



CCI 2007 CB 163 PO 022

**ESPON 2013**  
**(The European Observation Network on  
Territorial Development and Cohesion)**

**Annual Report 2013**

STRUCTURAL FUNDS 2007-2013  
TERRITORIAL COOPERATION OBJECTIVE

**Annual implementation report**  
**(In accordance to article 67 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006)**  
**Approved by the ESPON Monitoring Committee on 3 June 2014**

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## Abbreviations

AA:	Audit Authority
CA:	Certifying Authority
CU:	Coordination Unit
EC:	European Commission
ECP:	ESPO Contact Point
EoI:	Expression of Interest
ERDF:	European Regional Development Fund
EU:	European Union
FLC	First Level Financial Control
GoA:	Group of Auditors
KSS:	Knowledge Support System
LP:	Lead Partner
MA:	Managing Authority
MC:	Monitoring Committee
PMSS:	Programme Monitoring Support System
SB:	Sounding Board
TA:	Technical Assistance
TIA	Territorial Impact Assessment
TNA:	Transnational Networking Activity
TPG:	Transnational Project Group

## 1. Identification

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME	<b>Objective concerned:</b> European Territorial Cooperation
	<b>Eligible area concerned:</b> EU 28 as well as Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland as Partner States
	<b>Programming period:</b> 2007-2013
	<b>Programme number (CCI No):</b> CCI 2007 CB 163 PO 022
	<b>Programme title:</b> ESPON 2013 (European observation network on territorial development and cohesion)
ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT	<b>Reporting year:</b> 2013
	<b>Date of approval of the annual report by the monitoring committee:</b> 3 June 2014

## 2. Overview of the implementation of the Operational Programme

### 2.1. Achievement and analysis of the progress

Throughout 2013, the ESPON Programme implementation showed good progress. The ESPON Programme today is a recognised provider of comparable pan-European evidence, analyses and scenarios on territorial dynamics to policy development at all levels. It builds up a knowledge and evidence base that helps regions, cities and larger territories in deciding on their development. In the ESPON 2013 Programme 31 countries are contributing, 27 European Union (EU) Member States as well as the 4 Partner States Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Universities, research organisations and consultancies have been broadly participating in studies carried out under this programme and contributed to provide a link between research and policy making. The programme implementation is moving towards the end while still more and more project results become available and good progress is shown with the capitalisation efforts having impact. This way the ESPON 2013 Programme is supporting better understanding on territorial structures, trends, perspectives and policy impacts, seen from a European perspective.

The Work Programme 2013 for the implementation of the 5 Programme Priorities within the ESPON 2013 Programme has been set-up in close collaboration with the Monitoring Committee (MC).

Four major strategic avenues have been pursued during the implementation of the ESPON 2013 Programme in 2013:

- (1) **Enhancing capitalisation and communication activities based on the rising number of final results in support of wide-spread use of ESPON territorial evidence**, including targeted activities and publishing publications according to the decided Publication Plan 2011-2014.
- (2) **Avoiding de-commitment of Funds by implementing with serenity the Roadmap adopted for the ESPON 2013 Programme** and continue sound financial management of the programme with finding-free audits and quality checks.
- (3) **Ensuring high quality and useful outputs from active projects**, ensuring easy communicating and useful results supported by clear executive summaries that can make ESPON even more recognised for its European territorial evidence base.
- (4) **Maximising the support from the many envisaged activities under MA led projects within Priority 3 and 4**, carrying through tendering of services on a multitude/variety of events, publications, tools, website development, map updates, etc. as far the human resources available allows.

Being the set up of the programme completed, and the entire implementation system in place already since 2010, 2013 was still a year in which numerous projects were running. They were complemented by one project under the Transnational Networking Activity (TNA) resulting from the final call of this programme implementation period. During this year the ESPON 2013 Programme had still 12 Applied Research projects under implementation together with seven Targeted Analyses and eight projects under the Scientific Platform which were complemented by several Managing Authority (MA)-led projects. Under 'Capitalisation, Ownership and Participation' five TNAs and also several MA-led projects have been conducted.

Additional final results of Applied Research and Targeted Analyses projects became available during 2013. This further accelerated the communication and capitalisation of results under the Programme. This way the programme implementation showed especially good process with regard to capitalisation efforts taking pace. Numerous actions towards potential beneficiaries of the programme were implemented as for example the publication of a considerable number of Evidence Briefs, Territorial Observations and ESPON newsletters, the Synthesis Report No 2, or the ESPON Atlas. Additional activities and events created increased awareness of European territorial dynamics and subsequent interest of stakeholders in using ESPON results in practice.

As already in the previous years, also the implementation of the programme during 2013 connected as closely as possible to the policy development process related to territorial cohesion and the future of EU Cohesion Policy. In this context, a major challenge ahead was to provide operational support to the policy process with territorial facts and evidence. The ESPON 2013 Programme in 2013 has delivered additional solid and profound knowledge on European territorial structures, trends, perspectives and policy impacts.

The 2013 audit of operations and the previous audits results from 2009 to 2012 were concluded positively. The necessary elements and set-up procedures, complying with the rules and expectations, keep providing a sufficient procedures framework for the implementation of the Programme. In 2013, the yearly audit of operations covered expenditures from four projects from Priorities 1 and 4. Taking into account the audit results revealing a proper functioning and low risk of the ESPON 2013 Programme procedural framework, the external auditor indicated that the management and control system of the ESPON programme remains at highest level of confidence.

As regards the Certifying Authority (CA) quality checks, the CA issued in July 2013 the final report of the quality check on one operation from Priority 1, covering 9 partners selected in the end of 2011. In October 2013, the CA also requested the Audit Authority (AA) approval on the proposal to modify the methodology of the CA quality checks. The proposal of methodology change will imply a stronger use of the random sampling method, in compliance with the approved Description of the Management and Control System. The AA has approved the methodology change on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2013, considering the following elements: the high level of assurance of the programme resulting from the system audits and audits of operation, the low level of error rates from 2009 to 2012 resulting from audits of operation, the limited scope of the proposal of methodology update for the CA quality checks, the compliance with the Description of the Management and Control System, the large scope of the actual CA quality checks with a high number of partners and progress reports under review, and the exhaustiveness of control elements of the CA quality checks maintained in the methodology update. In case of identified needs, the CA quality checks can be strengthened at any moment, at the request of the AA.

Twelve Member States (Belgium Flemish Region, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden) carried on their quality checks on First Level Financial Control (FLC) Systems in 2013. No particular issue was observed by the Member States during their quality checks on FLC, except for Finland and Sweden.

For the Member State Finland, the final audit report issued on 3rd December 2012 reveals that the Regional Department's system (Central Approbation Body – CAB) can be regarded as functional, but control is insufficient and that the quality of designated

first level controllers' work is not always adequate. The ESPON project in the sample was the ESPON CLIMATE project. This project was given grade 2 in the quality check due to incomplete audit trail (on a grade scale from 1 to 5: grade 1 indicating that the audit was performed in line with the requirements set, whereas grade 5 means that the audit revealed defects that pose a threat to the EU budget). The Member State Finland informed the Coordination Unit (CU)/MA on 27/09/2013 that the recommendations of the final audit report, mainly focused on training, are taken into account by the CAB. The recommendation implementation is monitored by the internal audit department.

For Sweden, the FLC Quality check Final Report was sent on 22/03/2013. Seven recommendations have been described by the Swedish AA in relation to the assessment of the key requirements "Adequate management controls" and "Adequate audit trail". These recommendations have been followed-up by the AA who concluded in the final report that the national controllers have taken measures according to the recommendations of the AA. Certain measures are not completed in the present situation, but the work for improvement is in progress.

Two MA quality check final reports have been issued: in February 2013 for the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Faculty of Geography and Geology, in Romania and in July 2013 for Norsk Institutt for By- og Regionforskning (NIBR), in Norway. The MA quality check in Romania did not identify any major issue with the beneficiary. No major finding related to administrative, financial and technical (procedural) aspects has been observed. No issue has been identified as regards the expenses reporting in the frame of the ESPON projects. However, the ESPON CU noted particular points that the university should dedicate specific attention during reporting procedure: on exchange rates reporting, on audit trail completeness, on funds reception by the partner from the Lead Partner (LP) and on information related to costs cut by CU/MA/CA on their progress reports. The final report has been addressed to the MC Romania and FLCs for follow-up on these elements.

For Norway, based on the quality check performed at NIBR, no finding related to administrative and technical (procedural) aspects has been observed by the MA/CU. However, a major issue has been detected on the financial aspects, with the staff costs reporting, especially the hourly rates calculation. The detected finding has a financial impact on the total declared and paid staff costs for all ESPON projects of NIBR. Corrective actions in relation to this finding have been defined in an action plan presented in the final report addressed to the MC, FLC, and beneficiary. The follow-up is still ongoing at this stage with the Group of Auditor member of Norway.

The experiences from 2009 to 2012 showed that particular attention needed to be given to the correct and timely functioning of the FLC Systems in the different Member and Partner States. This remained a crucial task in 2013 both for the MA/CU/CA and Member and Partner States by performing their first quality check on FLC, in order to avoid any risk of de-commitment which might arise not just from a low level of programme financial commitment, but also from delayed project reporting and insufficient quality of the certification according to FLC accompanying the projects claims.

Overall it can be concluded that in 2013 the programme financial implementation has been undergoing a major effort where payments made by the CA towards beneficiaries kept rising consistently. The level of spending has not resulted in de-commitment of funds. Nevertheless, the target to avoid de-commitment of funds by the end of 2014 will still be a top priority in 2014.

### **2.1.1. Information on the progress of the Operational Programme**

The number of actions realised increased moderately during 2013 due to the contracting of the last projects stemming still from the call which was opened during 18 April 2012-13 June 2012.

The number of proposals submitted under Priority 1 to 4 changed due to the call for proposals for Transnational Networking Activities by the ESPON Contact Point (ECP) Network under Priority 4, which was opened during 22 August 2013 to 18 October 2013. One proposal was submitted. The number of submitted expressions of interest under Priority 2 remained the same as it has reached its final number already in 2011.

In line with an increased capitalisation, the number of publications, e-newsletter and press releases doubled during the first semester of 2013 and grew further during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. Here a considerable number of publications have very much contributed to the rise of this indicator, including several Territorial Observations, the Synthesis Report No 2, or the ESPON Atlas.

Furthermore the number of participants attending ESPON seminars, workshops and other events could be raised. More specifically, 47 participants attended the Financial Managers Seminar, 53 the Workshop on 'European Seas and Maritime Regions', and 225 participants the ESPON Open Seminar in Dublin, Ireland on 13-14 June 2013. In the second half of 2013, 62 participants were registered at the workshop on 'Territorial Dimensions of the Europe 2020 Strategy', 41 participants at the workshop on 'Territorial Vision for Europe towards 2050', 25 participants at the workshop on 'European gateway cities and regions – New evidence on different types of gateways and their future role, 94 attendees at the Scientific Conference, 23 participants at the Info Day in September, 23 participants at the Financial Managers Seminar and 190 attendees at the ESPON Internal Seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania on 4-5 December 2013. In line with increased capitalisation measures, and considering that the ESPON Open Seminar took already place in the first half 2013, it is promising that in the second semester 100 participants more than in the first semester 2013 could be counted.

In addition, the monthly average of visits of the ESPON website also registered a significant increase. This tendency can be explained by the interest generated among policy makers and practitioners on ESPON seminars and workshops, but also new publications with particular interest for the EU policy agenda. This tendency is especially positive considering that the programme is moving towards the end and that the one call published during this period only targeted the ESPON ECP network. Equally important is the fact that the numbers of subscribers on social media tools (based on Twitter followers) accompanied this trend and keeps growing, increasing therefore the role of networking activities in bridging the gap between beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries and other interested parties.

From a more programme management point of view, the fourth series audits of operation on the ESPON 2013 Programme ("audits 2013") were performed by the external auditor between February and May 2013 in accordance with the audit strategy approved on September 2008. The sampling of these audits of operations had been performed by the AA and approved at the Group of Auditors (GoA) meeting on 13-14 November 2012, selecting a random sampling and a complementary sampling. The random sample and the complementary sample included project expenditures from four projects from Priorities 1 and 4. The aim of these audits of operation was to assess the efficiency of the management and control system. The audits 2013 final reports have

been reviewed and approved by the AA and GoA members on 28 June 2013 by written procedure.

The external auditor presented at the GoA meeting on 14-15 November 2013, the results of the audits of operations 2013 and the follow-up of findings from the previous year audit (“audits 2012”).

As communicated in the Annual Control Report 2013, the final findings from audits 2012 were followed-up in 2013 by the MA/CU/CA: six findings have been closed: a) DEMIFER (expenditure finding): the ineligible amount of 2 842,30 EUR related to the two findings has been deducted from a subsequent progress report introduced for this operation; b) DEMIFER (sub-system finding): The Austrian member of the GoA has ensured that the remedial action has performed by the Austrian FLC; and c) TRANSMEC (expenditure finding): the ineligible amount of 729,73 EUR related to the two findings has been recovered via recovery procedure. From audits 2013, five final findings remain open after the contradictory procedures: one relates to sub-system finding, four to expenditures findings. An action plan detailing remedial actions, authority body in charge and deadlines for follow-up has been included in the Annual Control Report 2013.

The Annual control report was submitted to the European Commission (EC) by the AA on 24 December 2013, along with the corresponding opinion approved by the GoA members in 14-15 November 2013.

Sampling for the fifth year audits of operation (“audits 2014”) has already been discussed and approved during the GoA meeting on 14-15 November 2013. The AA has assessed the impact of the new guidance on sampling and the proposal of the sampling for 2014. Due to the size of the ESPON 2013 programme and the dedicated budget to the audit work compared to the work induced by the new guidance, the strict application of the new guidance is not conceivable for ESPON. The AA proposed for the ESPON programme to keep the actual audit strategy for the remaining programming period, and in the same time, to take into account some elements of the new guidance, and among them, to increase the number of controls performed. Therefore, the AA proposed to raise the sampling size, from 7,5% to 10% of the operations and to foresee a complementary sampling to increase as much as possible the coverage of the certified expenditures audited, with maintaining a reasonable number of on-the-spot checks to perform. The GoA members approved the sampling methodology for 2014.

The random sample and the complementary sample for the audits 2014 include project expenditures from five projects from Priorities 1, 3 and 4. The sample proposed for 2014 will imply the check of 8,32% of the declared expenditure in 2013 by including the complementary sample (or 7,97% by excluding the complementary sample), while in the previous year the level of controlled expenditure was 9,72% (or 8,51% by excluding the complementary sample). The random and the complementary samples presented have been approved by the GoA members.

With regard to the payments made, the continuous extensive efforts made by the MA/CU on the implementation of the roadmap to avoid de-commitment facilitated a swift processing of progress reports and contributed again to an increasing absorption of funds at project level in 2013. As result the financial execution rate of the accumulated payments made by the CA displays a substantial increase. Regrettably, still no additional payments have been certified to the EC by the CA for cost incurred under Priority 5 due to internal delays also with the FLC procedure.

As 2012, also 2013 was, in many ways, an important year for the ESPON 2013 Programme especially with regard to additional final results that were delivered by the ongoing projects under Priority 1, 2 and 3 and the following capitalisation actions.

No quantifiable indicators have been mentioned at programme level in the Operational Programme. Quantifiable indicators have only been defined at priority levels which are presented in details under Chapter 3.

### **2.1.2. Financial information**

In the course of 2013 altogether 86 project progress reports requesting reimbursements were submitted by the LPs. Following the assessment and the quality control on FLC undertaken by the ESPON CU, all progress reports were considered as receivable and there was no need to send back reports for correction. However, it needs to be mentioned that the ESPON CU had to ask clarifications to all progress reports and the LPs were requested to correct errors in the forms completing the documentations to entirely complying with the reporting requirements. In total 69 progress reports of the 86 submitted by LPs could be accepted and processed towards the CA for recommending for payment. To the rest of the reports submitted by the LPs the ESPON CU had to wait for the requested clarifications and corrections that have not been completed in the year of 2013.

The amounts reported by the beneficiaries as well as accepted by the ESPON CA are detailed in the table below.

#### ***Priority axes by source of funding (EUR) in 2013***

	Expenditure paid out by the beneficiaries included in payment claims sent to the managing authority	Corresponding public contribution	Private Expenditure*	Expenditure paid by the body responsible for making payments to the beneficiaries	Total payments received from the Commission
Priority Axis 1 – Applied Research ERDF type expenditure	15,215,185.29 €	15,215,185.29 €	0.00 €	14,188,010.63 €	12,769,321.06 €
Priority Axis 2 – Targeted Analysis ERDF type expenditure	5,169,970.85 €	5,169,970.85 €	0.00 €	4,535,048.71 €	3,628,038.97 €
Priority Axis 3 – Scientific Platform ERDF type expenditure	2,764,212.52 €	2,764,212.52 €	0.00 €	2,591,425.82 €	2,202,585.49 €
Priority Axis 4 – Capitalization ERDF type expenditure	1,820,331.15 €	1,820,331.15 €	0.00 €	1,781,813.45 €	1,407,587.71 €
Priority Axis 5 – TA, Analytical Support, Communication ERDF type expenditure	682,832.12 €	682,832.12 €	0.00 €	681,825.41 €	163,667.65 €
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>25,652,531.93 €</b>	<b>25,652,531.93 €</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>23,778,124.02 €</b>	<b>20,171,200.87 €</b>
Total in transitional regions in the grand total	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €
Total in non-transitional regions in the grand total	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €
ESF type expenditure in the grand total where the Operational Programme is co-financed by the ERDF	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €
ERDF type expenditure in the grand total where the Operational Programme is co-financed by the ESF	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €	0.00 €

\* Only applicable for operational programmes expressed in total cost.

### 2.1.3. Information about the breakdown of use of the Funds

The table below presents financial information about the certified European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) expenditure by the end of 2013.

Combination of codes of dimensions 1 to 5 only ERDF for the whole programming period					
Code * Dimension 1 Priority theme	Code * Dimension 2 Form of finance	Code * Dimension 3 Territory	Code * Dimension 4 Economic activity	Code * Dimension 5 Location	Amount **
Code 81 Mechanisms for improving good policy and programme design, monitoring and evaluation					20.051.723,49€
Code 85 Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection					109.657,32€
Code 86 Evaluation and studies; information and communication					9.820,06€
Sub-Total					<b>20.171.200,87€</b>
	Code 01 Non-repayable aid				20.171.200,87€
Sub-Total					<b>20.171.200,87€</b>
		Code 00 Not applicable			0,00€
Sub-Total					<b>0,0,€</b>
			Code 00 Not applicable		0,00€
Sub-Total					<b>0.00€</b>
				EU	20.171.200,87€

Sub-Total	<b>20.171.200,87€</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.171.200,87€</b>

\* the categories should be coded for each dimension using the standard classification

\*\* allocated amount of the Community contribution for each combination of categories

The table below presents the financial information about allocated ERDF expenditure for operations selected until the end of 2013. The figures display the ERDF share of the total budget of contracted project not considering the payment forecast of these projects for a specific year.

Combination of codes of dimensions 1 to 5 only ERDF for the whole programming period					
Code * Dimension 1 Priority theme	Code * Dimension 2 Form of finance	Code * Dimension 3 Territory	Code * Dimension 4 Economic activity	Code * Dimension 5 Location	Amount **
Code 81 Mechanisms for improving good policy and programme design, monitoring and evaluation					32.639.372,34€
Code 85 Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection					943.537,49€
Code 86 Evaluation and studies; information and communication					84.495,89 €
Sub-Total					<b>33.667.405,73€</b>
	Code 01 Non-repayable aid				33.667.405,73 €
Sub-Total					<b>33.667.405,73€</b>
		Code 00			0,00 €

	Not applicable	
Sub-Total		33.667.405,73€
	Code 00 Not applicable	0,00 €
Sub-Total		33.667.405,73€
		EU
Sub-Total		33.667.405,73 €
Total		33.667.405,73€

\* the categories should be coded for each dimension using the standard classification

\*\* allocated amount of the Community contribution for each combination of categories

#### 2.1.4. Assistance by target groups

Not applicable.

#### 2.1.5. Assistance repaid or re-used

Based on audits of operations results in 2012, two findings for a total amount of ineligible expenditures of 2.842,30 EUR has been deducted from a subsequent progress report introduced for this operation and two findings for a total amount of 729,73 EUR have been recovered via recovery procedure launched by the MA from 13<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The CA confirmed to the MA/CU the reception of the recovered amount of 729,73 EUR from the Project Partner of the audited operation on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2013. This recovery was deducted in the payment claim of 6 March 2013.

From audits of operations performed in 2013, there were four expenditures findings with ineligible costs, allocated as follows:

- One expenditure finding concerns the Project Partner, National University of Ireland, Cork for the GEOSPECS project. The expenditure finding relates to claimed refundable VAT costs. This findings has been identified by the FLC prior to the sampling selection by the AA. The ineligible amount of 14,91 EUR has been already deducted by the FLC within Progress Report 6. The FLC provided the CU/MA with the scan of the FLC control documents and PR6. These documents will be received in original at the CU and hence be processed for payment in 2014.
- One expenditure finding concerns the Project Partner, Metropolitan Research Institute in Hungary, for the SGPDTE project. The expenditure finding relates to miscalculation of administration costs. The ineligible amount of 4,74 EUR for the SGPDTE project has been deducted by the MA/CU from the payment of progress report n°6 by the CA. The assessment of Progress Report n°6 has been made by the ESPON CU in July 2013 and the payment was made on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013 by the CA to the LP of the SGPDTE project.

Two expenditures findings concern the Project Partner, Brussels Free University in Belgium for the ESPON-INTERSTRAT Project. The expenditure findings relate (1) to miscalculation of staff costs for an amount of 2.113,42 EUR and (2) to miscalculation of administration costs (due to the 1st expenditure finding on staff) for an amount of 317,01 EUR. The total ineligible amount of 2.430,43 EUR has been subject of a recovery procedure launched by MA decision on 13th September 2013. The MC members of the ESPON Programme have been informed on 19th September 2013 of the ongoing recovery procedure, and the MC member of UK – country of the LP of the operation - gave formal agreement on the recovery procedure on 14 October 2013. The recovery of 2.430,43 EUR has been received on 28 October 2013, as confirmed by the CA. This recovery will be deducted in 2014 in the next payment claim to the EC.

#### **2.1.6. Qualitative analysis**

From a programme management point of view, during 2013 the efforts were concentrated on ensuring a sufficient speed in the implementation of the different programme priorities in order to avoid any risk of de-commitment and to forward the dissemination activities.

Overall the programme implementation seems to be on a good track with a good development especially with respect to the project implementation, with an increasing focus on communication and capitalisation measures. The absorption of funds from the operation side increased, additional efforts though are still required concerning the spending and certification of cost for MA-led projects. Thanks to the joint efforts between the ESPON MA, CU, CA and LPs and PPs the ESPON Programme did not have to face de-commitment at the end of 2013.

A significant number of projects under Priority 1 and Priority 2 are now on the closure phase and projects have generally received a vivid interest from the practitioners and scientific communities.

The implementation of projects within the Priority 3 Scientific Platform is now catching up and the level of activities increased considerably in 2013. In total eight Scientific Platform projects were running during 2013 and all progressing well. Besides some necessary revisions and unforeseen delays, the projects within the Priority 3 MA-led projects are in general progressing in a satisfying way and the deliveries are of good quality.

An additional Priority 4 TNA project was selected in 2013, making the total number of TNA projects to be carried out during the ESPON Programme to eight. Only four MA-led projects were still running in 2013: “4.1a Media and Publications” supporting the capitalisation activities which reached his peak in 2013 and continue in 2014. The other additional MA-led projects were “4.1b Capitalisation Strategy and Media Bureau 2009”, “4.1c Website II (2011-2014)”, and “4.2 European Seminars and Workshops 2011-2014” which are progressing in a satisfying way and with deliveries of sufficient to high quality.

#### **2.2. Information about compliance with Community law**

There were no problems encountered relating to the compliance with Community law in the implementation of the Operational Programme.

