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## ID 1572 | REVISITING THE CONCEPTS OF SCALE AND RESCALING IN RELATION TO THE EU MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGIES

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**ABSTRACT** : Seeking to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the processes of rescaling in European macro-regional strategies, this paper aims to develop and test a conceptual framework to explain the underlying processes of rescaling. In an attempt to draw on the conceptual gateways in the main debates of scale and rescaling, we observe a mismatch with empirical observations on how stakeholders construct scale. As a result of a structured literature review, and based on empirical observations in the Danube region, we suggest that the key to understanding rescaling processes is the conceptualization of scale as a construct, constantly contested through multiple dimensions. Drawing upon recent developments within planning literature arguing for a co-existence between relational and territorial spaces and our empirical information, the paper suggests a multidimensional conceptualization of scale of four dimensions: (i) regulatory/jurisdictional; (ii) funding/resources; (iii) knowledge/values and (iv) network. We argue that scales consist of four co-existing dimensions which have impacts on social and economic relations as well as policy-making. Through the analysis of the Danube Region example the paper concludes that processes of rescaling often occur indirectly. We observe that case stakeholders make use of networks and knowledge at the macro-regional level in order to influence decisions in the funding and regulatory dimensions of the national and EU level.

**KEYWORDS:** scale, territoriality, rescaling, EU macro-regions, Danube Region, transport, navigation

### 1 INTRODUCTION

European macro-regional strategies aim to address common “functional challenges” and coordinate policy responses across multiple countries (EC 2013). Starting with the development of macro-regional strategies for the Baltic Sea (2009) and the Danube Region (2011), they have subsequently evolved to form a key aspect of European cooperation. Situated between the EU and the nation states, writings from several scholars in human geography, planning and political studies have started to discuss the rescaling of spatial policies in the wake of ongoing European integration (FALUDI 2010, STEAD 2011). Macro-regions have not generally extended political decision-making competences, despite their influence and role in recent policy-making. As macro-regional activities affect existing governance arrangements in more complex ways than representing a new political scale, the paper examines which processes of rescaling in EU policy making can be identified in the case of European macro-regions. Second, the paper questions how scalar constructions influenced by macro-regional activities can be explained. In analysing the various processes of rescaling and the ways stakeholders shape scalar structuration, we faced the challenge to

explain our empirical observations based on the existing theorization of scale. Hence, we third consider what we can learn for the theorization of 'scale' from these findings.

Starting in the 1980s, academic literature witnessed a considerable growth in debate around conceptualizations of 'scale' and processes of 'rescaling'. We summarize these academic debates in four phases. In the first phase social theorists and human geographers such as TAYLOR (1981, 1987) and SMITH (1981, 1984, 1990) engaged in theorization of scale and scalar organization of society. In the second phase in the 1990s and the early 2000s, contributions disputed the changing role of nation states in the context of globalization and European Integration. In seeking to overcome the notion of scale as 'taken-for-granted' most contributions were affiliated with forms of neo-Marxist (e.g. SMITH 1995; BRENNER 1999 A/B) or regulation theory (e.g. SWYNGEDOUW 1997A/B, JESSOP 1997, COLLINGE 1999,). The third phase was marked by poststructuralist writing challenging these political-economic approaches by disputing the use of the concept of scale as such (MARSTON 2001, MARSTON ET AL. 2005). More recently, scalar literature has turned to highlighting the overlaps of both strands in following a constructivist perspective, albeit their opposing philosophical roots (MackKinnon 2012).

These debates have helped to understand the nature of 'scale' and develop different perceptions. Nevertheless, the translations of these conceptualizations for analysis remains complex and challenging. More concretely, we argue that this theorization elucidates a processual understanding of scale but does not offer gateways to explain how scale is contested in a structured way. Seeking to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the processes of rescaling, we argue that scalar theorization now needs to go a step further and explain how scale is constructed.

Most studies of rescaling either focus on the reasons and major developments triggering rescaling (e.g. globalisation), the different objects of rescaling processes, and/or the direction of processes of rescaling and the involvement of different groups of stakeholders. Many definitions of rescaling exist. Some follow a narrow understanding of the reallocation of state power. Others encompass modes of governance, policy relationships, agendas, networks or ideas (GUALINI 2006, STEAD ET AL. 2015). Interestingly however, many recent empirical studies of spatial rescaling in environmental and planning studies often consider 'scale' from the perspective of changes to jurisdictional arrangements and competence-shifts (KERN & LÖFFELSEND 2004, MC CARTHY & COHEN 2015; see also contributions in EPS Special Issue 2006 14:7).

As a result of empirical observations in the Danube region, we suggest that the key to understanding rescaling processes is an alternative conceptualization of scale as a construct, constantly contested through multiple dimensions alongside different fluidities. Hence, the paper aims to develop and test an alternative conceptual framework that reflects on the rationales of scalar activities in policymaking. This then enables us to explain the reasons and processes behind rescaling and the implications for scalar structuration. We approach the development of a framework by means of a structured literature review of existing conceptualizations of scale and rescaling and by drawing on our empirical observations research. The paper aims to contribute to the broader debate of 'scale' conceptualisations in support of theorizing and empirically analyzing rescaling.

The paper presents a multidimensional conceptualization of scale and suggests four dimensions: (i) regulatory/jurisdictional; (ii) funding/resources; (iii) knowledge/values; and (iv) network. These dimensions are explicitly and implicitly recognized in literature, most prominently the administrative and network spaces and scales. One point of departure on the theorization of 'scale' is a paper by MACKINNON from 2012 who presents the conceptual overlaps between political-economic approaches and post-structural writing. A second starting point are current developments around the co-existence of relational and administrative spaces within the territoriality debate. We explicitly take up the dimensions of access to funding and resources, existing values and knowledge basis, as well functional spaces, which are acknowledged in scale literature as rationales or parameters for stakeholder's activities. Based on our empirical evidence in the Danube region in the specific policy issue of navigation, we suggest that looking at these explicitly as own dimensions offers explanatory force as to how scalar construction come into being. Examining the recent activities in the thematic cooperation of developing the Danube Waterway under the EU macro-regional strategy for the Danube Region, we illustrate that all of these dimensions are essential within processes of scalar restructuring.

