



Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

# Climate neutral territories

Proposal for an ESPON 2030 Programme Thematic Action Plan

30 November 2021

# Climate neutral territories

**ambition**



To further develop the knowledge base on the **territorial patterns for a green transition** in order to encourage and stimulate European territories to transition towards climate neutrality by 2050

**focus**



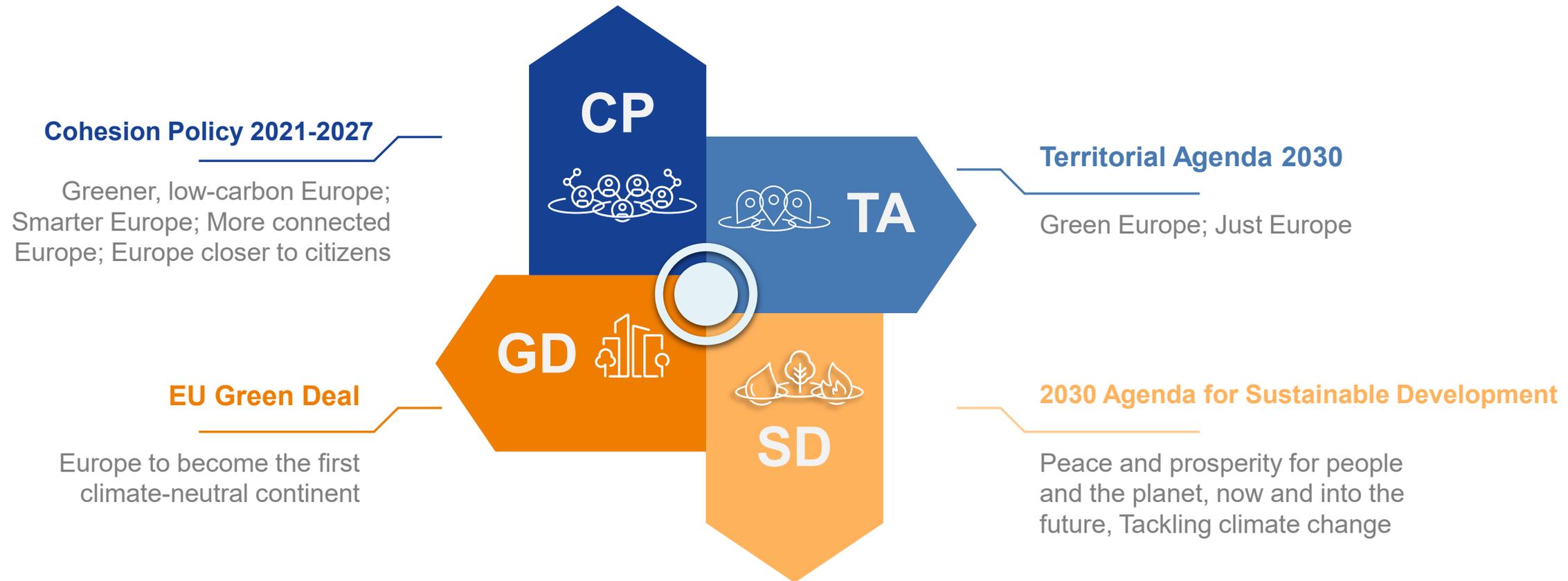
**Territories with additional challenges**, such as economic development, accessibility or social disparities.

**policy**



**Strengthening skills and capacities of policy makers** to further integrate carbon neutral territories in programming and policy making processes.

# Policy context relevant for climate neutral territories



# The challenges, trends and drivers behind



*challenges*

**Challenges that hinder a transition towards climate neutral territories are mostly systemic in nature and cannot be overcome by individual organisations alone.**

*drivers*

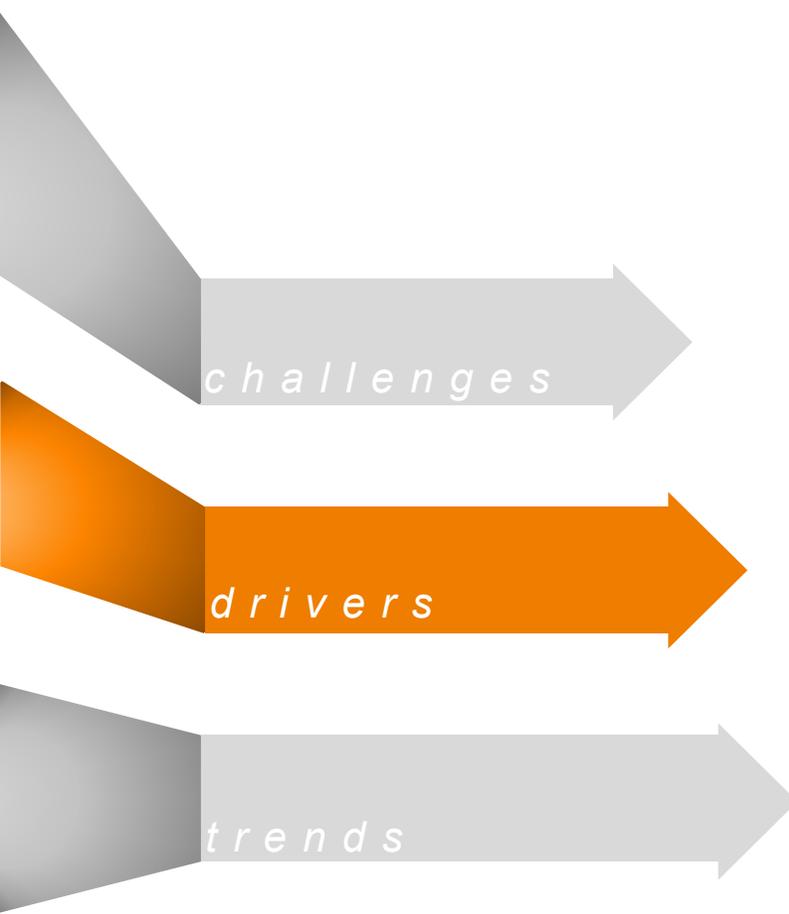
A green transition has a highly increased use of resources that often come from outside Europe.