### ***2.3. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them***

The significant delays from the side of the beneficiaries in submitting financial progress reports remain a major problem in the financial implementation of the ESPON 2013 Programme. While in previous years, the delays were mainly related to problems inside the project partnership due to the high number of partners in some cases, in the last two years the ESPON CU experienced another important bottle neck in reporting. In several countries the centralized first level control bodies are lacking resources to undertake the first level control and consequently, the certification procedure cannot be implemented within the given 2 months deadline.

As a result of the contentious effort of the ESPON CU in providing guidelines and targeted support to beneficiaries, it needs to be highlighted that the quality of the reports improved. All 86 progress reports submitted in the course of 2013 were declared receivable and 69 reports submitted by LPs could be accepted and processed towards the CA for recommending for payment.

The de-commitment situation for 2013 represented a challenge considering that the level of expenditure to be certified was high in relation to the rhythm of absorption and reporting of the projects. The MA and the ESPON CU therefore followed the steps of the road map that was approved by the ESPON MC in 2010 for avoiding fund de-commitment. In the framework of this road map and beside the standard financial manager seminar held in early spring 2013, the ESPON CU organized a 'targeted financial manager seminar' in July 2013 with specific focus on supporting the LPs with the submission of their pending progress reports. The seminar proved to be useful and the results are tangible with a series of reports de-blocked and submitted after the meeting. Several projects managed to catch up with the delays in their financial reporting and with the submission of the pending reports many projects have been closed from the financial point of view in the course of 2013.

It is important to mention that following the targeted financial manager seminar, the quality of the submitted progress reports have considerably improved. It is therefore not excluded that additional events of this type will be organised in future to support the smooth reporting of the projects and facilitate the closure of the ESPON 2013 Programme.

Beside the road map the ESPON CU continued to invest more resources and to be active by providing information, additional guidance not only to LPs but also directly to Project Partners and to the national and designated First Level Financial Controllers in order to ensure that impeccable financial reports are forwarded on time to the CA for processing. A pre-check of the reporting documents before they are submitted by the LP to the First Level Financial Controller are undertaken by the ESPON CU upon requests of the beneficiaries. Member and Partner States have been requested to improve and speed up the certification process in their respective countries.

It needs to be mentioned that several projects have faced the problem of partner change or partner drop out in their partnership in 2013 as well. The procedural steps related to the changes in the partnerships of several projects required also more resources from the ESPON CU and a very intensive effort was needed in order to complete the contractual procedures related to these changes.

The audits of operations carried out in 2013 in accordance with the audit strategy of the Operational Programme, have been presented by the external auditor at the GoA

meeting in 14-15 November 2013. The audit of operations undertaken in 2013 covered expenditures from four projects from Priorities 1 and 4.

Two final finding of audits of operation 2012 has been closed in 2013 by recovery procedure of the ineligible amount of 729,73 EUR. From the audits of operation 2013, five final findings remained open after the contradictory procedures: one related to sub-systems findings and four to expenditures findings (14,91 EUR for GEOSPEC and 4,74 EUR for SGPTDE project that will be deducted on next progress reports before payment by the CA and 2.430,43 EUR for INTERSTRAT project that has been recovered by recovery procedure in October 2013). An action plan detailing the remedial actions for these six findings has been included in the Annual Control Report 2013 submitted to the EC on 24 December 2013. The action plan identified the authority body in charge of the remedial actions and follow-up and the remedial actions deadlines in 2014. Taking into account the audit results 2013 with a total error rate of 0,0008%, the external auditor indicated that the management and control system remains at highest level of confidence by the end of 2013.

Apart from the delays in financial reporting and the difficulties caused by the partner changes mentioned above, no significant problems with regard to Priority 1, 2, 3 and 4 have been encountered in the course of 2013.

With the exception of the last project selected in the framework of the last call for proposals under Priority 4, projects are now all contracted and under implementation in a good way.

Two actions within the MA-led Project on Update of Maps 2011-2014 have been launched in 2013: the public procurement procedure for ESPON Travel time matrices on road, rail, air, and multimodal for 2001, 2006, 2011, 2014 has been launched on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2013 and the one for ESPON Harmonised Datasets on Local Units (LAU 2) on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The Travel time matrices service contract has been signed by the MA and the selected service provider, Spiekermann & Wegener from Germany, on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2014. The contracting for the Harmonised Datasets on Local Units (LAU 2) is still on-going in March 2014. The two remaining actions of this MA-Led Project Update of Maps “Filling in the data gap in the ESPON Database” and “Update of maps and related data on Climate Change” have been launched in the first half of 2014.

The actions planned within the MA-led project “3.2b Tools 2011-2014” have been delayed. Two actions within the MA-led Project on Tools 2011-2014 have been launched in 2013: the public procurement procedure for ESPON Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) Web Application has been launched on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2013 and the one for ESPON Feasibility study on Big Data on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The TIA Web application service contract has been signed by the MA and the selected service provider, ÖIR GmbH from Austria, on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. The contracting for the Feasibility study on Big Data is still on-going in March 2014. Then, two other actions will be launched in the first half of 2014 “Functional Indicators Tool” and “Upholding of the Baltic Sea Region – Territorial Monitoring System”.

Under priority 1 and 2 no additional significant problems have been encountered on a general level or in the implementation of the priorities. More detailed information on significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them under priority 3 and 4 is presented in chapter 3 ‘Implementation by priority’ under the respective headings.

## ***2.4. Changes in the context of the operational programme implementation***

There were no changes stemming directly from the assistance of the Operational Programme that would have a direct impact on the programme's implementation.

## ***2.5. Substantial modification under Article 57 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006***

There were no cases where substantial modifications under Article 57 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 were needed.

## ***2.6. Complementarity with other instruments***

The ESPON 2013 Programme has no arrangements with other instruments.

## ***2.7. Monitoring arrangements***

During 2013, the monitoring and evaluation measures taken by the Programme have focused on the implementation of several elements which are described below.

### **2.7.1. Monitoring of programme implementation**

According to Article 58. (c) of Regulation (EC) 1083/2006, the Programme shall ensure a reliable accounting, monitoring and financial reporting system in computerised form. The monitoring and financial reporting system “Programme Monitoring Support System” (PMSS) collecting data on the implementation necessary for financial management, monitoring, verifications, audit and evaluation has been updated with the last application received in the framework of the last call for proposals during 2013. The structure of the PMSS has been set up following the requirements set by Article 60 (c) of Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 and Annex III of Regulation (EC) 1828/2006.

Information related to the implementation of the ESPON Programme is continuously stored in the system. All programme bodies and as well First Level Financial Controller of centralised systems and representatives of Central Approbation Bodies in decentralized system as well as the GoA members have received access to the system<sup>1</sup>.

In addition to the on-going evaluation, an external assessment of the programme implementation was carried by the EC during 2012 ending with a final report in 2013. As main conclusions, the EC evaluation highlights that:

- ESPON needs to realign and refocus to its original mission on serving policy makers in the field of territorial cohesion.
- Specification of projects could be better targeted to policy, and with swifter delivery, that comes with the right timing for policy processes.
- Demand driven targeted analysis for stakeholders was successful.
- Identification of the policy makers and stakeholders audience and a policy maker engagement plan is not sufficiently defined from the outset.
- Deliverables are too difficult for policy makers to digest easily.
- The CU should play a stronger “knowledge broker” role.

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<sup>1</sup> Different access rights have been defined for security reasons. One access code is foreseen per country and the Central Approbation Bodies can allow, if needed, access to the decentralized approved First Level Controllers by forwarding the Login and Password under their own responsibility.

- Barriers for academics to entry in projects are too high in terms of administrative procedures, in particular for the private sector, NGO's and other organisations.
- The complex organisational "ecosystem" should be better focused on delivery to policy development.
- The role of the Monitoring Committee needs to be reviewed giving more focus to key decisions.
- The role of the ESPON Contact Points needs to be refocused on the key role of increasing engagement of policy makers at transnational and national level.

The above mentioned points have been also considered during the construction of the ESPON 2020 Programme.

### **2.7.2. Monitoring of project implementation from a content point of view**

The monitoring of projects' proper development and progress is mainly being ensured by the provision of written feedbacks to project reports in the form of CU responses. Whenever a project report is received by the CU, the following steps are being taken:

- The CU project expert in charge transmits the Priority 1 and 2 as well as Priority 3 project reports for commenting via email (or provides it via the ESPON Intranet) to:
  - For Priority 1: the 2 Sounding Board (SB) experts following the project for commenting on the reports.
  - For Priority 1 Draft Final Reports: the LP of an ECP TNA for the implementation of the blunder check of the report in question.
  - For Priority 2: the Lead Stakeholder that is responsible for further distribution to and consultation with the Partner Stakeholders for common feedback to the report.
- The CU Director transmits by email the report for commenting to the MC, the MA and the EC.
- In parallel, the report is also being analysed by the relevant CU project expert. The project expert analyses all quality aspects with respect to the project and pays special attention to the consistency with the ESPON 2013 Programme as a whole. Together with the MA the CU project expert has a particular look at the contractual obligations as well as the general quality and the relation to the policy context.
- (For Priority 1) The SB watches in particular over the scientific quality of the research and is obliged by contract to provide up to 5/10 pages (depending on the type of report) of comments addressing those elements of the guidance paper that are considered of importance by the respective SB member.
- (For Priority 1, Draft Final Reports) The ECPs check the report in question for blunders, misinterpretations and mishaps based on national information.
- (For Priority 2) The Group of Stakeholders watches in particular over the relevance of the project for the stakeholders based on the stakeholder demands as pointed out in the Project Specification.
- The MC and EC watch over the general quality and the relation with the policy context of the research carried out.

- On the basis of the internal checklist and the comments received from the SB / Lead Stakeholder, MC, MA and EC, the project expert compiles a CU response to the LP. The comments of the SB and ECPs / Group of Stakeholders are annexed for information to the LP in original.
- In case the assessment of a project report shows that the report does not meet the requirements it should have met for the particular stage of the project's development, the LP will be asked with the CU response to provide an annex to the report in question that includes further elements complementing the original report; alternatively the LP can be asked in such a case to submit a revised report that should include further elaborations and improvements of those elements that are specifically pointed out in the CU response.
- The CU response is provided to the LP of the project by the coordinator of the cluster for project development and coordination via email. For Inception Reports, the CU response can be sent to the LP once it is ready. For Interim and Draft Final Reports, the CU response can only be provided to the LP once the MC has approved the report in question and accepted the accompanying CU response. This request for approval is normally being dealt with in the framework of a written procedure that is normally running for two weeks.

Another element of monitoring projects' development consists of assessing projects' activity reports that are delivered to the CU as part of projects' progress reports every 6 months during the lifetime of a project. Activity reports should reflect the activities undertaken since the latest report. Activity reports are checked by the relevant project expert in charge of the project in question on the basis of a checklist.

Furthermore, during the lifetime of a project a number of meetings are foreseen in which the responsible CU project expert takes part. This offers another opportunity for monitoring the project's development and for giving feedback and guidance to ensure that the project is meeting its predefined targets. Concerning Applied Research projects, the CU project experts normally participates in two meetings with the Transnational Project Group (TPG) / LP in which the SB would also be present and give feedback to the team's work. As for Targeted Analyses, the number of meetings can vary from three to four, also involving the stakeholders behind the project. For projects of the Scientific Platform the participation of project experts in meetings with the TPG may vary between one and four times depending on the character of the project and its implementation period. If there is justified reason for concern about a project's development, the CU might ask for a particular meeting with the LP/TPG and/or attend more meetings than originally foreseen to ensure that a maximum of support from the Programme is given to the project so that it can achieve its objective.

Irrelevant of the priority, each project is started in the framework of a kick-off meeting that is attended by the LP, the CU project expert, the cluster coordinator for project development and coordination and one financial expert. The kick-off meeting serves to lay the foundations for the project by giving feedback to the LP resulting from the evaluation of the project proposal and by agreeing upon the first steps of project implementation, the timetable of the project and arranging the contracting procedure.

Finally, the CU project experts are generally always available for advice and information to their LPs if in between delivery dates of project reports support should be requested.

The Priority 3 projects are, like the Priority 1 and 2 projects, subject to call for proposals and selected based on evaluation sessions involving MC members and finally approved by the ESPON MC for implementation based on subsidy contracts. The monitoring of the project is performed by the ESPON CU, submitting the assessment of the various project reports to the MC for approval. The Priority 4 TNA projects are subject to call for proposals from the ESPON Contact Points (ECPs) Network based on the specifications in the Operational Programme and in some cases with additional “Call Specific Criteria” decided by the ESPON MC. The proposals are evaluated by the ESPON CU for approval by the ESPON MC and implemented as subsidy contracts. The monitoring of the project is performed by the ESPON CU, submitting the assessment of the project reports (only Draft Final Report and Final Report) to the MC for approval.

In addition for Priority 3 and 4, several actions can be implemented or are implemented directly by the MA who, in this context, assumes the role of the LP. These projects are defined ‘MA-led projects’ and are approved by the MC following the presentation by the MA of a short project description which includes information relating to the objectives, activities, budget and timeframe for the implementation. Acting as ‘LP’ the MA has therefore the same duties and reporting requirements as any other LP.

The CU together with the MA implements the project according to the relevant public procurement procedure. The monitoring of the activities is managed by CU experts, who have the responsibility to receive the deliveries, to validate them and to approve them. In this process the CU expert works closely with the service providers ensuring highest quality of the deliveries and that deadlines are met.

At least once per year (for projects over €75,000 it is bi-annual) the MA will have to provide a short report to the MC on the progress with the implementation of the project, providing information on:

*For Priority 3 projects:*

- The results of the procurement procedure and the actions already contracted.
- The deliveries already received and approved.
- Brief explanation on any shortcomings and/or problems encountered that require a modification of the MA led project.
- The use of the budget.

*For Priority 4.1 projects:*

- General progress with the implementation of the overall project.
- Progress with the implementation of the ongoing work/action plan:
  - The results of the procurement procedure and the actions already contracted;
  - The deliveries already received and approved.
- Final status on the implementation of the previous work/action plan and information on any shortcomings and/or problems encountered (if not already provided).
- Brief explanation on any shortcomings and/or problems encountered that requires a modification of:
  - The ongoing work/action plan;
  - The MA led project.

- The use of the budget.

*For the Priority 4.2 project:*

- Progress with the implementation of the foreseen activities.
- Brief explanation on any shortcomings and/or problems encountered that require a modification of the MA led project.
- The use of the budget.

These reports will have to be approved by the MC.

In addition, once the final delivery of the last ongoing actions have been submitted and approved and the relevant invoices have been paid out, the MA will complete a short report to the MC summarising the implementation of all the Priority 3 and 4 MA-led projects by providing information on:

- The actions foreseen to be contracted and contracted.
- Brief information on the quality of the deliveries received.
- Brief information on shortcomings and/or problems encountered that required a modification of the project.
- Financial information on the implementation of the project.

These reports are prepared by the cluster responsible for the implementation of the MA-led project in question.

In 2013, the MA/CU has prepared the reporting of the MA-led project EU Seminar & Workshops 2009, in Priority 4, with the Progress Report 1-FINAL for a total amount of 36.582,57 EUR and the reporting of MA-Led project Website 2008 Progress Report #1-FINAL for a total amount of 74.922,50 EUR.

By the end of December 2013, an action plan has been designed to accelerate the reporting, payments and certification of progress reports in relation to MA-led projects of priorities 1, 3 and 4.

### **2.7.3. Monitoring of projects financial implementation, including the Technical Assistance (TA)**

The project implementation period is divided into six-month reporting periods. The exact reporting periods are defined in the Subsidy Contract of each operation. The LP is requested to submit a project progress report related both to activities and to finances for every six-month period to the CU (MA). The CU beforehand sends out the partly pre-filled partner/project progress report forms to the LP, who is in charge of distributing the relevant forms amongst its partners. The completed and certified project progress report has to be returned to the CU both electronically as well as in paper versions within four months after the end of the corresponding reporting period. The paper version has to carry the signature and stamp of the LP/Project Partner and LP/Project Partners's First Level Financial Controller.

The monitoring procedure set up at the ESPON CU includes the following steps:

- a. The project progress reports and its annexes are imported into the computerised monitoring system (PMSS);

- b. The relevant cluster of the CU checks the project progress report via progress report checklist and assessment section of the PMSS;
- c. The activity report of the project progress reports is checked as well by the relevant cluster on the basis of a checklist of activity report via the PMSS;
- d. If necessary the CU requests clarification to the LP or the First Level Financial Controller;
- e. Once all points have been clarified, the project progress report together with its relevant assessment generated by the PMSS is forwarded to the MA by a letter signed by the Director;
- f. The MA sends it to the CA for payment;
- g. The CA executes payment to the LP.

By the end of December 2013, an action plan has been designed to accelerate the reporting, payments and certification of progress reports in relation to TA expenditures.

### ***2.8. National performance reserve***

Not applicable.

### **3. Implementation by priority**

#### **3.1. Priority 1**

##### **3.1.1. Achievement of targets and analysis of the progress**

###### **Information on the physical and financial progress of the priority**

During 2013 there were no more calls for Expression of Interest (EoI) for the Knowledge Support System (KSS).

In 2013, three SBs that had previously been active stopped their work as the respective projects delivered their Final Reports during the year (i.e. TRACC, ESaTDOR, SeGI). Seven SBs that had taken up their work in previous years (i.e. the ones for ET2050, GREECO, TANGO, ITAN, TOWN, TiPSE, ECR2) continued being active.

The following projects were ongoing under this priority in 2013:

- **TRACC – Transport accessibility at regional/local scale and patterns in Europe (Total budget: 699.790,50 €)**

The project will provide innovative results which can support the policy development in the field of transport and accessibility improvement, territorial development, competitiveness and cohesion. It shall support policy makers in finding trade-offs between promoting accessibility for passenger and freight transport and competitiveness, sustainability, saving energy and territorial development.

The project had some major delays in delivering their Draft Final Report which was due, after an official request for postponement on 31 October 2012. The project finally delivered their Draft Final Report in parts of which the last part was delivered on 8 January 2013. Because the delivered report was not complete, an Annex to the Draft Final Report was requested for 30 March 2013 whereas the deadline for the Final Report was on 31 March 2013. Both the Annex to the DFR and the FR were delivered with major delays on 1 December 2013. The LP gave presentations at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and at the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2015 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

- **TIGER – Continental territorial structures and flows (globalisation) (Total budget: 999.801,00 €)**

Globalisation is accelerating with European competitiveness becoming more and more interwoven and dependent on the rest on the world. Understanding Europe in the world is a prerequisite for policy making and for promoting Europe in this international competition. This project is looking at globalisation from a territorial perspective and analyses its territorial aspects and its dynamics at different geographical scales. The main aim of the project is to look into the territorial dimension of the globalisation process and analyse its significance for an enlarged Europe.

This project delivered the Final Report on 29 June 2012. However, the submission of some datasets and maps was still missing by the end of 2012. During January and March 2013 the LP made a substantial effort to deliver the missing data and maps.

- **ESaTDOR – European Seas in Territorial Development (Total budget: 799.716,00 €)**

Against the backdrop of the EC's Blue Book on an Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and the relevant recent policy development, this project will investigate the current uses of Europe's seas through mapping current sea use patterns, typologies, dynamics and inter-linkages. It will investigate the present state of European sea areas, identify potential areas of conflict between the use of sea areas and their deterioration, distinguish different types of coastal regions, study employment patterns in sea areas and evaluate the present state of maritime clusters. Finally, the project will analyse and identify development opportunities in the respective areas, also taking into account issues regarding sustainability and climate change. The relationship between terrestrial and maritime planning will be taken into account, seeking optimal practices for maritime governance.

The project delivered its Final Report on 16 January 2013. The LP actively participated in the ESPON workshop "Stepping into the Sea – new evidence on territorial development and the opportunities and risks for European seas and maritime regions" on 15 May 2013 in Brussels. He also gave a presentation at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland.

- **SeGI – Services of General Interest (Total budget: 988.942,50 €)**

The territorial evidence to support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of territorial policy measures regarding services of general interest remains to be improved. This project provides territorial evidence filling this gap. More in detail, the project provides evidence on the spatial distribution of services of general interest and territorial development perspectives in different European regions. New territorial information on the distribution of services is provided in this respect. These elements are supplemented by case studies providing more detailed information on national situations as well as scenarios.

On 29 January 2013 the project delivered a revised version of the Draft Final Report in order to fully comply with the intentions laid down for the project. The project delivered its Final Report by 25 May 2013. The CU informally asked the LP to update some maps in the Final Report in order to be fully in line with the ESPON map templates and to streamline information with regard to the focus taken for the policy conclusions to make the main report more coherent. The corrected version of the Final Report was delivered by 16 December 2013. A Project Partner gave a presentation at the ESPON Open Seminar which took place on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and at the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania. SeGI results have been disseminated during the entire project implementation period by the Lead and Project Partners at various international events and conferences. Several working papers and articles based on project results have been already published. A 'European Atlas of Services of General Interest' has been elaborate by the TPG and an issue of the journal "Europa XXI" with the title "Services of General Interest in European Union" has been published.

- **SIESTA – European Regions: potential contribution to the EU 2020 Strategy (Total budget: 400.000,00 €)**

The aim of this project is to provide evidence on the territorial dimension of the EU2020 Strategy by identifying opportunities for different types of regions in

relation to the targets and flagship initiatives set out in the strategy. The results of this ESPON project are intended to be useful for policy makers at various scales in the process of identifying territorial interventions, for example at the scale of regions and local authorities and in the preparation of regional development strategies. The findings of this project furthermore will enable policy makers to have more in-depth monitoring and steering of the implementation of the strategy.

The Final Report was this project was delivered on 23 December 2012 but the digital version of the Atlas was delivered to the ESPON CU in the first semester in 2013.

- **ET2050 – Territorial Scenarios and Visions for Europe (Total budget: 1.199.969,94 €)**

The project will support and deliver input to the territorial vision-building process by updating, extending and refining the scenario work of ESPON. The territorial vision-building process will follow a participatory process and involve relevant stakeholders at European, national and regional level. The vision will have a strategic character that will allow giving direction to the policy debate on territorial development.

The project delivered their Second Interim Report on 30 April 2013. On 27 September 2013 a SB meeting was held to discuss some specific issues regarding the Second Interim Report and the work towards the Draft Final Report. The project met on 24 May and 15 November 2013 with the ESPON CU to discuss the participatory approach, upcoming events related to the project and the policy relevance of the project results. The project presented and discussed their progress with the MC and asked for their feedback three times in 2013: on 14 March, 12 June and 4 December. The project also presented and discussed their work with Mrs. Danuta Huebner from the European Parliament on 27 February. In addition, the project presented and discussed their work in the Regio Committee of the European Parliament and at DG REGIO on 25 June and on 24 September 2013. Moreover, the project co-organised with the ESPON CU a participatory workshop at the Committee of the Regions on 11 October 2013. Finally, the LP presented the project in the first plenary session of the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and in two of the parallel sessions and the final plenary session at the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

- **GREECO – Regional potential for a Greener Economy (Total budget: 749.780,02 €)**

The project identifies the territorial aspects and potentials related to a greener economy in order to highlight areas that have particular opportunities for contributing to a greener economy through successful territorial development and cohesion policy actions. An assessment of the impact of selected sectors on the socio-economic performance of European cities and regions is implemented. In addition the project provides a diagnosis on the conditions that drive, enable or constrain the development and consolidation of the green economies in the sectors of relevance for territories.

