

Article

Values-Led Planning Approach in Spatial Development: A Methodology

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Abstract: The scope of land management, which includes spatial planning as an activity in the public domain, demands that a planning process that is based on publicly or societally acceptable values is a matter of necessity. This study proposes a methodology for introducing a values-led planning (VLP) approach in spatial development. The motivation of the study is to promote the embrace of assessed values in planning. The study draws from issues evoked in various topical studies on European comparative perspectives. By way of argumentation, the study makes three relevant contributions to the literature and spatial planning and development practice. First, it presents and discusses the essential elements required in the design of methodology. In this way, it figuratively depicts VLP as a consequence of interactions between four key elements of spatial planning. Second, it proposes an actual methodology for action. Third, it discusses the applicability of the methodology. The proposed methodology would be useful for planners, including public authorities, land managers, and community leaders, who make socio-spatial decisions in land management and related activities.



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1. Introduction

Spatial development as a process focuses on decisions and activities related to the coordination and spatial distribution of land-use. A spatial planning system conceptually characterises “the ensemble of territorial governance arrangements that seek to shape patterns of spatial development in particular places” [1]. However, when it comes to spatial development practice, the desire to achieve win-win outcomes from spatial planning poses a substantial challenge [2]. Such outcomes are still rare in the real world of planning where difficult choices have to be made to the detriment of win-win values [3,4]. Many spatial planning studies provide detailed research outcomes in the context of publicly controlled planning [5]. Thus, spatial planning may more appropriately be concerned with the planning of development, involving substantial changes and responding to questions of what changes should be made, how substantial those changes are, and comparing them to an existing situation. Accordingly, planning aims at feasible solutions for identified needs and problems. These solutions should be analysed and evaluated before making binding decisions and engaging in their implementation [5] (pp. 32–38). Rational assumptions in planning support the optimisation of the decision-making process that considers choices between different values and existing uncertainties as well as circumstances and alternatives. However, based on this rational reasoning, the planning process also demands mutual discussions by the involved stakeholders. The strategy of “collaborative rationality” proposes solutions for wicked problems in planning, thus focusing on the characteristics

of a collaborative and rational planning process which is inspired more by Habermas's concept of communicative rationality than by scientific planning [6].

The assessment of shared/social values for ecosystem and landscape services and sustainability has been widely discussed in the scientific literature in recent years [7–15]. An empirical study demonstrates that the boundaries between instrumental and deliberative paradigms are often vague and suggests integrating some qualities of both [7]. Proposing the framework and classification of values, Kenter et al. (2015) conceptualised the dynamic interplay between shared/social and individual values as well as emphasised the importance of shared/social values for decision making [8]. In this regard, VLP primarily contains (1) group values (within valuation) where values are expressed by a group of stakeholders and (2) deliberated values where values are an outcome of a deliberative process. Kenter et al. (2016) provided arguments that values and preferences for ecosystem services need to be generated through a process of deliberation and learning [9]. They also proposed a new theoretical model for deliberative valuation that enables more effective integration of social learning and plural knowledge and values in valuation and decision making. Shared values can be deliberated through formal and informal processes where individuals may separate their personal preferences from a “broader metanarrative about what values ought to be shared” [10]. The proposed framework by Connor and Kenter (2019) provides an opportunity to bridge and reconcile the different types of values through deliberations—intrinsic, instrumental, and relational values [11]. Garcia-Martin et al. (2017) demonstrated a European perspective on landscape values perceived by local stakeholders, the patterns in the spatial distribution of values, and their connection to different socio-economic backgrounds and landscape characteristics [12]. Fagerholm et al. (2019), presenting an assessment of ecosystem services benefits, provided argumentation on the links from services to benefits and from benefits to different types of values [13]. Keller and Backhaus (2020) used the term landscape instead of ecosystem to underline the multiple dimensions of the landscape-services approach besides ecological issues. They defined landscape services, emphasising the benefits of landscape qualities for individuals and society [14]. Exploring drivers and processes of European landscape change, Van der Sluis et al. (2019) referred to the framework that shows the landscape as a social-ecological system providing landscape services for the people [15] (p. 459). Tiboni et al. (2020), promoting and testing a methodology to analyse the effects of urban regeneration, identified how different urban operations may contribute to creating public value. They assessed various possible development scenarios and compared them with the baseline of the current situation [16].

Thus, previous studies provided arguments that a planning process has to be based on assessed values—a reason why this study focuses on a methodology for a values-led planning (VLP) approach to support spatial development. It has been affirmed that the “introduction of VLP approach based on consolidated new knowledge from stakeholders' experience and empirical evidence will help better understand and guide the relevant processes and their effects in specific territories based on (1) the identified values as an outcome of experts' work and (2) the attitudes from stakeholders' preferences concerning these values” [17] (p. 281). Therefore, a VLP approach is concerned with the “evaluation and planning–implementation concept” and consequent principles. It aims to balance mainly the interests of environmental protection and new development. The usefulness of the VLP approach is found in dynamics and potential changes in land-use and its values. Practically, “the potential for further spatial development should be assessed and then supported by binding decisions” [18].

In the European context, research on spatial planning practices have been addressed from different planning cultures. Some scientific contributions clearly distinguish between planning systems and planning cultures [19]. Research on spatial planning systems and planning cultures in Europe distinguished both and associated a planning culture with the “underlying shared values, norms, and beliefs of the planning community or the societal environment that affect planning practices” [20] (p. 26). This study asserts that it is

difficult to dissociate shared values entirely from approaches to planning. This assertion is both logical and practical because the cultural features of the country influence the planning system in each country. For instance, village renewal—a methodology-based programme for spatial planning in various European countries—is done differently in Germany compared to other European countries [21]. The difference lies in the way the shared values in different countries are shaped. This is why Auziņš (2018) argued that “planning practices inherent to the system cannot be drawn from a comparison of legal-administrative framework conditions alone. Therefore, the outcome from the comparative analysis of planning practices (changes in cultures) is essential rather than of planning systems, which are only represented by hierarchies, artefacts, and institutional settings” [22] (p. 2). European comparative studies reveal the trends and directions in the evolution of spatial planning systems and territorial governance as well as the design of new typologies in Europe. This has led to the revision of EU policies and national spatial planning and territorial governance, focusing on synergies and contradictions between both [23]. Cross-fertilisation between the EU cohesion policy and spatial planning practice also has recently been on European planning communities’ agenda [24].

