

## **SPECIFICATION**

### **ESPON Applied Research Project 2013/1/22**

#### **European Neighbour Regions (2012 – 2014)**

##### ***(o) Territorial challenges relevant for ESPON 2013 projects***

The development of the European territory is facing several ongoing mega trends and impacts of policies:

- The integration of the EU in global economic competition is accelerating, offering more options for regions and larger territories in deciding on their development path as development is no longer a zero sum game for Europe.
- Interaction is growing between the EU territory and the surrounding neighbour countries as well as the other parts of the world, becoming apparent by e.g. migration pressure on more developed countries, which are themselves confronted with population decline and by access to and investment in new markets.
- Market forces and the evolution of society in general are supporting a geographical concentration of activities. The current economic downturn is having asymmetrical impacts on regions and cities, often mostly related to their national context and more local economic base.
- The ongoing demographic change with an ageing European population and migration is affecting the regions differently and boosts the competition for skilled labour.
- The occurrence and magnitude of hazards is increasing due to climate change while different parts of Europe experience different types of hazards.
- Increasing energy prices and the emergence of a new energy paradigm have significant territorial impacts, some regions being more affected than others, some of which have particular potential for production of renewable energy sources.
- The enlargement of the EU to 27 Member States, and soon with additional countries, presents an unprecedented challenge for the competitiveness and internal cohesion of the Union.

ESPON results have revealed that territorial capital and opportunities for development are inherent in the regional diversity that is a characteristic of Europe. Consequently, different types of territories are endowed with diverse combinations of resources, putting them into different positions for contributing to the achievement of the Europe 2020 Strategy as well

as to EU Cohesion Policy. Territorial diversity, particularly in the economic base, implies the need for tailor-made regional strategies building on endogenous potentials and synergies through cooperation in order for regions, cities and larger territories to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The ESPON 2006 Programme provided integrated analysis and long term spatial scenarios which enriched the European policy debate and knowledge base. The results and observations produced by ESPON on territorial structures, trends, perspectives and assessment of EU policy impacts had not been fully evident before and supported a better understanding of the European dimension of territorial dynamics. Therefore, interest is growing among policy makers and practitioners for the information, knowledge and understanding ESPON can offer.

The ESPON 2013 Programme shall bring this knowledge base one step further by carrying out applied research and targeted analyses, indicator development and data collection, capitalisation events presenting results, etc. All these actions will be related to an improved understanding of territorial structures, development trends, perspectives and policy impacts.

The European-wide evidence provided by the ESPON 2007-2013 Programme will potentially benefit stakeholders all over Europe at all levels. Policy makers dealing with territorial development require sound evidence and comparable regionalised information as well as medium and long-term development perspectives in order to draw up sustainable and efficient integrated policy responses for their territories.

All in all, the European process moves towards a more integrated approach to policy making which makes the territorial dimension important for policy makers. The aim of territorial cohesion proposed by the Commission supports this approach by taking the territory as an element in the framework for policy making. Due to its provision of evidence based on analyses of territorial units the ESPON 2013 Programme is of strategic importance for the European policy development and cooperation.

By further extending and deepening the existing knowledge and indicators, the ESPON 2013 Programme will play a strategic role in supporting the policy process of the current period 2007-2013, namely by contributing to the development of Cohesion Policy.

### ***(i) General objectives of applied research projects under Priority 1***

The general objectives of applied research projects within the ESPON 2013 Programme are the following:

- Building new evidence based on comparable information about European regions and cities, including information on dynamics and flows, and covering the entire territory of EU 27, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.
- Addressing major territorial challenges and political priorities providing comparable information covering the entire European territory, its regions and cities.
- Providing comparable regionalised information and possible policy options for making use of opportunities inherent in territorial structures; anticipating and counter balancing negative trends and structures, taking into account the diversity of

the ESPON territory and considering institutional, instrumental and procedural aspects.