The deadline for the delivery of the GREECO Draft Final Report has been postponed twice. The request for prolongation for the deadline has been accepted by the ESPON MA as the project faced severe scarcity of data which has caused a

delay in the implementation of the project. Accordingly the project delivered the Draft Final Report on 22 November 2013. On 18 December 2013 the TPG had a meeting with the two SB experts following the project and the project expert of the ESPON CU to discuss their remarks on the project and their response on the Draft Final Report. One of the SB experts participated via phone conference. A Project Partner gave a presentation at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and the LP presented project results at the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

- **TANGO - Territorial Approaches for New Governance (Total budget: 749.849,00 €)**

The aim of this project is to develop practical advice for territorial governance based on evidence from current practices. The project seeks to answer three main policy questions: (1) How is multi-level and cross-sector territorial governance organised throughout Europe and what are good mechanisms to ensure coordination between different public sectoral policies and cooperation between different levels of public government (including neighbouring areas)?; (2) What role can instruments of national and regional spatial planning systems play in creating better territorial governance?; and (3) what other effective models exist to obtain this aim? What happens if such instruments and models are not present? The results of the project will be evidence on the state of Territorial Governance, examples of leading practice and lessons for Cohesion Policy. A practical result of the project will be the 'Handbook for Good Territorial Governance'.

The project delivered its Draft Final Report on 30 June 2013; this was followed by a SB meeting on 11 September 2013 in Luxembourg, attended by both SB experts and the CU project expert. The project delivered the Final Report on 20 December 2013. The LP of the project gave a presentation at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

- **ITAN – European Neighbour Regions (Total budget: 750.000,00 €)**

This project provides knowledge on EU neighbour regions in order to support targeted policy development in the light of Cohesion Policy aiming (1) at improved regional competitiveness as well as sustainable and balanced growth of the European territory, (2) to promote European integration in a connecting world economy, and (3) to support evidence-based cross-border cooperation along external borders. Against this backdrop the project team elaborates an integrated territorial analysis of the neighbourhoods providing territorial evidence and highlighting topics of interest for cooperation activities with neighbouring regions and cities.

On 1 February 2013 the project delivered the Interim Report. A revised version of the Interim Report was delivered by 11 September 2013 in order to better clarify some important issues. The submission of the Draft Final Report was postponed from 31 December 2013 to 7 February 2014 as project faced some difficulties that resulted in delays in the submission. The project results were presented in two workshops at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and two workshops at the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

- **TOWN – Small and medium sized towns in their functional territorial context (Total budget: 649,804.00 €)**

The main objective of this project is to create a methodology to identify small and medium-sized towns. This methodology should be compatible with the recently revised urbanisation classification at EU scale identifying all small and medium-sized towns as places having an urban centre with a population between 5 000 and 50 000 inhabitants. In addition the project will provide evidence on the roles and functions that small and medium sized towns perform taking into account the different territorial contexts, which range from being nearby to a much larger urban centre to having a sparsely populated rural hinterland. The conditions for development and the functions that the small and medium-sized towns perform in these territorial contexts are significantly different. How can these different territorial contexts be taken into account and what is the relevant functional area of a small or medium-sized town? Finally the project will assess the different governance and cooperation arrangements used in ESPON countries to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public policies and public services. In particular, policies aimed to increase critical mass, which range from promoting cooperation between local authorities to the merger of small local authorities, should be considered in this study.

The TOWN Interim Report was delivered by the extended deadline of 28 January 2013. During the year, the project experienced a delay mostly due to the fact that the necessary morphological analysis took much longer time than expected. As a consequence the lead partner on 4 December 2013 requested a postponement of the delivery of the Draft Final Report from 31 December 2013 to 28 February 2014, and the Final Report from 30 June 2014 to 31 August 2014, which was accepted by the ESPON MA on 6 December 2013. A second International Workshop was organised on 29 November 2013 in Leuven, Belgium, on the theme “New perspectives on towns in Europe: From analysis to policy agenda”, which attracted approx. 40 participants. The second SB meeting was arranged following that workshop.

- **TiPSE – Territorial dimension of poverty and social exclusion in Europe (Total budget: 749 825.00 €)**

The project will provide evidence on the territorial pattern of poverty and social exclusion in European regions as well as its development over time. In this context the TPG liaises with the steering committee of the EC – World Bank project to map poverty in the ten<sup>2</sup> Central and Eastern Member States to ensure a maximum of synergy between these two projects. The project will: (a) develop a robust, but flexible small area estimation methodology to map poverty or exclusion at the NUTS 3 level or lower; (b) create territorial poverty maps; (c) identify to what extent these areas have changed over time and where bottlenecks of growth exist; (d) analyse common characteristics of areas affected by poverty or social exclusion; (e) identify an integrated poverty or exclusion policy package that could address poverty or exclusion in these deprived areas; (f) propose methodologies and indicators that could be used to monitor poverty and social exclusion in a territorial manner on an annual basis.

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<sup>2</sup> Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria.

The project didn't deliver any report during 2013, since the original delivery date for the Draft Final Report, i.e. 31 December 2013, was postponed to 30 April 2014 to allow the TPG to incorporate the latest Census data. The LP gave a presentation at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

- **ECR2 – Territorial impact of the financial and economic crisis (Total budget: 754 469,00 €)**

The picture of the economic situation in Europe resulting from the crisis that began in 2008 looks rather asymmetrical and diverse with regions that were not or hardly touched by the crises at all, with regions that were touched but that seem to recover rather progressively and with regions that still suffer quite a lot from the crisis. The fast and successful recovery of some particular regions strikes the eye and raises the question of what is behind this success. The economic crisis and recovery are at the core of all recent policy initiatives that set the framework for territorial development and cohesion policy. The objective of this project is to expose territorial evidence that supports policymakers at different administrative levels in making the economic structure(s) in Europe and its countries, regions and cities more resilient to economic crises and a sudden economic downturn.

The project delivered the Interim Report on 31 January 2013. Beginning of September, the LP provided an additional delivery, i.e. a short output examining how the economic crisis has affected EU Structural Fund Programmes and programme responses. This delivery was used as background document to the LP's presentation of the interim project results at the ESPON Workshop in the framework of the Open Days in October 2013 in Brussels.

In September the LP also requested an extension of the delivery deadline for the Draft Final Report, which was necessary due to the purchase and analysis of more updated data from Cambridge Econometrics, the latter only being available by September 2013. The MA agreed to a new delivery date for the Draft Final Report by 31 January 2014 and for the Final Report by 30 April 2014. Since the purchased data set was provided with a delay, the LP had to ask for another extension to have sufficient time for the analysis of the data acquired. The MA agreed to the delivery of the Draft Final Report by 31 March 2014 and for the Final Report by 30 June 2014.

The LP of the project gave a presentation at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Output Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of actions realised & number of small / medium / large actions	0	30 7/7/16	0	2	6	15	20	25	25
Number of cross-thematic / thematic analyses and trends / prospective studies realised	0	8/7/3	0	1	5	13	18	23	23
Number of territorial impact studies realised	0	5	0	1	1	2	2	2	2
Number of experts involved in task forces / sounding boards	0	40	0	4	12	30	40	50	50
Results Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of themes and policies that have been deepened and widened compared to ESPON 2006 results	0	20	0	2	6	15	20	25	25
Number of partners, institutes involved in applied research actions	0	100	0	19	44	105	152	180	180
Number of scientists involved in applied research actions	0	750	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Impact Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Degree of usefulness of ESPON applied research results for European, national-level / regional-level policy processes	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Degree of usefulness of ESPON applied research results for transnational and cross-border co-operation	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP

**NI:** Not implemented: The indicator is implemented, but not for the specific year.

**NP:** Not applicable: The indicator does not apply and will not be implemented.

**NA:** Not available: The indicator is implemented but the values for the specific year is not known.

### Qualitative analysis

The implementation of Applied Research projects generally works very smoothly and there is a good cooperation between the LPs and the CU project experts. The same is also true for the cooperation between the CU project experts and the SB experts. The latter's feedback to the projects' reports is highly appreciated by the TPGs who are grateful for the sound advice and guidance they receive from the experts.

The SB experts usually invest more time in their tasks than what they are contractually bound to do. This does not only apply to the commenting of reports which often takes more than just the one working day that is foreseen for this task. It is particularly the case for the requested participation in TPG meetings. Usually, preparing for the meeting, travelling to the location of the meeting and back again, require more than the one working day that is contractually foreseen for this task. This has occasionally caused some frustration among SB experts and the request for reconsidering the number of working days allocated per expert.

### **3.1.2. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them**

No significant problems have been encountered.

## **3.2. Priority 2**

### **3.2.1. Achievement of targets and analysis of the progress**

#### **Information on the physical and financial progress of the priority**

In 2013 the following projects were ongoing under this priority:

- **BEST – METROPOLISES – Best development conditions in European metropolises: Paris, Berlin, Warsaw (Total budget: 349.300,00 €)**

The project focuses on processes of urban development that many cities and regions in the EU currently experience. Emphasis is laid on comparing cities, thus enabling to identify similarities and common challenges in relation to the project's three main themes: (1) living conditions, (2) mobility and (3) governance in the metropolitan context. The analysis will focus on the metropolitan areas of Berlin, Paris and Warsaw attempting to gather information and knowledge that can be used in the planning, development and management practice of metropolitan cities and areas.

The project delivered its Final Report on 31 January 2013. On 18 April 2013 a final conference held in Warsaw helped to disseminate the project results to a wider group of stakeholders.

- **ADES – Airports as drivers of economic success in peripheral regions (Total budget: 300.000,00 €)**

The aim of this Targeted Analysis is to analyse the role of regional airports in improving the accessibility and the economic development in European peripheral regions. It is expected to develop a common understanding of the opportunities and perspectives of airports for the economic development of peripheral regions (and their role for territorial development and cohesion). The stakeholders behind this project consider that the improvement of the framework conditions of peripheral or remote regions and in particular their accessibility is one of the means to promote long-term sustainable growth and to facilitate the processes of structural adjustment. Regional airports play an important role in this respect.

At the 4th Steering Committee meeting held in Brussels on 21 January 2013 it was decided by mutual agreement to postpone the delivery of the ADES FR from 31 January 2013 to 28 February 2013. This decision was mainly due to the need of integrating the comments and recommendations stemming from the CU response to

the ADES DFR (i.e. 9 January 2013), but also the remarks made at the above mentioned meeting. As such the LP requested four additional weeks to complete the work. The CU eventually received the ADES FR on 28 February 2013 and, on behalf of the MA, considered in its response formulated and sent to the LP on 18 June 2013 that the ADES FR was in line with the contractual demands. The closure letter was sent to the LP on 28 June 2013.

- **GROSEE – Growth Poles in South East Europe (Total budget: 360.000,00 €)**

This project studies the main growth poles in South East Europe – Athens, Sofia and Bucharest – and their relation to the European core development areas, their competitiveness and the role that the three capitals can have individually as well as together in the European polycentric network.

The project delivered the Interim Report on 8 February 2013 with a delay of 8 days. The report was thoroughly discussed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Steering Committee meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria on 6 March 2013. The TPG then delivered a revised Interim Report on 30 April 2013 and a Draft Final Report on 15 September 2013. The latter was in the focus of the 4<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting on 10 October 2013 in Athens. Due to extraordinary difficulties, i.e. a strike of the administrative staff of the National Technical University of Athens hampered the Greek project partner to work normally, the delivery date for the Final Report was postponed from 31 December 2013 to 28 February 2014.

The LP gave a presentation at the Open Seminar in Dublin, Ireland on 13-14 June 2013 and the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

- **KITCASP – Key indicators for territorial cohesion and spatial planning (Total budget: 359,921.00 €)**

The KITCASP project will explore the use of territorial data in developing and monitoring national spatial strategies and other territorial development policies in Scotland, Ireland, Latvia, Iceland and the Basque Country, Spain. It will examine the extent to which ESPON data has informed the strategies examined and develop guidelines on the use of indicators and ESPON data in territorial policy development at the national level. A particular emphasis is placed on identifying a core set of key indicators for territorial cohesion, economic competitiveness and sustainable development to inform spatial planning at the national level, drawing on ESPON research and datasets available in the partner countries. The project will also consider how the capacity for spatial analysis can be strengthened and harmonised at the national level, how national analytical experience and expertise can help to inform and take forward the EU Territorial Agenda, and the implications for future ESPON research.

The 4<sup>th</sup> TPG meeting and Steering Committee meeting were arranged in Reykjavik, Iceland on 29-31 May 2013 discussing the project development towards the Draft Final Report, which was delivered by 31 July 2013. A KITCASP Final Seminar was organised 16-18 October in Glasgow, Scotland, under the theme “Identifying common indicators of territorial cohesion, economic competitiveness and sustainable development to inform strategic spatial planning”. The Seminar was hosted by the Lead Stakeholder, the Planning and Architecture Division of the Scottish Government, and gathered approx. 30 participants, with a keynote delivered

by the minister for Local Government and Planning. The Final Report was delivered on the agreed extended deadline of 30 October 2013.

- **LIVELAND – Liveable landscapes: a key value for sustainable territorial development (Total budget: 378.676,14 €)**

The request from the Stakeholders comes from the consideration that EU regional policies are increasingly focused on harmonious territorial development towards sustainability and that the relation between territorial development strategies and landscape planning is a political priority still uncovered by the ESPON Programme. In addition, the European Landscape Convention (ELC, 2003) is stimulating the elaboration of landscape plans and calling for their integration within spatial planning, considering landscape as a key territorial value for future development. This Targeted Analysis aims therefore to explore good practices of landscape planning and regional territorial strategies in some ‘living landscapes’ and to benchmark the content and procedures between regions. The aim is also to identify successful measures in combining landscape management and socio-economic development and to give guidelines and recommendations. The project seeks to identify ways in which ESPON data could be used to reinforce the integration of landscape and spatial planning and to provide new evidence for future ESPON landscape targeted research.

The project held a second stakeholder workshop on the 3-4 April 2013 in Midden-Delfland, Netherland where the benchmarking methodology was discussed in depth and an assessment of practices in each case study region was also shared among the participants. An additional workshop was organised in Bilbao for the 16-17 September 2013. The aim of this workshop was to discuss the results of the comparative analysis leading towards the policy recommendations. The results of the workshops organised in 2013 were used for the elaboration of the Draft Final report that was delivered by the Lead Partner on 15 October 2013. It has to be underlined that the submission of the Draft Final Report was delayed by four months at the request of the Lead Partner, a request approved by the Managing Authority, to allow all involved stakeholders providing the needed inputs to the project team. The project presented the intermediate and draft final results respectively at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and at the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

- **LP3LP – Landscape Policy for the 3 Countries Park (Total budget: 360.000,00 €)**

In this project landscape is understood as an asset to support smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Against this backdrop the 3LP is used as a cross-border testing ground for improving the effectiveness of European policy for territorial cohesion. The implemented analysis is used to formulate and establish a shared vision on the future of landscape in cross-border collaboration. Insight is presented on how European policies and legislation can be harnessed to develop a cohesive European landscape that in turn can contribute to overall European objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

On 21 January 2013 the project delivered the Interim Report. A 3<sup>rd</sup> Steering Committee meeting took place on 28 February 2013 in order to discuss the stakeholder remarks and ideas on the project and their comments on the Interim Report. A revised version of the Interim Report was delivered on 28 March 2013 in

order to fully comply with the intentions laid down for the project. The Draft Final Report was delivered on 14 October 2013 and a 4<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting took place on 13 November 2013. The Final Report was delivered in time by 20 December 2013. A Project Partner gave a presentation at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland and the LP presented project results at the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania. The results of the project have been presented at two public events organised by the project team, several conferences and ESPON seminars. Several expert meetings and stakeholder workshops with diverse target groups have been implemented by the project team throughout the project implementation period. In addition, an exhibition 'Mapping the Charlemagne Region' in several cities has been organised as well as students' activities covering a summer school and two seminars. A final dissemination event open to the wider public is planned by the Lead Stakeholder and will take place in 2014 in Maastricht. In addition a publication will be elaborated in English and the languages of the group of stakeholders which presents project results in a summarized and simplified form, targeting the broader public but also politicians.

- **North Sea STAR – North Sea – Spreading transnational results (Total budget: 339.923,70 €)**

This project aims to assess North Sea Region project results with a view to developing the most effective regional energy responses possible in future operations. The analysis focuses on the role that territorial cooperation can play in such developments and at how new models for clustered project implementation might influence this process and promote effective multi-level governance. The combination of practitioner experience and the localisation of potentials and challenges based on existing ESPON results will provide input for decisions on future actions and programme strategies in the NSR, and should also be transferable to many other programmes and themes. Furthermore, with regards to governance the project should answer the key question of how the clustering approach can help to stimulate regional co-operation in order to provide input to policy making on how to accelerate the take-up of renewable energy technologies and supporting relevant green economic activities in the region.

The project delivered the Inception Report on 22 February 2013 and the Interim Report on 1 July 2013, both on time. On 16 September the project team organised an ESPON North Sea STAR Stakeholder Workshop in Delft, the Netherlands, where the project stakeholders and potential project beneficiaries were invited to discuss energy policy scenarios for the North Sea region up to 2050 and exploring how these can be addressed through the NSR Operational Programme for 2014-2020. The Workshop gathered approx. 25 participants. The Draft Final Report was delivered on time 30 December 2013.

Output Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number and types of actions realised & number of small / medium / large actions	0	30	0	0	6	8	18	22	23
Number of stakeholder / user consultations realised	0	3	0	1	2	2	3	3	3
Number of stakeholders / users contacted <sup>3</sup>	0	300	0	164	305	305	441	441	441
Results Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of stakeholders directly involved in the implementations of the actions <sup>4</sup>	0	50	0	0	34	40	97	116	117
Number of themes, topics and experiments covered by actions realised	0	30	0	0	9	13	28	33	35
Number of types of specific territories covered by actions realised	0	20	0	0	9	10	10	10	10
Impact Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Degree of analytical support provided by targeted actions to a co-operative tackling of territorial development challenges	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Extent to which the outcomes of actions producing targeted analytical deliveries are cited in strategic publications at European, national and regional level	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP

**NI:** Not implemented: The indicator is implemented, but not for the specific year.

**NP:** Not applicable: The indicator does not apply. It will never be implemented.

**NA:** Not available: The indicator is implemented but you don't know the values yet for the specific year.

### Qualitative analysis

The implementation of Targeted Analyses generally works very smoothly and there is a good cooperation between the LPs, the CU project experts and the stakeholders behind the projects.

<sup>3</sup> The 'number of stakeholders/users' indicated in this row is referring to the number of stakeholder institutions participating in an EoI, including non-approved. In case stakeholder institutions are involved in several selected EoI, they are counted repeatedly.

<sup>4</sup> For this indicator the total number of stakeholder institutions involved in contracted Targeted Analyses projects is indicated. In case stakeholder institutions are involved in several selected EoI, they are counted repeatedly.

Ensuring the involvement of MC members or national experts nominated by the latter in evaluation sessions of proposals often proves to be a challenging exercise. It usually requires several rounds of requests towards the MC by email, during MC meetings and via direct contact to individual people to get sufficient numbers of MC representatives together for evaluation committees. Due to these difficulties, the originally foreseen rotating principle, i.e. involving as far as possible different MC members/national experts, is not always fully possible to implement. It would greatly facilitate the preparation of these evaluations with more active MC support in that respect.

Finally, at evaluation sessions the assessment of the management related criteria has often been considered by evaluators to be rather difficult. For instance, they found it almost impossible to judge if the procedures related to ERDF requirements were transparent (i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> Management related criteria) as they did not have sufficient knowledge about these ERDF requirements. It might therefore be worthwhile considering if this part of the evaluation should not be left to the financial experts at the CU who assess all proposals received on the basis of these criteria anyway on behalf of the MA.

### **3.2.2. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them**

No significant problems have been encountered.

## **3.3. Priority 3**

### **3.3.1. Achievement of targets and analysis of the progress**

#### **Information on the physical and financial progress of the priority**

As recommended by the CU and the MA, the ESPON MC decided in its meeting on 12 June 2013, due to an under-spending within the Priority 3 projects, approve of a reallocation of 180.660 EUR available within the overall P3 budget to the two MA-led projects (see below for details) 3.2 Tools 2011-2014 (105.660 EUR) and 3.4 Targeted Actions for Update of Indicators and Maps 2011-2014 (75.000 EUR).

#### **Priority 3 Projects**

These projects are, like the Priority 1 and 2 projects, subject to call for proposals and selected based on evaluation sessions involving MC members and finally approved by the ESPON MC for implementation based on subsidy contracts.

As informed in the Annual Implementation Report 2012, the last projects under the Priority 3 “Scientific Platform” started up during that year. This meant that in total, eight projects were ongoing in 2013. The activities carried out by these projects are presented in the below section:

- **ESPON Database 2013 Project Phase II (Total Budget: 1.375.000,00 €)**

The project delivered its Second Interim Report on 28 June 2013, including a new version of the ESPON Database Portal (on 5 June 2013) technical reports and Annexes. In addition, and according to schedule, the project delivered in November 2013 an updated version of the ESPON Database Portal including new resources and datasets in the Search Interface, the possibility to upload case studies datasets by TPGs, updated policy codification and the Newsletter of June 2013.

The project participated in both ESPON Seminars that took place in 2013. In the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland the LP of the project actively contributed to a plenary session showing the usefulness of the Database Portal for stakeholders. In the Internal ESPON Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania the LP presented the project in a plenary session on tools related to monitoring.

- **RIMAP – Design and Development of Rich Internet Online Mapping Tool (Total budget: 120.500,00 €)**

The project will develop the ESPON Online Mapping Tool. This tool which will be a highly interactive mapping tool available via the Internet where users can select, combine and overlay indicators from the ESPON database, choose the geography, make a map, diagram or even animations based on indicator time series.

The project delivered on 11 October 2013 a Draft Final Report and a beta-version of the Online Mapping Tool. On 30 December 2013 the project delivered the Final report and a final version of the Online Mapping Tool including guidelines and a number of videos explaining specific functionalities. The LP of the project planned to give a presentation at the ESPON Open Seminar on 13-14 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland, but due to a cancelled flight this presentation was given by the Project Expert. The LP of the project gave a presentation in a plenary session of the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

- **ESPON ATLAS – Mapping European Territorial Structures and Dynamics (Total Budget: 149.992,00 €)**

The ESPON Atlas 2014 is envisaged to present a synoptic and comprehensive overview of key findings from all ESPON 2013 Priority 1 and Priority 2 projects, which serve as main providers of new facts, evidence and knowledge about European territorial structures, trends and perspectives and policy impacts. Together with the indicators and datasets included in the ESPON Database, this project shall promote the mission of the ESPON 2013 Programme of supporting policy development by compiling an “ESPON Atlas on European Territorial Structures and Dynamics” by the end of the ESPON 2013 Programme.

The Atlas will not take a particular policy defined point of departure, but aims at covering the multitude of ESPON themes in a comprehensive manner. It shall enable comparisons among regions and cities and support the understanding of European territorial diversity of potentials and challenges.

On 25 January 2013 the TPG met with the CU at the CU premises in Luxembourg to discuss the format and design of the atlas, to clarify some queries in relation to data and to agree on the way forward towards the Interim Report. The latter was delivered on 22 April 2013.

The LP gave a presentation of the project at the ESPON internal seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania on 4-5 December 2013.

- **TERREVI – Territorial Evidence Packs for Structural Funds Programmes (Total budget: 480.600,00 €)**

The ESPON knowledge base is now developed to a level capable of delivering important support to other Structural Funds programmes which can help programme

bodies in their strategic programming and implementation. Important new facts and evidence at European level from ESPON projects can be broken down to regions and, if relevant, aggregated to larger territorial contexts which in turn can be used as knowledge base for identification of place-specific characteristics as well as territorial features such as interrelationships and interdependencies within or between places.

The strategic character of programmes may be improved by benchmarking and identification of key challenges and potentials in a European context which in turn can support the setting of public investment priorities accompanied by tangible targets. This project will prepare and provide the envisaged transfer of territorial knowledge to programmes under the anticipated “Jobs and Growth” objective (former objective 1 Convergence and Objective 2 Competitiveness and Employment goals) and the objective of European Territorial Cooperation. The project will cover one-region programmes as well as multi-region programmes.