As the concern of this study is the embrace of assessed values in planning, it proposes a methodology. Methodology development in the context of this study emphasises applicable techniques and guiding recommendations for introducing a VLP approach into land-management practice. This is especially concerned with “the science and practice related to the conceptualisation, design, implementation, and evaluation” of land-based interventions “with the purpose to improve the quality of life and the resilience of livelihoods in a responsible, effective, efficient, consensual, and smart manner” [25] (p. 66). This means engaging in analytical research and considering the consolidated outcome of spatial development case studies as well as focusing on stakeholders’ involvement in the planning processes. It also means finding new ways to advance values in planning through proposed techniques. Going forward, this study is organized into five sections. Section 2 specifies the approach to this study. As part of framing the methodology, Section 3 presents the theoretical perspective of values-led approaches. In addition, Section 3 answers the question about why values matter in spatial planning by using Rokeach’s theory of values to explain the values-led approach in planning. Section 4 frames the path to a methodology for the VLP approach in spatial development. Finally, Section 5 provides a conclusion on the way forward to support spatial planning practices.

2. Approach to the Study

In this study, a methodology reflects the overall frame which justifies applying particular spatial planning techniques and tools. By proposing and discussing the methodology, this study does not specifically consider the value-related issues to be a wicked problem in spatial planning and development. However, it does have a wicked component because a lack of values in planning poses problems in development outcomes. Yet, there is no immediate and no ultimate test of a solution for it [26]. This makes it pertinent to keep searching and testing techniques for VLP, thus tackling values-related planning concerns.

In devising a methodology for VLP, this study draws from findings from various topical studies on European comparative perspectives (from spatial planning documentary sources) conducted from 2017 to 2020. The study particularly responds to Auziņš’s and Viesturs’s (2017) call for creating a methodology for the VLP approach to ensure applicable implementation strategies for existing frameworks of spatial planning and development [17]. Hence, this study extends previous research conducted on European-wide comparative studies of spatial planning concepts using comprehensive evidence gathering (CEG) [17,18,22,27]. The methodology is proposed as a result of the synthesis of the key study outcome gathered during both the analytical research (examination of a range of scientific literature and documentary sources) and empirical research by making case studies (exploring the spatial planning practice and territorial governance in selected differently experienced European countries). Therefore, the study aims to show and discuss the issues

which are essential for designing the content of methodological solutions to support the implementation of the VLP approach into land-management practice.

Consequently, the approach of the study is fourfold (Figure 1): first, to provide a theoretical understanding of values-led approaches; second, to examine the organisation and peculiarities of the planning process and to identify the best way possible to involve stakeholders in a spatial planning process; third, to analyse the planning environment and shared values of the actors and to characterise and propose a typology of values, conceptualised participation, and evaluation techniques, including a value-causing assessment (VCA); and fourth, based on issues emerging from the synthesis of values-led approaches—including the organisational peculiarities and the shared values of actors in the spatial planning process—the study proposes a methodological framework for the VLP approach to be introduced in spatial development. The first three steps in this methodological approach are based on three knowledge-generating causal steps: (1) the understanding of theoretical orientation; (2) institutional issues and cases; and (3) values considerations in planning that led to the outcome—a methodology for VLP approach to spatial development. Thus, applying the proposed techniques for the integration of the assessed values with stakeholders' preferences essentially presents a novelty of this study.

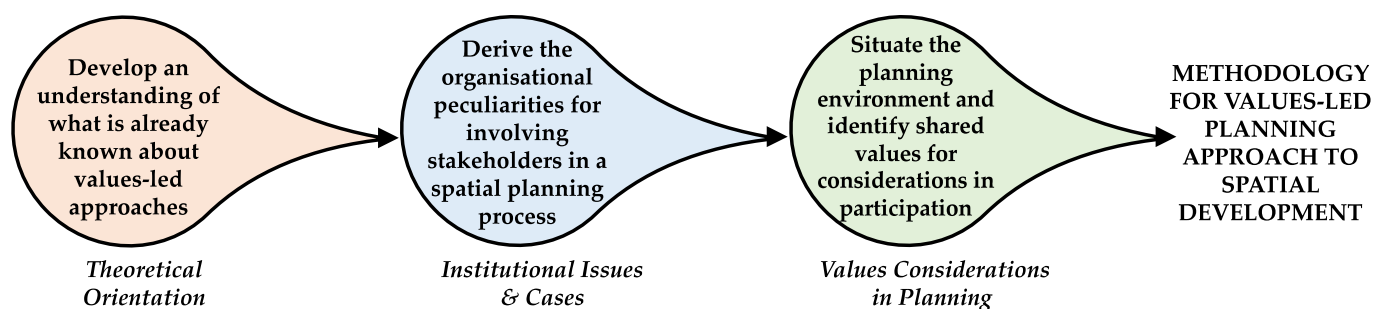


Figure 1. The approach adopted in the study.

3. Values-Led Approaches: A Theoretical Orientation for Spatial Planning

Generally, approaches entail how decisions and activities are carried out by those tasked with leadership in any sector or discipline of life. These decisions and activities also relate to planning, which involves coordinating different or related and interlinked or isolated decisions and activities to achieve envisaged goals. In planning, values form an essential part of making decisions and implementing activities [21–23].

