



ESPON 2013 Programme

Newsletter No 8/26 June 2009

Welcome to the eighth electronic ESPON 2013 Newsletter. It offers information on the latest developments of the ESPON Programme.

Message from the ESPON Coordination Unit:

The Global Economic Crisis, European Regions and Cities

Back from until now the largest ESPON Seminar, the understanding of the **regional and local effects of the global economic crisis** is a hot topic for policy makers, practitioners and scientists.

When addressing the global economic recession it is crucial to underline that the crisis is in progress. Despite the first encouraging signs of recovery, it is by far not sure that important features of the real economy, unemployment and closure of companies have passed the bottom. Attempts to measure the territorial footprint of the crisis at this stage will therefore only give a snapshot, and not indicate perspectives for the medium-long term. In addition, an evidence-based understanding of impacts based on facts on regions and cities is not yet possible as data broken down to regions and cities are not yet available.

Observations of structural developments, however, allow already formulating informed guesses on some territorial effects of the current crisis. The speakers and the discussions at the ESPON Seminar on 3-4 June 2009 in Prague took a first intelligent step to shape the understanding of the possible effects. Some of the key messages were:

- Some countries are affected more than others depending of the solidity of the national economy and the consequences on domestic demand.
- The crisis accelerates structural change of regional economies which will be due in the long term, generating threats as well as opportunities for regions pending on their assets and potentials.
- Regions are hit in an asymmetrical pattern just like micro-regions and towns depending on the vulnerability in their economic base.
- The economic specialisation of regions and the structure, size and solidity of local companies are important for the impacts experienced.
- Some regions do better than before apparently un-affected or benefiting of the current economic situation.
- Bigger cities could suffer more than smaller ones as their integration in the world market is more profound.
- Large cities seem however better equipped to absorb negative impacts of the crisis as their capability to substitute labour market effects is higher.
- In Central and Eastern Europe, capital cities seem less affected by the economic downturn than in other parts of Europe.
- Long term benefits should be the focus of recovery measures taken by regions and cities addressing the opportunities inherent in the diversity of assets.

- Territorial diagnostics should be enhanced as a tool in finding the best measures in combating the crisis.

Summing up the first discussion, it seems that country and sector specific impacts hit regions and cities in random territorial patterns. This is due to regional/urban vulnerability. Contraction/lay-off seems often to depend on a combination of national economic vulnerability, the degree of export orientation in the regional/local economy and the presence of economic sectors with high vulnerability, such as finance and banking, housing and the automotive industry. The solidity of individual businesses is also an important factor that seems to explain some negative impacts on local labour markets. Whether larger or smaller cities in general conquer the current challenges best is disputed by experts and remains to be seen based on data and facts.

Peter Mehlbye
Director ESPON Coordination Unit

ESPON Open Seminar “Territorial Development Opportunities in the Global Economic Recession”

The Seminar took place in Prague on 3 – 4 June 2009 and was organised in cooperation with the **Czech Presidency of the European Union** in the presence of Minister Rostislav Vondruška, Ministry for Regional Development of Czech Republic, Dirk Ahner, General Director of the **European Commission DG Regio** and representatives of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (**OECD**) and the European Investment Bank (**EIB**). Around 250 participants attended the seminar, among them policy makers and scientists from Europe and neighbouring countries.

The Seminar brought about many interesting interventions and observations on territorial dimensions of the global economic crisis and what challenges and opportunities exist for regions and cities. Should you be interested in studying the detailed presentations, please visit the [ESPON Website](#).

New Calls in September 2009 on ESPON Applied Research, Targeted Analyses, Scientific Progress and Transnational Networking Activities

The next calls for Proposals and Expression of Interest are envisaged by mid September 2009. The deadline for submitting proposals and express interest is foreseen by mid November 2009.

(1) Calls for Proposals will be opened for the following 11 themes of Applied Research (under Priority 1 of the ESPON Programme) that have been decided by the Monitoring Committee:

- Attractiveness of European regions and cities for residents and visitors
- European patterns of land use
- Territorial cooperation in transnational areas and across internal/external borders
- Transport accessibility at regional/local scale and patterns in Europe
- Secondary growth poles in territorial development
- European perspective on specific types of territories

- Territorial dimension of the innovation and knowledge economy
- Continental territorial structures and flows (globalisation)
- Indicators and perspectives for services of general interest in territorial cohesion and development
- European seas in territorial development
- Territorial and regional sensitivity of EU Directives

(2) Targeted analyses, the new type of ESPON projects (under Priority 2), will be further implemented through the following calls:

- Call for Proposals: Potential of Rural Regions/PURR (TCAP1), Transnational Support Method for European Cooperation/TransSMec
- Call for Expression of Interest: (Up to) 10 new project ideas

(3) In support of the scientific platform under ESPON activities (under Priority 3 of the ESPON Programme), one of three major projects will be open:

- Call for Proposal on Territorial Indicators/Indices

(4) Capitalisation in the transnational context will start with the first round of projects carried through by teams of ESPON Contact Points by opening the following call:

- Call for Proposals for up to 7 Transnational Activities of the ESPON Contact Point Network

Participation of private partners will be possible in the calls for Proposals on Applied Research projects and Targeted Analysis as well as the project on Territorial Indicators/Indices.