The first milestone of the TerrEvi project was the Factsheets for all of the 66 territorial cooperation programme areas, which were distributed in November 2012. The second milestone was to develop 10 Evidence Reports based on territorial evidence from ESPON that could be used as evidence support in the development of future programmes e.g. by giving a comparative European dimension to the programming. The ESPON Evidence Reports were distributed in September 2013 and covered 10 selected programmes; four regional programmes, one CBC programme and five TNC programmes; representing all regional categories (less developed, transition, more developed regions), a variance of available budgets, the mix between old and new, small and large, central and peripheral Member States.

The Draft Final Report was delivered on 4 November 2013 and the Final Report on 13 January 2014. The project made presentations both at the ESPON Open Seminar in Dublin 13-14 June 2013, represented by the project partner t33, and at the ESPON Internal Seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 3-4 December 2013, represented by the LP Metis GmbH. The project also delivered presentations at external events organised by the ETC Programmes.

- **DeTeC - Detecting Territorial Potential and Challenges (Total budget: 349.546,00 €)**

This project aims at providing practical guidance on how to utilise ESPON knowledge to detect territorial potential and turning challenges into potential deriving from their larger territorial context. It will include concrete cases of good practices in using territorial potentials, based on benchmarking, comparison with similar regions/cities.

The target group for the project is practitioners and policy makers, first and foremost at regional and municipal level, which will be provided with an overview and guidance in their day-to-day work. The general guidance on analytical approaches and methods will also be relevant for practitioners and policy makers involved in development considerations in cross-border, national and transnational settings.

Key areas of the analysis include a review and inventory of analytical approaches as well as of both qualitative and quantitative methods supporting the detection and utilization of territorial potentials and challenges; testing and evaluation of a conceptual framework of analytical approaches and methods, set up as a guidance document, through carefully selected case studies /regional laboratories providing concrete examples on how regions and cities can detect and utilise their territorial potential

and/or deal with particular challenges. The case studies will directly involve and engage practitioners and policy makers.

The TPG organised a 2<sup>nd</sup> partner meeting in Vienna 7-8 March 2013, in which the ESPON CU participated. At the meeting in particular the methodological foundation of the project was elaborated and the set-up of the planned six regional laboratories with regional and local policy-makers and practitioners. It was also discussed and agreed that the project should opt for making the envisaged Handbook in an interactive e-book format. This was further outlined and detailed in the Interim Report delivered by the 30 June 2013.

The project made presentations both at the ESPON Open Seminar in Dublin 13-14 June 2013, and at the ESPON Internal Seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 3-4 December 2013, represented by the LP Nordregio.

- **ETMS - EU Territorial Monitoring and Reporting (Total Budget: 597,956,00 €)**

This ESPON project is aimed at providing a practical and operational European Territorial Monitoring System (ETMS), which builds mainly on existing statistical information, data and tools developed (database, mapping tools) within the ESPON Programme, and which can be the basis for a continued monitoring of European territorial trends.

The TPG delivered the Inception Report on 28 February 2013, outlining the main content of project aiming at delivering a monitoring system that is user-friendly, policy oriented and integrated with other ESPON tools. This was further elaborated in the Interim Report delivered on 28 June 2013. An Intermediary Delivery was submitted on 1 December 2013 containing a detailed conceptual framework as well as a mock-up of the Facts and Figures booklet and the State of the Territory report. All the reports were fully compliant with the timetable set up in the contract. The TPG participated in the Programme of the Internal ESPON Seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 4 - 5 December 2013.

- **Territorial Monitoring in a European Macro Region – A test for the Baltic Sea Region – BSR-TeMo (Total budget: 340.000,00 €)**

This ESPON project is aimed at providing evidence on territorial development trends and cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) by developing an indicator based monitoring system. This will contribute to increased knowledge and understanding of territorial cohesion processes in the BSR and at the same time allow for a comparison and benchmarking with other European regions and macro-regions. It will also support the contribution of the BSR to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe as mentioned in the EU2020 Strategy.

The TPG delivered the Draft Final Report on 7 July 2013, which included draft versions of a user manual, visualisation tool and a handbook. The latter was delivered in a revised version in October 2013 and will also in the end be made available in a Russian version. Two steering group meeting were organised during 2013 the first on 22 January 2013 in Oslo and the second on 24 September 2013 in Helsinki. The project made presentations both at the ESPON Open Seminar in Dublin 13-14 June 2013, represented by the project partner from Poland, and at the ESPON Internal Seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 3-4 December 2013, represented by the LP Nordregio. In addition, the project made a presentation at the NTCCP meeting in Vilnius in October and arranged a Final Seminar in Helsinki, Finland, on 12 December 2013.

- **CityBench – CityBench for Benchmarking European Urban Zones (Total budget: 198.874,00 €)**

Cities of all sizes can play a crucial role as creative, efficient and environmentally sound engines of smart, sustainable and inclusive territorial development. But there are threats and barriers to this in the form of demographic and economic challenges, social disparities and urban sprawl. The EC is progressing urban policy at the European level, and in 2014-2020, the urban agenda is likely to be more prominent than in previous Structural Fund programmes. This process will require further evidence about the urban reality, a task where several initiatives are taken, and where the joining of forces and cooperation can provide added value.

Against this background, the CityBench webtool project aims at helping policymakers, practitioners and public and private investors to put economic, social and environmental sustainability of cities at the core of decisions. This webtool allows them to benchmark their cities against other similar cities, around issues such as demographic challenges, economic challenges, social disparities, urban sprawl and greenhouse gas emissions. The benchmarking webtool creates opportunities for the forming of innovative learning networks among cities and provide a first indication of the suitability of financial engineering instruments in place-based policymaking.

During the year, two modifications to the contracts were made: Regarding involvement of staff of the LP (March 2013) and budget reallocation due to issues related to missing data and the large number of cities covered (September 2013).

The TPG delivered several reports during the year, including a note on indicator scoping on 22 January 2013; Inception Report on 15 March 2013, instead of 28 February 2013 but the postponement of the deadline was accepted beforehand by the ESPON CU. The Intermediate Delivery 1 was sent on 29 April 2013; Intermediate Delivery 2 on 31 August 2013 and the Draft Final Report on 30 November 2013. The Intermediate delivery 2 contained a Technical/Prototype Report which was further developed towards the final webtool and administrative tools, scheduled for delivery for testing and finalisation at the beginning of 2014.

The CU closely followed the implementation of this ESPON project during 2013 and ensured the participation of EIB and ESTAT through the organization of Steering Group Meetings: 26 March 2013 and 23 September 2013. In general the Draft Final Report needed improvement to comply with the intentions laid down for the project, as well as the web application and admin tool. Therefore, in order to ensure that all contractual requirements are fulfilled a revised timetable of deliveries was agreed (by beginning of 2014).

The project made presentations both at the ESPON Open Seminar in Dublin 13-14 June 2013, and at the ESPON Internal Seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 3-4 December 2013, represented by the LP Geodan Holdings.

### **Priority 3 MA-led projects**

Besides the above-mentioned projects, the Operational Programme defines some actions being financed under Priority 3 as MA-led-projects. These projects are implemented directly by the MA, who in this context, assumes the role of LP and has the same duties and reporting requirements as any other LP. The MA-led projects are approved by the MC based on short project descriptions developed by the MA, which includes

information relating to the objectives, activities, budget and timeframe for the implementation.

The CU together with the MA implements the project according to the relevant public procurement procedure. The monitoring of the activities is managed by CU experts, who have the responsibility to receive the deliveries, to validate them and to approve them. In this process the CU expert works closely with the service providers ensuring highest quality of the deliveries and that deadlines are met. At least once per year (for projects over €75,000 it is bi-annual) the MA will have to provide a short report to the MC on the progress with the implementation of the project.

#### Kick-Off

Project	Date of kick-off meeting	Location
Cartographic Language – service contract	23 January 2013	Luxembourg
TIA Web Application – service contract	16 December 2013	Luxembourg

The individual actions under the Priority 3 MA-led projects are carried out within 3.2b “Territorial Indicators, Indexes and Tools” and 3.4 “Updates of Indicators and Maps”.

- **MA-led project 3.2b - Tools - 2009 (Total Budget: 225.000,00 €)**

#### Data Navigator Update (Budget: 74.893,92 €)

This action aims to update the existing ESPON Data Navigator in order to support the search for relevant territorial data sources on statistics across Europe in an enlarged EU and, in particular, to ensure the full coverage of all countries participating in the ESPON 2013 Programme, including Iceland and Liechtenstein. New inventories shall be also compiled for Croatia and FYR Macedonia. In addition, inventories for other EU Candidate countries and other Balkan countries shall be updated.

The service provider delivered their Draft Final Delivery on 5 April 2013 and their Final Delivery on 5 June 2013. These two deliveries covered in an overall good quality the contractual obligations as laid down in the service contract. On this basis the ESPON CU on behalf of the MA formally accepted the final delivery of this service contract by 18 July 2013.

#### Cartographic Language (Budget: 72.115,35 €)

This action aims at developing an innovative, accessible and practical approach to the visualisation and analysis of territorial trends and dynamics across Europe.

The kick-off meeting has taken place in Luxembourg on 23 January 2013. The selected service provider, UMS RIATE, submitted Delivery 1 on 11 May 2013. Deliveries 2 and 3 were submitted on 18 September 2013 and Deliveries 4 and 5 on 2 December 2013. Overall, the 5 deliveries meet the expectations set out in the service contract. During 2014 the deliveries of this service contract will be formally accepted.

- **MA-led project 3.2b - Tools 2010 (Total Budget: 300.000,00 €)**

Considering that all activities under this MA Led Project have been duly completed and finalized during 2012, the ESPON CU has processed the activity and financial reporting during 2013 in order to close this MA Led Project.

- **MA-led project 3.2b - Tools 2011-2014 (Total Budget: 447.660,00 €)**

This MA-led project will contribute to the capitalisation of the results and outcomes produced within ESPON by developing tools to support the use of ESPON results for policy, strategy and planning by different user groups.

The first three individual actions considered within this MA-led project were discussed and approved by the MC in their meeting on 1-2 December 2011. This included:

- Improve the usefulness of the ESPON HyperAtlas for European regions
- TIA web application using the ARTS methodology
- Online training platform with sessions focused on a specific topics

The following four additional individual actions were approved by the MC in its meeting on 12 June 2013, based on a re-allocation of 105.660 EUR from the overall P3 budget (see above):

- Regional typologies at LAU2:
- Functional Indicators Tool
- Upholding of the Baltic Sea Region – Territorial Monitoring System
- Feasibility study on analytical tools based on Big Data

The status of the implementation of these individual actions is presented below:

TIA web application (Budget available: €75.000)

This action aims at developing a TIA web application using the ARTS methodology.

The activities for developing a TIA web application using the ARTS methodology have started in the third quarter of 2013 with drafting a Terms of Reference. A Call for Tender has been launched on 1 August 2013 (Official Journal of the EU) and two offers have been received. The two offers were evaluated resulting in the selection of ÖIR GmbH & AIDICO (joint tender). The service started with a kick-off meeting on 16 December 2013.

Feasibility study on analytical tools based on Big Data (Budget available: €30.660)

This action aims at carrying out a feasibility study on analytical tools based on Big Data to explore innovative possibilities to develop a tool that can provide latest up-to-date territorial tendencies to policy makers.

The activities for this action have been started in the third quarter of 2013 with drafting a Terms of Reference. A Call for Tender has been launched on 7 November 2013 (Official Journal of the EU) and five offers have been received by the closing date of 19 December 2013.

ESPOH HyperAtlas Update no.2 (Budget available: €70.000)

This action aims at further improving the usefulness of the current ESPON HyperAtlas tool for European regions.

During 2013 the possible elements to improve the current tool were discussed and a negotiated procedure has been prepared. By the end of 2013 an invitation letter to submit an offer within 30 days was ready to be sent to the selected eligible tenderer.

#### Online training platform (Budget to be decided)

This action aims at developing an Online training platform based on the platform developed by the TNA project ESPON Train with sessions focused on specific topics.

The activities for this action have yet not been started during 2013.

#### Regional typologies at LAU2 (Budget to be decided)

This action aims at developing regional typologies at LAU2 level, similar to the nine regional typologies existing at NUTS3 level, to be used for comparable analytical purposes in case studies and targeted analysis.

The activities for this action have yet not been started during 2013.

#### Functional Indicators Tool (Budget to be decided)

This action aims at giving users the possibility to build indicators themselves based on a limited number of core data. These indicators could be more simple ratio indicators, such as different kinds of employment and unemployment rates and GDP per capita, but also more advanced indicators related to accessibility and potentials, such as population reached within 1 hour drive, distance needed to reach 2 million inhabitants and time needed to reach 1 million inhabitants.

The activities for this action have yet not been started during 2013.

#### Upholding of the Baltic Sea Region – Territorial Monitoring System (Budget to be decided)

This action aims at developing a Baltic Sea Monitoring Tool as an integrated element of the ESPON Territorial Monitoring System to ensure the upholding, continuation and long term operationability of the Baltic Sea Monitoring System after the closure of the current project.

The activities for this action have yet not been started during 2013.

### **• MA-led project 3.4 - Targeted Actions for Update of Indicators and Maps 2011-2014 (Total Budget: 369.000 €)**

The strategic objective of this MA-led project as part of the ESPON Scientific Platform is to contribute to the consolidation of the territorial knowledge needed for informed policy formulation and application. By updating datasets, indicators and maps when newer information is available, the ESPON programme will continue assessing territorial development trends in relation to policy objectives. The outputs of the actions developed shall continue serving as key inputs for producing ESPON Territorial Observations and presenting new ESPON results for policy makers and practitioners working in the field of territorial development at different geographical levels: from the European to local scales.

In addition to the previously approved “Update of Maps and Related Data on Natural Hazards”, the four additional individual actions were approved by the MC in its meeting on 12 June 2013, based on a re-allocation of 75.000 EUR from the overall available P3 budget (see above). As a result the following five actions were under implementation or being planned in 2013:

#### Update of Maps and Related Data on Natural Hazards (Budget: 69.000,00 €)

The ESPON MC approved on 30 September 2010 to update the map ‘Aggregated Natural Hazards’ as well as underlying indicators as presented in the Final Report of the

ESPON 2006 Project 1.3.1 'Spatial Effects of Natural and Technological Hazards'. Considering the methodological complexity of this issue, this update is implemented by bundling the following three actions in one service contract: (1) update of the aggregated natural hazards map; (2) update of the integrated vulnerability map and (3) update of the aggregated natural risk map.

The service provider of the 'Update of maps and related data on Natural Hazards' delivered an improved version of the final report, including corresponding data, metadata and maps collected and produced, by 22 February 2013. In addition, as part of the final delivery valuable comments were provided on a draft version of the Territorial Observation No. 7 on "Natural Hazards and Climate Change" by 29 March 2013. The deliveries of this action fulfil the contractual obligations as laid down in the service contract in an overall good quality. On this basis the ESPON CU on behalf of the MA formally accepted the final delivery of the service contract 140/2012 by 8 May 2013.

Matrix on accessibility data between NUTS 3 in Europe and Neighbourhood (only as points of destination) for 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2013;

This service contract is aimed at producing of the above mentioned matrices, calculation of potential accessibility indicators and elaboration of corresponding ESPON maps by: collecting and harmonising the most recent data available; calculating travel time matrices between NUTS-3 regions for passenger travel for road, rail, air and multimodal (2001, 2006, 2011, 2014) corresponding to the already existing potential accessibility indicators in ESPON; calculating accessibility potential indicators for the most recent data available for road, rail, air, and multimodal; elaboration of maps; analysing the territorial dynamics in an enlarged European territory its regions and cities on accessibility patterns and trends.

The ToR for a matrix on accessibility data have been drafted by the ESPON CU in the third quarter of 2013. A Call for Tender was been launched on 1 August 2013 (Official Journal of the EU) which closed on 17 September 2013. Two tenders were received. Following the public procurement procedures in relation to opening, administrative checks and technical evaluation carried out by the ESPON CU and the ESPON MA, the final award of the service contract for the implementation of this action was given to Spiekermann & Wegener. A kick-off meeting took place on 5 December 2013.

Harmonised datasets on local units (LAU 2) (Budget: 75.000,00 €)

The purpose of this map update is to enlarge the ESPON's knowledge base on data comparability from different years and sources. A secondary and equally important focus is on expanding the work developed by ESPON 2013 and thereby responding to the increasing demand for EU-wide harmonised analyses. The objectives of this service contract includes developing guidance to the ESPON research community on the main issues that users have to deal with when collecting and harmonising data at LAU level 2; further develop the ESPON 2013 Database at LAU level 2 with data for EU28+4 on thematically-oriented topics on the basis of the 2001 and 2011 population and housing censuses; improving data comparability over time and across data sources at LAU level 2 by applying the methodology developed in the framework of the ESPON 2013 programme; and demonstrate that the methodology mentioned above can be replicated more broadly by the ESPON research community.

The activities for Harmonised datasets on local units (LAU 2) started in the third quarter of 2013 with drafting a Terms of Reference. The call for tenders opened on 6 November 2013 and the deadline for submission tenders was set on 19 December 2013. In total 5

tenders were received. Following the opening, administrative checks and technical evaluation carried out by the ESPON CU and the ESPON MA, the final award of the service contract for the implementation of this action was given to Accademia Europea Bolzano, EURAC. The kick-off meeting is planned to take place in 2014.

Filling in Data Gaps in the ESPON Database (related to MC agreement in relation to the additional Partner State budget - Budget: 75.000,00 €)

This action is aimed at implementing a service contract for collecting count data and metadata, building up time series and filling in existing data gaps, related to the ESPON Database, on (1) population data, (2) employment by age group and gender and (3) employment by economic sector.

The ToR for filling in data gaps in the ESPON Database were drafted by the ESPON CU during the third quarter of 2013. The call for tender will open in 2014 according to a European open procedure. The maximum available budget for this contract is €75.000 inclusive of all taxes (incl. any VAT related to this contract) travels and accommodations and if applicable, delivery costs.

Update of Maps and Related Data on Climate Change (replaced 'Feasibility studies on selected topics in relation to the maintenance and development of the ESPON Database' - Budget: 75.000,00 €)

The activities for "Feasibility studies on selected topics in relation to the maintenance and development of the ESPON Database" were replaced by an "Update of Maps and Related Data on Climate Change".

The main objective of this action is to carry out a service contract for updating the following indicators: (1) climate change exposure of Europe's regions, (2) climate change sensitivity and aggregated potential impact of climate change on Europe's regions and (3) adaptive capacity and vulnerability of European regions to climate change of the ESPON Climate project. Based on the results achieved, this service contract shall analyze territorial trends of the European territory and its regions in regard to climate change, including a special focus on the ESPON Partner States (CH, IS, LI, NO).

The preparation of the ToR started in the fourth quarter of 2013. The call for tender will open in 2014 according to a European open procedure. The maximum available budget for this contract is €75.000 inclusive of all taxes (incl. any VAT related to this contract) travels and accommodations and if applicable, delivery costs.

Output Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of actions realised	0	20	0	2	6	7	10	14	17
Number of new, updated and improved tools, models, methodologies developed	0	15	0	3	10	14	17	21 <sup>5</sup>	27
Number of territorial indicators defined	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	29	29
Number of periodic territorial monitoring reports published	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Results Indicators <sup>6</sup>	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of downloads for support of data and tools (from the ESPON website) and geographical spread of users	0	2000	0	208.483	459.938	696.765	1.009.934	1.339.445	1.738.443
Number of downloads for territorial monitoring reports (from the ESPON website) and geographical spread of users	0	500	0	208.483	459.938	696.765	1.009.934	1.339.445	1.738.443

<sup>5</sup> In the previous Annual Implementation Report an incorrect 'Number of new, updated and improved tools, models, methodologies developed' has been identified for the year 2012. This was a calculation mistake which has been corrected.

<sup>6</sup> Since the ESPON CU does not have the specific data for the number of downloads of data and tools / territorial monitoring reports, the figure presented refers to the total number of website hits. During 2013 more detailed information for this indicator has become available for previous years and has been updated accordingly.

Impact Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Degree of usefulness (expressed for the different Scientific Platform components) in the context of ESPON applied research actions and policy development processes (with levels: high, medium, low).	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Number of ESPON-external documents making reference to ESPON data, tools or reproducing ESPON maps	0	100	0	4	13	22	27	39	53 <sup>7</sup>

**NI:** Not implemented: The indicator is implemented, but not for the specific year.

**NP:** Not applicable: The indicator does not apply. It will never be implemented.

**NA:** Not available: The indicator is implemented but you don't know the values yet for the specific year.

### Qualitative analysis

The implementation of the subsidy contracted projects within the *Priority 3 Scientific Platform 2011-14* peaked during 2013, with in total seven projects ongoing covering a wide range of activities including online mapping tool, territorial monitoring systems, ESPON Atlas and urban bench-marking tool. This means that in total 10 Priority 3 Scientific Platform projects will be carried out within the ESPON 2013 Programme.

The process of preparing and implementing the *Priority 3 MA-led projects 2011-2014* as service contracts within “3.2b Territorial Indicators, Indexes and Tools” and “3.4

<sup>7</sup> As example the following external documents / publications have been received during 2013. Many more documents are relevant, however it is impossible to ensure that the ESPON CU receives all despite asking so:

- Blotevogel, H.H., Spiekermann, K., Wegener, M. (2013): Deutschland in Europa: Ergebnisse des Programms ESPON 2013. Heft 2: Metropolen und ländliche Räume. Bonn: Bundesinstitut für Bau-, Stadt- und Raumforschung (BBSR);
- Capello, R. & Lenzi, C. (Eds.) (2013). Territorial Patterns of Innovation. An Inquiry on the Knowledge Economy in European Regions, London: Routledge;

Gløersen, E., Gundersen, F., Foss, O. (2013): Europeiske perspektiv på regioner og regional utvikling i Norge – i lys av ESPON. NIBR-rapport 2013:9. Oslo: Norsk institutt for by- og regionforskning.

Updates of Indicators and Maps” was intensified during 2013 and once all planned contracts are in place seven new tools and five major map updates will be developed.

### **3.3.2. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them**

As recommended by the CU and the MA, the ESPON MC decided in its meeting on 12 June 2013, due to an under-spending within the Priority 3 projects, approve of a reallocation of 180.660 EUR available within the overall P3 budget to the two MA-led projects 3.2 Tools 2011-2014 (105.660 EUR) and 3.4 Targeted Actions for Update of Indicators and Maps 2011-2014 (75.000 EUR), including an additional map update.

The preparation of the remaining actions under the MA-led project 3.2 Tools 2011-2014 has proven to be more demanding than expected for the CU both in terms of human resources and the time needed for drafting Terms of References and running the required public procurement processes. Thus, upon request by the CU, the MC approved an amendment to the Project Description “3.4 Targeted Actions for Update of Indicators and Maps 2011-2014” regarding the implementation schedule for the individual actions, moving the start of five of the in total seven actions to the beginning of 2014.

## **3.4. Priority 4**

### **3.4.1. Achievement of targets and analysis of the progress**

#### **Information on the physical and financial progress priority**

#### **Priority 4 Transnational Networking Activity projects**

The TNA projects are subject to call for proposals from the ESPON European Contact Points (ECP) based on the specifications in the Operational Programme and in some cases with additional “Call Specific Criteria” decided by the ESPON MC. The proposals are evaluated by the ESPON CU for approval by the ESPON MC and implemented as subsidy contracts. Going into 2013, in total 7 TNA projects had been approved by the MC with 5 projects still ongoing.

During the spring, the ESPON CU and MA made an analysis of the progress of the implementation and absorption of the overall funds of Priority 4 projects, i.e. both the TNA subsidy contracted projects and the MA Led projects – see below). This analysis was made with the aim of detecting the existing and the potential under-spending in order to increase the execution rate and target the use of all the financial resources available.

As a consequence of the substantial under-spending and free resources detected, the CU and MA proposed to the MC in its meeting 12 June 2013 to allocate additional funds for an eight TNA project. The main reason for this being that further utilisation of the ECP network would be well in line with observations made in the external evaluation and the EC evaluation of the ESPON 2013 Programme, both pointing at the ESPON National Contact Points (ECPs) playing a key role in increasing the engagement with policy makers at the (sub) national level, through disseminating findings both in English as well as in local languages. However, as also highlighted and recommended, it should be ensured that the new TNA project in appropriate ways defines and targets key audiences and stakeholder communities.

