



**The role of governance modes in environmental policy integration (EPI) in regional development:  
experience from Hungary and some comparison to CEE**

From the 1980's the redistribution system of European Community (EC) resulted in the implementation major projects and plans. The growth of the number of investments is inevitably followed by ascendant land use, emission and contamination of the environment. With the strengthening and far-reaching effect of the environmental policy the idea of Environmental Policy Integration (EPI) came to the front in the last decades. For assessing the impact of major investments on the natural environment, the EC introduced – among others – the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This tool is suitable for integrating environmental interests into regional planning. However the success of EPI is depending on institutional and governing settings. Based on the findings of an FP6 and a national research (where the application of SEA was analysed) the paper is going to present the specialities and reasons of different types of EPI in some CEE countries (Hungary, Poland, Czechia, Slovakia and Romania). Research results show that Slovakia has a better EPI than Hungary has in general due the difference of institutional settings. On local level Slovakia has similar problems than Hungary has. In Poland we can find quite many similarities to Hungary; the decision making and planning (governing) structure are also similarly centralised. The paper concludes by arguing that in order to achieve a full EPI (instead of attached (Partidário and Voogd, 2004) a proper wide-range information system on local level, adequate time management, wide partnership among actors and stakeholders, and network-style governance mode are needed.

**Keywords:**

environmental policy integration (EPI), strategic environmental assessment (SEA), regional development