The paper is divided into four main parts. We begin by revisiting conceptualisations of scale in order to identify, understand, explain and interpret processes of rescaling in their complexity in EU policymaking based on a structured literature review. Second, we present an analytical framework, which we then test in the third part of the paper examining the case of the European macro-regional strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). Fourth, we discuss the implications for the further theorization of scale.

## 2 DEBATES ON SCALE AND RESCALING – A REVIEW

### 2.1 CONCEPTUALISATION OF SCALE

The concept of scale has been subject to a very rich academic debate within human geography and, more broadly, social theory. We distinguish between four main phases. The start of the debate around scale is associated with the seminal writings of TAYLOR (1981, 1987) and SMITH (1981, 1984, 1990). In this first phase scholars focused on the theorization of scale as a concept based on different philosophical traditions. In contrast to the materialist views on scale proposed by Taylor and Smith, Hart (1982) drew on the Kantist philosophical tradition and argues that scales are fictive (see Herod (2011) for further exploration).

In the second phase of the debate, mainly in the late 1990s and early 2000s, an important narrative was the changing role of the nation state in times of globalization and European integration alongside debates on new regionalism (KEATING 1997). In general, literature theorizing the ‘politics of scale’ (NEUMANN 2009, cf SMITH, 1992; COX, 1998; SWYNGEDOUW, 1997a/b; 2004; MARSTON, 2000; SHEPPARD/MACMASTER 2004) questioned scalar configuration and processes of scaling, rescaling and descaling. The state of the art around 2000 is summarized by a quote from BRENNER (2001, 592):

“[M]any geographers have elaborated processual notions of scale in their efforts to understand the ways in which entrenched scalar configurations are being reorganized [...]. Rather than viewing scale as a self-evident or pregiven platform for geographical processes, these scholars have introduced more dynamic conceptualizations in order to investigate the contested, and continually evolving, role of scale as a container, arena, scaffolding and hierarchy of sociospatial practices within contemporary capitalism.”

It is in this context that relational thinking became influential in theorizing scale, significantly drawing upon Lefebvrian ideas that territorial organization, social relations and institutional arrangements occur upon different levels, and that hence a spatial fix necessarily involves a scalar fix (1991). Key scholars shaping this discursive shift from more static to dynamic conceptualisations include BRENNER (2001, 2004), SWYNGEDOUW (1992, 1997a/b, 2004), AMIN (2002) and MASSEY (1999, 2005). Both MASSEY and AMIN have been instrumental in perceptions of new power geometries as a result of globalization. They have advocated the importance of networks, and argued for shifts away from the nation state as the primary domain of organization of world economy, maybe towards “spaces of flows” (CASTELLS 2000). SWYNGEDOUW for example conceives “scalar configurations as the outcome of socio-spatial processes that regulate and organize social power relations, such as the contested making and remaking of the European Union or the process of state devolution or decentralization” (2004, p. 26). This may include the “emergence of new territorial scales of governance and the redefinition of existing scales” and hence may result in changing regulations or social, political and economic organization of the Nation State (SWYNGEDOUW 2004, p. 26).

In the first two phases, most authors in the literature were in some way affiliated with certain brands of neo-Marxist theory (e.g. SMITH 1995; BRENNER 1998, 1999 a/b) or regulation theory (SWYNGEDOUW 1997a/b, JESSOP 1997, COLLINGE 1999, UITERMARK 2002). The main arguments brought forward are the social constructiveness or production of scale through various social actors and the historical contingent process of political contestation (DELANEY and LEITNER, 1997). This constructivist perspectives, according to LEITNER, “involves conflict-laden power struggles” of “individuals, groups and institutions” independent whether played out through material or rhetorical practices (2004, p. 238).

In the third phase, post-structuralist writing challenged the political-economic approaches (MARSTON 2000, MARSTON ET AL. 2005, JONES 1998, MOORE 2008, COLLINGE 2005). These researchers argued that the materialist nature of political-economic approaches grants ontological meaning to scale. In contrast, MARSTON ET AL. (2005) suggest “a flat ontology”, arguing to abandon the notion of scale. In

highlighting, the epistemological meaning of scale MOORE (2008) agrees with MARSTON ET AL. denial of an ontological reality of scale, suggesting that “it is not necessary to retain a commitment to the existence of scales in order to analyse the politics of scale“ (2008, p. 213, italics in original). This approach was not uncontroversial (LEITNER/MILLER 2007, COLLINGE 2006).

In the last decade, scalar literature has turned to identifying overlaps between these two major strands, and has offered some interdisciplinary perspectives to scale. The common concern of both POLITICAL ECONOMIC AND POST-STRUCTURALIST WRITING was to overcome the notion of scale as pre-given following the “traditional Euclidian, Cartesian and Westphalian notions” (BRENNER 2001, 592) highlighting the evolutionary components of sociopolitical contestation. MACKINNON emphasised that there is A “shared concern with the construction of scale and how this is shaped by wider social relations and networks providing basis for theoretical providing a basis for theoretical rapprochement and synthesis.” (2011, p. 22). Herod (2011) summarizes the academic debate around scale as presenting opposing views of the nature of scale as static versus evolutionary, epistemological versus ontological, Marxist materialism versus Kantist idealism and the move from topographical to topological conceptions of space and scale.

