space.

The spatial dimension of Europeanisation manifests itself in the creation of both hard and soft spaces. New spatial scales are generally referred to as regions, irrespective of their size or governance arrangements, thus the EU contributes to a simultaneous standardisation and diversification of regions (ARTICLE IV). With the NUTS system, a hierarchical classification of spatial units was

introduced all over Europe. In many countries, including Finland, new formalised governance structures at the regional level were developed, leading to the redefinition of regions in the course of accession to the EU. At the same time, Europe witnessed the creation of new spaces such as LEADER regions consisting of several municipalities, cross-border regions comprising two or more countries and macro-regions stretching across large parts of the continent. These processes are not triggered by European inputs alone, as the scientific discourse around soft spaces illustrates. Nonetheless, the EU supports the processes leading to diversification financially, for example through the ERDF programmes, as well as discursively through the European storyline on diminishing borders and conflating spaces (ARTICLE II). This is also acknowledged by several interviewees:

> The new instruments, coming from outside, from the EU programmes, triggered an era of change in the extremely conservative and rigid administrative system of the federal state. I am not sure how it was in other federal states, but in our administration, we could clearly feel it.   [Federal state of Styria, AT]

> What was clearly strengthened through the EU, through EU regional policy and the funding opportunities, were the INTERREG programmes. They have created new planning spaces, or at least they have created the *idea* of such spaces. Quite clearly. And also deliberately.   [Federal state of Lower Austria, AT]

These new spatial scales have led to tensions with the formal planning system and uncertainties regarding legitimacy. While formal plan-making entails mechanisms to enable public participation and to protect the interests of citizens, landowners and nature, these rules are neither universal nor transparent in soft spaces. As noted in ARTICLE I, "It is thus not clear who has the right to participate, make proposals and decide when it comes to soft planning, let alone how plans are implemented and who has to abide them" (Purkarthofer, 2016, p. 8).

   Although new spatial scales supported by European policies are seldom used to frame processes of concrete plan-making, the spatial imaginaries created in such processes might shape and affect the outcomes of formal plans in other spaces. One the one hand, this can be regarded positively, for example when planners and politicians succeed in taking into account processes and developments outside the borders of their jurisdiction. On the other hand, this can be problematic if decisions taken in informal planning processes are inserted into formal plans without critical reflection (Bäcklund et al., 2017).

4.4.3   Europeanisation as a Contextual Process: Learning from Comparison

This dissertation has addressed planning systems and practices in Austria and Finland in order to reveal different responses to European spatial planning. To do so, this study has gone beyond the state level and attempted to understand planning processes at all spatial scales. Comparing the findings has highlighted

the need to understand Europeanisation from within, since local, regional and national applications of European inputs differ greatly.

In Austria, planning is characterised by fragmentation, ambiguity and complexity. This is both due to the federal system, ascribing different competences to different jurisdictions, and to the understanding of planning as cross-sectional matter, involving several different disciplines. The encounter of an equally fragmented, ambiguous and complex conception of spatial planning at the European level results in a situation where a multitude of domestic actors feel at least somewhat responsible for European policies. This leads to a relatively broad anchorage of European issues among Austrian administrators, although clear differences regarding engagement and commitment can be observed. Many Austrian actors seem to have recognised the potential of instrumentalisation of European policies to support their own policies and further their own interests. This potential is exploited especially regarding regional policy funding, but to a lesser degree also in other areas. European ideas and arguments are sometimes used to stand in for missing national policies regarding spatial planning. Nevertheless, Austrian actors regard strategic documents from the European level as comparatively weak:

> What was the name of that document again? The ESDP, enacted in 1999, in Potsdam. Of course we all flicked through the pages, and the idea of polycentricity made an impression, we were wondering what that means. But it remained so far away. [...] There was a group of people interested in these themes in Austria [...] but they weren't enough to anchor these themes in a broad sense.
>
> [Federal state of Styria, AT]

Yet, some strategies, such as the macro-regional strategies, have served as vehicles for self-promotion and justifications for specific spatial development measures. Moreover, the cross-border programmes with neighbouring countries are regarded as very important. Though they hardly ever result in concrete plans and strategies, actors from planning departments are often involved in the processes, supporting communication and mutual learning between planners across Europe. As federal states enjoy a relatively high degree of independence regarding spatial planning, differences between the organisations and administrative cultures exist, also affecting attitudes and practices towards European spatial planning. While Austrian actors in general seem to be fairly successful in the implementation and instrumentalisation of European inputs, differences regarding resources and administrative capacity persist, leading to a situation in which European policies can often not be used to overcome structural weaknesses, e.g. in the north-eastern and eastern border regions.