Furthermore, it was argued that as the ESPON 2013 Programme reaches its final stage of deliveries from project 1 and 2, the capitalisation and dissemination activities will be peaking from mid-2013 to end of 2014. Part of this involves, as previously, the capitalisation and dissemination of the findings and evidence produced by the Priority 1 and 2 projects, but a major part during this period will be related to the extensive outputs coming from the publication activities (at least 10 main publications and numerous additional publications such as the Territorial Observations and Evidence Briefs) and new tools (up to six tools from the Priority Scientific Platform projects). The capitalisation of this bulk of results could really benefit from supporting activities at the transnational, national, regional and local levels.

The idea of an additional TNA project was well received by the MC, and as requested the CU qualified the approach of the project and specified the budget, which was presented to the MC in a Written Procedure ending 9 August 2013. In approving the proposal, the MC in particular emphasised the following features of the additional project:

- The project should bring together as many as possible experienced ECPs in a truly Trans-national effort, ensuring a “touch-down” in North, West, South as well as East Europe, both in terms of the composition of the TPG and the activities to be carried out.
- The project should, on the one hand, carry out creative, interactive and innovative activities/events targeting stakeholders at national and local level (policy-makers and practitioners), as well as also a wider public.
- The activities/events should bring highest possible exposure to ESPON based on the latest project findings, publications and tools, by carrying out well-designed, additional dissemination activities for the new publications and tools, involving e.g. social media, and including when translations of relevant publications.
- The project proposals should include professional/specialised support that can provide the necessary event-making and journalistic services to ensure high quality and innovative activities.
- Foresee translation of a number of key texts and publications, and support of “event-making and journalistic” professionals via sub-contracting.

The indicative maximum budget to implement this additional TNA project was set to 700.000 EUR. In order to process the Call for Proposals, the Programme Manual needed to be amended and updated regarding the relevant sections in Ch. 5 on “Deliveries and Outputs expected” and “Application and Selection Procedures for calls for proposals” as well as in Ch. 8 on “Eligibility period”.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals was open from 22 August to 18 October 2013, and included an “ESPON Info Day” on 11 September 2013 in Luxembourg, which gathered approx. 15 ECPs as potential beneficiaries, and as required in the call exclusively representing the institutions nominated by Member and Partner States that are confirmed by the MC as active ECPs.

In total 1 proposal was submitted:

Project Reg. No.	Title of Project Proposal	Lead ECP
131_PR4_PP_0507	ESPONontheROAD	Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR)

The evaluation of the submitted proposal took place on 11 November 2013 in Luxembourg. In accordance with the Programme Manual chapter 5.4.2, the eligibility check was carried out in parallel, which concluded that the proposal was eligible. The Evaluation Session was conducted in accordance with the Evaluation Manual, involving two evaluators from the ESPON CU. The proposal was assessed independently by the evaluators and scored according to the relevant evaluation criteria stipulated in the Programme Manual, which had been made available to all potential beneficiaries via the ESPON Website. In addition, written comments were given by evaluators. At the following Consensus Meeting, the evaluated proposal was compared and discussed by the evaluators and the scores of the individual evaluators were added for the proposal in a Consensus Report. The proposal was then discussed by the evaluators leading to a final agreement.

The evaluation considered the proposal to be strong and well reflecting the needs of ESPON to further enhance the capitalisation of its results in the very last year of the 2013 Programme. In addition, it was pointed out that the proposal sets out relevant objectives aimed at ensuring alignment with the current and future policy agendas and political issues, as well as bridging building towards the next EPON Programme. Finally, the proposal was praised for succeeding to bring together 19 out of 30 contact points appropriately organised in 4 Transnational Working Groups (TWG). The geographical distribution of the TWG allows for a macro-regional approach fully covering the EU territory; West (4 ECPs), South (5 ECPs), Central-Eastern (4 ECPs) and North (6 ECPs). Accordingly, the MC was recommended to approve of the proposal in its meeting on 3 December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania. However due to a lack of quorum, the proposal had to be processed in a Written Procedure ending 24 December 2013, which resulted in the proposal being approved. The Kick-off meeting of the ESPONontheROAD project took place on 22 January 2014

During 2013, the following 5 Transnational Activity Projects were ongoing:

- **SCALES - Breakdown and capitalisation of ESPON results on different scales (Budget: 337.790,00 €)**

The aim of this project is to ensure the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of ESPON results. To ensure this the project will develop strategies to deal with the challenges of scales within the capitalisation of ESPON results. Starting point for the development of 'scale-sensible dissemination' are the following three strategies: Zooming in, European Comparison and Bi/multi-lateral comparison. The project planned to organize five seminars to disseminate ESPON results using these strategies. The results of these seminars will be brought together in a manual providing advice on how to handle the problem of scale and how to use ESPON results on different levels.

The project delivered its Draft Final Report on 31 January 2013 and its Final Report on 13 May 2013. The LP of the project represented the project in a plenary session on capitalisation activities of the ECP network at the ESPON Internal Seminar on 4-5

December 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania. In 2013 the project delivered no blunder checks for the Priority 1 projects.

- **ESPONTrain - Establishment of a transnational ESPON training programme to stimulate interest in EPON 2013 knowledge (Total budget: 436.875,00 €)**

The ESPONTrain project is aiming at making ESPON 2013 knowledge operational in a coordinated and transnational way for practical use at regional and local level. It is also translating ESPON Europe-wide information and findings to the regional/local level. In particular ESPONTrain aims at:

- Stimulating a transnational educational and training activity organized by ESPON and facilitated by an e-learning and networking platform promoted by ECPs;
- Identifying target groups within the national environment (both educational and political) to facilitate the diffusion of the ESPON philosophy, ideas, findings and results;
- Transforming knowledge produced by the ESPON 2013 Programme into comprehensible teaching materials and disseminating it.

During 2013 the following key activities were carried out within the project:

- Finalising of the two teaching cycles;
- Evaluation of the teaching cycles;
- Preparing the Draft Final and Final Reports;
- ESPONTrain Final Conference in Athens, Greece, on 3-4 April 2013.
- Transferring and integrating the ESPONTrain e-learning platform with the latest TNA project, USESPON.

In line with the approved extension of the deadlines, the Draft Final Report was delivered on 31 January 2013 (DFR) and the Final Report on 31 April 2013. The LP of the project participated and made a presentation during the Open Seminar in Dublin, Ireland, in June 2013.

- **CaDEC - Capitalisation and Dissemination of ESPON Concepts (Total budget: 525.081,56 €)**

The main aim of the CaDEC project is to capitalise on and disseminate ESPON results and activities using concepts included in ESPON Priority 1 projects as a gateway to ESPON reports. To achieve this, the project applies a three-folded implementation strategy:

1. The construction of an information network between Project Partners, and between Project Partners and members of the national target groups.
2. A systemic dissemination process based on a mix of top-down inputs and bottom-up initiatives as well as an interactive process of the network, which will contribute to identify needs for future ESPON projects.

3. A diversity approach, which implies:
- Assuring a certain level of comparison between the target groups identified in different countries in order to secure the transnational character of the project,
  - Adjusting the choice of the target groups to national contexts in order to reach an accurate dissemination and capitalisation of ESPON concepts within the nine countries participating to the project.
  - Combining national and transnational workshops to prevent the exclusion of non-English speakers.

During 2013 the project carried out a number of activities including additional national and transnational workshops and TPG meetings. Due to the difficulties in organising all the national workshops with relevant stakeholders, was approved (May 2013) upon request an extension of the deadlines of the Draft Final and Final Reports, which were over-held and the concerned reports delivered on 31 October 2013 and 31 January 2014.

An additional request for modification of the contract was made in August 2013, were the LP pointed out that the project partner from Bulgaria was not complying with its contractual obligations and had not completed its allocated tasks. Based on this, the LP requested to allocate these resources to additional tasks. However, due to the programme rules this request was possible to approve.

The project participated in both the Open Seminar in Dublin, Ireland, in June 2013 and the Internal Seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania, in December 2013.

- **ENECON - ESPON Evidence in a North European Context (Total budget: 297.210,00 €)**

The project addresses challenges and opportunities facing territorial development and spatial planning policies and practices, particular to the vast territory of the northern part of Europe. By actively facilitating the use and capitalisation of ESPON-evidence the overall aim is to contribute to make clear the significance of the European perspective on territorial development and cohesion, and especially the crucial need for a transnational cooperation approach to territorial analysis, policies and planning, in a macro-regional context. The project's interactions will also help building a Nordic-Baltic community around territorial development and spatial planning.

The project addresses the North European macro-regional perspective by primarily focusing on the Nordic and Baltic area. It focuses on the spatial development and planning of the countries comprising this area (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden) which emanates from their common northern location and external northern neighbouring relations.

During 2013 the main content-related activities achieved in were:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Post-graduate workshop, "European External Border", in Tartu, Estonia, April 2013;
- Conference "Climate Change in Northern Territories", August 2013;
- Compiling requested blunder checks reports.

The project participated in both the Open Seminar in Dublin, Ireland, in June 2013 and the Internal Seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania, in December 2013.

Towards the end of the year it became obvious to the TPG that it was necessary to re-schedule the final events and reporting. Thus in January 2014 the project requested, which was approved, to move the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final Post-graduate workshop from end of 2013 to March 2014 and the final Conference from March to 11-12 April 2014. In addition the Draft Final Report was extended until 28 February 2014 and the Final Report until 31 May 2014.

- **USESAPON – Use ESPON (Total budget: 498.860,00 €)**

USESAPON encourages and supports the use of work and findings from ESPON 2013. The aim is to create awareness and sense of ownership amongst key stakeholders in respect of the use of methods and tools developed within the current programme. The strategy is to draw on and share work done in four previous and ongoing transnational Priority 4 projects. A key part in the transnational work is to pool the resources developed in these four projects directly represented in USESAPON. This includes the following project objectives:

- Building and further developing e-learning platforms and training materials (ESPONTrain);
- Providing learning support through interactive workshops (INTERSTRAT);
- Exploring the opportunities offered by the inter-relation of spatial scales when using ESPON methods (SCALES)
- Capitalising on key territorial concepts (CaDEC).

Fundamentally USESAPON is about capitalisation of European perspective on territorial development and cohesion. This is done through giving stakeholders key methods to interpret ESPON results in their context, but also taking this further by showing how the stakeholders can use these methods. In terms of expected outputs and results, the USESAPON project will develop ECP's capacity to learn, network and communicate with stakeholders.

During 2013 the main content-related activities achieved in were:

- Identification of key potential stakeholders in the EU Member States and Partner States of the ESPON 2013 Programme represented by partners in the TPG, but also transnational bodies concerned with geographical specificities;
- Design and delivery of support materials for each of the method chosen. These will be short, user-friendly, step by step guides on how to use the method. They can serve as free-standing documents but also be used in the workshops where participants will be taken through the steps;
- Design and delivery of a project website that will include the library of ITPS publications built up by INTERSTRAT, but also access to support materials: [www.espon-usespon.eu](http://www.espon-usespon.eu);
- Preparation of the VLE pack on ESPON methods, including, but not limited to, TIA, Nexus, and CoZiCo. The design of the project website will assure full integration with VLE portal;
- Design and delivery of four interactive workshops which were held in Germany, Luxembourg, Greece and Poland. On the basis of the target group and its needs, each workshop will concentrate on one of the ESPON methods;

- Design and delivery of a final transnational conference in the UK on 15 November 2013, presenting a synthesis of the work, and promote ESPON more widely, including evaluation by participants.
- Compiling requested blunder checks reports.

The project participated in both the Open Seminar in Dublin, Ireland, in June 2013 and the Internal Seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania, in December 2013.

In January 2013, a new project coordinator was appointed by the LP and subsequently formally approved by the CU. Towards the end of the year it became obvious that it was necessary to re-schedule the reporting. Thus in November 2013 the project requested, which was approved, to extend the deadlines of the Draft Final Report until 31 January 2014 and the Final Report until 31 March 2014.

#### **Priority 4 MA-led projects**

Besides the above-mentioned TNA projects, the Operational Programme defines some actions financed under Priority 4 as MA-led projects, which are implemented directly by the MA who, in this context, assumes the role of LP and has the same duties and reporting requirements as any other LP. The MA-led projects are approved by the MC based on short project descriptions developed by the MA, which includes information relating to the objectives, activities, budget and timeframe for the implementation.

The CU together with the MA implements the project according to the relevant public procurement procedure. The monitoring of the activities is managed by CU experts, who have the responsibility to receive the deliveries, to validate them and to approve them. In this process the CU expert works closely with the service providers ensuring highest quality of the deliveries and that deadlines are met. At least once per year (for projects over €75,000 it is bi-annual) the MA will have to provide a short report to the MC on the progress with the implementation of the project.

The various actions under the Priority 4 MA-led projects are carried out within 4.1a-c “Media and Publications” and 4.2 “European Seminars and Workshops”. The progress on the ongoing actions during 2013 is presented below:

- **MA-led project 4.1a. Media & Publications 2011-2014 (Total budget: 710.000,00 €)**

The strategic “MA-led project 4.1a Publications and Design 2011-2014” was approved by the ESPON MC at its meeting on 23 September 2011. This project is in turn based on the detailed Publication Plan, which was approved by the MC in 23-24 June 2011. The publications envisaged in these documents include a wide range of products that are divided into three main categories:

1. ESPON Programme Publications: consist of the major publications that are mentioned in the ESPON 2013 Programme documents, namely ESPON Synthesis Report, ESPON Scientific Reports, ESPON Territorial Observations and ESPON Territorial Monitoring Reports.
2. ESPON Project-related publications: ESPON Atlas 2013, Territorial Impact Assessment, Scenarios on Territorial Development, Indicators/Atlas on EU 2020 Strategy, Territorial Evidence for Structural Fund Programming and Best Practices Handbook for Territorial Governance.

3. Supporting ESPON Publications and Collaterals: consist of a high number of various publications and printed products/collaterals related to ESPON activities and events as well as promotional material and compilations of overviews of the progress of the ESPON Programme. This category includes, for example ESPON Seminar Reports, Policy Briefs and Factsheets, ESPON Posters, Map of the Month, and articles and presentation materials.

The publications are being implemented based on three framework service contracts for External Expertise, Corporate ID & Layout, and Printing. A limited number of additional publications will be produced directly by the ESPON CU based on project reports or other input, which during 2013 included

*ESPON Evidence Brief No. 1 (May 2013)*

As part of the Publication Plan, the first ESPON Evidence Brief was developed by the ESPON CU on the theme of Territorial Cooperation, based on a 4-page concept/style and new layout template. This was presented at MC meeting in December 2012 and a revised version at the meeting in March 2013. Henceforth, most of the Evidence Briefs will be drafted by the External Expertise in collaboration with the ESPON CU.

The following of Requests of Service were launched and implemented by the three service providers during 2013:

Service Contract: Publications – External expertise (Budget: 295.000,00 €)

The service provider was contracted on 6 September 2012 and during 2013 Requests of Service were implemented for the following publications (in chronological order):

*Paphos Seminar Report - “Europe’s Neighbourhood from a Territorial Perspective” (February 2013, web-publication)*

This report is based on the ESPON Internal Seminar on 5-6 December 2012 in Paphos, Cyprus on the theme “Territorial Development Opportunities in Europe and its neighbourhood to Foster Global Competitiveness”. The seminar was organised in cooperation with the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU. The seminar offered a good opportunity for a dialogue between policy makers, practitioners and researchers on territorial development opportunities and strategic options, including co-operation activities that could promote Europe’s competitiveness and territorial integration in the long term.

The report departs from the presentations and discussions during the seminar, focusing on the main ESPON findings on the topic and the key issues discussed during the seminar and in its various workshops. The factsheet in the beginning of the report presents some comparable facts and figures on neighbouring countries. The first chapter sets the scene by looking at EU neighbourhood policies and different understandings and definitions of the European neighbourhood. The second chapter highlights ESPON findings that are relevant for discussing the neighbourhood. The third chapter provides a summary of the main territorial dimensions of the neighbourhood developments discussed in Paphos. Each sub-chapter of the third chapter ends with a text box highlighting some statements or questions raised by participants during the seminar.

*Territorial Observation No. 7: “Hazards and Climate Change” (June 2013)*

For this publication, Territorial Observation No. 7 "Natural Hazards and Climate Change", the External Expertise has delivered critical reading and commenting of draft versions of the text prepared by the ESPON CU which is based on map updates carried

out by a contracted service provider. This report aims at identifying some territorially differentiated policy options linked to urban and regional development in order to tackle climate change and natural hazard related risks. This is relevant on two main accounts: Firstly, there is a need to become aware of challenges that might affect development negatively and even pose risk for the economy as well as for people. Secondly, there are future development opportunities and dynamics that could become new potentials for growth.

Like the impacts of the economic and financial crisis, the impacts of climate change caused by natural processes but also human activities, affect and will affect the European territory. However not all regions and cities are and will be affected in the same way. In some places these challenges have little impacts. In other places, they will in the worst case reinforce each other and provide a serious challenge for future growth and employment. This diversity of impacts within Europe is very important to understand in order to shape the best possible actions at national, regional and local levels.

*ESPON ATLAS - Territorial Dimensions of the Europe 2020 Strategy (June 2013)*

For this publication, the External Expertise provided critical reading, commenting and editing of draft versions of the text, which was prepared by the ESPON SIESTA-project and the ESPON CU. The Atlas analyses the territorial dimension of the Europe 2020 Strategy and presents the regional and, when possible, urban dimension of Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth as defined in the Strategy. The ATLAS delivers territorial evidence, including maps that illustrate major trends, potentials and challenges facing regions and cities and allows policy makers comparing and benchmarking their territories towards the targets related to the Strategy.

Policy makers at various scales can benefit from the ATLAS in the process of identifying territorial actions, for example at the scale of regions and local authorities and in the preparation of regional development strategies. The Atlas clearly demonstrates that pan-European territorial evidence in support of the Europe 2020 is pertinent. With the Atlas users can identify (1) which types of regions have what opportunities with regard to exploiting their territorial potentials in support of smart, sustainable and inclusive territories in Europe, and (2) which types of regions can be perceived as key drivers for development and growth at various scales. The evidence from the ATLAS furthermore enables policy makers to have more in-depth monitoring and steering of their implementation of the strategy.

*Second ESPON 2013 Synthesis Report: Territorial insight: Where to focus what types of investments (June 2013)*

The External Expertise fully drafted the ESPON Synthesis Report 2, which is focusing on the future Common Strategic Framework for EU Structural Funds Programmes and the priorities covering various thematic fields / investment priorities. The report connects territorial evidence from ESPON to the eleven key themes for investment of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) after 2013. In doing so, it reveals important territorial differences and framework conditions that need to be considered for an efficient and effective use of the investment through ESIF and for achieving the objectives of Europe 2020.

Different types of cities and regions need different types of investments. The analysis carried out by ESPON projects can assist policy makers to better target their strategies and enhance the performance of their regional economies. This will also help to

strengthen a place-based approach for the development of future ESIF programmes, as well as the selection and delivery of projects to be funded. Territorial evidence needs to be taken into account for each of the ESIF themes in order to develop effective and efficient programmes and projects.

*ESPON Territorial Observations No 8: Territorial Dynamics in Europe: Regions Integrating Land and Sea (August 2013)*

This Territorial Observation presents different European seas and explores the diversity of maritime areas, including the identification of the core area, different hubs, maritime rural areas, hot and cold spots of land sea interaction and picks on some particular dimensions of it, such as different types of flows and blue energy potentials. Europe's seas have great potentials for contributing to achieving the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, as regards economic growth and renewable energy. In recent years, the role and importance of maritime potentials has received increasing policy attention, as the idea of Blue Growth has developed.

The publication focuses on land sea interactions, including the role of the maritime economy in a region (e.g. in the fields of shipbuilding, tourism, transport and fisheries), the land sea flows (e.g. movement of people, goods, energy or information) and the environmental pressures (e.g. pollution). Like other territorial potentials, the potentials for maritime development are not equally distributed across all parts of Europe.

*ESPON Evidence Brief No 2: Territorial Dimensions of Europe 2020 Strategy (September 2013)*

This Evidence Brief builds on the above presented ESPON Atlas "Territorial Dimension of the Europe 2020 Strategy". Selected from this Atlas, an appetizer of three indicators, each related to one of the three growth priorities, allow for first insights on the territorial diversity of regional potentials and challenges for achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

*Evidence Brief 3: Territories with Geographic Specificities (November 2013, web-publication)*

This Evidence Brief focuses on ESPON research and analysis identifying the geographically specific territories in Europe and their development potentials and challenges. These findings clearly show that, besides seeing the geographic particularities of these territories as "handicaps" as stated in the Treaty, policy-makers also need to consider their unique development assets.

*Evidence Brief 4: Services of General Interest: a European Issue (November 2013)*

Services of general interest cover important arrangements, tasks and functions related to citizen's welfare and participation. They also refer to the supply of basic infrastructure and services for businesses. On that respect, they are not only preconditions of growth and job creation, but also a fundamental pillar for the achievement of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Moreover, the access to services of general interest represents an important dimension of social and territorial cohesion. ESPON has analysed the access to and provision of services of general interest across the European territory, which is synthesised in this Evidence Brief, including the findings from the SeGI, EDORA, GEOSPECS and TIGER.

*Evidence Brief 5: Secondary cities as important growth poles (December 2013)*

Europe's second tier cities are important growth poles and have in many cases great development potentials. They play a vital role within the national urban system and often even perform better than their capital cities. In fact, secondary cities contribute substantially to the economic development in Europe and are decisive for achieving the Europe 2020 objectives on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The economic development during the decade before the crisis showed that second tier cities can further strengthen their performance and contribute even more to national economic development as well as play an independent role in the increasing globalisation of markets. Investments in second tier cities are more likely to maximise the economic potential of a national economy than a concentration of all resources in the capital. However this will require policy support, strategic investments and tools.

*Evidence Brief 6: Post-crisis migration trends: challenges and opportunities for Europe's competitiveness (November 2013)*

This Evidence Brief discusses how migration flows have changed due to the territorial impacts of the global economic crisis on European countries, its regions and cities. In the light of the Europe 2020 Strategy, migration and mobility is seen as contributing to the competitiveness of the EU, ensuring a labour force with the necessary skills to reinforce the EU's long-term economic development. It highlights the need for developing cooperation between EU strategic partners and regions in the field of migration.

*Territorial Observation 9: Territorial Dynamics in Europe: Gateway Functions in Cities (December 2013)*

This Territorial Observation gives insights into different types of gateway functions of cities including major economic and business gateways, knowledge gateways, transport gateways and gateways with particular attractiveness. Furthermore, it shows where in the territory which types of gateway functions are to be found. This evidence can support policy decisions about investments to strengthen gateways, smart growth and Europe's global competitiveness.

Service Contract: "Layout and Design II (2012-2014)" (Budget 190.000 €)

As the new service contract did not come into effect until May 2013, the layout for a number of publications had to be processed by the ESPON CU, which was possible due to temporary in-house competence and skills: This concerned:

- Paphos Seminar Report – "Europe's Neighbourhood from a Territorial Perspective"
- ESPON Project Overview
- ESPON Evidence Brief No 1 (finalisation by the service provider)

In addition, the layout work was initiated for Territorial Observation No 7 and the ATLAS 2020, but was completed by the new service provider, Imprimerie Centrale.

In total nine requests for layout services were made during 2013, covering the following publications and materials:

- Territorial Observation No. 7-9
- Evidence Brief No. 1-6
- ESPON Atlas 2020

- Synthesis Report No. 2
- ESPON Posters
- Additional graphical elements for new publications
- ESPON 2013 Scientific Conference
- Web-layout advice related to the Baltic Sea Region Territorial Monitoring tool

Individual action: “Printing II (2012-2014)” (170.000 €)

A new service contract for printing went into effect in May 2013 with Imprimerie Centrale, covering printing / finishing a wide range of publications and collaterals, including delivering of some publications and materials to several destinations in Europe.