Most recently, the interdisciplinary perspective has been strengthened by MC COHEN & CARTHY (2015). In the environmental studies there is also a strand of theory-building on the environmental or natural dimensions of scalar configurations (NEUMANN, 2009, MC COHEN & CARTHY 2015, SWYNGEDOUW 2004, 2007, CASH ET AL. 2006). Environmental studies refer to the perimeters of natural resources as scale (e.g. water catchment areas, animal migration corridors) (CASH ET AL. 2006). Serving as a bridging figure between environmental studies and social sciences (SWYNGEDOUW, 2004) notes that “scalar configurations, whether ecological or in terms of regulatory order(s), as well as their discursive and theoretical representation, are [...] an outcome of the perpetual movement of the flux of sociospatial and environmental dynamics”. (2004, 132). Meanwhile, COHEN & MC CARTHY (2015) differentiate between a rescaling to jurisdictional or natural space and make a case that the environmental dimension and ecosystem spaces deserves “to be drawn out more explicit in scalar scholarship” (2015, 3).

Based on the review, we perceive a lacuna in scale literature to move beyond questioning the use of the concept itself towards a deeper understanding as to how scales are contested. Poststructural literature has claimed to expurgate the existence of scales. We however retain the notion of scale for two reasons. First, based on our empirical observation it is a concept that underpins general views of the world and subsequently produces some kind of ‘scalar fixed’ rationales. Secondly, adopting the evolutionary and processual understanding of scale, we perceive scale as a dynamic construct constituted of different horizontal dimensions alongside which stakeholders action radiuses are detectable. This is influenced by recent developments in planning literature.

## 2.2 LEARNING FROM THE TERRITORIALITY DEBATE

Theorisation of scale coincided with close engagement with social theories within human geography, which lead to “a re-thinking of many of the core concepts of the discipline, including space, place, landscape, region and scale” (PAINTER, 2010, p. 1091) under the rise of relational thinking. The vast amount of literature approached scale “in similar fashion to the region” (MACKINNON, 2012) and approaches to ‘territory and territoriality’. Both concepts have undergone substantial transformation through the movement away from the perception of fixed entities according towards a constructivist view.

In the last decade in the human geographic literature, and more explicitly in planning literature, various academics have sought to overcome the dialectic between relational and territorial approaches towards territoriality (HAUGHTON ET AL. 2010, PAINTER 2010, AGNEW 2015, PAASI 2004). For example, PAASI AND ZIMMERBAUER (2015, 2) highlight that “[e]specially researchers studying the links between regional and urban planning, governance and policymaking have stressed the need to balance the relational and territorial views.” Processes of planning often remain situated in their jurisdictional boundaries and competence fields in need of coping with these overlapping developments, networks and so on (COCHRANE and WARD 2012). With regard to spatial configurations, the introduction of the concept of “soft spaces” by ALLMENDINGER ET AL. (2009) was perceived as a cornerstone. The concept reflects the mutually constitutive ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ spaces of governance. It is not surprising, that planning scholars welcomed this framework to think with, and it rapidly found basis for explaining many regional configurations in Europe and worldwide (e.g. FALUDI 2011, PETTERSON/FRISK 2016, SIELKER 2016).

The concepts of scale and territoriality are closely intertwined with a scale describing its relation to other spaces. The overlapping notion of different types of spaces is closely connected to somehow scaled networks and frameworks that are increasingly porous and malleable. Recently JESSOP (2016) presented a modified territory, scale, place and network (TSPN) scheme to explain the relations between these core concepts. Here he conceives the notion of 'soft spaces' as "networks of differently scaled places" (p. 24). The seemingly insurmountable opposing understanding of constructivist views as opposed to the Westphalian notion of scale is increasingly dismissed. The persistence of state structures and some elements of territoriality for state structuration have lately been perceived as contingent, but subject to change as well. Hence, some constructivist thinking, and even poststructuralist thinking, has made its peace with the idea that territorial spaces are as well never fixed, though they are more resistant to change (HEROD, 2011).

In line with these arguments, we perceive both the existence of networks as well as administrative or state spaces as elements of scalar structuration. Before embarking on the presentation of our multidimensional framework, we now turn to the literature focusing on the processes of rescaling.

### 2.3 CONCEPTUALISATION OF RESCALING

Following McCann rescaling can refer to "the process in which policies and politics that formerly took place at one scale are shifted to others in ways that reshape the practices themselves, redefine the scales to and from which they are shifted, and reorganize interactions between scales" (2003, p. 162). Narrow and broader definitions of rescaling can be found (GUALINI 2006). A narrow understanding of rescaling describes the reallocation of power and competences, particularly over resources and regulations (FÜRST 2006). A broader understanding of rescaling encompasses the restructuring of all kinds of governance, cooperation and social power relations. Most academic writing with a conceptual interest in rescaling is to be found in critical geographic literature thereby disapproving perceptions, which are conceived to have an underlying rationale of a purely state-centring rescaling of power (Brenner, 1999). The introduction of relational thinking and the post-structuralist argumentation were important contributors to a broader notion of rescaling, in which the social construction of all forms of interaction served as an explanatory background. In the context of European integration KEATING (2013), writing on the issue of new regionalism, captures rescaling as "the process by which systems of social regulative, collective action, representation and legitimation are migrating to new territorial levels" KEATING 2013, ix).