In Finland, responsibilities regarding planning are more clearly defined. Municipalities are primarily responsible for land use planning, while the Ministry of Environment develops planning legislation and guiding principles at the national level. Regional development issues are implemented through the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. If there is room for spatial planning, understood as a broader discipline encompassing different policy

fields in the Finnish system, then it is to be found at the regional level. The Finnish regions show the potential to provide a platform for the encounter of European and domestic policies. However, in the current situation regional actors are often not resourceful and powerful enough to take up an active role in interpreting, implementing and instrumentalising European policies. This situation might change with the upcoming regional reform, although this should not be taken for granted, as ARTICLE IV has shown. For now, however, the national ministries represent the key links between European and Finnish spatial planning and thus act as gatekeepers:

> We don't have big awareness about all these EU programmes, […] We have this Ympäristöministerio [Ministry of Environment] that is quite... it is not so talkative in its legislation. So it's not so visible. The EU is behind the ministry guys. And it makes it unclear and intransparent. [City Region of Tampere, FI]

With the ministries' important role as links between domestic and European structures, more attention should be paid to the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European inputs within these organisations. Though the ministries currently seem to act as gatekeepers for European inputs, the actors within these organisations might not be aware of this role. One could also question, whether the perception of the ministries as gatekeepers results from their active role in regulating information about and access to European issues, or whether it serves as an excuse for other domestic actors not to occupy themselves with European policies.

In general, Finnish planners seem to perceive European policies as something positive, and yet very distant. Consequently, many domestic actors show little ownership of processes associated with European spatial planning. They also seem less inclined to apply European inputs to support their own policies or interests, though some examples of instrumentalisation exist. Several actors even expressed guilt about not being well-informed about European issues, and worry about being unable to deal with the complexity of European policies. European spatial planning thus seems to be out of the professional comfort zone of some Finnish planners. This is not the case, however, for the EU's environmental legislation, which many Finnish planners regard as highly relevant for their work. Regarding planning strategies and ideas, European inputs might not be as important for a broad range of actors, because the national level acts proactively, e.g. by providing a framework for city-regional cooperation. Despite the strong national level, regional differences can be observed, especially regarding the use of funding programmes. Like in the Austrian case, it seems that bigger cities and regions with more financial resources and personnel are more successful in obtaining EU funding, thus potentially undermining the balancing objective of regional policy.

The comparison between the findings from Austria and Finland has shown that there is a clear need to address Europeanisation from within, i.e. address the outputs and effects of European spatial planning in the member states. However, it has also shown that there is no clear-cut definition of what "within" means. In order to fully understand the applications of European inputs in

Austria and Finland, it would be necessary to look beyond the two countries, to the European level as well as beyond the country borders.

4.4.4 Europeanisation as a Complex Process: Limitations of This Study

Lastly, it is necessary to address the limitations of this study. Europeanisation is a complex and multifaceted process. The complexity increases when emphasis is put on understanding Europeanisation within its local, regional and national context. This dissertation has thus only highlighted some examples of how European inputs are applied. Many more examples could be found, within Austria and Finland, the countries addressed in this study, as well as in other European countries. Moreover, the findings need to be viewed in relation to the discourse at the European level both in the European institutions and in the intergovernmental arenas including the informal meetings of national ministers on planning issues. Not all of these contexts can be addressed in one study, especially not with the depth required to understand the processes of Europeanisation. Thus, this dissertation has presented a conceptual framework to understand Europeanisation and introduced some empirical examples, while it leaves it to future research to test the framework empirically in other contexts.

The dissertation relies on expert interviews as its main source of empirical data. The interviewees were carefully selected to represent different levels of government and regions. Nonetheless, information obtained in interviews is always shaped by the interviewee's professional experience and personal nature and should thus be reflected upon critically. While most interviewees seemed comfortable and frank in the interview, some were more cautious in their answers. In some cases, this might have been due to language difficulties.