3.1. Why Do Values Matter in Approaches?

The importance of values in planning has attracted interest from many scholars. That is why it has become common to read about value-focused decision making [28], values-led conservation [29], values-driven leadership [30], values-led participatory design [31], values-led entrepreneurship [32], value-led management [33], and value-focused approaches [34]. In terms of spatial planning, planners have always operated with values or are aware of the need for values in their work. This is why planning has been done with different sets of human-related values. For instance, Chigbu et al. (2019) called for a tenure security-sensitive approach that would protect landowners' rights in any process of land use and planning in the global south [35]. However, Auziņš's and Viesturs's VLP approach re-evoked the discourse in spatial planning in the context of values-sensitive ways, because they directly argued for the "creation of positive synergy in managing land-related resources" [17] (p. 275).

This study furthers this discourse by basing its argumentations on the premise that all sorts of planning—whether land/spatial planning, natural resource, or human-resource planning—are related because they are all human activities. This premise is not only relevant for grasping values and how they apply in planning, but it is also a truism because planning is about people [36]. That is why the implementation of planning activities either improves or worsens the living conditions of people [17]. Davoudi (2016) argued that there is a “value of planning” and there are “values in planning” [37]. This implies that planning does not only lead to value (e.g., a social value of planning) but depends on values. Hersperger et al. (2017) evaluated outcomes in planning in Swiss landscapes and concluded that the values tied to goals and indicators are linked to an efficient outcome [38]. From Australian experience, Rawluk et al. (2017) noted that concrete and abstract social values influence the success of environmental management planning concerning bushfire mitigation because values relate to natural places and attributes [39]. Ives et al. (2017) recognised the importance of “capturing residents’ values for urban green space” in urban land administration [40]. What all these scholars [17,36–40] are alluding to is that values are at the core of any planning process. Hence, values matter in any sort of planning [41]. This is why this study seeks to link values-led approaches to planning from a spatial perspective. However, the study cannot achieve this aim without understanding what values-led approaches entail in spatial planning and development.

3.2. Using Rokeach’s Theory of Values to Understand a Values-Led Approach in Planning

To grasp the connotations of values-led approaches, it is necessary to, first and foremost, grasp the meanings embedded in the concept of value. Rokeach’s (1973 and 1979) theory of values provides a path to understand values in the context of planning [42,43]. In theory, he defines a value as an “enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” [42] (p. 5). Based on this definition, Rokeach developed a value survey (RVS) consisting of values considered as preferable behavioural and terminal values which can apply to “a group, a social organization, a total society, or even an ideal society” [42] (p. 38). It is possible to understand Rokeach’s (1973 and 1979) theorisation of values in many ways [42,43]. However, a generic inference from the theory, which can be suitable for planning, is that values can be implicit or explicit. They can relate to individuals, places, and groups of people. As is always the case with many theories, there is room for improvement. In this regard, Schwartz (2012) investigated Rokeach’s theory and concluded that it does not adequately explain the underlying structure of values as a system [44]. This cultural perspective of values is relevant in planning either as a method or a system. Hence, the concept of values-led approaches is related to the notion that planning should be based on human values in the form of a vision for action in delivering outcomes of land use and spatial development [45]. However, this does not entirely explain what is meant by a values-led approach to spatial planning.

3.3. (Re)Stating the Concept of Values-Led Approach in Planning

The scope of land management, which includes spatial planning as an activity in the planning domain, demands that a planning process, based on publicly or societally acceptable values, is a matter of necessity. This is because the direct ways to capture and fulfil the interest of the public exist in spatial-development affairs. Evidence from the empirical studies of Reimer et al. (2014) supports that new approaches to spatial planning are needed because various urban and rural areas are facing new challenges [19]. The VLP approach as prescribed by Auziņš and Viesturs (2017) provides an opportunity for testing new values-led tools and techniques. As they put it [17] (p. 281):

“Introduction of VLP approach based on consolidated new knowledge from stakeholders’ experience and empirical evidence will help better understand and guide the relevant processes and their effects in specific territories based on the identified values (an outcome of expertise) and attitudes (stakeholders’ preferences), thus avoiding such problems as, for

example, unplanned urban sprawl, environmental/landscape fragmentation and damage, unequally populated areas, remarkable differences in income, insolvent territories, etc. It is argued that . . . implementation of the new approach within the proposed framework will lead to improved regional and local land-use policies and thus better territorial governance, developing more inclusive and resilient territories for the benefit of entrepreneurship, society, and nature. Innovation activities will be recognised, for example, when applying developed methodological guidelines in the planning process. Complex yet significant relationships between the values and preferences of the stakeholders concerning land use and development are to be assessed."

The study [17] is concerned with the conceptual background and feasibility aspects of the VLP approach. In contrast, this paper capitalises on the achieved outcome and provided arguments, thus proposing a methodology and pathway for its implementation.

The arguments for the VLP approach reflect the evolution of planning cultures and systems. For instance, during the period of the Ebola pandemic in West Africa, many communities clamoured for the reassessment of their public-health values in planning [46], intending to improve their funerals, cultural festivals, and other celebratory rites that make them vulnerable to pandemics. In the COVID-19 (or Coronavirus) period, radical changes in behaviour and attitudes to public facilities whether in urban, peri-urban, or rural areas have emerged. For instance, the practices of physical/social distancing in public spaces like playgrounds and parks are values-related planning issues that require integration into spatial planning. Values reflect the realities in the organisation of desired activities and well-being. Thus, if spatial planning is about situating people in the most convenient ways to ensure adequate living conditions, then values should form a critical consideration of the spatial planning process.