- Identifying types of territories, regions and cities that share common development challenges and are affected most (positively or negatively) by the identified structures, trends, perspectives and/or policy impacts.
- Contributing to the further identification of structures within the EU territory that represent options for exploring comparative advantages and provide synergy through territorial cooperation arrangements, involving regions and/or cities.
- Contributing to the improvement of the scientific platform for European applied territorial research by refining existing concepts, methodologies, indicators, typologies, European maps and models and by defining new ones.
- Providing the knowledge and competence capabilities needed to ensure scientifically validated results of the applied territorial research with the support of Sounding Boards<sup>1</sup>.
- Supporting the use of and dissemination of results to an audience of policy makers, practitioners, scientist and experts.

This project shall contribute to these general objectives during its implementation, and in doing so make best use of existing ESPON results, new results in other ESPON projects as well as other research results and relevant studies.

## ***(ii) Relation of this project to the ESPON 2013 Programme***

The priorities describing the work-programme of the ESPON 2013 Programme are structured in four strands:

### **a) Applied research on territorial development, competitiveness and cohesion: Evidence on European territorial trends, perspectives and policy impacts**

The applied research projects will create information and evidence on territorial challenges and opportunities for success for the development of regions. Cross thematic applied research will be a major activity integrating existing thematic analysis and adding future analysis of new themes. Territorial impact studies of EU policies will be another focus under this priority.

### **b) Targeted analysis based on user demand: European perspective to development of different types of territories**

This priority responds to a clear demand of practitioners for user and demand driven actions within the ESPON 2013 Programme. By convening an analytical process where ESPON findings are integrated with more detailed information and practical

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<sup>1</sup> For each applied research project a Sounding Board will be set up, accompanying the project throughout its life cycle and giving advice to the TPG on both, scientific issues as well as relevance for policy makers. Sounding Boards will normally be made up of one scientist and one practitioner. Their task will consist of assessing project proposals, giving continuous feedback to TPGs and commenting on their reports.

know-how, new understanding of future development opportunities and challenges may arise, which could be transformed into projects and actions.

c) **Scientific platform and tools: Territorial indicators and data, analytical tools and scientific support**

The scientific platform and analytical tools built up within the ESPON 2006 Programme will be maintained and further expanded. New actions shall be undertaken to develop current achievements and make use of the indicators, data and tools.

d) **Capitalisation, ownership and participation: Capacity building, dialogue and networking**

Under this priority, actions are foreseen that will be aiming at making the evidence and knowledge developed operational through measures raising awareness and involving stakeholders in the results and their practical use.

This project belongs to the first priority and holds a key position in developing evidence and awareness on EU neighbour regions. The project builds further on knowledge developed by former and other ongoing ESPON projects. Profound knowledge on EU neighbour regions is vital for 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.

Therefore a strong coordination and linkage with other ongoing ESPON projects is crucial for achieving comprehensive results. A close cooperation with the Sounding Board set up for following and advising the project and the Coordination Unit shall as well be established as part of the project implementation.

***(iii) Thematic scope and policy context***

The consideration of the territory beyond the EU borders seems to be obvious due to the increasingly global economy which the EU is encountering and challenges that affect territories across borders as for example climate change. Cities and regions of the ESPON territory and their neighbouring regions are important players in this respect that need territorial evidence supporting cooperation activities, as the set-up of networks creates opportunities to promote economic and social integration through a dialogue on common interests and strategic options.

Cohesion Policy is promoting coherent cross-border and macro-regional actions in order to encourage economic activities across internal and external EU borders and to reduce obstacles for territorial development. In addition the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) provides a common framework to support stability, security and well being for all partners concerned, reinforcing existing forms of regional and sub-regional cooperation. For financing these projects and supporting the priorities, the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) was set-up.