Another aspect which needs to be reflected upon critically is the broad definition of planning employed in this dissertation. Immediately, Wildavsky's claim "if planning is everything, maybe it's nothing" (1973, p. 127) comes to mind. While it should be acknowledged that the definition of planning should not be diluted disproportionately, the reasons for understanding planning in a broad sense were laid out in Section 2.

5. Concluding Remarks

This dissertation investigated the Europeanisation of planning from within, as processes taking place in national, regional and local contexts, and driven by domestic actors. To understand these processes, it explored how actors interpret, implement and instrumentalise European spatial planning. It introduced a conceptual framework to understand the encounter of European policies and domestic actors and, based on expert interviews, scrutinised the Europeanisation of planning in Austria and Finland. This final chapter summarises the responses to the research questions and main findings, presents implications and recommendations derived from the results and discloses avenues for future research.

5.1 Returning to the Research Questions: Interpretation, Implementation and Instrumentalisation of European Spatial Planning

In order to understand how actors concerned with spatial planning in the member states respond to European inputs, this dissertation posed three operational research questions, relating to the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning.

Interpretation (RQ1): What is understood as European spatial planning, i.e. which policies, programmes and documents are considered relevant by domestic actors?
The study highlighted that the interpretations of European spatial planning differ among actors and contexts and are shaped by educational traditions and institutional structures. In general, policies from all three types of policy interventions, discursive, regulatory and remunerative, are associated with spatial planning. Several European policy interventions are frequently mentioned in the context of spatial planning, e.g. the ESDP, the macro-regional strategies, the Natura 2000 directives, the EIA directives, the INTERREG programmes, and the TEN-T networks. While these policies are usually not understood as planning per se, they are thought as framing and affecting spatial development. There are many other policies that are associated with planning by some actors but not by others. Interpretation is determined by the national context, primarily through the legal and administrative framework, as well as by an actor's individual context, affected by education, work experience and employment position.

Some conclusions can be drawn based on comparisons between Austria and Finland. In Austria, a generally broader understanding of planning prevails, as planning is by definition considered a cross-sectional matter, integrating different policy fields. With regard to European policies, strategic documents are well known but often regarded as largely insignificant, regulatory interventions are acknowledged and funding instruments, especially as part of EU regional policy, are considered highly relevant for planning. In Finland, planning is more narrowly defined and strongly focused on the local level. European inputs are primarily associated with regulatory interventions, especially environmental legislation. Strategy documents, with the exception of the ESDP, are not well known among a broad range of actors and are considered largely insignificant by many. Funding opportunities, such as EU regional policy, are not generally considered in the context of spatial planning, though some actors, primarily those working at the regional scale, highlight a potential connection with planning.

Implementation (RQ2): Who are the actors and organisations in the member states addressed by/responding to European spatial planning?
This dissertation emphasised the importance of actors in the implementation of European spatial planning and consequently investigated who the actors addressed by and responding to European inputs are. In the Austrian case, the federal administrative system results in a plurality of actors being involved in planning in one way or another. Actors within the federal state governments and the municipalities are primarily responsible for planning matters from a legal perspective. With regard to European policies, actors at the national level, primarily within the ÖROK and the Federal Chancellery, also play a crucial role – despite the informal status of these organisations regarding planning matters. Additionally, Regional Managements have emerged at a sub-federal level to provide support in project development and management in the course of EU regional policy. The bigger municipalities, for example the cities Vienna and Graz, have also been successful in establishing a connection with the European level.

In Finland, the ministries play a decisive role at the national level. With regard to planning, especially the Ministry of Environment acts as gatekeeper between European and domestic policies. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment addresses EU regional policy as well as domestic economic development policies. At the regional level, both spatial planning and development are the responsibilities of the Regional Councils. While the Regional Councils have administrative employees, they are not politically independent but consist of municipal representatives. Consequently, the Regional Councils suggest themselves as places of intersection between different policies contributing to spatial development. They are also thought of as organisations interrelating European, regional and local policies. In practice, however, actors within the Regional Councils are often not powerful and resourceful enough to undertake this challenging task. With the exception of the biggest cities, the Finnish municipalities are typically not concerned with

European policies when it comes to spatial planning, except for acknowledging regulatory interventions such as the Natura 2000 directives in their plans.