During 2013 period in total eight requests of printing services was implemented, including:

- Territorial Observation No. 7-9
- Evidence Brief No. 1-2, 4 and 6
- ESPON Atlas 2020
- Synthesis Report No. 2
- ESPON Posters
- Programme Open Seminar Dublin “Territorial co-operation for growth and jobs”
- Application Pack Call Pr. 4
- Programme ESPON Info Day on Call Priority 4 Luxembourg
- Programme Scientific Conference Luxembourg “Science in support of European Territorial Development and Cohesion”
- Scientific Conference Abstracts “Science in support of European Territorial Development and Cohesion”
- Programme Workshop 30 September 2013 “Territorial Dimensions of the Europe 2020 Strategy”
- Programme Workshop 11 October 2013 "Territorial Vision for Europe towards 2050"
- Programme workshop 27 November 2013 “European gateway cities and regions - New evidence on different types of gateways and their future role”
- Programme Internal Seminar 4 December 2013 "Territorial Evidence for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 and Territorial Agenda 2020"

Individual action “Sending” (20.000 €)

The sending of publications as well as the supporting printing and collaterals to various recipients across Europe will mainly be taken care of by the ESPON CU, except for in those cases where the sending is requested and agreed to be handled by the printing service provider.

- **MA-led project 4.1b - Capitalisation Strategy and Media Bureau 2009 (Budget: 400.000 €)**

The ESPON 2013 Programme in 2013 made increasing efforts to capitalise and communicate the final results of the projects through a wide range of activities and channels aimed at policy makers, stakeholders and experts. Those activities had been implemented a) with the support of the media bureau and b) directly by the ESPON CU.

A) The service contract with Media Consulta “Capitalisation Strategy and Media Bureau for the ESPON 2013 Programme” has been executed in the period as follows:

Production of audiovisual products to promote the ESPON Tools

Eight videos have been produced and widely promoted 2013. They cover the following tools: Data Navigator, Online Map Finder, Typology, Hyper Atlas, Database for Policy Makers, Database for Scientists, Territorial Impact Assessment.

	
<p><b>ESPON Tools - Introduction</b></p>	<p><b>Data Navigator</b></p>
	
<p><b>Online Map Finder</b></p>	<p><b>Typologies</b></p>
	
<p><b>Hyper Atlas</b></p>	<p><b>Database for Policy Makers</b></p>

 <p>ESPON Database for scientists</p>	 <p>ESPON Territorial Impact Assessment</p>
<b>Database for Scientists</b>	<b>Territorial Impact Assessment</b>

**B)** In addition to the above mentioned activities, the CU promoted several initiatives guided by the objectives of increasing the visibility of ESPON's work and the development of the ESPON network. In terms of visibility the following activities are of relevance:

- Promotion of two Maps of the Month (Gender Imbalances in European Regions in February; "Hot Spots" of land-sea interactions in July)
- Promotion of the following publications
  - a. A practical guidance for policymakers and practitioners based on contributions from ESPON projects and the European Commission, January 2013
  - b. Reports from ESPON Seminar in Cyprus 'Europe's Neighbourhood from a Territorial Perspective', February 2013
  - c. "Project Overview", final version, which has been published in February 2013
  - d. Evidence Brief, May 2013, "European Territorial Cooperation"
  - e. Posters (topics: Climate Change, Gender Structures, Innovation, Internet Connection), June 2013
  - f. ESPON ATLAS - Territorial Dimensions of the Europe 2020 Strategy which has been published in June 2013.
  - g. Second ESPON 2013 Synthesis Report - Territorial insight: Where to focus what types of investments which has been published in June 2013.
  - h. Territorial Observation 7 Natural Hazards and Climate Change in European Regions, released in June 2013.
  - i. Territorial Observation 8 Regions Integrating Land and Sea, released in August 2013.
  - j. Evidence Brief, September 2013, "Territorial Dimensions of Europe 2020 Strategy"
  - k. Evidence Brief, November 2013, "Post-crisis migration trends"
  - l. Evidence Brief, November 2013, "Services of General Interest"
  - m. Evidence Brief, November 2013, "Territories with Geographic Specificities"
  - n. Territorial Observation 9 Gateway Functions in Cities, released in December 2013
  - o. Evidence Brief, December 2013, "Secondary cities as important growth poles"

These publications have been widely fostered (digital version at the ESPON website, announcement at the ESPON social media tools, hard copies distributed directly to MC members for national dissemination, EU Institutions, and disseminated at events).

- Production and dissemination of Newsletters, Press Releases and articles as detailed in section 5 of the Annual Implementation Report.
- Promotion of Reports from projects, events, Calls for Tenders.
- Updates of the ESPON website with news, articles, reports.

The ESPON activities received wide coverage across Europe, with several articles published on websites and publications.

- **MA-led project 4.1c. Website 2011-2014 (Total Budget: 75.000,00 €)**

The MA-led project includes the further development, adaptation and hosting from 2012 till 2014 of the following five elements: ESPON 2013 website, the additional internet facilities, tools and web applications, the PMSS, the ESPON Intranet and the Email system. In addition, the service provider will provide technical support in relation to these five elements.

During 2013 the service provider provided hosting and maintenance of the five elements on one or more servers managed by the service provider and installed a new Database Portal including database content.

- **MA-led project 4.2 European Seminars & Workshops 2011-2014 (Total Budget: 394.000 €)**

The ESPON MC approved in its meeting on 10 September 2013 in Brussels a request by the MA/CU for amendment to the Project Description “4.2 European Seminars and Workshops 2011-2014”. This was due to a previous MC decision (MC meeting 12 June 2013) to approve a budget reallocation within Priority 4, including a reduction of the budget for “4.2 European Seminars and Workshops 2011-2014” by 120.000 EUR.

The decided budget reduction was motivated by the fact that the average costs for arranging the events have proven to be far less than originally estimated. The main reason for this is that it has been possible to utilise facilities and resources of the EC and the ESPON countries often resulting in no costs or considerably lower costs for venues and speakers than anticipated, which is also expected to also be the case for the remaining activities.

The amendment concerned the following main points:

- The indicative implementation of Seminars/Conferences will increase from 9 to 10 events, adding a Partner States Conference in the beginning of 2014.
- The indicative implementation of Workshops will increase from 7 to 10 events, adding workshops on Atlas 2020 (30 September 2013), ET 2050 (11 October 2013) and on Gateway Cities (27 November 2013).
- The total available budget will be reduced from 514.000 to 394.000 EUR.

The activities carried out during 2013 included 2 Seminars/Conferences and 4 Workshops, which were implemented as follows:

### European Seminars /Conferences

The annual *ESPON OPEN Seminar* took place in Dublin, Ireland, on 13-14 June 2013, and was organised in cooperation with the Irish Presidency of the Council of the EU. The theme “Territorial Cooperation for Growth and Jobs” addressed one of the main policy concerns in 2013 aiming at stimulating a thorough discussion of recovery and resilience on the basis of territorial trends and supporting evidence from ESPON projects.

225 people, including policy makers, practitioners, scientists and experts were welcomed by representatives of the Irish EU Presidency, Dublin City Council, ESPON MC and MA. This was followed by opening speeches from Dick Gleeson from Dublin City Council, and ESPON representatives introducing the aim of the event and new European territorial evidence for the development of regions and cities.

The Seminar began by examining the territorial outlook in the short and long term and new approaches from policymakers for recovery and resilience. The plenary was complemented by parallel workshop sessions in which ESPON projects reflected on the impact of the last crisis and the patterns, challenges and opportunities emerging across different types of territories. In addition, the Seminar offered a toolbox session which gave insight on the tools, indicators and data made available by ESPON.

The second day was structured within the scope of territorial co-operation and the envisioned thematic objectives of the Common Strategic Framework. The opening session highlighted the experiences of Territorial Cooperation programmes in responding to the effects of the economic crisis. A parallel workshop session provided evidence that can be used to identify opportunities and potentials to assist with operational programming processes.

The closing sessions of the Seminar saw a roundtable on general lessons concerning recovery and resilience and implications for the role of Territorial Cooperation programmes as well as the demands for territorial evidence from ESPON. The Seminar concluded with presentations concerning ESPON 2013 and beyond, the intentions of the Lithuanian Presidency and finally a farewell from the Irish Presidency.

ESPON invited for a two days *Scientific Conference* on "Science in support of European Territorial Development and Cohesion" in Luxembourg on 12 and 13 September 2013. The conference involved the network of scientists in the field of territorial research and related fields and was organised in close cooperation with European professional and academic organisations from different disciplines, including AESOP, ECTP-CEU, ERSA, EUGEO and RSA. The conference was organised in collaboration with the University of Luxembourg and held at the university campus in Walferdange.

The conference was attended by about 100 participants and aimed on the one hand to provide a good overview and scientific dialogue of the progress made in the scientific field during the current programming period. On the other hand, ongoing ESPON projects as well as researchers outside the ESPON network had the opportunity to make use of new and innovative research carried out until now and use scientific feedback received during the conference in their own research.

The general purpose of the Conference was to discuss elements such as concepts, methodologies, indicators, typologies, tools, maps and models developed and/or used within the ESPON projects and the European scientific research community in the field of territorial development and cohesion. The conference also contributed to the development and improvement of concepts and methods related to the 11 thematic

objectives on which the future European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) shall be concentrated.

All papers presented at the ESPON Scientific Conference will be included in the second ESPON 2013 Scientific Report. The report is targeting the European scientific community involved in research and higher education on territorial development and cohesion and is planned to be published in the beginning of 2014.

#### ESPON Workshops

On 15 May 2013, ESPON organised a Workshop in Brussels on the theme “*Stepping into the sea - New evidence on territorial development and the opportunities and risks for European seas and maritime regions*”. The workshop aimed at providing information on land-sea interactions within Europe’s six regional seas, which can be used by stakeholders for the elaboration of both, future Structural Funds programmes but also other development strategies. New evidence on the development opportunities and challenges of Europe’s seas were presented, while also taking into account coastal and maritime governance arrangements. Place-based policy approaches for Europe’s seas were discussed which will be of high relevance for future EU funding possibilities.

About 50 persons attended the Workshop, which began with an introduction into maritime policy on different policy levels. Relevant strategies and policies of integrated territorial-maritime development were presented, setting the scene for the subsequent interventions. The second part of the morning session started off with an introduction into the main outputs and key messages of the ESPON ESaTDOR project by Dave Shaw, University of Liverpool. The presentation was followed by short statements of stakeholders on the usefulness of the new evidence produced related to European seas. In the afternoon, Jacek Zaucha presented the current results of the PartiSEApate project, looking into multi-level governance in maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea Region. Against this backdrop as well as the relevant results from ESaTDOR on governance arrangements, stakeholders reflected upon experiences made concerning governance in their respective regional seas.

On 30 September 2013 ESPON carried out a workshop “*Territorial Dimensions of the Europe 2020 Strategy*” in Brussels, jointly organised by ESPON, the Mission of Norway to the EU, as well as the West and South Norway Regional Offices. The workshop addressed the territorial dimension of the Europe 2020 Strategy and contribution of the European regions to reach the Europe 2020 headline targets, taking account of specific characteristics of the European regions.

The recently published ESPON Atlas on the “Territorial Dimensions of the Europe 2020 Strategy” provided the basis for the workshop. It presents new evidence on the situation of the European regions in relation to the policy targets and it allows for benchmarking among regions in Europe, aimed at stimulating the discussion and debate among policy makers on how regions can support in the best possible way the objectives of Europe 2020 Strategy.

A key part of the workshop was a round table discussion involving key policy-makers at European and regional levels sharing their perceptions, ambitions and expectations with regard to the implementation and possible contribution of the European regions to EU’s growth strategy until 2020. It also gave the opportunity to discuss place-based policy options for the elaboration of territorial development strategies. In total 50 persons participated in the workshop.

Therefore, there is a need to identify and further exploit available resources and territorial potentials, which can be used in achieving the European policy targets at national and regional levels.

The workshop “*Territorial Vision for Europe towards 2050*”, was organised in Brussels on 11 October 2013 as a response to a voiced demand among policymakers in the field of territorial development and cohesion for a future oriented and integrated vision on the development of the European territory. The basis for the workshop was the ESPON project “ET 2050 - Territorial Vision for Europe in 2050”, which is developing a vision that is meant to guide policy debate on territorial development and provide a coherent European framework for policy initiatives at different decision-making levels. The building blocks of the projects involve a territorial vision-building process and implementing a participatory process involving relevant stakeholders at European, national and regional level.

The workshop aimed at raising the awareness among all relevant stakeholders on the work that is done and to involve stakeholders in dialogue and cooperation on the development of a Territorial Vision for Europe towards 2050. A first draft text towards a Territorial Vision was presented for discussion by the 41 participants in both plenary and parallel sessions. The input gathered from all attendees will feed the next version of the Territorial Vision 2050 planned for the end of 2013.

The last workshop in 2013 was organised in Brussels on 27 November 2013 covering the theme of “*European gateway cities and regions - New evidence on different types of gateways and their future role*”, which intended to present and discuss different types of gateways from a European perspective considering their different geographical contexts. The workshop included territorial evidence that has been produced by numerous ESPON projects and a recent Territorial Observation no.9.

The evidence on gateways and the concept used by the ESPON analyses was discussed and tested exploring examples from national and regional territorial strategies or policies. Concrete examples from different European countries and regions were presented. A panel discussion ending the workshop addressed the role of gateways as policy orientation in European territorial development and in national and regional strategies and policies. The round table was nourished by stakeholders referring to regional gateway examples and statements from policy makers at national level as well as scientist involved in ESPON. A main conclusion coming out of the workshop was that there is a need to clarify the concept of gateways and they should be considered in national strategies and included in macro-regional strategies, if relevant. The workshop was attended by 24 participants.

Output Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of actions realised	0	30	0	3	6	8	14	16	16
Number of	0	14	0	3	8	12	16	20 <sup>8</sup>	26

<sup>8</sup> In the previous Annual Implementation Report an incorrect ‘Number of European Seminars / workshops realised’ has been identified for the year 2012. This was a calculation mistake which has been corrected.

European Seminars / workshops realised									
Number of TNAs realised	0	14	0	0	0	2	5	7	7
Number of press releases, e-newsletters	0	10	0	3	15	29	39	57	71
Number of larger and smaller reports / publications issued	0	12	0	8	11	18	25	28	41
Results Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of participants in all European Seminars / Workshops	0	150	0	205	640	1017	1434	1790	2290
Average number of participants per seminar / event	0	30	0	68	80	85	90	90 <sup>9</sup>	88
Number of participants in all TNAs <sup>10</sup>	0	400	0	0	0	15	40	54	54
Average number of participants per action	0	40	0	0	0	8	8	8	8
Number of stakeholders reached by mailing lists	0	500	0	1.864 / 208.483	2.149 / 459.938	2.848 / 696.765	3.244 / 1.009.934	3.592 / 1.339.445	3888 / 1.738.443

<sup>9</sup> In the previous Annual Implementation Report an incorrect 'Average number of participants per seminar / event' has been identified for the year 2012. This was a calculation mistake which has been corrected.

<sup>10</sup> This result indicator presents the number of institutes involved in all TNAs. In the previous Annual Implementation Reports an incorrect 'Number of participants in all TNAs' has been identified for the years 2011 and 2012. This was a calculation mistake which has been corrected.

and by visiting the ESPON website <sup>11</sup>									
Impact Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Degree of capitalisation and increased awareness achieved among the participants of European Seminars/ Workshops	NP	NP	NP	High	High	High	High	High	High
Degree of capitalisation and increased awareness achieved among the participants of TNAs	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP

**NI:** Not implemented: The indicator is implemented, but not for the specific year.

**NP:** Not applicable: The indicator does not apply. It will never be implemented.

**NA:** Not available: The indicator is implemented but you don't know the values yet for the specific year.

### Qualitative analysis

Due to identified under-spending in the overall Priority 4 budget and after approval by the MC, it was possible to launch a 11<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposal for an additional TNA. The submitted proposal – ESPONontheROAD – was subsequently approved by the MC in December 2013 and will be carried out during the main part of 2014. This will be the eight TNA project in the ESPON 2013 Programme and will bring added value by supporting the capitalisation and dissemination activities at national and transnational level related to the extensive outputs coming from the increasing publication activities and new scientific tools. The project brings together no less than 9 out of 30 contact points appropriately organised in 4 Transnational Working Groups.

Perhaps the most evident development during 2013 is the significant increase in publications output in the MA-led project 4.1a “Media and Publications”, which was made possible by getting all the three new service contracts for expertise, layout and printing up and running and coordinated. The extensive volume of publications and materials included:

- ESPON Evidence Briefs No 1-6

<sup>11</sup> These figures present (1) the number of newsletter subscribers and (2) the number of website visits. During 2013 more detailed information for this indicator ‘number of website visits’ has become available for previous years and has been updated accordingly.

- ESPON Territorial Observation No. 7-9
- Paphos Seminar Report – “Europe’s Neighbourhood from a Territorial Perspective”
- ESPON Project Overview
- ESPON Atlas 2020
- ESPON Synthesis Report No. 2
- ESPON Posters
- Workshop and Seminar programmes

Also the activities carried out in the MA-led project 4.2 “European Seminars and Workshops” were further strengthened and in total the CU succeeded to prepare and carry out 2 European Seminars/Conferences and 4 Workshops on a wide range of topics.

Finally, the further development of the ESPON website is bringing continuous improvements to the website, while at the same time ensuring continuity with the ESPON website from the 2006 Programme. The “European Seminars and Workshops” organised in 2012 have covered a wide range of themes and attracted a high number of interested and engaged participants.

#### **3.4.2. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them**

As described in detail above, the CU presented a note at the MC meeting in Dublin 12 June 2013 detailing the progress in implementation of actions and projects under Priority 4, including an overview of the financial figures and a proposal for additional actions to be implemented within the budget available. Based on this and a subsequent written procedure (24.7 – 9.8 2013), the MC decided to re-allocate 700.000 EUR to an additional TNA project, as described above.

As indicated in the previous report and above, the two new service contracts under the MA-led project 4.1a for Layout and for Printing could not start until May 2013, which made it necessary to have some layout work for the publications during this period developed in-house by the CU. Furthermore, the printing of a number of publications had to be put on stand-by until the new contract was in place. However, the time lost was recovered during the second half of the year, and the implementation is now running on track.

In July 2013, the service provider on Layout informed the Contracting Authority on the fact that a wrong VAT rate had been indicated in their offer by mistake. The Contracting Authority acknowledged the information and allowed the Service Provider to proceed to the correction of the VAT rate to be indicated in the formal documentation for him to be in line with the applicable law in Luxembourg. However the correction on the VAT rate does not, in any occasion, affect the total price including VAT that was agreed by both parts signing the contract.

Furthermore on the service contract for “Layout and Design”, it was decided that the Request of Service No. 7 for layout advice for the BSR-TeMo tool, should include a general advice on colours for ESPON web tools. In addition, the Request of Service No. 8 on layout advice for the RIMAP application was aborted by mutual agreement between the CU and the service provider.

Based on the past experiences of considerable lower costs than budgeted for running the events under the MA-led project “4.2 European Seminars and Workshops 2011-2014” it was suggested by the CU to reduce the budget by 120.000 EUR (from 514.000 to 394.000 EUR), which was approved by the MC in its meeting on 12 June 2013 in Dublin, Ireland. In the same meeting it was decided that this amount should be re-allocated to an additional Call for Proposals for a project under P4 TNA.

## 4. Technical Assistance

The TA activities focused on implementing and monitoring the programme and the operations. These tasks were implemented by the CU in its role of support to the ESPON MA.

The ESPON CU focused its work on the following elements:

- Support to Member States in setting up Member States duties towards the implementation of the ESPON 2013 Programme such as following up on the set up of the FLC, appointments of MC and ECP members etc.;
- Organisation and support of MC meetings and implementation of the MC decisions;
- Setting up, adaptation and improvements of procedures for the programme management of operations and programme monitoring at different levels;
- Coordination activities with the MA and CA;
- Support to the GoA for the implementation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Financial Control level, in particular the approval of the audits of operations and the Annual Control Report and opinion;
- Preparation and organisation of the last call for proposals.
- Contracting of the approved operations and monitoring their progress in assessing Inception, Interim and Draft Final Reports;
- Further monitoring and assessment of ongoing operations;
- Elaboration of the new programme publications (the first six Evidence Briefs, the ESPON Atlas 2020, the 2<sup>nd</sup> ESPON Synthesis Report, Territorial Observations n°7, n°8 and n°9, the 2<sup>nd</sup> ESPON Scientific Report for a publishing by the beginning of 2014);
- Organisation and running of ECP meetings;
- Organisation of the ESPON Internal Seminar;
- Communicate the programme results and aims at a series of events during 2013.

Output Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of MC meetings	NI	14	2	4	7	11	15	19	23
Number of Concertation Committee meetings organised	NI	14	2	6	7	10	11	11	11
Number of Internal ESPON seminars	NI	7 <sup>12</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<sup>12</sup> In the Operational Programme the target for seminars are 14. However, 7 of the seminars envisaged are implemented under Priority 4.

Number of ECP meetings	NI	14	0	3	6	8	10	12	14
Number of events for potential and selected beneficiaries	NI	14	0	4	8	12	16	18	21
Results Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of on-the-spot-checks showing no significant results <sup>13</sup>	NI	95	0	0	0	2	2	4	4
Number of participants in Internal ESPON seminars <sup>14</sup>	NI	2.500	0	118	279	444	649	839	1029
Number of participants in information events for potential beneficiaries	NI	400	0	322	561	879	1.309	1.409	1.432
Number of participants in information events for selected beneficiaries	NI	100	0	41	72	168	283	330	400
Volume of mailing list	NI	1.000	1.442	2.894	5.731	7.467	11.016	12.266	13.390
Quality of process launching projects in the light of programme evaluations	NI	High	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI
Impact Indicators	Initial Baseline	Final Target	Achievements						
			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Level of importance of audit finding as reported in Annual audit report	NI	Low	NP	NP	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Degree of satisfaction with information, services and support provided to the MC, ECP and partners	NI	High	NP	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI

<sup>13</sup> This indicator presents the cumulative number of MA quality checks on the spot, the audit of operations by the external auditor is not included.

<sup>14</sup> The Internal ESPON seminars are paid under the TA budget and therefore indicated in this table. Open ESPON seminars are included in the table for the Capitalisation Strategy.

Degree of satisfaction of potential partners with the information given on ESPON	NI	High	NI	High <sup>15</sup>	High <sup>16</sup>	High <sup>17</sup>	High <sup>18</sup>	High <sup>19</sup>	High <sup>20</sup>
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**NI:** Not implemented: The indicator is implemented, but not for the specific year.

**NP:** Not applicable: The indicator does not apply. It will never be implemented.

**NA:** Not available: The indicator is implemented but you don't know the values yet for the specific year.

During 2013 most of the tasks were related to the monitoring of ongoing projects, the implementation of audits of operations, follow-up on quality checks of the CA on operations and quality checks of Member States and Partner States on FLC.

For further information on the audits of operations, annual control report and opinion, MA/CA quality checks and MS/PS quality checks on FLC performed in 2013, see sections 2.1 and 2.3.

Furthermore, in order to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the implementation of the Programme and also in order to avoid the financial de-commitment the following steps have been taken:

- Two ESPON Financial Managers Seminars were organised. The first one took place on 7 March 2013 in Athens, Greece. About 50 people attended the event, representing mainly financial managers of Lead and Project Partners of approved ESPON 2013 projects. Within the seminars information about e.g. eligibility rules, the programme manual, the subsidy contract, reporting and monitoring procedures were given, as well as information about publicity requirements, administrative, legal and practical matters of relevance concerning project coordination and management. First Level Financial Controllers were provided with additional and more specific information about ESPON 2013 reporting procedures and requirements for the certification of expenditure. Their participation added to a lively discussion. The second 'targeted' seminar was organized in London, UK on 19 July 2013. The main purpose of this event was to facilitate the reporting process of the projects in order to avoid financial de-commitment. At this seminar, Lead and Project Partners received targeted assistance in the form of pre-check of the existing reporting documents and support with the completion of the outstanding Project Progress Reports. In order to be efficient and make the most of this event, participants brought their progress reports and its accompanying first level control documents and the related supporting documents. The seminar was dedicated to practical support, problem solving, and finalization of progress reports.
- One ESPON call has been launched during 2013: The eleventh call for proposals for Transnational Networking Activities was launched on 22 August 2013.