The long-term development perspective of the European territory needs to take into account the fact that the governments of EU Member States, coming together in the European Council, have agreed to extend the EU perspective in the enlargement process by identifying candidate and potential candidate countries. In order to strengthen Europe's competitiveness and to enhance its strategic linkages to these regions a deeper understanding is required of the territorial development, of structures, trends, perspectives and policy impacts. In this respect is the Europe 2020 strategy (2010) seen to be of relevance to EU candidate countries and the EU neighbourhood to elaborate reform efforts.

The European Commission highlights in its Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion (2010), that for EU external border regions, there is a challenge of expanding and improving basic infrastructure, not just cross border transport but also communication links. Other challenges are identified like higher unemployment rates, limited access to basic services and a GDP per head that accounts just to 65% of the EU average.

The EU ministers responsible for territorial development and planning took reference to the need to deepen and widen the EU integration at external borders in the framework of the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 (2011), which is part of the policy framework for this project. In the document cohesion is seen as a crucial element to overcome disparities and differences in legal, social and political systems in these territories. The integration of territories through territorial cooperation is highlighted as an important factor to foster global competitiveness as it can create a critical mass for development.

The European Commission considers cooperation with regional partners in the Mediterranean area, south-east Europe and north-east Europe to be an important political objective, taking into account that the southern and eastern neighbourhood of the EU differ strongly. On one side increasingly close economic relations can be identified between the EU and eastern neighbours. On the other side the southern neighbours, with whom the EU territory also has substantial historical, linguistic and trading ties, are passing right now a political upheaval. Several neighbourhood programmes, transnational strategies and regional partnerships are implemented. Of importance are also numerous spontaneous cooperation activities such as Euroregions and twin city networks. The OECD published several reports providing in-depth knowledge on specific topics for some of these regions and concerned countries.

- For the Mediterranean area the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) has been set-up in 2008 replacing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED). It is supporting stability, economic transition and prosperity for the regions by liberalising trade in goods, services and investments. Partnerships on sustainable development, as for example urban and regional building projects, play an important role in these regions. Also other territorial cooperation programmes are of importance, such as the ENPI CBCMED – cross-border cooperation ‘Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme’ which aims at reinforcing cooperation between the EU and partner countries regions placed along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.
- The south-east EU neighbourhood is covering non-EU Member States included in the Danube Region. In the EU and non-EU part of this region, in which 115 million people

are living, several challenges can be identified regarding environmental aspects as well as insufficient transport and energy connections. Aiming at a further development of the economic potential of these regions the EU Strategy for the Danube Region has been proposed by the Commission in 2010 in which non-EU Member States are intended to play a proactive role.

- Also in the relationship with the neighbours to the north-east the macro-regional framework is important for effective realisation of cooperation activities. The Baltic Sea Region including Russia and Belarus actually can be seen as a successful implementation of this approach in which links between different policies and stakeholders were strengthened. Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea (VASAB) jointly formulated a spatial development concept for their member states bordering the Baltic Sea and the cooperation of the Visegrad Group countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia) + Romania and Bulgaria (also named V4+2 countries) have prepared a common spatial development document<sup>2</sup> and aim to formulate a common spatial development strategy in European context.
- The EU neighbourhood relations to the west are extended for example by the Northern Periphery Programme 2007-2013 which covers parts of EU Member States of Finland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom and Sweden and non-EU Member States Norway, Iceland, Faroe Islands and Greenland. It aims to help peripheral and remote communities on the northern margins of Europe to develop their economic, social and environmental potential.
- Also the Northern Dimension (ND) policy might be mentioned which has the main policy objectives to provide a common framework for the promotion of dialogue and concrete cooperation in Northern Europe. This common policy is shared by four equal partners: the EU, Norway, Iceland and the Russian Federation. A broad geographic area is covered by this policy, from the European Arctic and Sub-Arctic to the southern shores of the Baltic Sea, countries in the vicinity and from north-west Russia in the east, to Iceland and Greenland in the west.