In both countries, European inputs encounter primarily formal actors, i.e. the actors and organisation that are ascribed a role in the statutory planning system. This is true even for new spatial scales supported by European policies, such as city regions, cross-border regions or macro-regions. Although these spaces exist in a state of organisational ambiguity, i.e. responsibilities are not specified clearly, it is typically formal actors who extend their authority to new spatial scales.

Instrumentalisation & Implementation (RQ3): How is European spatial planning applied in the member states? Do domestic actors implement European inputs, i.e. following European level intentions, or instrumentalise them, i.e. using European spatial planning to support their own policy goals and interests – and how?

The distinction between implementation and instrumentalisation is based on the question whether actors apply policies in the way envisioned at the EU level or whether they apply them to support their own policy goals and further their own interests. Often, implementation and instrumentalisation occur simultaneously, either through the same or different actors.

The implementation of European policies is more straightforward and – to a certain degree – determined by the type of policy intervention. First, domestic actors can pick up discursive and strategic policies, ascribe meaning to them, reference and reproduce them. Second, domestic actors need to comply with EU regulations and include EU directives into their legislation. Third, they can obtain European funding by developing programmes and projects, and need to provide co-funding if necessary. Examples from Austria and Finland have shown that certain European policies are implemented in ways that directly or indirectly affect spatial planning and territorial governance.

The empirical study also sheds light on several examples of the instrumentalisation of European policies by domestic actors. Interestingly, there are no major differences regarding instrumentalisation based on the type of policy intervention: Domestic actors have instrumentalised discursive, regulatory and remunerative policy interventions alike, though not necessarily in the same manner. Four different ways of instrumentalisation were identified in relation to spatial planning. Domestic actors have thus used European policies as *impetus*, primarily through the provision of financial incentives or seed capital. In other cases, European inputs have served as platforms and drivers for *self-promotion*, often through knowledge exchange, cooperation processes and awards. European policies also serve as *justification* for specific planning decisions and are used as arguments in debates and controversies. Lastly, European policies are instrumentalised to *challenge* competences and relations, for example between the regional and the national level or the local and the federal level. Based on the expert interviews conducted in this study, it seems that Austrian actors are more active in instrumentalising European policies to serve their own policy goals and interests, although some examples could also be found in the Finnish context.

5.2 Europeanisation as Active, Spatial, Contextual and Complex Process

This dissertation advocated understanding Europeanisation from within, as processes taking place within domestic contexts and determining the role European policies play at the national, regional and local level. The findings presented in the previous section suggest paying increased attention to the active, spatial, contextual and complex dimension of Europeanisation: Actors and the ways in which they interpret, implement and instrumentalise specific policies play a crucial role in determining the outcome of European inputs. This active dimension is especially crucial in the field of European spatial planning. On the one hand, actors can ascribe meaning to "soft policies", such as European strategy documents, and thereby – to a certain degree – compensate for their legally non-binding status. On the other hand, actors can tie policy interventions to planning practice that lie outside the subject area of planning, as happens in the course of EU regional policy, for instance. While these opportunities do not compensate for the lack of competence of the EU regarding spatial planning, they highlight the fact that the decision whether European policies affect spatial planning is not necessarily taken at the EU level.

Moreover, this dissertation suggests understanding Europeanisation as a spatial process. European policies, especially discursive and remunerative policy interventions, have supported both the standardisation and the diversification of regions across Europe, making regions more uniform and comparable, while at the same time supporting the creation of new spaces that do not coincide with established administrative territories. These processes can reshape the territorial frames and underlying ideas about space used in spatial planning, both formally through reforms regarding territorial governance and informally through the creation of soft spaces. Special attention needs to be paid to the relation between such soft spaces and the existing hard spaces. Questions regarding legitimacy prevail, as responsibilities and rules are not defined clearly and processes do not necessarily take place in a transparent manner.

