



Version 19 November 2009

## **ESPON 2013 Internal Seminar**

2-3 December 2009 in Malmö

### **The European perspective as opportunity for detecting territorial development potentials for regions and cities**

#### **Seminar Paper: Setting the Mind**

#### **1. Thematic scope, aim and objectives**

The ESPON Coordination Unit organises in cooperation with the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union an Internal ESPON 2013 Seminar on 2 and 3 December 2009 in Malmö. The seminar is to stimulate a dialogue between the ESPON Monitoring Committee, the stakeholders participating in Targeted Analyses, the Project Groups and the network of ESPON Contact Points. This dialogue should contribute to ensuring the internal consistency and synergy related to the content of projects within the different programme priorities.

The seminar programme includes a variety of components enabling the discussion on the progress of the different projects. In order to streamline the discussion and to enhance scientific and policy relevant output the ESPON Monitoring Committee has decided to focus the discussion on the ESPON knowledge base as a potential for regional territorial analyses and hence supporting policymaking from the regional to the European level.

The seminar is expected to present and discuss the following issues:

- The opportunities that ESPON Applied Research and the ESPON Scientific Platform offer for regional analysis and policymaking.
- The research approaches and techniques (e.g. spatial positioning or benchmarking) that can be used to make the European knowledge base operational for regional territorial analyses.
- Targeted analyses as good examples of making the European knowledge of ESPON base operational for regions.

The objectives for the seminar are:

- Showing the added value of and providing practical suggestions on using European wide ESPON knowledge in territorial policymaking at regional level.

- Discussing practical suggestions useful for researchers and practitioners involved in regional analysis on using the European wide ESPON knowledge.
- Discussing lessons for future ESPON project development and implementation in order to further improve the use of ESPON knowledge in regional territorial analyses and policymaking.

This paper tries to define a mindset for the Malmö seminar. It tries to give a first elaboration of how the European perspective can be understood for territorial development in regions. It departs from the recognition that various types of relations exist between the region and its European context. The overview provides examples of policy and research questions, appropriate research methods and research output relative to every type of relationship. In a last chapter it tries to identify what elements of the ESPON knowledge base can be of use in the various.

The overview should finally result in guidance for regional policymakers, practitioners and researchers in the field of territorial cohesion and development. The overview in its current state is still under construction and can be discussed at the ESPON Seminar on 2-3 December 2009 in Malmö.

## **2. Targeted Analyses: Approaching the Larger Territorial Context**

Regions and cities in Europe are no longer isolated entities but belong to a larger territorial context. The larger territorial context adds to a great extent to the potential and preconditions for the development of regions and cities. A good understanding of this larger territorial context is therefore of major importance. The ESPON Programme offers an innovative knowledge base and tools supporting European regions and cities to do so. The ESPON knowledge base can support them not only to detect potential and preconditions for territorial development but also in making them operational for regional territorial development strategies and policy action.

The ESPON 2013 Programme introduced Targeted Analyses as a tool to support stakeholders (often regions) to enhance their understanding of the larger territorial context, make comparisons to other territories and hereby providing a European perspective to considerations on the development of their territories.

The first series of Targeted Analysis projects started in spring 2009 and the first project results are soon becoming available. The ESPON CU wishes on the basis of these first experiences to explain how such an exercise could be of interest of regions and cities in Europe.

## **3. Types of Relations with the Larger Territorial Context**

The larger territorial context a region or city belongs to, may maintain different types of relations to the region or city in question. Depending on the policy questions and the related expected research output, it seems important to take this into account when developing, elaborating and implementing the research project.

Regions may have different types of relations with the larger territorial context. The following types can be distinguished:

- The characteristic region

- The performing regions
- The related region
- The integrated region
- The influenced region
- The influencing region

Hereunder we describe for each type of relation distinguished a short impression of the type of relation and we provide examples of policy and research questions, research methods and research output.

### 3.1. The characteristic region



*Every region in Europe is unique. They all possess of assets that define their regional character or identity. In particular unique selling points often turn out to be important levers to create regional prosperity (including economic growth and jobs) that also contributes to the economic strength of the European territory as a whole.*

#### **Examples of policy and research questions:**

- What type of region am I?
- What are my intrinsic characteristics and specific development trends?
- What makes me special compared to others?
- What are my development assets / territorial potential?
- ...

#### **Examples of research methods:**

- Comparative analyses / definition of territorial characteristics
- (Comparative) SWOT Analysis
- ...

#### **Expected research output:**

- Content related:
  - Definition of regional identity as lever for spatial development
  - Definition of added value of the region in the wider context (and hence to preserve as specialisation)
  - Demonstration how to boost strong points
  - ...
- Added value of territorial co-operation and governance:
  - Define regions that share your challenges in order to:
    - exchange experiences (learning)

- develop common activities (e.g. studies) (networking)
- defend specific stakes together (networking)
- Define complementary regions in order to:
  - collaborate and network to improve interaction and avoid unnecessary competition
- ...

### 3.2. The performing region



*Every region and city wants to be the best. They are in permanent competition to persuade investors and to create the best living conditions for their citizens. This competition boosts positive action and investment that finally benefits not only to the individual region or city but to the quality of life and economic performance of Europe as a whole.*

#### **Examples of policy and research questions:**

- How am I performing?
- What are my comparative advantages?
- What am I good at, what are points for improvement?
- What type of investors could be interested in my region?
- On what shall I focus my development perspectives?
- ...

#### **Examples of research methods:**

- SWOT Analysis
- Benchmark
- ...