There are several values to be considered in planning. They all relate to the cultural, institutional, ethical, or ideological (or philosophical) sense of worth, which shapes how people decide, act, and appreciate the manner of life they live or want to live. In broad terms, values can be categorised in many forms. Spatial values can be in the form of intrinsic or extrinsic values. Intrinsic value reflects an ethical and philosophical property. Intrinsic values can manifest in planning because people have to make personal or group choices about their path to development "based only on how things possess inherent worth or satisfy their preferences" [47] (p. 1462). Intrinsic values can also manifest in how the people "consider the appropriateness of how they relate with nature and with others, including the actions and habits conducive to a good life, both meaningful and satisfying" [47] (p. 1462). These intrinsic values are relational because they are mostly based on life principles, preferences between options, and virtues linked with person-to-person and place-to-person relationships. Values can manifest in place-based relationships or a sense of place [48,49]. Such values can also be extrinsic. Thus, they are objectified in their physical worth, and they cannot be avoided since planning is about people and is done by people. Hence, a planning system that works to improve the existing living conditions and livelihood requires a planning approach that allows values-related issues (whether social, economic, or environmental), and their effects in specific territories are urgently needed. This is why a VLP approach is crucial for identifying the synergy that would enhance balanced socio-economic and environmental impact as well as governance in human settlements. Scholars have done preliminary work in defining the framework for understanding the VLP approach [17,18,22,27]. The missing piece is a methodology for making values-based spatial development a reality.

4. Framing the Path to a Methodology for VLP Approach in Spatial Development

Spatial planning is "a multifaceted and highly complex activity, embedded in specific cultural contexts composed of interactive processes among involved actors, their cultural cognitive frames, and their particular social contexts" [50] (p.83). Values which emerge from a culture "play a mediating role between people or society and the environment, influencing people's intentions, way of life, sense of place, practices, norms, and rules" [51]

(p. 25). Therefore, VLP is essential because when communities prioritise their needs around what they value most, their efforts are bound to produce outcomes that matter most to them. In operationalising the EU Spatial Development Agenda, VLP has entailed putting values in place, promoting and integrating values in planning towards sustainable place-making and place-shaping.

The operationalisation of the VLP approach requires identifying those elements of its conceptual framework and reconciling them with existing empirical issues that are commonly accessible from the literature. In this regard, this study identified four key elements. These are values-accommodating and enable leading a spatial planning process to spatial development without negating values. They include (1) the nature of the physical “land-use” and “space” being planned [52], (2) the values-based “function” of spatial planning [53], (3) the values-based “principle” of spatial planning [54], and (4) the nature of “prevailing ideological and belief systems” under which spatial planning operates [55]. The nature of “land-use” and “space” is determined by the actual spatial planning, which considers the land use and spatial networks as means of administering uses to people and services, including nature—embracing all functions of space. However, spatial functions can be non-values-based. Participation is a major way to ensure that values-based functions are actualised in the planning process. However, this depends on the principles applied in spatial planning. Where bottom-up principles are applied, there is a tendency to embrace equity, equality, accountability, participation, and various others. Yet, all of these issues are concerned with specific beliefs and ideologies. It can be observed that ideologies and belief systems drive planning vision, which appears to guide success or failure. Four elements or dimensions of spatial planning (in Figure 2) are recognised as crucial in a spatial planning process because of their interaction that determines a relationship capable to lead a VLP approach in the planning process.

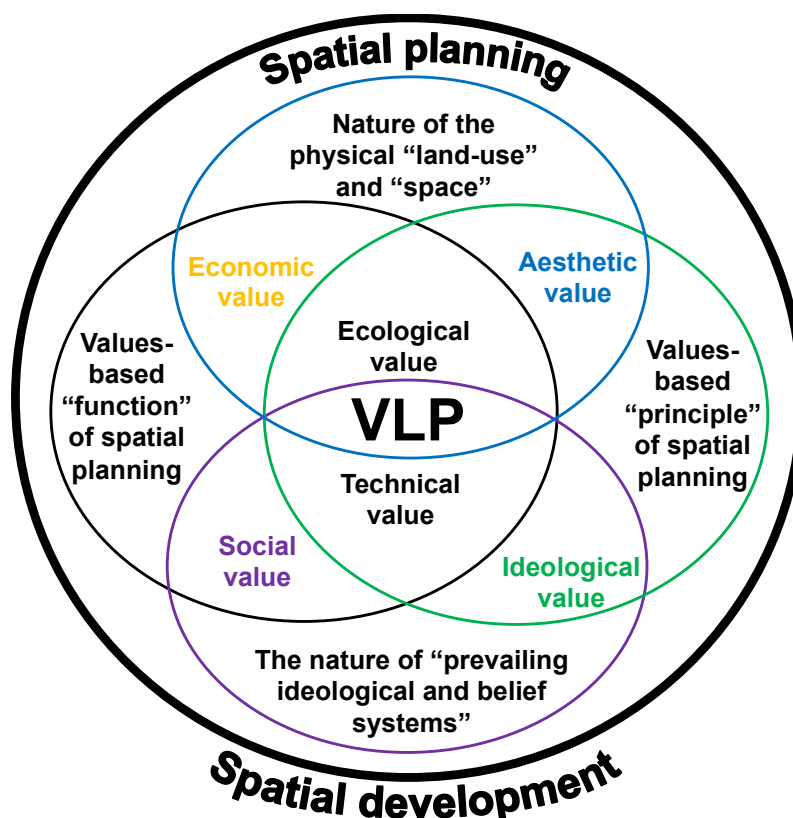


Figure 2. VLP is a consequence of an interaction between four key elements of spatial planning.

4.1. The Typology of Values

Values, apart from being a set of belief systems or culture, are the core instruments in expressing, interpreting, and understanding viewpoints in the planning process. They also represent a core embedment of the planning experience from conceptualisation to the outcome and its monitoring and further alterations in plans.

Further, each of these four main elements or dimensions (in Figure 2) produces particular *core values* that enable the operation of spatial planning (as a comprehensive process) and the creation of preconditions for further changes in land use and space through spatial development. The interrelation between these four dimensions manifests in six types of core values that influence spatial planning. Based on developed useful classifications and assessments' approaches, the typology of *spatial (territorial) values* is proposed (in Table 1).

Table 1. Values and their characteristics.