The findings have also shown that Europeanisation is after all a contextual process and that there is not one right scale of investigation. While I have argued at the beginning of this dissertation that it is necessary to immerse oneself in the planning processes and governance structures within the member states, the findings have shown that considerable differences might surface only at the regional or local level. Nonetheless, interesting conclusions can be drawn based on the comparison between Austria and Finland. First, language and education play a decisive role in shaping the understanding of spatial planning. When working or doing research within one country, one might lose awareness of the specificities of one's own context. Communication and mutual learning are thus crucial in the field of planning, as has been noted in the context of European spatial planning (Faludi, 2008, 2010b; Haselsberger, 2015). Second, the administrative structure and legal framework delineate the scope of action for domestic actors, as well as their self-conception of their roles. Yet, even well thought-out and mature planning systems like those in Austria and Finland leave considerable scope of discretion. This should not be understood as a

disadvantage, but calls attention to the fact that the practices within specific organisations and the attitudes and capabilities of individuals can have a significant influence on the outcomes of policies. Paying attention to the dimensions of interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation in addition to the legal provisions and the planning system is a suitable way of capturing these contextual differences.

This, however, immediately highlights the need to acknowledge the complexity associated with understanding Europeanisation from within. While European spatial planning is a multifaceted and complex theme to begin with – speaking about European spatial planning as a policy field would suggest that there exists some kind of definition – it becomes increasingly more complex when domestic processes are emphasised. Moreover, as local, regional and national contexts are often decisive of the outcome of certain policies, the opportunities for generalisation are limited. This study introduced a conceptual framework to understand Europeanisation from within and presented some examples of its application in Austria and Finland. It should, however, not be understood as a complete account of all the influences of European policies on spatial planning in these two countries.

5.3 Contribution of the Dissertation

This dissertation draws upon the scientific discourses on European spatial planning and Europeanisation, and it is specifically informed by the studies emphasising the importance of actors in Europeanisation (Cotella & Janin Rivolin, 2010; Cotella & Stead, 2011; Faludi, 2001; Gualini, 2008; Luukkonen, 2011b; Stead & Cotella, 2011). It also takes into account previous research on the context-dependency and multi-interpretability of European spatial planning and territorial cohesion (Abrahams, 2014; Böhme, 2002; Shaw & Sykes, 2004; Sykes, 2008, 2011; Waterhout, 2007).

The dissertation aimed to increase the understanding of European spatial planning in domestic contexts both conceptually and empirically. To do so, it introduced a conceptual framework aimed at understanding European spatial planning as a broad and multifaceted process and argued for paying attention not only to the legal status of European policies but also to their encounter with domestic systems, actors and policies. The conceptual framework distinguishes between three types of policy interventions originating from supranational and intergovernmental processes at the European level: discursive, regulatory and remunerative. All three types are potentially relevant for spatial planning, for example in the form of strategy documents such as the ESDP, directives such as the Habitats Directive or funding instruments such as INTERREG. The conceptual framework also goes beyond the statutory planning systems in the member states and includes soft spaces and soft planning, as well as the actors associated with these processes. Only if European spatial planning is understood both as the input created at the European level and the outcomes on the ground in the member states, can we start to understand its effects and influence.

The dissertation also put the conceptual framework into use in investigating the Europeanisation of planning in Austria and Finland. It presented examples for the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European policies by domestic actors in these countries. By understanding Europeanisation from within, findings are not so much guided by what the researcher deems significant, for example a specific policy, but by what domestic actors regard as relevant and meaningful in their work. This perspective helps to highlight inconsistencies and simplified assumptions we might have about the importance of certain policies. ESPON, for example, is often regarded as a cornerstone of European spatial planning. However, based on the interviews conducted in the course of this study, it seems to play a minor role in planning practice, especially at the regional and local level. While it might thus be a cornerstone for European spatial planning *research*, its relevance for planning *practice* seems limited. This exemplifies that we cannot take for granted that European policies reach domestic actors, and that these actors respond to them in a way envisioned at the European level. Understanding Europeanisation from within can contribute to highlighting such disparities between planning research, policy and practice.

5.4   Implications and Recommendations

After elaborating on the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning, it is important not to lose sight of the potential implications of this study. This section thus presents recommendations for planning researchers, planning educators and policy makers.