The various understandings of the processes of rescaling reflect a divide between relational and some kind of 'territorial' thinking. UITERMARK (2002, p. 748) notes that "usually, the re-scaling literature leaves the 'softer' issues aside and focusses on the 'hard' issue of power". His view is that "both of these issues are equally important with regard to regulation". However, there is often a gap between empirical studies and these theoretical debates. The theoretical debate has advanced and begun to acknowledge the importance of these 'soft' issues. Somewhat detached from the conceptualisations in most empirical studies particularly within environmental or planning studies the question of re-scaling remains largely associated with questions of changes in authority, power, legitimacy or more broadly speaking increasing influence in processes, on decision-making (KERN & LÖFFELSEND 2008, see as well EPS Special Issue 2006 14:7).

The rescaling literature has generally focused on one or more of the four realms (or questions): (i) the directions of scaling processes (from where to where?); (ii) the reasons for changes and contestations leading to 'scalar jumping' (why?); (iii) the objects of rescaling (what?); and (iv) the involvement of different interest groups, agents, networks or actors involved and the implications for governance and influences of different groups (who?).

Much of the scaling literature in empirical studies focus on the first realm, although not always explicitly. The question of directions of rescaling is part of the discussion on hierarchically nested scales. An important element of scale theorization was to show the entangledness of the different scales, most importantly the relation between the local and the global scale (SMITH 1993, BRENNER 1999, COX 1998b, SWYNGEDOUW 1997). In times of globalization, the 'hollowing out' of the nation state was an important narrative, giving more importance to regionalism and global cooperation (BRENNER 1999). In an empirical case study in the context of transnational cooperation for sustainable development in the Baltic Sea region KERN & LÖFFELSEND (2004) describe the outcome of new governance arrangements

as a transfer of national authority in three directions: (i) upwards to the level of international and supranational institutions; (ii) sideways to civil society actors; and (iii) downwards to subnational actors. This distinction is helpful in explaining the directions of rescaling for example in the context of environmental governance (STEAD, 2014).

The reasons for rescaling are sometimes presented in relation to large societal phenomena and economic forces such as capitalist influences on economic systems and structures (e.g. COX, 2013, BRENNER 2004) or the agendas of particularly influential stakeholders (e.g. SMITH A. 2013, Special Issue in Political Geography 17 (1) 1998, MARSTON 2000).

In accordance with the narrow definition of rescaling, the issues of authority, power or legitimacy can be affected. For example, FÜRST (2006, p.9) argues that “a shift in political agendas, problem-solving and policy-legitimization” can be seen as rescaling. Meanwhile, in the context of European cooperation STEAD ET AL. (2015) argue that rescaling can include “policy making agendas, processes, networks or power, or alternatively [...] ideas, argumentation or identities related to policy” (p. 105-106).

Another realm identified in rescaling literature concerns the question ‘who’ is involved in scale making. For example, MEADOWCROFT (2002) links scalar construction to the involvement of different interest groups, arguing that rescaling leads to broader and more inclusive processes, but at the same time contributes to more fragmented and differentiated approaches as different groups participate in different contexts, according to their interests (MEADOWCROFT, 2002). In his early writings, Neil Smith develops the idea of ‘scale jumping’, describing the “ability of certain social groups and organizations to move to higher levels of activity” (MACKINNON, 2011). The notion of ‘scale bending’ (SMITH 2004) describes that ties between certain scales can be undermined by social groups and individuals mostly in the context of “fragmentation of pre-existing scales” (SMITH 2004, 2005).

Many empirical studies adopt rather narrow definitions of rescaling (see above). Given the rich debate on scale and scalar configurations, it is surprising how little empirical work has been presented from these perspectives.

### **3 TOWARDS A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYZING RESCALING PROCESSES**

#### **3.1 BRINGING THE SCALE AND RESCALING DEBATES AND EMPIRICAL OBSERVATIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

The conceptual framework set out below has been developed with the aim of explaining processes of rescaling in policy-making processes in EU macro-regions, which contain large networks involving a great variety of actors. The framework specifically addresses how processes, ideas and competences move across different scales and are transferred between them, and by whom. The case of the macro-regional strategies serves to highlight rescaling in the context of a multiplicity of ‘layers’ of policy and scales.

The initial development of macro-regions questioned the development of a new scale of policy intervention (Stead 2011). Applying PERKMAN’S (2007) framework for the construction of new scales in three steps (political mobilization, governance building, strategic unification), macro-regions can be considered as a new scale. However, we do not limit ourselves to describing institutionalization processes, we also identify the interlinkages and the entangledness with other scales. In line with McCann’s observations on the “reorganization of interactions between scales” (2003), we suggest that new forms of cooperation lead to changes at other scales.

We identify a variety of processes of rescaling, the objects of which are not a priori known. While the results of the various attempts for scalar reorganization can be clearly identified, the underlying processes remain largely ‘behind the scenes’. Explaining the processes of rescaling is complex but the rescaling literature has a tendency for the oversimplification of analytical schemes for the analysis of competence shifts (e.g. sideways, upwards or downwards).

Our framework is influenced by arguments around contested rather than static theorization of scale. The two most helpful starting points for the framework are related to the construction of scale and the co-existence of networks and statehood scaling in scalar configurations. We agree with the concern of

political-economic and poststructuralist scholars on a social and political constructivist view towards scalar configuration. In line with the above, we perceive scale as constantly contested arenas and networks, which are not an a priori given. Generally, our framework connects with ideas from HEROD (2011, xvi) who argues that “there is always a tension between tendencies towards stabilization and those towards destabilization, even if at any one moment one of these appears to have won out”.

Much of the scale literature focusses on the question whether scale is perceived as ontologically or epistemological. In our attempt to analyse the ongoing processes it is secondary to us whether to characterize scale as ontological or epistemological, but are convinced that the effects of ‘scalar politics’ (MACKINNON, 2011) have material effects. However, we follow the post-structuralist claim that it is not ‘scale per se’ as a conceptual given leading to its imposition on aspects of social and political practices. Hence, the conceptual framework focusses on ‘scalar’ practices as a way of identifying processes of stabilization or destabilization of scales, or ‘in-between spaces’ given the non-fixity.