Typology	Values	Description
Core values	Economic value	Land use and development as they reflect in welfare gains
	Social value	Involvement and cooperation as they reflect on social inclusion and security
	Ideological value	Traditions and cultural matters as they reflect in beliefs
	Ecological value	Environmental quality and ecological liveability as they reflect in acceptability
	Aesthetic value	Emotional perception and critical attitudes as they reflect in designs
	Technical value	Application of technology-based knowledge as it reflects in stimulating planning innovations
Spatial values	The values of land-related resources	Can be seen in landscape as a stock; factual land-use types or geospatial units in the frame of a particular project, e.g., agricultural land, forest, waterbody, roads, built-up land, etc.
	The values of landscape functions	Can be seen and perceived in the landscape as ecosystem and landscape functions, goods, and services—the functions based on de Groot and Hein (2007) [56] when considering the multi-functional nature of ecosystems and the evolvement of the approach of ecosystem services when considering it as a strategy and focusing on ecosystem services as these are related to the activities, decisions, and investments of humans [57], e.g., provisioning, regulation and support, cultural, etc. According to the institutional settings of a particular spatial planning system, these can be identified in spatial development plans from different socio-economic functionalities—functional zones in an area, e.g., rural areas, green/natural areas, transport infrastructure, industrial areas, public areas, family housing, etc.
	The values of land-use patterns	Can be perceived and analysed through the planning-implementation experience, e.g., green or public areas concerning residential areas and connection to public-transport infrastructure in an area
	Synergetic values of land-use patterns	Can be recognised through historical evolution and are socially meaningful for the future, e.g., intrinsic, place-based, historical, cultural, etc.
	Intangible values	

“Spatially allocated values are the ones that may be recognised spatially as both provided by ecosystems and human-made formations. Ecosystems, e.g., agricultural and forest land and ecological landscapes, are an essential part of natural capital. Their quality is the basis for environmental viability. However, the impact of human beings on ecosystems is considerable. Ecosystems provide humans with services that are relevant for survival, health, and welfare/culture. Human-made formations, e.g., developments, improvements, and utility supply, are an essential part of human-made capital. Its quality is the basis for socio-economic equity. Human-made formations provide humans with services that are relevant for dwelling, workplace, and recreation.

4.2. Conceptualised Participation

Public participation and stakeholders’ involvement are integrated into the spatial planning process in all observed European countries [18,22]. However, they are approached differently in different countries and even in regions or municipalities within the same countries. The difference also appears in the conditions of particular planning practices. The *conceptualization of participation* captures various approaches and techniques that support the understanding of possible discussions and agreements in the way from a conflict/disagreement towards a consensus-building, which results in the extent to which the outcome of participation and collaboration is considered in a final or binding decision. Conceptualisation allows finding ways to reach sustainability in a decision-making process when assessing stakeholders’ preferences in an area. This also means that public participation should be considered as a values-related matter in planning. For instance, in Germany’s case, participation is viewed as a cultural value to be embraced in any planning process [21]. Trust is a prerequisite for cooperation, for the resolution of collective action problems, and effective democratic governance. Trust is indeed vital to participants’ belief that a meaningful discussion and cooperation with the members of a planning association (committee) is possible [58]. This is especially important if the planning process is driven by an expert approach (often opposite to a deliberative approach). Yet, building and maintaining trust is extremely complex. Trust is deeply connected with risk, power, and modernity. However, citizen engagement and placemaking [59] are crucial processes for improved communication, informed deliberation, and trust-building practice.

The *deliberative planning* method as a form of participatory planning and an urban planning theory focuses on involving the community in spatial planning and management processes. During the discussions about possible further development, the involved local stakeholders may participate, communicate, and deliberate. Often, participatory planning is debated in contrast to deliberative planning [58]. The first includes all points of view in the decision-making process and gathers them all in one vision. However, the second involves those being motivated by an intended outcome and choosing a vision that is based on sound evidence and arguments [60,61]. Deliberative democracy provides principles for spatial planning. The most important is to determine the beneficial conditions and particular collaborative forms, which provides the best possible outcomes and largely contributes to the decision-making process. Therefore, key questions should be formulated: how may different concepts of stakeholders’ participation contribute to the binding decision? To what extent does the introduction of a particular concept improve the implementation of what is decided and the decision-making process on the whole? Legacy et al. (2019) recently discussed new ways of conceptualising participation that “can create new informal spaces where injustices and inequalities are voiced and the structures and hegemonies created” [62]. This study on methodology development assumes the interrelation between three processes: (1) conceptual participation, (2) deliberative planning, and (3) decision-making leading towards a consensus-oriented governance model.

4.3. Value Causing Assessment (VCA)

It is acknowledged in the study on methodology development that the problem structuring methods (PSM) [63] are appropriate to apply in structuring the values and in assisting planners and involved stakeholders. The inclusion of goals and objectives as evaluation criteria and the weighting given to these criteria adjust the quantitative scheme of cost-benefit analysis (CBA) to the needs of planning. However, such quantitative methods and the multi-criteria analysis (MCA) and ordinal ranking methods still use a broad scheme of CBA. PSM represents an alternative set of methods developed to address similar concerns in the operation research field. These methods were developed to address situations where there is no single objective to be achieved and where parameters are contested [63]. The widely used quantitative multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) methods require that all dimensions be valued in ordinal terms. Both the valuation and weighting are sensitive to the identity of those performing the tasks. Feitelson (2011) pointed out that an “evaluation process in a communicative setting aims to utilize expertise to raise issues that can be easily described to a relatively wide audience” [64]. PSM makes progress in this direction by engaging experts and stakeholders and by seeking to understand better their perceptions of the issues at hand and of the options for addressing them. The method based on MCDA has been proposed by Feitelson’s distinguished study. The method can also be applied for the VCA to the extent that professionals evaluate alternatives according to criteria that are partially derived from the objectives. These objectives can be determined either from existing plans and policy documents or in a collaborative process. The experts are asked to rationalise their evaluation in reporting the outcome. These rationalisations are summarised by criteria and form building blocks of the VCA whose outcomes are a set of values that can be easily understood and discussed by non-experts and people who have not previously engaged in the planning process. For instance, the alternatives (trade-offs of values) are designed/described with main features and evaluated by experts (see step 1.5 in Table 2).