#### **Examples of research output:**

- Content related:
  - Definition of comparative advantages lever for territorial development
  - Demonstration of comparative advantages in a investment strategy
  - Definition of weak points that require policy action
  - ...
- Added value of territorial co-operation and governance:
  - Understanding regional strengths and knowing the corresponding target groups (e.g. private investors)
  - Open a policy debate on territorial strengths and weaknesses
  - ...

### 3.3. The related region



*All European regions and cities are part of a wider territorial network and structure. Related regions and cities can benefit from each other's intrinsic qualities. Shared territorial structures (rivers, economic zones, infrastructures) can carry new (different) territorial development or might to be reinforced. This requires a common vision and common policy actions.*

#### **Examples of policy and research questions:**

- Where is my region situated?
- What territories, regions, and cities am I related to?
- How am I related to other regions?
- ...

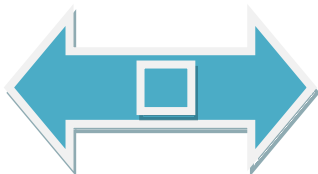
#### **Examples of research methods:**

- Spatial positioning
- Relation and flow analysis
- ...

#### **Examples of research output:**

- Content related:
  - Definition of spatial structures (road, rail and water infrastructures, ecological networks) that are to be reinforced / require policy action
  - Definition of possible synergy and complementarity
  - ...
- Added value of territorial co-operation and governance:
  - Definition of partners with who you have a common interest for a territorial investment
  - ...

### 3.4. The integrated region



*European regions and cities are part of a wider more or less functionally coherent territory like macro or cross-border regions. Regions in these wider territories share territorial challenges and can often create synergies and complementarities via common policy action.*

**Examples of policy and research questions:**

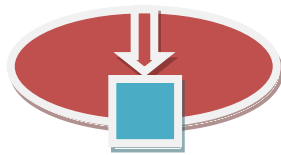
- To what territory do I belong to?
- With whom in my direct environment I share policy challenges?
- What is the appropriate level to approach my policy objectives?
- ...

**Examples of research methods:**

- Definition and delineation of territories
- ...

**Examples of research output:**

- Content related:
  - Definition of the territorial context and direct sphere of influence
  - ...
- Added value of territorial co-operation and governance:
  - Defining a macro- or cross-border-region for collaboration
  - ...

**3.5. The influenced region**

*Territorial development potential and preconditions of regions and cities are often influenced by forces deriving from outside or playing at a higher level of geographical scale. Understanding the external context in which the region or city is to operate helps in defining the policy actions that can lead to successful outputs. It also helps to understand for what issues the region or city depends on others and where collaboration seems required.*

**Examples of policy and research questions:**

- What influences me?
- How can I deal with overall challenges such as climate change, the energy crises or globalisation?
- How is the external environment influencing me?
- ...

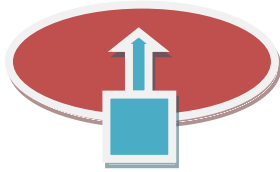
**Examples of research methods:**

- Translation of global / EU-wide scenarios and trends into the regional/local context
- ...

**Examples of research output:**

- Content related:
  - Definition of policy themes that require an adaptation strategy at regional level
  - Possible developments paths for adaptation
  - ...
- Added value of territorial co-operation and governance:
  - Understanding multilevel relations in policymaking
  - ...

### 3.6. The influencing region



*Regions have a sphere of influence. They contribute in both a positive and a negative sense to their surroundings. Understanding the sphere of influence helps regions in defining their importance to a wider territory, both neighbours and the higher level of geographical scale.*

#### **Examples of policy and research questions:**

- What do I contribute (economic growth, jobs) to other regions?
- What is my share (pollution)?
- What is my spill-over (GDP, outmigration of people and economic activity)?
- ...

#### **Examples of research methods:**

- Impact analysis
- Flow analysis
- ...

#### **Examples of research output:**

- Content related:
  - Definition of the areas that compete with you and on what issues
  - ...
- Added value of territorial co-operation and governance:
  - Definition of regions with whom you are (inter)related
  - Understanding why regions address you to discuss certain issues
  - ...

## 4. The ESPON Knowledge Base

The ESPON Knowledge Base offers a wide set of information regions and cities can use to better understand themselves in the larger territorial context. The different elements have been summed up in

the table hereunder. The table also tries to indicate what particular parts of the ESPON knowledge base can be of interest in case a researcher or policymaker wishes to built on a certain type of relation as described earlier.

The different elements reflect territorial relevant types of information covering economic, environmental and / or social information. Territorial structures for instance may address economic structures including economic clusters.

Useful elements from the ESPON Knowledge Base in Regional Analysis and Policymaking	Characteristic region	Performing region	Related region	Integrated region	Influenced region	Influencing region
Grey = applicable information X = very useful information						
Comparable regional data at NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 covering EU27 + Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland	X	X				
Comparable regional territorial indicators at NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 covering EU27 + Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland	X	X				
European typologies and classifications of regions and cities	X	X		X		
Description of the territorial structure of Europe at global/European, national, regional and local level , including:						
o partial territorial structures composing this structure			X	X		X
o functional coherent territorial sub-entities:			X	X		
o interdependencies between different levels of geographical scale			X	X		X
Description of the development of the European territorial structure at global/European, national, regional and local level, including:					X	
o driving forces behind territorial changes					X	
o development trends for specific activities and within partial territorial structures					X	
o changes in the territorial allocation and distribution of spatial activities and functions and sector oriented parameters (e.g. GDP, employment)		X			X	
o recent past developments		X			X	
o future developments and territorial scenarios					X	
o interdependencies between different levels of geographical scale				X	X	X
Information on territorial co-operation and governance, including:						
o Co-operation models			X	X	X	X
o Best practices						
o Territorial Impact Analysis of EU Policy					X	X
Innovative approaches and methods for applied integrated territorial research		X	X	X	X	