The topics of demography, accessibility to markets and stability for both sides of the border are of high importance for all the above mentioned regions. In order to address certain issues that are arising at the enlarged EU's external borders, more knowledge and recommendations on regional development, cooperation and integration as well as the different territorial dynamics of the EU neighbouring territory need to be developed.

#### *Scope of the project*

This project shall provide necessary territorial evidence highlighting topics of interest for cooperation activities with neighbouring regions and their cities that can be picked-up in the territorial agenda of ESPON countries.

Potentials related to the aims of the Europe 2020 Strategy shall be identified, taking into account the contribution of the EU Cohesion Policy, for EU Member States and their neighbouring regions, in order to better understand (1) territorial interactions with

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<sup>2</sup> Available at: <http://www.mmr.cz/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=1c473c0d-7bba-44bf-8b2c-14f4b3ac886c>.

neighbourhood areas and (2) potential joint development opportunities for cooperation. Aiming at the support of the recent policy agenda additional knowledge is especially needed for the latter taking into account that territorial cooperation strategies need to be integrated to development strategies on different scales.

The project should therefore strive for a better understanding with regard to the following key policy question for which it is expected to provide supporting knowledge and evidence:

- **What territorial dynamics and respective changes over time can be identified between cities and regions of the ESPON territory and their neighbourhood?**
  - How can the structures and dynamics of the ESPON neighbourhood and territorial flows between the ESPON territory and its neighbourhood be described?
  - Which territorial characteristics of the ESPON territory have an impact on the territorial development of and cohesion with the neighbouring regions and their cities?
  - How are territorial flows likely to change and what impact on the territorial development might become apparent?
  - How and where can existing territorial structures, dynamics and flows be improved by closer cooperation taking into account economic, social and environmental aspects, the enlargement of the EU, Cohesion Policy and relevant related territorial cooperation areas?

The results should provide policy makers and practitioners at different levels but particularly regions with evidence to improve their policymaking practices.

#### ***(iv) Analytical framework and deliveries expected***

By considering the scoping and policy context described above the project is mainly expected to expose content-oriented territorial evidence on the territorial state, structures and trends in cities and regions neighbouring the ESPON space as well as of the ESPON space in its wider territorial context. In this respect the project shall extend the existing territorial knowledge base within the ESPON territory to what is happening in neighbouring regions.

The project is asked to make well thought through selection of territorial evidence that can be of use for territorial development and cohesion policies within the ESPON territory as well as for enhancing territorial cooperation with neighbour regions. The project is however *not* expected to deepen extensively on new forms of territorial cooperation and governance as these issues are being dealt with by the ongoing applied research projects ‘TERCO’ and ‘ESPON TANGO’. The project is hence asked to create the necessary links with these two projects on territorial cooperation and governance in order to complement with content related territorial input.

The project should deliver the territorial evidence upon which basis European policy makers can formulate an agenda for territorial cooperation with the neighbouring areas under observation. The potential Transnational Project Group (TPG) is asked to:

- 1) Extend the geography of the existing ESPON knowledge base with basic regional data beyond the borders of the ESPON territory in order to present the territorial structures and dynamics as well as their changes over time.
- 2) Provide data for territorial flows of accessibility, trade & services, migration, transport and infrastructures including energy, tourism, cultural and natural environmental (potentially incl. water basins and water management) and other economic aspects on regional level where possible and relevant.

#### *General framework and territorial area to be covered*

A geographical rather than a functional approach shall be the basis to define the research area of this project, with a strong focus on the immediate ESPON neighbourhood. A functional approach is in many aspects covered by the applied research project TIGER on territorial impact of globalization that might produce highly relevant knowledge for this analysis.

Taking into account the political objective of the EC a specific focus shall be put on the territorial development and dynamics in the *Mediterranean area* (e.g. Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey), *south-east Europe* (e.g. Croatia for which the accession negotiations were closed, allowing for the signature of the Accession Treaty by the end of 2011, and non-EU Member States included in the Danube Region as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine as well as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99) and *north-east Europe* (e.g. Belarus, Russia).

