Preparing the continuation of ESPON has been part of the European cooperation process for quite some time. The general opinion has been very clear that Europe needs territorial evidence to progress territorial cohesion, implement place-based approaches, enhance the territorial dimension in policy, and cater for integrated approaches to territorial development.

The Europe 2020 Strategy calling for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth has a clear territorial dimension inherent in the diversity of regions and cities around Europe. This is clearly demonstrated for a wider audience in the recent ESPON Atlas on the territorial dimension of the Europe 2020 strategy. As regions and cities are key contributors making the strategy come true, the need for evidence on the territorial dimension is in growing demand by policy makers.

The future European Structural Investment Funds 2014-2020 shall support the Europe 2020 Strategy in creating growth by focusing on 11 themes to be considered by programmes as their priorities for investments. Also here regions and cities play a key role in delivering evidence-informed responses.

The Territorial Agenda 2020 for the European Territory which is part of European cooperation included a number of policy orientations for territorial development related to urban systems, infrastructures and natural assets etc. Monitoring the implementation of these policy orientations, and at a later moment updating the Territorial Agenda, is another policy process where ESPON territorial evidence is in demand.

Moreover, policy attention needs today to include the larger territorial context much more than before. Strategic development considerations has to address opportunities and challenges from the ever increasing globalisation, connecting the world much closer and creating new market places. Growth potentials for Europe, its regions and cities, will increasingly be related to places outside Europe.

These needs for territorial evidence in future policy development are driving the process of shaping the third generation of ESPON. The process is carried forward by a Joint Working Group involving 28 EU member states and 4 partner states, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland with the mandate to elaborate the Operational Programme for the ESPON Programme covering 2014-2020.

Basic directions for a renewal of ESPON have been set at the level of General Directors. The drafting process has now reached a first level of maturity, however, there are still important discussions ahead and consensus to be shaped among the 32 countries involved.

You can if interested get a first insight on this process at the ESPON Website http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Press/Menu_LatestNews/news_274.html

Peter Mehlbye
Director ESPON Coordination Unit
ESPON Workshop "Gateway cities and regions - New evidence on different types of gateways and their future role in territorial policies"

Brussels, 27 November 2013 - Policy-making community representatives and practitioners are invited to attend this workshop which aims at presenting different types of gateways from a European perspective and discussing their future role in territorial policies.

The evidence on gateways and the concept used by the ESPON analyses will be discussed and tested exploring examples from national and regional territorial strategies or policies. Concrete examples from European countries and regions will be presented.

A roundtable ending the workshop will address the future of gateways as policy orientation in the development of the European territory and in national and regional strategies and policies. The round table will be nourished by stakeholders referring to regional gateway examples and statements from policy makers at national level as well as scientist involved in ESPON.

Registration deadline: 18 November 2013 at 14h00. Find out more at the ESPON Website http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Events/Menu_Workshops/workshop131127.html

Cohesion policy 2014-2020 - ESPON Territorial Evidence Packs for the development and implementation of future programmes

How ESPON evidence can be used to support the development of new programmes by giving a comparative European dimension?

ESPON published Territorial Evidence Packs for 10 programme areas aiming at providing the reader with insight on different types of territorial evidence with regard to the thematic objectives of future programmes.

The 10 reports include territorial evidence for four regional programmes, one CBC programme and five TNC programmes as follows: Molise (regional), Umbria (regional), Thessalia (regional), Norte (regional), Slovakia – Austria (CBC), North West Europe (TNC), North Sea (TNC), Alpine Space (TNC), Atlantic Area (TNC), South East Europe (TNC).
Articles

(1) “Economic Crisis and the Structural Funds”

The current round of Structural Fund programmes began on the 1st January 2007 and come to a close on the 31st December 2013. Thus, whilst they were prepared in the dying days of the economic boom, their implementation has coincided with the economic crisis that is generally considered to have been precipitated by the credit crunch of 2008.

