



PROMOTING EXCELLENCE
IN PLANNING EDUCATION
AND RESEARCH

SECRETARIAT GENERAL
www.aesop-planning.eu / secretariat@aesop-planning.eu

AESOP
SILVER
JUBILEE

Wrocław University of Technology / Faculty of Architecture / ul. Bolesława Prusa 53/55 / 50-317 Wrocław / Poland

10th June 2012

To the National Representatives in the EU Parliament

Horizon 2020 The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)

We, the members of Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) have joined forces to emphasise the importance of enhancing **the role of spatial research on EU research agendas**. Spatial Planning is the discipline integrating the needs and desires of developments towards a sustainable and socio-economically sound future. The identified major societal challenges in Horizon 2020 (in the following called H2020) are about health, demographic changes, energy, climate action, transport and secure societies. All these are strongly space and place related. While the proposed H2020 expresses a desire for integrating research and innovation activities in '*a seamless way in order to achieve the policy objectives*', integrating disciplinary research within the spatial domain is currently not being addressed. Therefore we present you **this urgent call to include Spatial Planning in H2020 in a prominent way**.

We, AESOP, represent university education and research in the subject of Spatial Planning, Urban and Regional Development. As such we are not just a strong and broad interest group in the field of planning, but join the whole range of stakeholders active on the matter. We will be the future applicants for H2020 funding. We appreciate the aim with the H2020 programme and agree about the major challenges designated. We support the importance of complementarity and integration of the various sectoral topics and stress how Spatial Planning is the framework for integrating and implementing visions, policies and objectives for the declared challenges.

In the proposal of H2020 the subject of **planning** being an integrating discipline is not even mentioned. Our concern is therefore that the allocation of funding will solely follow the various sectoral topics and criterias, ignoring complementarity, integration and implementation unless the concept of Spatial Planning and planning processes is made an explicit part of the H2020 programme.

The H2020 programme states '*Citizens have the right to know how their money is invested*', which touches upon management through methods of democratically sound planning processes. The H2020 emphasizes '*goal-orientated and interdisciplinary collaborative research at various scales – from small to large – and by adopting innovative research practices the aim is to identify and realise opportunities of long-term benefit for citizens, the economy and society*'. Spatial Planning is by nature multi-level and interdisciplinary to cover the field of urban and regional developments.



PROMOTING EXCELLENCE
IN PLANNING EDUCATION
AND RESEARCH

SECRETARIAT GENERAL
www.aesop-planning.eu / secretariat@aesop-planning.eu

AESOP
SILVER
JUBILEE

Wroclaw University of Technology / Faculty of Architecture / ul. Bolesława Prusa 53/55 / 50-317 Wrocław / Poland

Spatial Planning is about developing innovative ideas solving major challenges in society as well as the relations between these challenges. For example, with respect to the challenge, '*Reduction of energy consumption and carbon footprint through smart and sustainable usage*' it is said in H2020, that '*new technological, organisational, planning and business models need to be developed and tested at full scale according to the needs and means of cities and communities*'. These innovations are closely connected to the subject of Spatial Planning.

With respect to the challenge, '*Smart, green and integrated transport*' is said that '*New mobility concepts, transport organisation, logistics and planning solutions need to be developed and tested*'. This again points at the integrative qualities of Spatial Planning. And with respect to the challenge, '*Inclusive, innovative and secure societies*' it is stressed the negative consequences are to be prevented by planning the physical environment.

Planning as a discipline promotes and manages change in spatial dimensions. It is also a discipline concerned with the promotion of social, economic and territorial cohesion as well as with other crucial EU objectives as smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the wise management of natural and cultural resources and the integrated redevelopment of urban areas. The core of this task is to conduct planning activities to be responsive to and in support of society and its economic, environmental and social aspirations. Urban and regional planning as a discipline already contributes to the production of guidance documents as well as of applied knowledge within the framework of several pan-European initiatives, as for instance the processes that lead to the European Spatial Development Perspectives (ESDP), the Territorial Agenda of the EU and its 2020 version, the Spatial visions developed under the INTERREG Programme and the European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion (ESPON). A scientific community at the European level exists and its components actively cooperates among themselves as well as with many relevant stakeholders active in different sectoral fields, and it is our view that this should be clearly reflected in the H2020 framework.

Despite the need for Spatial Planning research emerges clearly from several of the major challenges in H2020, this happens only implicitly. We are therefore worried about the calls coming from the H2020 being explicit in focussing on individual sectors and challenges. We want you to be aware of our concerns and its implications. **Therefore we would like to see the Spatial Planning discipline to be more clearly designated in the H2020 programme, followed up by specified calls for Spatial Planning.**

Yours sincerely,

AESOP President

AESOP National Representative