



Decolonising (our) discourses on socio-spatial polarisation in 'East' Europe

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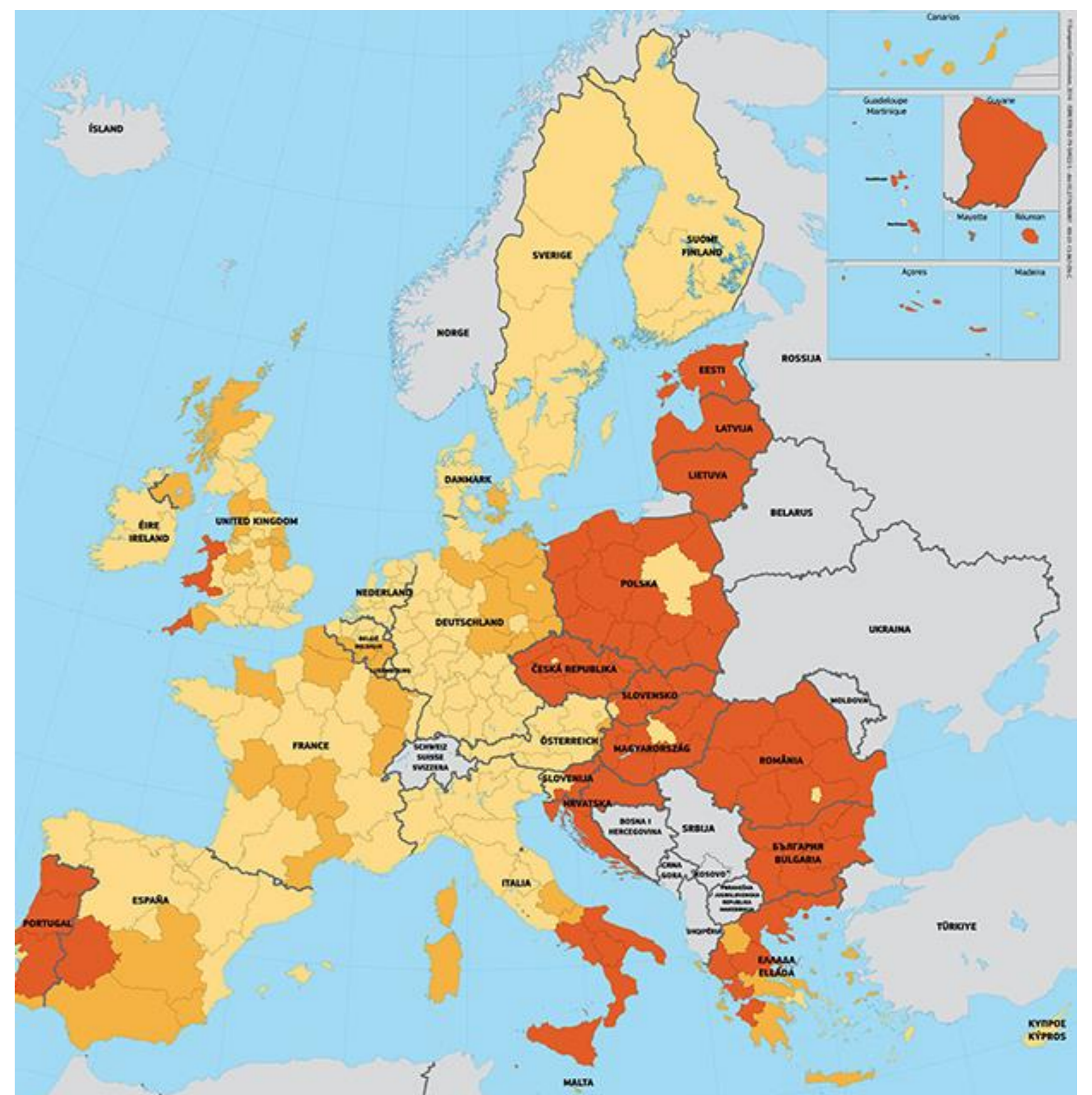
Abstract

I recommend to pay more attention to the discursive mobilisation of territorial clichés (stigmas/praises) in socio-spatial relations. The aim would be to minimise our participation, as researchers, in the mythos that, on the one hand, ascribes marginality concentration to some remote and thus stigmatised areas, and, on the other, stimulates projections of fantasised “pure” centres. Hence, we might be more able to reveal (and fight) power effects associated with the mobilisation of discourses on space which reinforce, justify and often reproduce social inequalities in Europe (in particular in the labelled *East*).

Main results

- (1) I encourage scholars to avoid using terms such as periphery and core and to replace them by labelled cores and labelled peripheries instead. This terminological shift is a statement that there are no such things as peripheries and cores but only an imaginative and discursive over-simplifying categorisation of certain territories as cores and peripheries (the next question becoming by whom?).
- (1) I also recommend to avoid picking a pre-delimited case study in that the researcher would thereby him/herself ascribe peripherality to a certain space. Instead, I suggest to start with an analysis of the discursive construction of the space's peripherality/centrality which is initially established in relation to the other spaces produced by the dominant and dominated narratives. It implies to accept that the case study has no rigid limits and therefore its scope can be extended beyond the area initially delimited.

How can we approach peripheralisation without peripheralising?



Map : Eligibility to 2014-2020 EU regional policy according to presumed level of development.

Source : EU Commission, www.europa.eu

Maps are a medium to ascribe peripherality.