In light of this juxtaposition, the ECR2 - Economic Crisis: Resilience of Regions - project was asked to examine how Structural Fund programmes have been affected by the economic crisis and, in turn, how the programmes have responded to this and to the effects of the crisis itself.

Read the article at the ESPON Website.


(2) “The ESPON Atlas - Territorial Dimensions of the EU 2020 Strategy- proved to be highly relevant for European regions wanting to benchmark themselves in relation to the growth targets set”

With the publication of the Atlas on the EU 2020 Strategy in June 2013, ESPON has responded to the significant demand of policy makers for evidence on the territorial dimension of the Strategy.

It is broadly recognized that the implementation of the Strategy requires the contribution of regional and local authorities. The Atlas offers concrete support in this respect allowing policy makers comparing their territories with others and towards the policy targets related to a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

To support the use of the ESPON 2020 Atlas, the Mission of Norway to the EU as well as the West and South Norway Regional Offices in Brussels, closely cooperated with ESPON to organise an event on 30 September involving key policy-makers at European and regional levels to discuss their perceptions, ambitions and expectations with regard to possible contributions to EU’s growth strategy until 2020.

Ambassador Atle Leikvoll said: “Europe 2020 Strategy is about growth and we need growth now. I welcome the Atlas that offers evidence in a direct way; its maps show the story of the territorial dimension of the EU 2020 Strategy in a different way and this is highly relevant for anything related to growth and innovation both at national and local level”.

Read the article at the ESPON Website


Use of ESPON

(1) “European perspectives on regions and regional development in Norway – in the light of ESPON”

The Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development commissioned a project which aimed at placing the regional development into a wider European and international perspective. The publication answers the following questions:

- What does ESPON tell us about regions and regional development in Norway and about the similarities and differences in regional conditions and trends in Norway compared to other parts of Europe?

- Can the relevance for Norwegian regional policy be strengthened by reproducing some of the analysis at a more detailed regional level and/or for other regional divisions in Norway?
To what extent does this information strengthen the knowledge base for Norwegian regional policy?

The study includes a summary in English. Further information and download at the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) Website http://www.nibr.no/i/pubdetaljer.aspx?pid=2678

(2) “Territorial dimension of development: Poland from the perspective of the ESPON”

The ECP Poland released the publication “Terytorialny wymiar rozwoju: Polska z perspektywy badań ESPON” which presents ESPON evidence and critical analysis of the Polish territory in the European perspective. It also includes recommendations for practitioners and institutions implementing development policies.

Chapters of the publication directly correspond to development challenges defined in the National Strategy for Regional Development. Authors interpret results in a transnational context so that each chapter can be used as an inspiration for evaluation of the nine new integrated development strategies, the concept of national spatial development and regional development strategies.

Further information:
Contact Katarzyna Wojnar, ECP Poland, espon@espon.pl

New Reports

(1) Governance: Draft Final Report of TANGO - Territorial Approaches for New Governance;

(2) Neighbour Regions: Interim Report of ITAN - European Neighbour Regions

(3) Energy: Interim Report of NSS - NORTH SEA STAR, North Sea - Spreading Transnational Results
http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Projects/Menu_TargetedAnalyses/NSS.html

ESPON In Your Country

(1) UK - USESPON final conference “Promoting local growth”

London, 15 November 2013 - The aim of this event is to generate thinking on promoting local growth in the UK. The event will consider the Government’s growth agenda, and examine how sustainable economic growth is being stimulated in Scottish cities as well as London. It will show how tools and concepts developed by ESPON can encourage strategic thinking and help in the formulation of strategies for growth.

Further information
USESPON Website http://www.espon-usespon.eu/upcoming-events.final-usespon-conference-promoting-local-growth; contact Eleanor Rowe, ECP UK eleanor.rowe@rtpi.org.uk

(2) BE - ESPON TOWN Project Workshop “New perspective on towns in Europe: from analysis to policy agenda”

Leuven (BE), 29 November 2013 - Evidence shows that small and medium sized towns (SMSTs) are rooted in local specificities and existing territorial capital, which becomes vulnerable if not well supported by tailored policies, in particular during and after periods of crisis, which have affected in different way these specific urban areas. Therefore, paying specific attention to SMSTs could offer opportunities to increase the resilience of territories facing global economic trends, retaining population that otherwise would be attracted by bigger metropolitan areas, and boosting the specific potentialities of territories.