Only public authorities are accepted in calls for expression of interest for Targeted analyses, and only institutions confirmed as ESPON Contact Points can submit proposals on Transnational Networking Activities.

New ESPON Inception Reports

(1) The Inception Report of TeDi - Territorial Diversity in Europe is available at the ESPON Website

The overall objective of this project is to provide a better understanding of development processes in territories outside the Pentagon that are defined as insular, mountainous, sparsely populated or peripheral. The analysis aims particularly at highlighting how these territories may contribute to the achievement of overarching European objectives expressed in the Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategies. By focusing on a representative sample of such regions, the project will be drawing more general conclusions for territories subject to similar territorial specificities across Europe. The Interim Report will be delivered on 13 July 2009. [More](#)

(2) The Inception Report of METROBORDER – Cross-Border Polycentric Metropolitan Regions has been published at the ESPON Website.

This project addresses cross-border metropolitan regions in Europe in relation to the policy aim of polycentric development. It aims at identifying criteria, potentials and governance

practices based on available ESPON evidence for polycentric cross-border metropolitan regions in Europe and proposing options for development strategies towards a multilevel approach for two case study regions (Upper Rhine Region and the Greater Region). Interim Report will become available by February 2010. [More reading](#)

ESPON CLIMATE Project - Climate Change and Territorial Effects on Regions and Local Economies in Europe

Find out more about ESPON CLIMATE - Climate Change and Territorial Effects on Regions and Local Economies in Europe. 13 partners are analysing how and to which degree climate change will impact on the competitiveness and cohesion of European regions and Europe as a whole. [More](#)

ESPON Contact Point in Your Country

The ESPON Contact Point (ECP) Network is a European wide network of public institutions nominated by each Member/Partner State and formally confirmed by the Monitoring Committee of the Programme. The ECP network supports the ESPON Programme by undertaking the capitalisation of ESPON results in the transnational context that should amplify the awareness and sensibility of policy makers and practitioners from all over Europe and stimulate their involvement and use of ESPON results.

The ECP network includes now 28 officially confirmed countries. During the last Monitoring Committee meeting in Prague on 2 June 2009, the University Alexandru Ioan Cuza from IAȘI – University Centre for Human Geography and Territorial Planning “Innovative Territories: Regional Management and Spatial Interactions” - was officially confirmed as ESPON Contact Point in Romania. To find the ECP in your country, visit the [ESPON Website](#).

List of Beneficiaries of the ESPON Programme

Under the rules governing the implementation of the ESPON Programme (EC No 1828/2006) details of all direct beneficiaries of European Cohesion policy must be published. An updated list of the approved beneficiaries under the ESPON 2013 Programme is available at the [ESPON Website](#).

Vacancies

The ESPON Coordination Unit is looking for Experts to join our international team. The two vacant posts are for a Financial Expert specialised in Law and a Junior Expert. Deadline for submitting an application is **8 July 2009 at 16.00**. [More](#)

ESPON participated to the “European Maritime Day Stakeholder Conference”

The conference took place on 19-20 May 2009 in Rome. The rich programme of the event combined high level political participation with workshops with a high level of stakeholder involvement from maritime regions and the maritime sector. ESPON was represented in Workshop 5 “How can atlases help to organise and promote the seas?” More information at http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/maritimeday/conference_in_rome_en.html

ESPON Partner Café

The ESPON Partner Café is an opportunity to find partners for setting up Transnational Project Groups aiming at submitting proposals for ESPON projects. **54 institutions from 17 European countries** have already taken the opportunity to be included in the overview compiled by ESPON. Your institution can be part of the Partner Café by submitting the "Partner Information Form" available at the ESPON Website.

Since from the next calls for proposals and onwards the ESPON 2013 Programme will be open also for private institutions to participate in Transnational Project Groups (TPGs), private partners are welcome to take part in the ESPON Partner Café. [More](#)

News from the Regional Studies Association (RSA)

RSA has announced a call for papers for its Annual International Conference 2010. Titled "Regional Responses and Global Shifts: Actors, Institutions and Organisations" it will take place from 24-26 May 2010 in Pécs, Southern Hungary. More information on this conference can be found here: <http://www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk/events/pecs2010/CFP.pdf>.

News from URBACT: 2nd Call for Proposals for the Creation of Thematic Networks and Working Groups Now Open

A Call for Proposals is now open for the creation of 12 new Thematic Networks and 3 new Working Groups. The Call is aimed at supporting European cities to deal with two current major challenges: the economic crisis and its consequences, and climate change and its effects. The Call is open from June 16, 2009 until September 25, 2009. Further information and detailed procedure to apply are available at the [URBACT Website](#).

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More information

The ESPON 2013 Programme is part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

It shall support policy development in relation to the aim of territorial cohesion and a harmonious development of the European territory. ESPON shall support Cohesion Policy development with European wide, comparable information, evidence, analyses and scenarios on framework conditions for the development of regions, cities and larger territories. In doing so, it shall facilitate the mobilisation of territorial capital and development opportunities, contributing to improving European competitiveness, to the widening and deepening of European territorial cooperation and to a sustainable and balanced development.

The Managing Authority responsible for the ESPON 2013 Programme is the Ministry of the Interior and for Spatial Development of Luxembourg. More information: www.espon.eu