

NOTE ON THE RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Geography of COVID-19 outbreak and first policy answers in European regions and cities

The starting point to develop this short term research project on Covid-19 is the lack of:

- Pan-European overview about the geographical spread of the epidemic at regional and local levels (going beyond national representations and using reliable comparable data).
- Understanding about the variables likely to influence the spread of the disease (in terms of territorial characteristics, mobility patterns, population structure...).
- European overview of the emergency policy-responses carried out at regional and local levels (cities, metropolitan areas...) before, during and right after lock-down measures have been implemented.

This activity shall bring pan-European territorial evidence to contribute to the efforts undertaken at EU, national and regional levels: to help understand better the territorial patterns of the epidemics and to support the definition of renewed place-based policies to tackle the upcoming socio-economic crisis.

The results of this new ESPON study should be usable for the purpose of an eventual future mid-long term applied research activity in 2021 on the territorial consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for European territories.

Main tasks foreseen:

- Dynamic mapping of the geography of the outbreak at the European scale, using openly available data from national and regional public authorities.
- Overview and comparisons on policy answers/responses at regional and local levels across Europe, using existing evidence collected by organisations such as CoR, CEMR, Eurocities, Urbact...
- Identification of key policy questions and proposals for future potential ESPON applied research in 2021.

The study will be implemented in cooperation with other interested partners networks.

First results shall be ready by mid-September 2020 to be presented and discussed with ESPON monitoring committee and all partners organizations involved. Final results shall be made available to ensure common dissemination at the time of the European Week of Regions and Cities (October 2020).

The estimated budget for this activity is 60,000 EUR.