<sup>15</sup> Based on the evaluation of the Info Day and Partner Cafe` as well as the Financial Managers Seminar (see point 5.1.3).

<sup>16</sup> Based on the evaluation of the Financial Managers Seminar.

<sup>17</sup> Based on the evaluation of the Financial Managers Seminar.

<sup>18</sup> Based on the evaluation of the Financial Managers Seminar.

<sup>19</sup> Based on the evaluation of the Financial Managers Seminar.

<sup>20</sup> No survey was organised at events during 2013. However, the CU collected positive feedback on the spot from participants during several events.

The call was presented during a day of information for potential beneficiaries which took place in Luxembourg on 11 September 2013 where 22 ECPs of the ESPON 2013 Programme attended.

More detailed information on these activities can be found on the section related to the Communication Plan in chapter 5.

#### **4.1 Financial implementation of certified TA**

The tables below provide information on the financial implementation of TA actions and represent expenditure incurred by the MA which has been certified to the EC by the CA according to Article 16 of Regulation 1080/2006 and therefore recorded as Programme expenditure.

The following table shows the TA budget lines 1 to 9 for the year 2007 certified to EC as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 1-9	Allocation 2007	Certified 2009	Total cert. 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
1 Staff	130 762,12 €	130 762,12 €	130 762,12 €	31 388,58 €
2 Trainees	4 960,46 €	4 960,46 €	4 960,46 €	1 190,73 €
3 CU and MA Travel costs	13 882,16 €	13 882,16 €	13 882,16 €	3 332,32 €
4 MC travel and meeting costs	11 473,43 €	8 984,63 €	8 984,63 €	2 156,70 €
5 CC meetings	2 316,68 €	2 316,68 €	2 316,68 €	556,10 €
6 ECP meetings	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
7 ESPON Internal Seminar	11 683,69 €	6 138,69 €	6 138,69 €	1 473,55 €
8 Rent (incl. Parking, cleaning, heating, insurances etc.)	29 958,29 €	29 958,29 €	29 958,29 €	7 191,29 €
9 Overheads, installation, postal services, telephone etc.	12 791,23 €	12 791,23 €	12 791,23 €	3 070,45 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>217 828,06 €</b>	<b>209 794,26 €</b>	<b>209 794,26 €</b>	<b>50 359,71 €</b>

The following table shows the TA budget lines 1 to 9 for the year 2008 certified to the EC, as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 1-9	Allocation 2008	Certified 2009	Total cert. 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
1 Staff	508 715,77 €	373 628,02 €	373 628,02 €	89 686,92 €
2 Trainees	9 682,54 €	9 682,54 €	9 682,54 €	2 324,23 €
3 CU and MA Travel costs	32 704,81 €	20 354,17 €	20 354,17 €	4 885,88 €
4 MC travel and meeting costs	14 150,24 €	4 398,26 €	4 398,26 €	1 055,77 €
5 CC meetings	4 532,51 €	2 055,21 €	2 055,21 €	493,34 €
6 ECP meetings	21 249,04 €	13 132,43 €	13 132,43 €	3 152,35 €
7 ESPON Internal Seminar	11 334,30 €	11 033,10 €	11 033,10 €	2 648,42 €
8 Rent (incl. Parking, cleaning, heating, insurances etc.)	66 157,53 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
9 Overheads, installation, postal services, telephone etc.	15 836,37 €	12 125,26 €	12 125,26 €	2 910,59 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>684 363,11 €</b>	<b>446 408,99 €</b>	<b>446 408,99 €</b>	<b>107 157,50 €</b>

The following table shows the TA budget lines 10 to 14 for the period 2007-2013 certified to the EC as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 10-14	Allocation 2007-2013	Certified 2009	Total cert. 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
10 GoA - meetings and external contract	450 000,00 €	196,50 €	196,50 €	47,17 €
11 Financial Monitoring System and maintenance	195 500,00 €	6 597,20 €	6 597,20 €	1 583,61 €
12 Programme evaluation	138 480,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
13 Experts costs (legal etc.)	35 000,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
14 Communication Plan	466 000,00 €	18 828,19 €	18 828,19 €	4 519,58 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 284 980,00 €</b>	<b>25 621,89 €</b>	<b>25 621,89 €</b>	<b>6 150,36 €</b>

By the end of 2013, two Progress Reports for TA for 2008 (237.902,83€) and 2009 (792.775.57€) have been submitted for 1<sup>st</sup> Level Control but will only be accounted as certified in 2014.

#### **4.2 Financial implementation of not yet certified TA**

Due to the complexity of procedures, in relation to the FLC, some delay incurred in getting the TA costs certified. A special effort has been made during 2013 in relation to the preparation of Progress Report and further certification shall be implemented during 2014.

The tables below provide information on the financial implementation of TA actions and represent expenditures incurred by the MA which have not been certified yet according to Article 16 of Regulation 1080/2006 and therefore not yet recorded as Programme expenditure. The amounts in the table below should therefore be added to the ones indicated in the table above, as expenditures already certified to the EC, to have a complete overview of the use of the TA (certified and not yet certified).

The following table shows the TA budget lines 1 to 9 expenditures not certified for the year 2007 as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 1-9	Allocation 2007	Paid 2013	Total Paid 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
1 Staff	130 762,12 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
2 Trainees	4 960,46 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
3 CU and MA Travel costs	13 882,16 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
4 MC travel and meeting costs	11 473,43 €	0,00 €	2 488,80 €	597,42 €
5 CC meetings	2 316,68 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
6 ECP meetings	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
7 ESPON Internal Seminar	11 683,69 €	0,00 €	5 545,00 €	1 331,04 €
8 Rent (incl. Parking, cleaning, heating, insurances etc.)	29 958,29 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
9 Overheads, installation, postal services, telephone etc.	12 791,23 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>217 828,06 €</b>	<b>0,00 €</b>	<b>8 033,80 €</b>	<b>1 928,46 €</b>

The following table shows the TA budget lines 1 to 9 expenditures not certified for the year 2008 as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 1-9	Allocation 2008	Paid 2013	Paid 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
1 Staff	508 715,77 €	0,00 €	135 087,75 €	32 426,91 €
2 Trainees	9 682,54 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
3 CU and MA Travel costs	32 704,81 €	0,00 €	12 350,64 €	2 964,69 €
4 MC travel and meeting costs	14 150,24 €	0,00 €	9 751,98 €	2 340,90 €
5 CC meetings	4 532,51 €	0,00 €	2 477,30 €	594,66 €
6 ECP meetings	21 249,04 €	0,00 €	8 116,61 €	1 948,34 €
7 ESPON Internal Seminar	11 334,30 €	0,00 €	301,20 €	72,30 €
8 Rent (incl. Parking, cleaning, heating, insurances etc.)	66 157,53 €	0,00 €	66 157,53 €	15 880,67 €
9 Overheads, installation, postal services, telephone etc.	15 836,37 €	0,00 €	3 711,11 €	890,83 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>684 363,11 €</b>	<b>0,00 €</b>	<b>237 954,12 €</b>	<b>57 119,30 €</b>

The following table shows the TA budget lines 1 to 9 expenditures not certified for the year 2009 as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 1-9	Allocation 2009	Paid 2013	Paid 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
1 Staff	586 346,70 €	0,00 €	586 346,70 €	140 748,62 €
2 Trainees	9 942,49 €	0,00 €	9 942,49 €	2 386,63 €
3 CU and MA Travel costs	49 339,22 €	0,00 €	49 339,22 €	11 843,55 €
4 MC travel and meeting costs	20 468,39 €	0,00 €	20 468,40 €	4 913,30 €
5 CC meetings	2 269,90 €	0,00 €	2 269,90 €	544,87 €
6 ECP meetings	34 857,99 €	2 337,41 €	34 857,99 €	8 367,43 €
7 ESPON Internal Seminar	19 105,29 €	0,00 €	19 105,29 €	4 586,10 €
8 Rent (incl. Parking, cleaning, heating, insurances etc.)	63 573,17 €	0,00 €	63 573,17 €	15 260,32 €
9 Overheads, installation, postal services, telephone etc.	10 325,44 €	712,00 €	10 325,44 €	2 478,55 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>796 228,59 €</b>	<b>3 049,41 €</b>	<b>796 228,60 €</b>	<b>191 129,37 €</b>

The following table shows the TA budget lines 1 to 9 expenditures not certified for the year 2010 as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 1-9	Allocation 2010	Paid 2013	Paid 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
1 Staff	600 860,09 €	600 860,09 €	600 860,09 €	144 232,46 €
2 Trainees	14 683,82 €	14 683,82 €	14 683,82 €	3 524,75 €
3 CU and MA Travel costs	48 001,46 €	45 039,19 €	48 001,46 €	11 522,43 €
4 MC travel and meeting costs	28 076,43 €	1 669,20 €	28 076,43 €	6 739,56 €
5 CC meetings	779,61 €	0,00 €	779,61 €	187,14 €
6 ECP meetings	20 187,54 €	1 369,60 €	20 187,54 €	4 845,88 €
7 ESPON Internal Seminar	19 365,40 €	0,00 €	19 365,40 €	4 648,54 €
8 Rent (incl. Parking, cleaning, heating, insurances etc.)	60 557,69 €	0,00 €	60 557,69 €	14 536,47 €
9 Overheads, installation, postal services, telephone etc.	17 144,62 €	12 335,87 €	17 144,62 €	4 115,45 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>809 656,66 €</b>	<b>675 957,77 €</b>	<b>809 656,66 €</b>	<b>194 352,68 €</b>

The following table shows the TA budget lines 1 to 9 expenditures not certified for the year 2011 as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 1-9	Allocation 2011	Paid 2013	Paid 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
1 Staff	700 602,56 €	700 602,56 €	700 602,56 €	168 174,98 €
2 Trainees	13 999,98 €	0,00 €	13 999,98 €	3 360,60 €
3 CU and MA Travel costs	71 398,78 €	67 769,98 €	71 398,78 €	17 138,80 €
4 MC travel and meeting costs	26 945,63 €	2 333,80 €	26 945,63 €	6 468,12 €
5 CC meetings	31,43 €	0,00 €	31,43 €	7,54 €
6 ECP meetings	25 335,84 €	3 305,86 €	25 335,84 €	6 081,70 €
7 ESPON Internal Seminar	21 662,32 €	20 732,76 €	21 662,32 €	5 199,90 €
8 Rent (incl. Parking, cleaning, heating, insurances etc.)	62 000,00 €	62 000,00 €	62 000,00 €	14 882,69 €
9 Overheads, installation, postal services, telephone etc.	23 048,86 €	11 479,39 €	23 048,86 €	5 532,73 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>945 025,40 €</b>	<b>868 224,35 €</b>	<b>945 025,40 €</b>	<b>226 847,05 €</b>

The following table shows the TA budget lines 1 to 9 expenditures not certified for the year 2012 as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 1-9	Allocation 2012	Paid 2013	Paid 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
1 Staff	722 684,67 €	722 684,67 €	722 684,67 €	173 475,64 €
2 Trainees	13 233,32 €	13 233,32 €	13 233,32 €	3 176,57 €
3 CU and MA Travel costs	71 051,88 €	70 056,92 €	72 544,22 €	17 413,76 €
4 MC travel and meeting costs	25 104,52 €	18 939,08 €	33 461,24 €	8 032,15 €
5 CC meetings	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
6 ECP meetings	25 156,26 €	17 116,15 €	26 510,35 €	6 363,63 €
7 ESPON Internal Seminar	25 303,98 €	21 638,88 €	21 638,88 €	5 194,27 €
8 Rent (incl. Parking, cleaning, heating, insurances etc.)	62 000,00 €	61 996,20 €	61 996,20 €	14 881,77 €
9 Overheads, installation, postal services, telephone etc.	14 608,54 €	14 779,75 €	19 340,37 €	4 642,53 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>959 143,17 €</b>	<b>940 444,97 €</b>	<b>971 409,25 €</b>	<b>233 180,32 €</b>

The following table shows the TA budget lines 1 to 9 expenditures not certified for the year 2013 as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 1-9	Allocation 2013	Paid 2013	Paid 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
1 Staff	825 000,00 €	382 792,88 €	382 792,88 €	91 886,88 €
2 Trainees	16 000,00 €	3 359,15 €	3 359,15 €	806,34 €
3 CU and MA Travel costs	75 000,00 €	27 394,69 €	27 394,69 €	6 575,91 €
4 MC travel and meeting costs	33 000,00 €	10 403,56 €	10 403,56 €	2 497,31 €
5 CC meetings	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
6 ECP meetings	40 000,00 €	11 795,51 €	11 795,51 €	2 831,43 €
7 ESPON Internal Seminar	30 000,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
8 Rent (incl. Parking, cleaning, heating, insurances etc.)	62 000,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
9 Overheads, installation, postal services, telephone etc.	37 500,00 €	844,12 €	844,12 €	202,63 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 118 500,00 €</b>	<b>436 589,91 €</b>	<b>436 589,91 €</b>	<b>104 800,50 €</b>

The following table shows the TA budget lines 10 to 14 expenditures not certified for the period 2007-2013 as approved by the MC:

TA budget lines 10-14	Allocation 2007-2013	Paid 2013	Paid 2007-2013	ERDF (24%)
10 GoA - meetings and external contract	450 000,00 €	32 343,75 €	198 069,07 €	47 545,16 €
11 Financial Monitoring System and maintenance	195 500,00 €	14 490,00 €	158 571,95 €	38 064,14 €
12 Programme evaluation	138 480,00 €	0,00 €	63 480,00 €	15 237,95 €
13 Experts costs (legal etc.)	35 000,00 €	0,00 €	29 598,14 €	7 104,84 €
14 Communication Plan	466 000,00 €	89 242,07 €	141 197,94 €	33 893,62 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 284 980,00 €</b>	<b>136 075,82 €</b>	<b>590 917,10 €</b>	<b>141 845,71 €</b>

## **5. Information and publicity**

On 17 December 2012 the ESPON MC approved the Communication Action Plan for 2013 which was sent to the EC for information purposes. The Communication Plan has been amended in August 2013 following the decision of the MC to launch a new call for proposals for an additional TNA project to further boosting the outreach of ESPON results; the amended plan has been sent to the EC as well.

During 2013 the ESPON MA/CU worked in partnership with the ECPs, Member and Partner States to provide information and to promote the Programme widely. All actions had been implemented in the full respect of the information and publicity requirements of the ESPON Programme as well as of EU Requirements as stated in Articles 8 and 9 of Commission Regulation 1828/2006.

The key messages of the Communication Plan have been channeled through media and actions belonging to the Capitalisation Strategy, such as the ESPON website, newsletters, seminars and workshops targeting the Programme stakeholders.

In 2013 the ESPON 2013 Programme and its Communication Action Plan was mainly influenced by (1) the last Call for Proposals for Transnational Networking Activities by the ECPs; (2) the results of the last Calls for Proposals 2012 (3) the life time of the Programme.

As for (1), a new Call for Proposals for an additional TNA project further boosting the outreach of ESPON results was launched and an information event for potential beneficiaries organised.

Due to the new Call, the implementation period of ESPON's Communication Plan on Information and Publicity Measures will run till the end of 2014 and the final event aimed at presenting the achievement of the Programme and its major projects will be moved to 2014.

The dialogue with beneficiaries (Lead and Project Partners) continued to be a vital feature of ESPON's work. Events and meetings, such as Financial Managers Seminars, helped ensure that information was exchanged, in particular in terms of management and administration of projects as well as procedures related to the financial closure and winding-up of projects.

Dissemination of results from the contracted projects and at Programme level also fed into the Plan with messages based on evidence of results of the projects, in particular through giving visibility to projects. The ESPON CU kept supporting their dissemination activities by, for instance, spreading news and articles on their projects findings and events.

### ***5.1. Publicity and Communications Activity undertaken to December 2013***

Communication-Highlights 2013

- Implementation of the Communication Plan 2007-2013 of the ESPON 2013 Programme continued.
- One call for proposals to potential beneficiaries launched.
- One Annual Event - Info Days and Partner Café – for potential beneficiaries organised.

- Two events for contracted beneficiaries (Financial Managers seminar) organised to inform them on and assist with regulations as well as guidelines for good project management in order to maximise the quality of the project implementation.
- 82 ESPressON disseminated to the ESPON community and spread at national and local level by the ECP network;
- 6 press releases produced and disseminated to the press;
- 8 Newsletters disseminated to a list of more than 4.000 subscribers;
- 398.998 visits to the ESPON website;
- 809 Followers to ESPON Twitter;
- More than 730 people at the ten events organised.

### **5.1.1. Information tools**

#### **Programme Manual and Applicants' packages**

The applicants' package and the programme manual were updated and completed prior the opening of the call for proposals in April 2013. They were published at the ESPON website and disseminate during the Info Day event.

#### **Programme Managing Support System (PMSS)**

The Programme Management Supporting System is accessible for the main actors of the Programme, such as the MC, MA, CA, GoA and First Level Financial Controllers for their use.

The PMSS stores information about the submitted proposals and EoI as well as subsequently also information about the various priorities and measures on the Programme level that is updated regularly by the ESPON CU. The database serves as the main source for both quantitative and qualitative data on projects implementation and achievement.

The PMSS is equipped with the software OLAP, which provides analysis of data stored in the PMSS. OLAP enables the users to extract and analyze the different data according to their needs. The PMSS can be considered as a reliable monitoring and financial reporting system that can support the everyday management and monitoring of the operations.

During 2013 the PMSS has been updated with the proposal received in the last round of calls of the ESPON 2013 Programme.

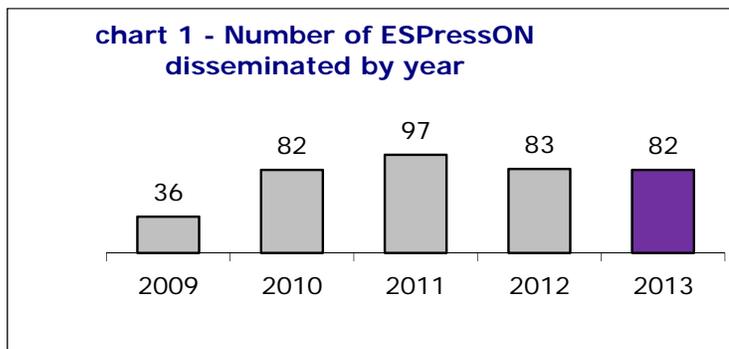
#### **Programme Bodies**

The programme bodies - MC Members and ECP network, - have been continuously involved in reaching potential beneficiaries, policy makers, other stakeholders and the citizens. The CU itself provided continuously information about the Programme and its activities.

In order to enable the flow of information between the various management units of the Programme, i.e. between the CU, MA, CA, AA, MC meetings / contacts between the different units and actors took place during 2013 and regular messages were sent out to keep the Programme's bodies informed.

During 2103 the CU drafted and disseminated more than 80 **ESPressON** targeting the ECPs and MC Members with a monthly average of seven messages per month (see chart 1 below) which covered among others the following topics:

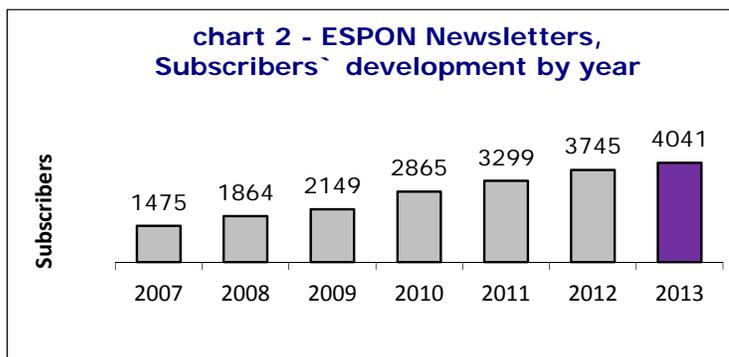
- ESPON events (Info Day on call for proposals and Partner Café, Financial Managers seminars, workshops, Open and Internal Seminars, Scientific Conference);
- ESPON at external events;
- Events organised by MC Members and ECP at national level;
- Events organised by Lead and Project Partners to promote the ESPON funded projects;
- Publications;
- Call for proposals (pre-announcement, announcement, output);
- Press Releases;
- Example on how to use ESPON (publications mentioning ESPON evidence);
- News from projects (new released projects and progress, evidence, reports);
- More (Videos, Calls for Tenders, List of beneficiaries, Vacancies, etc.).



### 5.1.2. Communication tools

#### ESPON Newsletter

During 2013 eight newsletters have been produced, published at the website and distributed to a mailing list with more than 4.000 recipients (see chart 2 below)



For each of the newsletters disseminated in the framework of the Capitalisation Strategy, the ESPON CU elaborated short articles targeting the launch of the call, the Info Day, the outputs of the Programme and so on. In addition, information on the timetable of events was provided.

The first newsletter of the year, dated January, focused on the activities planned in 2013 and provided information on the following issues:

- New Projects: Economic Crisis and Use of ESPON
- New Reports (Territorial Cooperation, Integrated Strategies, R&D, Metropolitan Regions.)
- News from the ECP Network (ENECON - Call for abstracts ‘Climate Change in Northern Territories - Sharing Experiences, Exploring New Methods and Assessing Socio-Economic Impacts’)
- ESPON in your country (Event “Landscape Policy for the Three Countries Park”, Maastricht 28 February 2013; event “Territorial imbalances and the role of EU and national policies in reducing them”, Bucharest, 28 November 2012).
- News from ETC Programmes.