The scope of the workshop is two-fold:
First, it aims to discuss some preliminary findings. The different spatial performances that characterise SMSTs across Europe and in particular in the case study areas will be combined to provide an overview of different policy issues that emerged from the analysis.

Second, the workshop will use the findings as a starting point for further discussions with stakeholders and policy makers from different EU regions. The various regional and national cases will provide different perspectives and approaches while indicating good practices, difficulties and future opportunities.

For info and registration contact Loris Servillo loris.servillo@asro.kuleuven.be

Past Events

(1) ESPON Workshop “Territorial Vision for Europe towards 2050”

Brussels, 11 October 2013 – In cooperation with the project ET2050 ESPON organised a workshop at the Committee of the Regions. The event aimed at raising awareness among all relevant stakeholders on the work that is done and to involve them in dialogue and cooperation on the development of a Territorial Vision for Europe towards 2050.

The workshop brought together 41 European stakeholders (policy-makers, practitioners and organisations) and provided a platform for lively, useful and constructive discussions in plenary and parallel sessions.

The project team presented scenarios and striking results for Europe in 2030 and 2050. Several prospective documents at European and global level as well as inputs from stakeholders already received, added to this evidence base for a Territorial Vision for Europe towards 2050. The input gathered from all attendees will feed the next version of the Territorial Vision 2050 that will be presented in December 2013.

Further information at the ESPON Website
http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Events/Menu_Workshops/workshop131011_after.html

(2) ESPON at the OPEN DAYS 2013

Brussels, 7 – 10 October 2013 – The OPEN DAYS-European Week of Regions and Cities- is the key annual event for regional and local authorities. Marking the new timeline towards the Europe 2020 strategy, this edition of the OPEN DAYS was held under the slogan “Europe’s regions and cities taking off for 2020”.

This year ESPON contributed to the event with workshops, speech and a joint exhibition in cooperation with INTERACT, INTERREG IVC and URBACT.

Find out more at the ESPON Website
http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Events/Menu_ESPONatEvents/opendays13100710_after.html

(3) ESPON Scientific Conference “Science in support of European Territorial Development and Cohesion”

Luxembourg, 12-13 September 2013 - Last month about 100 people contributed to a fruitful dialogue between science, practice and policy at the ESPON Scientific Conference.

The cooperation with the University of Luxembourg, hosting the conference, and the five scientific organisations AESOP, ECTP-CEU, ERSA, EUGEO and RSA proved very successful.

Thanks to the chairs, key messages from the 12 parallel sessions have been drafted. The messages summarise new and challenging needs and developments for the future to support European Territorial Development and Cohesion.

The panel discussion at the end of the conference voiced a number of interesting points of advice for the future ESPON Programme.
All papers presented are currently being reviewed and revised and will finally be included in the second ESPON 2013 Scientific Report.

Find out more at the ESPON Website

http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Events/Menu_Conferences/scientific-conference_2013091213_after.html

Other News

Have a say on Europe 2020! - CoR launches consultation on EU growth

The Committee of the Regions has launched a consultation which invites local and regional authorities to give their opinions on the impact of the EU’s growth strategy. The assessment will form the basis of the institutions contribution to the midterm review of the Europe 2020 strategy.

The survey runs until 11 November 2013, and the results will be officially published in March 2014.

Visit the CoR website to take part in the survey

https://portal.cor.europa.eu/europe2020/Pages/TMASurvey.aspx

Sign-up and communicate

If you find the ESPON Newsletter interesting and useful, please tell others to sign-up by subscribing online at the ESPON Website, link:


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 Sustainable Development and Infrastructures, Department for Spatial Planning and Development of Luxembourg. More information: www.espon.eu

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