We are influenced by recent developments in planning literature with its concept of soft spaces and fuzzy boundaries and the idea to overcome the simplistic dichotomy between scale as purely hierarchical elements of statehood levels and the idea of overlapping arenas. We believe that scalar configurations, be it in the frame of statehood scales or network scales, are always contested. More specifically, we perceive the construction of scale as mutually constitutive of the ‘hard’ as well as the ‘soft’ elements overlapping networks with state actors as one important impulse. In order to understand scalar structuration and the underlying social relations we see both the ‘softer’ and the ‘harder’ issues of rescaling as those which manifest the contestation processes. Furthermore, we argue that there are multiple dimensions of scale (or arenas) in which policy-making is taking place. This leads to a position, where apart from the jurisdictionally scales, commonly organized in the layers global, European, national, regional and local, numerous ‘in-between-spaces’ (PAINTER 2010) develop that come to form their own scales, often transgressing these layers.

As a result, and based on empirical observations in practice, we suggest that the key to understanding rescaling processes is an alternative conceptualization of scale as a construct, constantly contested through multiple dimensions alongside different fluidities. Hence, we theorise scale in differentiating how and through which means and elements, or as we call it dimensions, scalar production comes into effect.

### 3.2 THE NATURE OF THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

We suggest that scale can be conceptualized through four dimensions with different fluidities: (i) regulatory/jurisdictional; (ii) funding/resources; (iii) knowledge/value; and (iv) network. These dimensions are derived from explicit and implicit recognition in literature, as well as from our experiences in practice. Most obvious from the literature are the dimensions concerning regulatory/jurisdictional and network. We concur with COX’S approach (1998 a/b) that scales reflect the overlapping nature of different dimensions of scalar configurations, including legitimacy questions and network elements. This academic debates mirrors our experiences in the EU macro-regions. Stakeholders are well aware of their networks as well as the administrative spaces that serve as a parameter to their activities. Stakeholders recognize both relational and administrative spaces, and both influence their scalar activities. In addition, arguments around knowledge and values as well as resources and access to funding provide explanatory factors when looking at how and why stakeholders influence scalar politics. These two elements have implicitly been regarded both in post-structural and political economic literature as regards to stakeholders motivations and reasons for scalar politics (see for example MARSTON 2000 on the resources of middle class women or SMITH 2004 on scale bending). In our approach, we attribute these elements a more explicit role. Before applying the framework, we first offer a brief characterization of each dimension.

The first dimension refers to the regulatory or jurisdictional dimension of scalar construction. In policy-making processes, as in the case we will illustrate later, the jurisdictional and legitimate dimension remains an important notion of political action. All types of regulatory frameworks ranging from jurisdictional or legislative frameworks to all kinds of regulations, provisions or formalized procedures are one part of scalar construction. Depending on the phenomena analyzed, this can on the one hand involve regulations in form of jurisdictional means as for example represented by the state scales. On the other hand, this dimension describes as well different types regulatory framework at all scales (such as agreed rules on the household level).

The second dimension ascribes funding and resources as one element to scale construction. The examples we choose to illustrate our approach towards scalar construction and phenomena are from policy related processes rather than social phenomena. However, we see resources such as human resources, and financial means as one element allowing, restricting or facilitating all kind of activities. As regards to the question of what is either rescaled or influenced by developments at other scales, many scholars are concerned with changes in budgets or the (re)allocation of (human) resources from one scale to another (e.g. PERKMANN 2007, MARSTON 2000).

The third dimension we term as 'knowledge/value dimension'. With this dimension, we draw attention to the somewhat intangible parts of scalar construction reflected in 'common knowledge' and even more widely shared or sometimes contradicting societal values. All human activities are influenced by underlying values and knowledge. Coinciding with the definitions presented above, the narrow definition reflects on processes that come into effect through the jurisdictional and the resource dimension (e.g. budgets or human resources). The broader definition as well includes processes that come into effect through the knowledge and the network dimension (e.g. policy agendas or ideas). This dimension hence allows to reflect on who has what knowledge and what is discussed at what level, as well as on the values and identities involved. In the diversity of scalar related phenomena transfer of knowledge to different levels or the changing nature of discourses and hegemonic relations is important. Whereas some phenomena relate to knowledge in terms of information (such as problems of implementation in transport project) others relate to values and knowledge which are also moving across scales. Some scholars build their arguments explicitly or implicitly on examples where knowledge, values or identities persists (see for example MOORE (2008) on the Bosnian-Serbian identity and overlaps with traditional state boundaries). Knowledge and values can spread and transgress scales through public interactions and sometimes enter into the narrative of 'common sense' or the predominant 'canon of values'. The resulting scales here are to be considered as more fluid and porous and not necessarily geographically locatable.

Fourth, we see the network dimension as an important, fluid part of scalar construction. This dimension closely reflects relational and post-structural thinking as it refers to all kinds of networks, formally or informally construed. Networks transgress around different dimensions and layers at the same time.

Networks reflect the notion of 'spaces of flows' (CASTELLS, 2000) and the increasing role of informal, formal, temporary and institutionalised networks through which scales are built.

We reason that this multidimensional approach to scale offers a way to understand how scales are contested, formed or reoriented. Through these four dimensions scalar configurations come into effect. At the same time actors and stakeholders construct scale moving alongside these dimensions. Because of these interactions the different dimensions are constantly contested, triggered by social, economic and political changes. However, these dimensions differ in their fluidities to change, with jurisdictional levels to be on a general level rather resistant compared to networks that might be loosely organized (see Fig. 1).