The second issue, disseminated in February, provided information on the following topics:

- Publications 1. “Territorial Impact Assessment of Policies and EU Directives. A practical guidance for policymakers and practitioners based on contributions from ESPON projects and the European Commission”; 2. “Europe’s Neighbourhood from a Territorial Perspective”; 3. ESPON Project Overview – Final Version
- ESPON Database new version
- Map of the Month “Gender Imbalances in European Regions”
- Events 1. Financial Managers Seminar in Athens, 7 March 2013; 2. ESPON TANGO Project Workshop in Brussels, 20 March 2013; 3. ESPON Workshop "Stepping into the sea - New evidence on territorial development and the opportunities and risks for European seas and maritime regions" in Brussels, 15 May 2013
- New Projects 1. Territorial Potential: DeTeC - Detecting Territorial Potentials and Challenges; 2. Territorial Monitoring: ETMS - EU Territorial Monitoring System
- New Reports 1. Specific types of territories: Final Report of GEOSPECS - Geographic Specificities and Development Potentials in Europe; 2. Territorial Performance: Final Report of TPM - Territorial Performance Monitoring; 3. Globalisation: Final Report of TIGER - Territorial Impact of Globalization for Europe and its Regions; 4. Transnational Perspectives: Final Report of NORBA - Nordic-Baltic dialogues on Transnational Perspectives in Spatial Planning; 5. Rural Regions: Final Report of PURR - Potential of Rural Regions; 6. EU 2020 Strategy: Draft Final Report of SIESTA – Spatial indicators for a Europe 2020 Strategy Territorial Analysis; 7. Airports: Draft Final Report of ADES - Airports as Drivers of Economic Success in Peripheral Regions; 8. Poverty and Exclusion: Interim Report of TIPSE - Territorial Dimension of Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe; 9. Indicators for Territorial Cohesion: Interim Report of KITCASP - Key Indicators

for Territorial Cohesion and Spatial Planning; 10. Territorial Monitoring: Interim Report of BSR-TeMo - Territorial Monitoring for the Baltic Sea Region

The third one, dated May, included the following topics:

- ESPON Event Open Seminar “Territorial co-operation for growth and jobs” in Dublin, 13 and 14 June 2013
- Publication ESPON Evidence Brief 1 “European Territorial Cooperation”
- New ESPON tool: Online Map Finder
- New Project - Energy: NORTH SEA STAR - North Sea - Spreading Transnational Results
- New Reports – 1. Seas: Final Report of ESaTDOR - European Seas and Territorial Development, Opportunities and Risks; 2. Territorial scales: Draft Final Report of SCALES - Breakdown and capitalisation of ESPON results on different scales; 3. Green economy: Interim Report of GREECO - Territorial Potential for a Greener Economy; 4. Mapping Tool: Interim Report of RIMAP - ESPON Online Mapping Tool and video; 5. Database: First Interim Report of ESPON Database 2013 Phase II (2011-2014), Multi Dimensional Database Design and Development (M4D)
- Use of ESPON: Finnish publication ‘ESPON shows results’
- Call for papers on EU cohesion policy

The forth one, disseminated in July, provided the following information:

- Publication ‘Second ESPON Synthesis Report - Territorial insight: Where to focus what types of investments’
- Publication ‘ESPON ATLAS - Territorial Dimensions of the Europe 2020 Strategy’
- Publication ‘Territorial Dynamics in Europe: Natural Hazards and Climate Change in European Regions’
- ESPON Map of the Month - “Hot Spots” of land-sea interactions
- ESPON whiteboard videos introducing ESPON Tools
- Future Events (1) Supporting Lead and Project Partners: ESPON Financial Managers Seminar in London, 19 July 2013; (2) ESPON Scientific Conference in Luxembourg, 12-13 September 2013, *Call for Papers: 40 abstract submitted by ESPON Lead and Project Partners and Representatives of AESOP, ECTP-CEU, ERSA, EUGEO, RSA*
- Outcome of Past Event - ESPON Open Seminar “Territorial Cooperation for growth and jobs” in Dublin 13-14 June 2013
- New Reports – Final (Airports: ADES - Airports as Drivers of Economic Success in Peripheral Regions; R&D: AMCER- Advanced Monitoring and Coordination of EU R&D Policies at Regional Level; Rural migration: SEMIGRA - Selective Migration and Unbalanced Sex Ratio in Rural Regions; Metropolitan Regions: BEST METROPOLISES - Best Development Conditions in European Metropolises: Paris, Berlin and Warsaw); Draft Final (Territorial governance: SMART-IST - Smart Institutions for Territorial Development; Services of general interest: SeGI - Indicators and Perspectives for Services of General Interest in Territorial Cohesion and Development); Interim (Economic Crisis: ECR2 - Economic Crisis: Resilience

of Regions; Growth Poles: GROSEE - Growth Poles in South-East Europe; Scenarios Second Interim Report ET2050 - Territorial Scenarios and Visions for Europe; Landscape: LP3LP - Landscape Policy for the 3 Countries Park); Inception (Energy: NSS - NORTH SEA STAR, North Sea - Spreading Transnational Results).

The fifth one, dated July, provided the following information:

- Opening of the registrations for the ESPON Scientific Conference "Science in support of European Territorial Development and Cohesion"
- ESPON at the OPEN DAYS 2013, 7-10 October 2013 (ESPON Workshop "How to make regions and cities more resilient to economic crisis" Tuesday 8 October 2013, 11h15 – 13h00; Joint Workshop "More jobs, better cities and regions: how can cities and regions best create and support more and better jobs? Lessons from inter-regional cooperation" Tuesday 8 October 2013, 14h30 – 17h00; Speech at the Workshop "Territorial Impact Assessment: a tool for better lawmaking and territorial cohesion" Wednesday 9 October 2013, 11h15 - 13h00; ESPON at the Exhibition "100 EUrban solutions" 7-10 October 2013).
- ESPON Tools - Data Navigator online
- News from Projects (1) ESPON AMCER supports the next programming period for Structural Funds and contributes to the regional Research & Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategies; (2) Library on Territorial Development - USESPON Project
- New Report, Inception Report of Urban benchmarking: CityBench - ESPON CityBench for benchmarking European Urban Zones.

The sixth one, dated August, provided the following information:

- Publication 'Territorial Observation No. 8 Territorial Dynamics in Europe - Regions Integrating Land and Sea'
- News from Projects (1) North Sea STAR Workshop "Energy and the North Sea Region" TU Delft, Netherlands, 16 September 2013; (2) TANGO Final Policy Seminar Brussels, 29 October 2013
- New Reports (1) ATLAS: Interim Report of ESPON Atlas on European Territorial Structures and Dynamics; (2) ESPON Annual Report 2012
- Calls for Tender (1) "ESPON Tools (2011-2014) - TIA Web application"; (2) "ESPON Update of Maps (2011-2014) - Travel time matrices on road, rail, air, and multimodal".
- Reminder Events (1) ESPON Scientific Conference "Science in support of European Territorial Development and Cohesion" Luxembourg, 12-13 September 2013; (2) ESPON at the OPEN DAYS 2013 Brussels, 7-10 October 2013

The seventh one, dated September, provided the following information:

- Workshop "Territorial Dimensions of the Europe 2020 Strategy" in Brussels, 30 September 2013
- New Reports 1) Cross-border development: Final Report of ULYSSES - Using applied research results from ESPON as a yardstick for cross-border spatial development planning; 2) Territorial governance: Final Report of SMART-IST, Smart Institutions for Territorial Development.

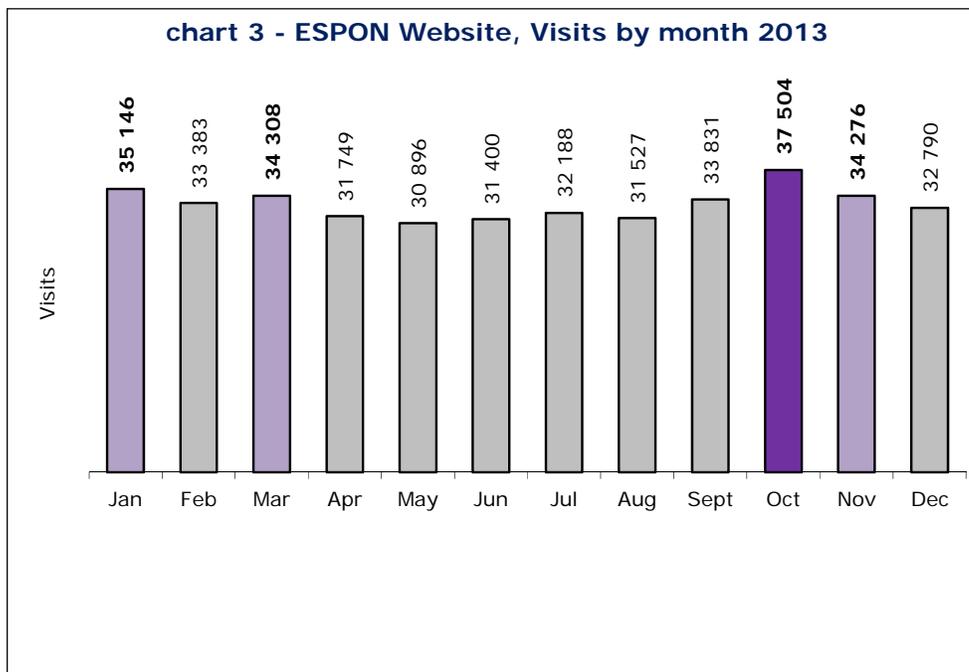
- Vacancies at the ESPON CU
- Reminder Event - ESPON at the OPEN DAYS 2013 Brussels, 7-10 October 2013

The eighth one, dated October, introduced the progress towards a renewed ESPON for the period 2014 -2020 and provided the following information:

- Workshop in Brussels, 27 November 2013 “Gateway cities and regions - New evidence on different types of gateways and their future role in territorial policies”
- Cohesion policy 2014-2020 - ESPON Territorial Evidence Packs for the development and implementation of future programmes.
- Articles (1) “Economic Crisis and the Structural Funds”; (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”.
- Use of ESPON (1) “European perspectives on regions and regional development in Norway – in the light of ESPON”; (2) “Territorial dimension of development: Poland from the perspective of the ESPON”.
- New Reports (1) Governance: Draft Final Report of TANGO; (2) Neighbour Regions: Interim Report of ITAN; (3) Energy: Interim Report of NSS - NORTH SEA STAR.
- ESPON in Your Country (1) UK - USESPON final conference “Promoting local growth”, London, 15 November 2013; (2) BE - ESPON TOWN Project Workshop “New perspective on towns in Europe: from analysis to policy agenda”, Leuven, 29 November 2013.
- Outcome of Past Events (1) ESPON Workshop “Territorial Vision for Europe towards 2050”; (2) ESPON at the OPEN DAYS 2013; (3) ESPON Scientific Conference "Science in support of European Territorial Development and Cohesion".
- Other News - Have a say on Europe 2020! - CoR launches consultation on EU growth.

### **ESPON Website**

The importance of ESPON’s website continued to increase in 2013, with visits increasing by more than 20% compared to 2011. In 2013 398.998 visits were counted, with the highest number of visits in October, January, March and November as the table below shows.



During 2013 the CU has made regular updating and improvement of the ESPON website. Also, in keeping with Commission Regulation 1828/2006 Article 7(2) (d), the list of beneficiaries, the names of the operations and the amount of public funding allocated to the operations has been updated.

Over the course of 2013, the website has been constantly filled with information, data, news on e.g. ongoing activities and calls, new publications or improved operations including:

Publication of news items and a number of new web pages;

Adaptation of website about the main activities of the year, including reports from projects, events, calls for proposals, calls for tenders as well as facts and figures about the programme and its implementation.

### **ESPON Intranet**

During 2013 no improvements and changes have been carried out in the ESPON Intranet.

### **Media**

The main objective of the media activities in 2013 was to raise awareness of the ESPON 2013 Programme, to communicate the findings and increase the knowledge about the Programme, to the benefit of policy makers, stakeholders, and potential beneficiaries as well as the general public.

Throughout the course of the year **six Press Releases** were disseminated as follows:

- Published online at the ESPON website;
- Directly sent out to a list of journalists;
- Directly sent out to the ECP network which then disseminated the press release at national level.

This task was realised in the framework of the Capitalisation Activities 2013.

The press releases covered the following topics:

- *March, press release* “**Commissioner Hahn and Minister Schank at the inauguration of the ESPON’s new premises.** On 12 March, at the inauguration of ESPON’s new premises, Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn and the delegated Minister for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure of Luxembourg, Marco Schank responsible as Managing Authority for the ESPON Programme, underlined the importance and usefulness of ESPON, the European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion”.

- *May, article* “Article "Maritime policy and transnational cooperation in the focus of workshop discussions"

With its workshop “Stepping into the Sea – New evidence on territorial development and the opportunities and risks for European seas and maritime regions” ESPON offered a crossing through the six European seas, thereby revealing their crucial role for growth and jobs and for the achievement of territorial cohesion. The workshop aimed at highlighting the usability of the ESPON ESaTDOR project results and at discussing related topics that are relevant for the EU political agenda.

In addition to a series of presentations by representatives of DG Mare, national and transnational stakeholders as well as the Lead Partner of the ESaTDOR project, the workshop featured two rounds of open discussions that were kicked-off by short statements of different stakeholders. During the open discussions, policy-makers and stakeholders exchanged their views about the necessary synergies to be achieved between land and sea management, maritime spatial planning, and the need of conciliating the economic potential and the environmental protection of the European seas. More reading

- *May, press release* “**Recovering from the crisis: Evidence-based policy making for growth and jobs.** Participants at the ESPON Open Seminar on “Territorial co-operation for growth and jobs”, organised in cooperation with the Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, will discuss in Dublin on 13 and 14 June 2013 new approaches for recovery and resilience and hear the experiences of Territorial Co-operation Programmes in responding to the effects of the economic crisis”.

- *July, article* “**Recovery and resilience in the spotlight of the ESPON Open Seminar 2013.** The ESPON Programme, in collaboration with the Irish Presidency of the European Union, held its annual Open Seminar on the 13th and 14th of June in the Dublin Castle. The event, which brought together policy-makers, members of the ESPON Monitoring Committee, Contact Points, Project Partners and a variety of stakeholders, focused on the role of Territorial Cooperation towards the recovery of the current crisis as well as its potential to building a more resilient European Union. Read the article”.

- *October, article* “**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”.

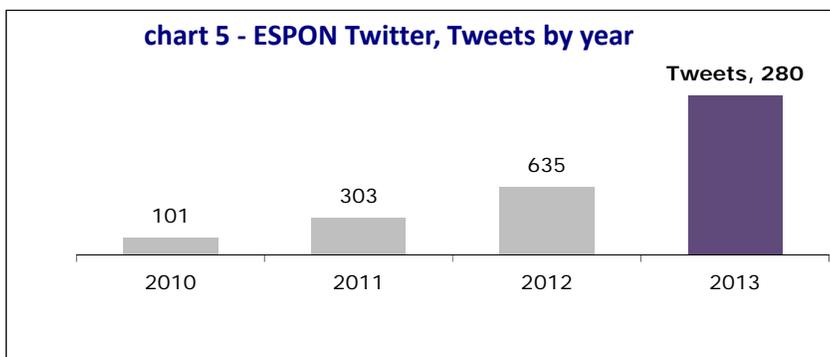
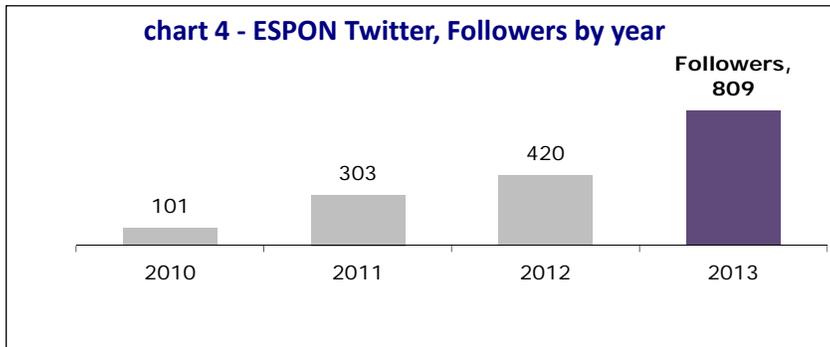
- *October, article* “The ESPON Atlas - Territorial Dimensions of the EU 2020 Strategy- proved to be highly relevant for European regions wanting to benchmark themselves in relation to the growth targets set. With the publication of the Atlas on the EU 2020 Strategy in June 2013, ESPON has responded to the significant demand of policy makers for evidence on the territorial dimension of the Strategy. To support the use of the 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 in Bruxelles 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”.

### Social media

In 2010, in line with the Capitalisation Strategy, the CU started the implementation of the Web 2.0 environment by making use of the social media tools Twitter, LinkedIn, RSS feed, Netvibes and Delicious.

The ESPON Twitter account released information on a regular basis via tweets. The ESPON LinkedIn page provided users with some valuable information about the programme. RSS feed, Netvibes and Delicious helped users to keep up to date with and bookmark ESPON.

As for Twitter, the accumulative figures since September 2010 are as follows:



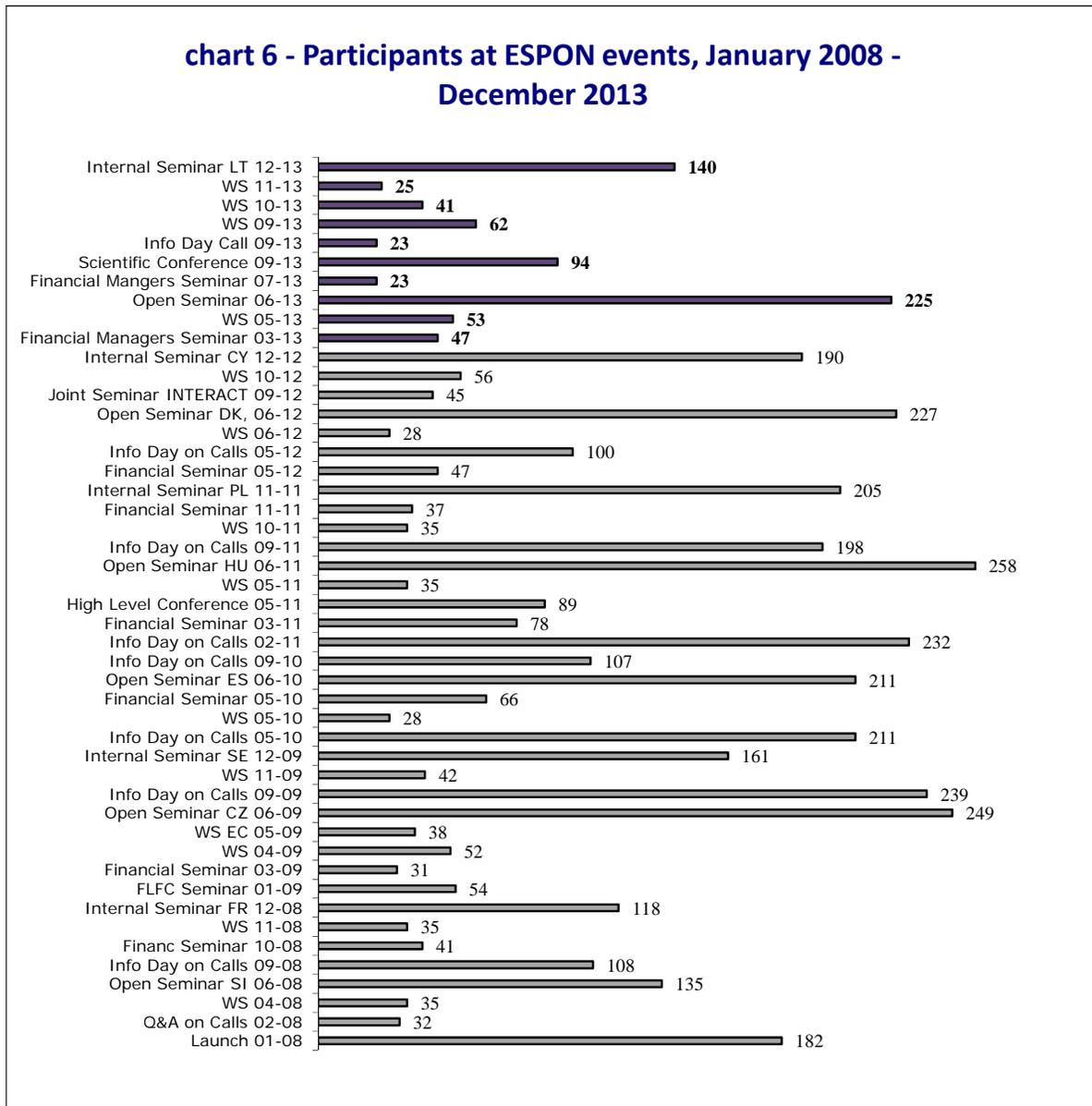
### 5.1.3. Targeted activities and actions/Events

Since the launch of the ESPON 2013 Programme, 4,768 people participated at 47 events organised by the CU with 733 people at the ten events in 2013 as chart 6 shows.

As for the events organised within the Communication Plan, 96 participants were counted at three events:

- 47 participants at the Financial Manager seminar in March;
- 23 participants at the Financial Manager seminar in July;
- 23 participants at the Info Day on calls in September.

**chart 6 - Participants at ESPON events, January 2008 - December 2013**



## Financial Manager Seminars



The CU organised two seminars on management and administration of projects.

The eight Financial Managers Seminar took place on 7 March 2013 in Athens, Greece, and targeted Lead and Project Partners of approved projects under the calls that ended in June 2012. The Seminar was organised in cooperation with Greek ECP, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences of Athens

The purpose of the event was to inform the Financial Managers of the Lead and Project Partners and to assist the centralized and decentralized First Level Controllers of the approved ESPON 2013 Projects. The ESPON CU presented eligibility rules, contracting, reporting and monitoring procedures, as well as administrative, legal and practical matters of relevance concerning project coordination and management. The seminar gave special attention to the procedures in relation to project financial closure and winding-up.

Altogether 47 people attended the event. Participants had the opportunity to network, to share experience with peers and get feedback.

The de-commitment situation for 2013 represented a challenge considering that the level of expenditure to be certified was high in relation to the rhythm of absorption and reporting of the projects. Therefore, beside the above mentioned standard financial manager seminar, the MA and the ESPON CU organized a ‘targeted financial manager seminar’ with its specific focus on supporting the LPs with the finalization and submission of their pending progress reports in order to avoid the risks of financial de-commitment.

The seminar gave practical support to Lead and Project Partners by problem solving, pre-checking existing reporting documents and finalization of delayed progress reports.

The event which was organized in cooperation with the Central Approbation Body of the United Kingdom, Department for Communities and Local Government on 19 July 2013 in London proved to be useful and the results were tangible with a series of reports de-blocked and submitted after the meeting. Several projects managed to catch up with the delays in their financial reporting and with the submission of the pending reports many projects have been closed from the financial point of view in the course of 2013. Altogether 23 people attended the event.

### **Call for Proposals (22 August – 18 October 2013)**

At its meeting in June 2013 the MC decided to implement a new call for proposals for an additional TNA project to further boosting the outreach of ESPON results.

### **Annual Event: Info Day on Call for Proposals in Luxembourg, 11 September 2013**

ESPON organize one major information activity, an ESPON Info Day on the newly decided Call for Proposals including a Q&A session, to present the new funding opportunities and the conditions for applying.

The ESPON Info Day aimed at (1) presenting the new funding opportunities and the conditions for applying; (2) informing and assisting potential beneficiaries in preparing

proposals for the Call; (3) networking and finding partners for building proposals. Topics discussed include:

- General presentation of the needs for further capitalization by the ECPs
- Presentation of the specific objectives, compulsory activities and requirements of the Call for Proposals
- Explanation of the specific application procedure, eligibility and evaluation criteria

23 people representing the ECPs from 14 countries attended the event.

### **Participation at external events**

The ESPON CU and the MA participated at different major conferences/events as well as at events organised by beneficiaries in order to market and present the ESPON 2013 Programme, the available opportunities and its progress in the implementation, including the following:

- February - European Territorial Cooperation 2014-2020 in Bruxelles – BE
- March - TANGO Workshop, Bruxelles – BE
- March – Eutostat “GISCO Meeting”, Luxembourg –LU
- April - ESPONTrain Final Conference in Athens – GR
- April - SIESTA Final Conference in Santiago de Compostela – ES
- April - Best Metropolises Conference in Warsaw – PL
- April - BSR-TeMo Workshop in Stockholm – SE
- June - AMCER Conference in Bruxelles - BE
- July - EESC Maritime Action Plan Conference in Bruxelles - BE
- August - Seminar Municipalities & Regions in Global World in Copenhagen – DK
- September - EUGEO 2013 Congress in Rome – IT
- September - METREX Conference in Oslo – NO
- September - North Sea Star workshop in Delft – NL
- October - KITCASP Final Seminar in Glasgow – UK
- October – Workshop on Regional Statistics at EUROSTAT – LU
- November - TOWN Workshop in Leuven – BE
- November - Plan4business Workshop in Bruxelles – BE
- December - Pan-European Programmes in Bratislava – SK

### **Flying the EU flag**



For one week, starting 9th May, the MA flew the flag of the EU in front of its premises.

### **List of beneficiaries**

The list of beneficiaries has been published on the website of the Programme since 2008, together with the names of the operations and the amount of public funding allocated to each single operation. The list has been updated and published periodically after each binding decision of the MC.

### **Promotional material**

The calls for tenders aiming at producing new promotion materials (bags, umbrellas, pens, memory keys) and exhibition stands had been delayed due to a lack of resources. At its meeting in December, the MC decided to post-pone the tenders to 2014 and to limit the items to pens and memory keys.

### **Evaluation**

In 2013 ESPON has increased its outreach as demonstrated by some indicators such as the visits to the website, subscribers to the newsletter, social media followers, participants at events and so on.