Recommendations for planning researchers
Hopefully, this dissertation as a whole is relevant to researchers in the field of European spatial planning. However, it might be feasible to formulate a few concrete recommendations, which can be derived from this study. First, it is good to remind ourselves of the fact that policies do not exist on their own. It is always organisations, and ultimately individuals within those organisations, who are responsible for the ideation, formulation, development, negotiation, enactment, translation, application, interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of policies. This might sound somewhat obvious, and many of these aspects have been scrutinised in the scientific discourse with a view to actors. Yet, it might also be worthwhile to remind ourselves of this actor dimension, especially when talking about abstract concepts and processes like European spatial planning. As this dissertation set out to show, actors may often be the crucial factor why something works or does not work, or why it works in the way it does. While legal provisions and administrative structures thus provide a framework for public policies such as planning, they are not always sufficient to explain reality due to the scope of discretion and leeway of the actors involved. This seems especially true for European spatial planning issues, which are characterised by fuzziness and ambiguity in planning research and practice alike. The second recommendation calls for more consistency regarding

what we mean by European spatial planning (or whichever term is used to refer to European policies affecting spatial planning). This might sound counter-intuitive since this dissertation has taken a very broad approach and has even been reluctant to define which policies European spatial planning entails. However, a broad view is necessary to identify differences in interpretations, and to get a grasp on which policies are regarded as important. If we, as planning researchers, decide which policies matter for planning, we impose our own interpretations of the issues in a way that may differ from those of the practitioners.

Recommendations for planning educators

This dissertation has not addressed planning education as a central theme. Yet, I would like to express one recommendation for those concerned with planning education. Namely, to make their students aware of what happens at the European level regarding planning. Of course, basic knowledge about European spatial planning is already part of the planning curriculum in many universities. At the same time, however, many practitioners I interviewed seemed fearful of the complexity associated with European policies and were thus not eager to be actively working with European issues. Although the names of policies might change regularly, European policy-making follows a few principles, such as the different types of policy interventions, which could be communicated to students and might diminish insecurities later in their professional lives.

Recommendations for policy makers

Ultimately, I would like to highlight a few recommendations for policy makers. To formulate these recommendations is undoubtedly the most difficult part, because the perspective of a policy maker is the least familiar to me. Nonetheless, I would like to remind the domestic policy makers that they have an ownership of processes. Some actors still wait for the European policies to bring results, while others have already realised that ideas, arguments and instruments are already there, ready to be applied. Of course, obstacles in doing so should not be downplayed. Administrative complexity and limited resources hinder many domestic actors in dedicating the time necessary to engage in European spatial planning. It might thus be necessary to rethink the administrative paradigm of working on European issues on top of everything else. If a fair and feasible arrangement is found that allows domestic actors to delve into European policies, organisations like the Finnish Regional Councils could really play a key role in linking domestic actors with the European level.

Concerning European policy makers, I identified three main issues to consider. I cannot call them recommendations, because they are not so much solutions as challenges. First, European actors should think about how to strengthen the governance capacity of domestic organisations. It might be worthwhile to consider setting aside some funding for structures and organisations, not only projects. These could give permanence to the interrelation of European and domestic policies. However, concerns regarding legitimacy should be duly acknowledged, as the EU cannot interfere with the planning systems in the member states.

Second, European actors might have to rethink the EU's "one size fits all" approach, if European policies create a differential impact on the ground. While there is no obvious solution to resolve this, it needs to be acknowledged that simple European inputs can lead to complex outcomes in domestic contexts. The ongoing debates on a potential Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) seem to be a promising step towards this direction (Essig & Kaucic, 2017; Fischer et al., 2014; Medeiros, 2015). As the name suggests, the TIA is intended to anticipate and evaluate territorial impacts of EU policies, although the exact definition of territorial impacts has been changing over time, and has been explored for example in several ESPON studies (ESPON, 2010, 2012, 2013a, 2013b). The studies suggest including environmental, social, economic and administrative aspects, some considering also elements of governance (Fischer et al., 2014; Tennekes & Hornis, 2008). The ideas underpinning the TIA clearly reflect many of the concerns highlighted in this dissertation, thus further pursuit and development of the concept and its practical application can only be encouraged. There are, however, also a few shortcomings related to the TIA. To date, TIA is mainly being discussed in the context of directives, though testing it in the context of other policies and programmes was suggested already (Fischer et al., 2014). Furthermore, the added value of the TIA needs to be apparent, in order not to be perceived as another burden which requires skills, commitment, time and resources from domestic actors. Ultimately, it has to be acknowledged that even an extremely well-thought-out TIA might not be able to account for the leeway of domestic actors in the interpretation, implementation and especially instrumentalisation of European policies. Thus, while the TIA can have a role in drawing attention to the territorial effects of European policies, it might not be sufficient for understanding the processes of Europeanisation.