Table 2. Steps of VCA.

1. Identification and assessment of values (professional expertise)
1.1 Determination of territory and setting of preliminary land-use objectives and its criteria (from previous planning practice and policies) by the responsible planner
1.2 Establishment of the board of experts by the responsible planner
1.3 Assignment of tasks for experts lead by the responsible planner
1.4 Identification and structuring of values from field surveys, stakeholders’ knowledge and community involvement, plans, documentaries, and other sources by experts
1.5 Evaluation of alternatives (trade-offs of values) by experts
1.6 Consensus-oriented discussion and provision of the outcome as a result of professional expertise by the board of experts
1.7 Summarization of the outcome when considering its contribution to the land-use objectives (by criteria) by the responsible planner
2. Beliefs and preferences of stakeholders (stakeholder deliberation)
2.1 Establishment of the board of stakeholders/steering committee by the responsible planner
2.2 Organisation of stakeholders’ deliberations based on the outcome of professional expertise, provided arguments, and discussions, involving community members and experts by the responsible planner
2.3 Selection between possible alternatives regarding decisions by stakeholders and responsible planner
2.4 Organisation of public hearing and discussion by stakeholders
2.5 Consensus-oriented discussion and provision of the outcome on identified alternatives by the board of stakeholders/steering committee
2.6 Summarization of the outcome when considering its contribution to the land-use objectives (by criteria) by the responsible planner

Table 2. *Cont.*

3. Allocation of planning alternatives (assessed decision-making)
3.1 Establishment of the joint working group, involving representatives from both boards, responsible planner, and a representative of the legitimate body (official authority responsible for legally binding decision-making) by the legitimate body
3.2 Synthesis of outcomes from professional expertise and stakeholder deliberation towards making an assessed and well-coordinated decision, considering that possible feedbacks and mitigation measures (trade-offs) are solved before providing outcomes (1.7 and 2.6) by the joint working group
3.3 Approval of the synthesis report (a decision) on the allocation of planning alternatives by the legitimate body
3.4 Proper arrangements into spatial/land-use plans (land-use patterns) and regulations on land use and development by the responsible planner
3.5 Monitoring of the implementation of the decision by stakeholders

The VCA is proposed based on the identified “gap between post-modernist planning theory (communicative collaboration) and largely modernist planning practice (rational-technocratic process)” [64]. Thus, in the light of the advanced systematic qualitative approach for evaluating planning alternatives, as is emphasised by Feitelson (2011), VCA will also lead to the identification of particular values that should be deliberated by stakeholders rather than to choose among the alternative options. Accordingly, the VCA uses the expertise of professionals to focus stakeholder deliberations on spatial planning and local development. To employ VCA, various known evaluation techniques have been reviewed [18,27]. Evaluation techniques, represented through case studies and the outcome of applied research, are considered relevant for the VLP approach. At the same time, the advantages of qualitative evaluation methods for VLP over some widely used quantitative ones (e.g., MCDA, CBA) should be considered. For instance, CBA often does not address all the facets of complex tasks with multiple externalities and wide-ranging distributional implications due to democratic decision-making and orientation towards consensus, and it also does not reflect social welfare preferences or assure quality among all involved stakeholders. In this respect, for instance, it is suggested that to facilitate and set the agenda for discussions in spatial planning, a qualitative yet systematic method is necessary. However, the effective combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in communicative planning is encouraged, especially where there is a need to process gathered data sets. From the discursive perspective of planning practice, the deliberation process and decision-making focus on using mainly qualitative evaluation methods. The application of VCA should be based on the philosophy that policy for the people needs policy with the people. Hereafter, the steps from 1.1 to 3.5 of VCA are subsequently proposed in Table 2.

4.4. *Preconditions for Ensuring a Values-Enabling Planning Environment*

By developing the methodology, it is acknowledged that three essential preconditions are necessary to promote the environment in which spatial planning is taking place. This implies that it has to be a values-enabling planning environment. This is essential for values-based spatial development to emerge. If an environment is not supportive of values but rather impedes values, it cannot lead to a values-based spatial development. The planning environment involves conditions that surround and enable the planning process. For instance, laws, policies, professional ethics, human behaviours, and capacity, among others. The planning environment should play a fundamental role in shaping the nature of spatial planning practices within geographies, legal jurisdictions, or administrative boundaries. Three essential elements that characterise the planning environment based on the shared values of stakeholders include: (1) the organization of spatial planning and involvement in it; (2) a planning process and tools; and (3) the relationship of planning activities to fostering sustainable communities. These are further explained below.

4.4.1. The Organization of Spatial Planning and Involvement in it

The organization of the planning process and stakeholders' involvement allow for a values-enabling environment if the administrative structures, policy frameworks, institutional and social settings, collective actions, and social learning are collaborative in their design. Hence, when developing a values-enabling or supportive environment in spatial planning, the following issues are relevant to consider for applying the methodology:

- The organisation of planning in practice when identifying a locus of power, hierarchies, institutions, etc.;
- The recognition of the most influential actors in planning, including the organisational structures, authorities, partnerships, the groups of common interest, and individuals;
- The legal and administrative fundamentals that formally support spatial planning;
- Policymaking and implementation that reflects deep-rooted values, e.g., dominant policy style, ascertaining its impact on institutional performance, and social activity looking over last years;
- The existence of the linkages among stakeholders, including collaboration forms/networks, cross-border relations, integration of sectoral interests, problem-driven cooperation, etc.;
- An assessment of the linkages between places relevant in the planning context, e.g., rural-urban, inner-urban, and peri-urban;
- The identification of key defining moments, events, and people in the evolution of planning practice;
- Methods for how the people may benefit from spatial planning, including informing, learning, collaborating, understanding values, critically acting;
- Dynamic changes if measuring territorial governance, thus ascertaining the movement between both command/control and consensus-oriented governance models.