*trends*

A green digital transition is not always very green.

Overcoming the barriers to increase the use of carbon sinks.

# The challenges, trends and drivers behind



*challenges*

**Economic activity is a strong driver of energy consumption in all end-use sectors.**

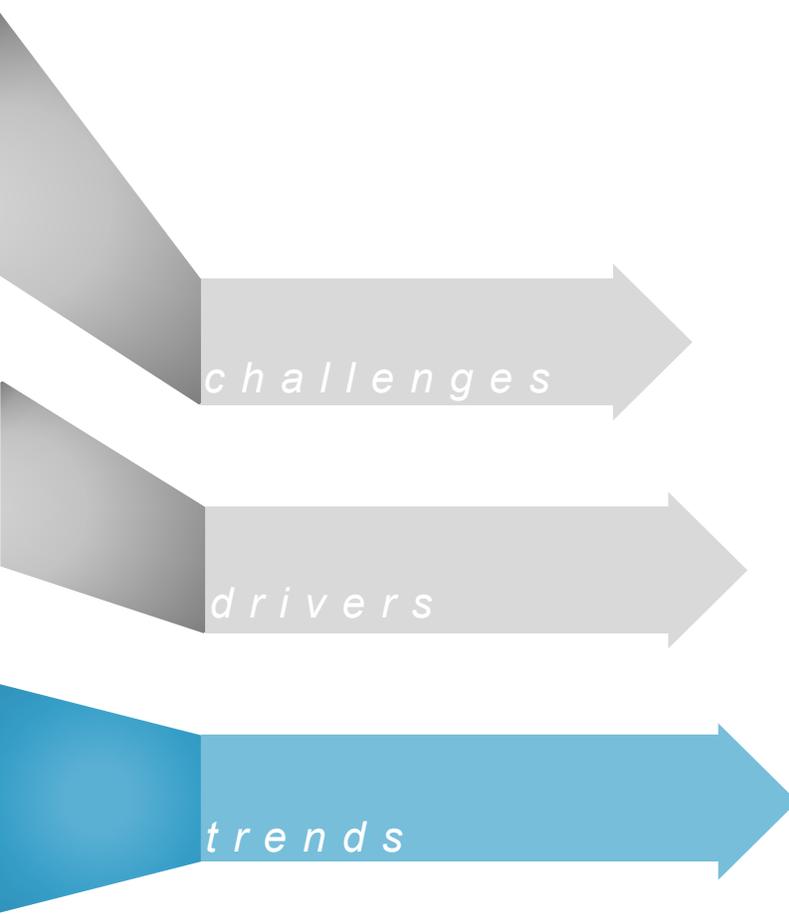
Decoupling economic growth from resource use.

Involving citizens in the process, because their well-being and quality of life are affected.

Involving the private level in the process.

*trends*

# The challenges, trends and drivers behind



*challenges*

*drivers*

*trends*

**Building a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation is key to understanding how a strategy delivers clear benefits to a region.**

For (renewable) energy consumption and production, ecosystem services, biodiversity, and natural resources, time series of comparable sub-national data (at the long-term) are missing.

Climate neutral policies and targets should be considered from a wider perspective.

# Possible inquiries about **policy needs**

01

**Which are the main challenges and constraints** to incorporate climate neutral strategies in your territorial development strategies?

02

**What are the knowledge gaps** that prevent policy makers from delivering a more effective policy response?

03

**What are the reasons for such knowledge gaps?** Do they result from lack of understanding territorial development trends and challenges? Is there a lack of access to good practices from similar places in Europe?

04

**How can policy influence behaviour patterns** towards more climate neutrality?

05

**What would be your specific evidence and knowledge needs** for getting better capacity in policymaking that ESPON could address?

X

.....?

# Research support



What is the stock of available scientific evidence matching the topical profile of climate neutral territories? Is this evidence up-to-date?



What is the state of art in research work on climate neutrality? What is the territorial focus and coverage? Is it based on solid data and methodologies?



What are the current discourse questions and debatable aspects that might be further pursued by ESPON?



Are there distinct evidence gaps on climate neutrality that ESPON could fill? With what instruments? How could this complement research done by others?

# Connect with us!

For more information,  
please check our website:  
<https://www.espon.eu/>





Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

// **Thank you**

[marjan.vanherwijnen@espon.eu](mailto:marjan.vanherwijnen@espon.eu)