Below, we apply this framework to analyse the case study of EU Strategy for the Danube Region strategy (EUSDR) and examine the extent to which this framework can provide useful starting points to conceptualize scale as a combination of co-existing arenas of these four dimensions.

#### **4 TESTING THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK WITH AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGY**

The first European macro-regional strategy was launched in 2009 for the Baltic Sea Region. This was soon followed by the development of the Danube Region Strategy (2011), and later the Adriatic-Ionian Strategy (2014) and the Alpine Region (2015). One key idea of macro-regional cooperation is to tackle common challenges through the development of a joint strategy by countries in the same geographic area. The geophysical characteristics are the building blocks for various areas of cooperation (e.g. navigation or environment). The EUSDR is organized in priority areas, representing the thematic foci for cooperation. The EUSDR addresses a total of eleven policy fields ranging from transport, environment towards education or security matters. Starting from this general prioritization in support of joint activities, the EUSDR sets the goal to make the Danube a better navigable river (EC 2011). For each priority area a governance structure is defined in order to coordinate implementation activities.



In this section, we seek to illustrate the dynamics of rescaling in the case of transport policies contained in the EUSDR. This issue has been chosen for two reasons. First, the use of the Danube river as an important transport corridor has been impetus for Danube cooperation. Second, this policy theme has received relatively high-level political attention and has become one of the most active fields of cooperation.

Methodologically, the case study is based on a textual analysis of meeting minutes, progress reports of the navigation/waterway priority area and official EUSDR documents. In addition, it is based on interviews with representatives from the Steering Committees, the European Commission as well as from the Shipping Associations in the Danube Region.

#### **4.1 SETTING THE SCENE – TRANSPORT POLICIES AND PROJECTS IN THE DANUBE MACRO-REGION**

The EUSDR involves the cooperation of 14 Danubian countries on the issue of transport along the Danube River corridor. The issue of navigation was very central to the development of a macro-regional strategy, not least since Commissioner Hahn called on national transport ministers to increase transport volumes on the Danube River by 20% between 2011 and 2020. The development of joint projects to achieve this goal is summarized below.

Soon after adoption of the macro-regional strategy, work began on implementing Priority Area 1a (“Mobility – Inland Waterways”) under the lead of Austrian and Romanian Coordinators with support of the Technical Secretariat at the ViaDonau GmbH, the Austrian waterway operator. A governance structure was set up for the implementation of the Priority Areas with a Steering Group as the central governance element. The group was formed of representatives from the 14 countries including representatives from public authorities, such as Ministries or Waterways and Shipping Offices. Several governmental and non-governmental organisation such as the Danube Commission, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River organisations or ProDanube International are observers to this committee. The committee is responsible for decision-making on joint goals and strategies. The decisions have, however, neither a formal character nor do they represent binding agreements.

In a second step, this Steering Group prepared the “Luxemburg Declaration” (Danube Ministers, 2012), signed by most of the Danube Transport Ministers, which provides political commitment to the development of a more effective waterway. In a third step, the Steering Group developed the “Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan” based on a NEWADA project (FRMMP, 2014). This project included waterway companies. It covers the navigable tributaries in each country and the critical sectors. In addition, public authorities defined so-called common minimum Levels of Service as goals as well as different waterway maintenance activities. In a fourth step, the Master Plan was presented to the Danube Ministers, who subsequently gave it their endorsement (DANUBE MINISTERS 2014). Fifth, the Master Plan built the basis for National Roadmaps (2015) and the development of specific implementation activities. One example is the FAIRway Project whose scope is to procure the necessary equipment to carry out pilot activities for hydrological serves and to allow the identification of innovative approaches for fairway rehabilitation and upgrade. The eight beneficiaries from six countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia) obtained funding through the Connecting Europe Facilities. In February 2016 the FAIRway Project was launched with a total budget of ca. €22 million with ca. €19 million from EU contributions.

The development of joint waterway development policies for the Danube from 2011 to 2016 was triggered by discussions in the new macro-regional committees, which in return sought the necessary political support. The primary stakeholder triangle in its development are public authorities and observers in the steering group, transport ministers and waterway companies. The European Commission served an advisory role in the Steering committee meetings where the Master Plan development and the Project development were high on the agenda.

In sum, the macro-regional level represents a new cooperation arena, which over the last 5 years has led to project development and funding allocations at different levels. Below, we seek to illustrate how the ESUDR influenced scalar politics, and to what extent these developments represent processes of rescaling.

## 4.2 APPLYING THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL FRAMEWORK

Drawing on the four dimensions presented above, we elaborate on the ways in which the primary stakeholder groups explored and influenced these dimensions in the EUSDR generally as well as the FAIRway Project more specifically.

### NETWORK DIMENSION

The interest to initiate and join new networks across the Danube countries was high during the early phases of developing the EUSDR (Blanked Name 2012, Blanked Name 2016). The Danube Cooperation is largely led by existing networks with different degrees of institutionalization. The networks created by this cooperation are manifold and reflect the overlapping hard and new soft spaces (Blanked Name 2014). These occur through the new informal, consultative governance structure of the EUSDR itself as well as in projects and wide range of activities and new institutionalized networks (such as the Danube-INCOnet, see website [danube-region.eu](http://danube-region.eu)). The networks cover different territories and show different constructions as regards to those four dimensions. Some build on informal arrangements, whereas others have been created in response to changes in the funding or legislative dimensions of scale.