4.4.2. Planning Process and Tools

Examining both the peculiarities of the planning process and the ways concerning how the planning practice is supported and improved allows focusing more on the deliberative making of plans, planning modes, formal and informal (complementary) planning tools, and project-oriented techniques. To ensure that the planning process and applicable or associated planning tools do not hinder the evolution of values as a part of the methodology for action, the following issues are relevant to consider:

- The determination of key driving forces influencing the evolution of local planning practice over the last decades, including how values have evolved in political, economic, and neo-liberal agendas, and social actions, etc.;
- The recognition of structures and networks with an important influence on the development of local planning practice if considering the ways they changed over time;
- The evolution of the role of professionals/planners over time and its current status, e.g., an executive-arm, a technician, a consultant, a negotiator, or an assistant;
- An overview of the education for professionals/planners;
- An assessment of the coherence of a planning community in a particular practice, identifying several different planning communities, and ascertaining its variations in urban/rural, regional/local, or other contexts;
- Observation of different instrumental planning tools in a particular practice, e.g., informal modes of operation and planning tools that lie outside the institutionalised planning system;
- The characteristics of emerged planning modes and tools to support spatial planning practice, e.g., general/specific planning regulations, set of planning documents, legally binding/guiding, formal and/or informal arrangements for territorial governance, enhancing multi-sector participation, and networking, more oriented towards strategies or land use;
- The recognition of projects which support and/or provide improvements to formal spatial planning;

- Dynamic changes in measuring a spatial planning-implementation linkage—besides the planning, also considering the implementation of plans in practice through decision-making in land-use management—thus ascertaining the movement from just formal institutionalised planning mode towards complementing informal planning arrangements.

4.4.3. The Relationship of Planning Activities to Fostering Sustainable Communities

For maintaining and repositioning the values in the planning process, it is necessary to analyse the planning environment itself and the shared values of the involved actors, whose preferences and actions may influence the planning outcomes. This allows focusing more on the cultural awareness of stakeholders in the planning process. It would also ensure that the shared assumptions, values, and preferences of the involved parties are put under scrutiny to promote a planning environment in support of generally accepted values. To achieve this, the following issues relevant for applying the methodology should be considered:

- The extent to which a spatial planning in particular practice succeeds in achieving the principles such as sustainability, equal opportunities, public participation, transparency, integrated approach, and coherence;
- The importance of community involvement and activity in spatial planning as well as the social value of planning;
- The promotion of community development and management if considering identified and discussed spatial values and preferences of stakeholders in spatial planning;
- The extent to which the perception, beliefs, shared values, and behaviour of the actors involved can be recognised through the spatial planning;
- The importance of the role of values in spatial planning and the extent to which the planning agendas and discourses, e.g., dominating ideas, views, and styles, substantiate the preference of values;
- The extent to which spatial planning serves different interests, including local communities, the business community, private developers, international investors, etc.;
- The impact of the international planning ideas and knowledge on the evolution of planning practice;
- Reasons for increasing activity of the civil society and identification of bottom-up initiatives and networks mobilising around urban and rural development issues as well as the importance of these networks in current planning debates and agendas;
- An assessment of emerged, distinct approaches of the planning experience and tradition to spatial planning;
- The impact of the evolution of planning education and experience on the VLP approach to planning.

4.5. Towards an Application of the Proposed Methodology for the VLP Approach in Spatial Development

To apply the proposed methodology, planners, including public authorities, land managers, and community leaders involved in spatial planning, must understand the diverse characteristics of values and how they can influence development outcomes negatively or positively.

In spatial planning, socio-economic, environmental, and institutional aspects of values and preferences of stakeholders embody *sustainability dimensions*. They can refer to future-oriented or historical changes. Therefore, the planning and implementation should form the necessary preconditions for sustainable use of land-related resources, thus reconciling spatial development interests with all dimensions or elements of values that apply within specific planning environments. For instance, the interests of preservation and revival of natural resources constitute environmentally significant ecological values. They may also be social values for people who are from a very environmentally aware society. These sorts of interests are primary in Europe but can be of secondary concern elsewhere. Irrespective of the geography of planning, some values are generally of basic interest to people globally.

For instance, the values related to housing, work, and place improvements are known to be of primary interest in any form of spatial setting, e.g., urban, rural, or peri-urban. Therefore, it is essential to focus on ensuring that these primarily accepted values are handled as a matter of priority before secondary values. Doing this requires adopting effective strategies for tackling the challenges and approaches usually encountered in identifying, assessing, and discussing these values among involved stakeholders.

Furthermore, the review of governance styles and institutional settings, as well as sustainable development analysis, should be performed to grasp how complementary planning tools can support the process of formal spatial planning in practice without negating the importance of promoting values. Evidence-based knowledge of the “collaborative planning approach” [65] may support making binding decisions to promote consensus-building for the benefit of local society. Hypothetically, sustainable decisions based on harmonized values and preferences lead to “sustainable communities” [66]. Some arguments towards a “sustainable intensification” of land use emphasise the “management of growing pressure of human needs, while at the same time minimizing the impact on the environment” [67]. However, a new paradigm of sustainability towards a sustainable future rather than a sustainable development is becoming necessary. In this light, the sustainability aspects should focus on “how significantly human needs have to be diminished or changed for the impact on the environment and land-related resources to be the smallest possible” [18]. In the context of implementing the developed methodology for the VLP approach, we would point to it as a definition of sustainability challenge.

As the VLP approach does not replace formal (institutionalised) spatial planning but complements it, the implementation measures focus on informal (complimentary) tools, e.g., thematic plans, and its integration with formal planning tools (spatial development plans) through the planning process. *The framework for implementation of the VLP approach* is designed with three key elements of the VLP agenda and particularly targeted measures (in Table 3):

Table 3. The framework for the implementation of the VLP approach.