Third – and this is clearly the most challenging – European actors have to find ways to foster interest in European matters among domestic actors. The sermon, the carrot and the stick are different strategies to nudge domestic actors in the desired direction. However, they are not effective if domestic actors do not take an interest in European policies. European actors thus need to emphasise and communicate the *raison d'etre* of European policies and make it resonate with the concerns of domestic actors.

5.5   Avenues for Future Research

The results presented in this dissertation disclose several avenues for further research. First, more examples of the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European spatial planning could be analysed through the proposed framework in other contexts. This could include scrutinising additional regional and local contexts in Austria and Finland, as well as investigating European spatial planning in other member states. Additional examples could clarify the role of domestic actors, the range of responses to European policies and the importance of the EU for domestic planning practices. Second, future research could address the role of domestic actors in

the European dimension of European spatial planning, i.e. the development and enactment of policies at the European level, which has largely remained outside the scope of this dissertation. Through the uploading of ideas and discourses, domestic actors of course play a major role in European policy-making regarding planning. This would also contribute to the clarification of the European intentions behind policies, which in this dissertation determined the distinction between implementation and instrumentalisation. Third, the concept of instrumentalisation could be explored further. The intention of this study was to highlight how European policies are applied but it did not investigate in detail whether instrumentalisation should be viewed critically. It seems that there are both positive and negative aspects to the instrumentalisation of European policies, and their assessment might be a matter of perspective. Future research could explore the different ways of instrumentalisation in depth and discuss them with a view to legitimacy, democracy and decision-making. Fourth, in research focused on the dimension of agency, the role of and relation between individual and collective actors is particularly interesting. In the context of European spatial planning, it would also be worthwhile to explore the ways in which individual actions are guided by organisational cultures and institutional norms. This could also be an opportunity to relate this research with the discourses on planning cultures. While this dissertation has explored how domestic actors interpret, implement and instrumentalise European spatial planning, future research could address how planning cultures frame the behaviour of domestic actors.

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Articles I-IV

I. Purkarthofer, Eva. 2016. When soft planning and hard planning meet: Conceptualising the encounter of European, national and sub-national planning. European Journal of Spatial Development, 61.

II. Purkarthofer, Eva. 2018. Diminishing borders and conflating spaces in Europe: A storyline to promote soft planning scales. European Planning Studies, volume 26, issue 5, pages 1008-1027. DOI: 10.1080/09654313.2018.1430750

III. Purkarthofer, Eva. 2018. Investigating the partnership approach in the EU Urban Agenda from the perspective of soft planning. European Planning Studies. DOI: 10.1080/09654313.2018.1527294

IV. Purkarthofer, Eva; Mattila, Hanna. 2018. Integrating regional development and planning into "spatial planning" in Finland: The untapped potential of the Kainuu experiment. Administrative Culture, volume 18, issue 2, pages 149-174.

The ties between European Union policies and spatial planning in the member states are manifold, ever-changing and much debated. To clarify these complex connections, this dissertation suggests distinguishing between three types of European influences: financial instruments, legal regulations and discursive policy documents. Each of these types of policy interventions has diverse implications for planning actors and affects urban and regional development in certain ways. This dissertation argues that in order to understand these effects, it is necessary to scrutinise the application of EU inputs in national, regional, and local contexts. It draws on examples from planning practice in Austria and Finland and investigates the interpretation, implementation and instrumentalisation of European policies. Domestic actors in both countries have their own ways of dealing with European influences and connecting EU policies to their work, which result in differences regarding the perceived and de facto importance of the EU for planning in specific contexts.

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