The example of the FAIRway project illustrates how the new networks are closely shaped by the Priority Areas set out in the EUSDR. The implementation of activities in view of navigation improvements are supported and induced by the steering group, a new network itself. This committee offered the opportunity for the representatives of the public authorities to provide guidelines for joint activities through the decision on joint goals. The different interest groups and observers were able to raise concerns and bring needs to the attention of representatives. The Priority Area Coordinators based in Austria and Romania involved a technical secretariat with the *viaDonau GmbH*, a company founded to tackle difficulties of Danube shipping. The official framing of an EU strategy helped this network to make its voice heard at the group of the Transport Ministers. Through this 'upscaled' network of interest groups and public authorities in cooperation with the waterway associations and shipping companies, stakeholders were able to seek political support of the national transport ministers as a first step. This high-level political support then serves as basis to argue for changes in the legal and the funding framing. For the stakeholders involved and this new network the next step was to create an elementary and coherent knowledge.

### KNOWLEDGE/VALUE DIMENSION

In the primary stages of macro-regional cooperation, the Priority Area Coordinators provided an overview of existing activities. The naming of the cooperation after the Danube river initiated broader debates as to whether there is a Danube identity. According to statements by different interviewees, cooperation and coordination between the different ministries and associations on the issue of navigability led to a revived feeling of being focused towards a common goal.

*ViaDonau* initiated and coordinated the development of the Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan following the *Newada* and *Newada DUO* project. The goal was to identify in more detail joint activities around quantitative data. The Masterplan named the challenges of the navigable tribunals and summarized data from the 11 riparian states. This includes country reports laying out how many days in a year the Danube was navigable (e.g. the daily draught or dredging activities). Based on this, the Steering Group identified the sections in which the joint goals of 2.5 m of draught and 5.25 m minimum height under bridges 365 days per year are not fulfilled. These discussions subsequently shaped the discourse along the upper and lower Danube. Through the EUSDR process, information was made accessible to all stakeholders in the region. On the one hand, the knowledge itself was enhanced, then 'upscaled' and finally, led to new 'knowledge arenas'. On the other hand, these developments and the coordinated project was used to inform policy-makers and impact funding decisions on other levels, namely national and EU-wide funding.

## RESOURCES/CAPACITIES DIMENSION

The dimensions of resources and capacities is a crucial dimension in scalar politics, often being the object of activities. In the Danube Region, the immense numbers of stakeholders involved (e.g. more than a 1000 participants at the Annual Forum in Ulm in 2015) reflects the allocation of human resources to activities related to the relatively new cooperation. However, one of the main important rationales of macro-regional cooperation are the three NO's: no new legislation, no new institutions and no new budgets. At first instance, macro-regional cooperation seems not to imply rescaling of allocation of funds.

The FAIRway project, however, reveals that stakeholders used the knowledge and network dimension of scale to influence funding decisions in the Connecting Europe Facility. Based on discussions in the Steering Group, the FAIRway project was developed in close cooperation by the Steering Group members with consultation for example from representatives of the European Commission (DG-Move). In addition, the results of the process were regularly directed towards political stakeholders by the Steering Committee members. An example of this is the political leverage triggered by the Transport Ministers endorsement of the FRMMP. As the EU funds aim to implement MRS, the respective funding decision by the CEF is directly linked to the EUDRS. Though not implying new funds the EUSDR has had an impact on the allocation of existing funds at the EU level. At the same time, the perimeter of the different projects is connected to the territorial coverage of the Danube Region. Therefore, this level has gained importance in terms of the use of resources and capacities, which in return necessarily implies changes at other scales.

## REGULATORY/JURISDICTIONAL DIMENSION

The macro-regional cooperation builds on informal documents which are not binding (e.g. the Strategy Document and the Action Plan). Whilst the MRS in itself does not imply new legislation, it does offer a new framework which changes regulatory arrangements at other levels. One consequence is that the modus operandi for the development of projects has changed and the decision on funding is coupled to the support of the macro-regional Steering Groups.

The case presented here provides an example on how the macro-regional discourse shapes the political framing. The Transport Ministers did not provide new legislation with the Luxemburg Declaration. Nevertheless, this document has shaped ensuing decisions in the national and EU-wide context. National ministries are now more likely to take action that coincides with the priorities contained in the macro-regional strategy. In addition, the development of the FRMMP has provided a basis for joint goals, which are being introduced into national discussions and regulatory frameworks. These frameworks provide the building blocks for national funding decisions.

## 5 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

One of the goals of the paper was to analyse processes of rescaling in EU policy making in the example of macro-regional strategies. Based on a structured literature review around scale and rescaling as well as the empirical insights from the case study we developed a framework for analysis. In this paper, we argue for a multidimensional understanding of scale, where scalar (re)structuration can be explained through stakeholders interactions alongside four dimensions: regulatory/jurisdictional, funding/resources, knowledge/values, and network. This four-dimensional framework was tested in the Danube macro-region and the FAIRway project. We contend that processes of both stabilization and destabilization can be observed in rescaling processes.

### 5.1 DISCUSSION: HOW DO PROCESSES OF RESCALING OCCURE IN THE EUSDR?

The example of the EU Danube Region reveals the complexity of scalar structuration, configuration and production. The example shows how the macro-region and its strategy are composed and constructed by different overlapping 'in between scales'. The macro-regional developments indirectly influence those at other scales. These depend on the topics addressed, as in the case of navigation.

The example presented in this paper shows how stakeholders crossed over different scales and made use of the different dimensions of scale as a way to influence political priorities and decision-making at the EU and national level. The Steering Group is a new network through which public authorities can enhance their position in respect to the national context. In the case presented above, the knowledge and the network dimension were essential for stakeholders to gain political support. This, in turn, led to allocations of resources. Just looking at the example of the Steering Group, essentially driven by some active public authorities and the Technical Secretariat of the Via Donau GmbH, shows how this new network influenced the political decision-making and funding at the national and EU level. In order to achieve this goal they used the knowledge dimension in providing a new information base and directed this development towards the network dimension at the macro-regional level. The transport ministers draw on the regulatory framework, whereas the shipping companies draw on the network and knowledge dimension to influence the other dimensions. Clearly, different stakeholders use different dimensions to influence developments and change political priorities.