Key Elements	Measures
The organisation of the planning process and involvement of stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of institutional settings to soften the normative approach in the way they facilitate deliberative processes • Establishment of administrative structures to support a bottom-up approach in territorial governance [68] and placemaking [59] as well as agglomerative (cross-border and soft-area) cooperation • Provision of policy style to facilitate deliberative democracy and communicative planning • Promotion of social settings to strengthen collective actions and social learning towards consensus-building and participation in decision-making
The planning process, modes, tools, and techniques supporting the planning practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making of deliberative plans to meet demand and supply in spatial planning and development aims • Integration of formal and informal planning tools to make the planning process more flexible • Development of thematic planning tools to provide VCA and the mapping of values • Promotion of project-oriented techniques to support the integration of planning modes

Table 3. Cont.

Key Elements	Measures
Planning environment and shared values of stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on the cultural awareness of stakeholders in planning to support the deliberation • Sharing of assumptions, values, and preferences of involved parties to balance interests and achieve well-informed planning results • Understanding of cooperation, discussions, and gaining new knowledge as beneficial social values to promote the trust-building practice • Gaining confidence that made preferences and actions, including trade-offs, will influence further outcomes in a sustainable way

From the meetings with experts during comprehensive evidence gathering (CEG) and the workshops of stakeholders [27], some relevant *guiding suggestions to the VLP methodology* were derived. Thus, the VLP approach benefits society while the benefits justify the values, but the values ground the decision-making process. The approach should conceptually provide advantages for decision-making in land management. It is necessary to promote integration between sectoral policies, spatial planning, and land use. The introduction of the approach should enhance the cross-scale and cross-sectoral coherence between three interrelated land-use (land-use intensity driven by market mechanisms), spatial planning (land-use objectives and priorities determined through the planning process assessing environmental impact), and sectoral policies (restrictions and compensations due to the assessment of policy impact).

Public participation should be purposefully managed. The involvement of inhabitants should not be organised without a specific purpose and informed/explained agenda. The discussions have to be constructive and provided with arguments. The responsibility of parties (authorities or other bodies) about decision-making also has to be clear and declared, especially when the crucial issue is about the extent to which the outcome of a discussion is considered in a binding decision. The interests of participating parties/stakeholders can be different by their status and competencies. In the process of public participation and discussions, the differences cannot be so vivid. However, it would be interesting (even if it sounds quite utopic) to measure the interests by type of participants. The level of competence looks quite important to understand. However, a great deal depends on the provided information to the participants and its understanding by participants. The level of competence influences the quality of discussions and the ability to trade-offs. The public conflict has to be prevented/avoided due to the discourse of public discussions. The early involvement of participants helps to avoid conflicts. Thus, the participants are informed enough due to the discourse of the planning process but not only at the end of it. Otherwise, during the late phase of the planning process, the participants feel more like they are formally informed and provided with factual information but are not involved purposefully to contribute to the planning. Any participatory method has to fit its place and time. So-called thought leaders also have powerful roles to drive public opinion and changes. The establishment of forums of professionals as capable enough formations to initiate and manage discursive changes into particular fields also should be considered for improved planning and development. Particular tools may support participation and decision-making. However, the competence (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) of participating key stakeholders is very significant.

5. Conclusions

This study has used evidence from the literature and CEG to create an understanding of (1) the relevance of values in spatial planning; (2) the concept of values-led approaches in planning; and (3) framed methodology for introducing a VLP approach in spatial development.

The study strove to implement the methodology because of the growing need in Europe and many parts of the world for new innovative ideas ensuring people-centred planning. The proposed methodology is relevant because it projects the importance of conducting spatial development to appeal beyond the mere coordination of activities and space. It embraces often neglected aspects of spatial planning and development concerning the values and preferences of the people whom the planning outcome should serve. It is a methodology that presents preconditions that, if followed, would ensure that stakeholders in a planning process would be able to decide consciously on how the outcome of planning can reflect their worldviews and their development needs. However, it is important to state that the methodology proposed in this study does not, in any way, suggest that all values are relevant for promotion in a planning process. It acknowledges that values evolve and are always in a state of flux, and not all values would lead to adequate spatial development outcomes. The methodology does not assume that values (as an intricate consideration in planning) are always clearly identified and assessed. Values do come with many problems or even create problems. For instance, values that promote gender inequality, racism, nepotism, spatial inequality, inequality in sexual orientations, and spatial or environmental injustice (to mention a few) would not promote a responsible VLP approach. Hence, while putting into operation the methodology proposed in this article, only values that promote good territorial governance and land management practice should be considered by spatial planners, communities, public authorities, and land managers.

This study is biased in favour of the European tradition of spatial planning. However, it is not peculiarly influenced by any specific country experience but rather by studies emanating from multiple European countries. Thus, the issue of adaptability in its application matters. This is why the study emphatically recommends an assessment of the planning environment and shared values as a core activity in facilitating the development of local communities and capitalising on professionalism (constructive attitudes) rather than general policies and mainstream planning to serve market-driven developments. If this is done in consideration of the objectives of the VLP approach, there is bound to be some successful outcome in spatial development. The key objectives should include but not be limited to: (1) more supportive and collaborative territorial governance as well as promoted informal institutions and organisational forms and (2) the building of trust through balancing of planning interests as well as increased cultural awareness, shared perception, and making the appropriate assumption of values and preferences.

For successful implementation of the proposed methodology for solutions to support further planning practices, the key recommendations should be organised into three directions: (1) improvements in institutional settings, organisation of planning process, and involvement; (2) integration of informal (complementary) planning tools into formal planning agenda; and (3) conceptualisation of public participation, collaboration, and deliberation. With these recommendations in place, the likelihood of embracing beneficial values through the VLP approach would be high.

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