The multidimensional framework appears to be a useful tool to detect how scalar restructuring occurs. One example presented here was the development of the FAIRway project, which is a direct result of the macro-region and the politicization of Danube River related activities. The example illustrates that all processes and their outcomes are connected by the developments within the four dimensions, and that all of these dimensions are essential within processes of restructuring, albeit depending on the phenomena and actors involved with diverging weight. For example, the use of the knowledge dimension on the macro-regional level influences the funding dimension on the EU level.

## 5.2 DISCUSSION: IMPETUS FOR FURTHER THEORIZING OF SCALE?

We argue that following the developments of scale literature over the last few decades, theory now needs to enter into a new phase focusing on how scale is contested and the process behind rescaling. This next step can help to overcome the mismatch between theory and empirical complexity. In providing a conceptual framework, we aim to offer one approach as to how scalar construction can be theorized.

In our framework development we were guided by the idea to overcome the dialectic of scale as a purely hierarchical element of statehood levels and the idea of overlapping network-arenas. Inspired by the recent developments in the planning literature, arguing for a co-existence of relational and territorial approaches to space, we assume the co-existence of more resistant dimensions of scale as well as more fluid dimensions of scale. When analyzing territorial policies, such as transport, we are hesitant to expurgate the role of the statehood levels too fast and reduce it to a purely network notion. On the contrary, we argue that scales consist of four co-existing dimensions through which scales become apparent and through which effect is taken on the social relations and policy-making. Agents make use of these different dimensions according to their means, and hence construct "scale".. At the same time, stakeholders move across different dimensions and different levels, where scale may be somewhat difficult to detect.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The paper started from the claim that, despite the richness of literature in theorizing scale, many conceptualisations of scale and rescaling do not offer very adequate gateways to explain the multiplicity of 'layers' of policy and scales that we observed empirically. Based on a structured literature review and the empirical evidence we have developed an analytical framework to scrutinize processes of rescaling in the Danube region, focusing on the specific policy issue of transport and navigation. We have then tested this multidimensional framework.

We conclude that the framework offers a helpful starting point to better illustrate how macro-regional cooperation can both destabilize and restabilize existing scalar structuration and leads to the construction of new 'scales'. Further, we conclude that looking at scalar politics explicitly through these dimensions offers explanatory force as to how scalar construction come into being.

More generally, the framework provides a more nuanced way of illustrating which agents and actors are operating within what type of scales and, through which means they become active in influencing

processes. Looking at scale through these dimension helps to identify the interplays between the dimensions and across scales, and hence the ways scales are constructed socially, politically as well as economically. Using this approach, we have identified how scalar politics are entangled through the rationales alongside these dimensions. In the macro-regional case we have illustrated the use of the knowledge and network dimension, as a means to indirectly implicate changes at funding decision at other scales (e.g. national or EU). This not only helps to identify the processes of hardening of soft spaces (METZGER & SCHMITT, 2012) through the scalar dimensions, but also to discover the “relative softening of hard spaces”, a phenomenon which PAASI & ZIMMERBAUER (2015, 14) highlight as underrepresented in literature.

Further testing of this framework is needed in order to verify whether it is applicable to a range of different contexts. In our research, we sought to link the conceptual debate with the empirical evidence through the development of a framework for analysis. More research is needed to better understand the processes of scalar construction, and how changes in scalar politics are coming into force. A key here is to understand how these different dimensions affect each other. Theoretically, the paper has outlined the interlinkages between the scale debate and recent debates around territoriality. Moving away from a simple juxtaposition of philosophically differently informed writings (e.g. neo-Marxist as opposed to poststructuralist writing) as a way to explain the empirical demands more in-depth investigations. Indirect rescaling and cross-dimensional influences are essential to understanding the sociopolitical processes in scalar construction.

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## ID 1597 | TOWARD TERRITORIAL COHESION WITH THE NATIONAL SPATIAL PLAN FOR ALBANIA 2030

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**ABSTRACT:** In late 2013 the National Territorial Planning Agency (NTPA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Urban Development (MUD) of Albania took the initiative of drafting the First National Spatial Plan for Albania 2030(NSPA). The strong need of the country to jump to a new way of sustainable development was backed up by the political will and a new legal planning reform, paving the ground for new integrated planning instruments. Although this is not the first time plans are drafted in Albania this is the first national spatial plan for the country. The methodology for drafting the NSPA was based on three complementary steps: At first the metabolic analysis of the territory was performed for five main systems of the territory: water, food, infrastructure, urban and natural system. Secondly, the Declaration of Vision was drafted through a wide participatory process from different stakeholder form the government administration but also independent experts and academia. Third, the strategic proposals through flexible tools that allow for further exploration for best collaboration between national developing sectors and local governance. The plan followed an open and democratic approach reflected not only in the participatory drafting process but also on the strategic proposals that were offered. It was not the aim of the working group to have a restrictive plan with rigid land use maps but to provide a tool for the national and local administration and also private sector that would guide and advise on the best possible uses of the territory. The plan gives alternatives and describes possibilities for best cross-sector and inter-regional cooperation and proposes strategic projects of national importance for the sustainable development of the territory in the next 15 years. Major public hearing were held across the country, so people could have the chance to express ideas, to be informed but above all to be part of a national plan that would guide the territorial development for the next 15 years. The participation process resulted to a new increased level of awareness of the importance of territorial planning as a cohesive process to different governance sector of the administration. Strengthen institutional capacity for cross-cutting issues of territorial planning resulted essential to achieve a plan that aimed spatial balance, sustainable development, and socio-economic