The countries mentioned above should be covered by this study. Some of them should be covered completely, and for the following countries the TPG is asked to propose already in its proposal a suitable delineation of the regions that may be analysed: Russia as well as Algeria, Egypt, Libya and Morocco.

The choice of territorial units for analysis is a relevant issue in all ESPON applied research project as they conduct analysis at sub-national levels for the entire ESPON space (EU 27 plus Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein). Considering the larger geographical framework of this project, special attention should be given to this aspect at an early stage of the project implementation in order to ensure international comparability to the administrative levels used at sub-national level. The application of the most reliable geographical and statistical information available is also important in this respect.

Therefore, this project shall as far as possible make use of standardized spatial datasets at sub-national levels for the countries covered in the analysis, preferable NUTS or similar official administrative divisions (when available), allowing to establish international comparisons at regional level. Some considerations on this issue shall already be included in the proposal presented.

The project could be structured in two building blocks:

1) *General approach (presentation of data at NUTS1 or similar NUTS divisions)*

A general approach including (1) an assessment of the territorial structures of EU neighbour regions and their cities based on economic, social and environmental key indicators of the ESPON 2013 Programme in order to enlarge the focus of existing ESPON results, (2) an analysis of territorial impacts of the current economic and social dynamics on the basis of the previous step and (3) lessons learned of policy (cross-border) actions that were taken to increase the integration within the EU enlargements of 2004 and 2007. For point (1) this approach may also consider the western neighbourhood of the EU for relevant topics by covering Faroe Islands, Greenland and selected regions in the east of North and South America, eventually including also a focus on territorial flows to, and their impacts on, the ESPON territory.

2) *In-depth approach for direct neighbour regions and their cities (presentation of data at NUTS2/3 or similar NUTS divisions)*

A more in-depth approach providing (1) territorial evidence on flows of accessibility, trade & services, migration, transport and infrastructures including energy, tourism, cultural and natural environmental and other economic aspects on regional level, (2) information on the territorial impact of a possibly further enlarged EU, (3) identification of comparative-advantages of policy relevant cross-border cooperation options for different territorial levels and (4) targeted case studies on NUTS3 level in the direct ESPON neighbourhood. It is especially due to the cross-border aspect of high importance that data for this approach is collected at NUTS3 level when possible.

*Key research questions*

In the concrete design of the applied research project and its work packages, the project is expected to answer the following key research questions:

- **Structures and dynamics of cities and regions neighbouring the ESPON territory**
  - What basic regional data for the EU neighbourhood is available and for which geographical level? What structures and dynamics of the EU neighbour regions and their cities can be identified? What role has the current and historical political environment of neighbour countries on cooperation options?
  - What do the structures and dynamics of neighbour territories imply for the potentials to support integration and cross-border cooperation by using territorial characteristic as well as Cohesion Policy and other instruments at different territorial scales inside the ESPON space?
  - What are the most important barriers for not exploiting cooperation potentials and development opportunities with the EU neighbourhood?
- **Territorial flows and their changes over time**
  - What basic regional data on accessibility, trade & services, migration, transport and infrastructures including energy, tourism, the cultural and natural environment and other economic aspects is available for the EU neighbourhood and for which

geographical level? What territorial flows can be identified between the ESPON territory and their neighbour regions and their cities?

- Which identified territorial flows create comparative advantages for territorial cross-border cooperation options?
- In what way will the social and economic development within the ESPON territory be effected by the accession of New EU Member States?

- **Cooperation options**

- What scope of action do national/regional/local policy makers have to foster economic growth for the different types of territories and regions in Europe by cooperating with neighbouring regions and their cities outside the ESPON territory?
- What territorial policy relevant elements/aspects/topics and comparative advantages are most promising to be addressed in cross-border cooperation, transnational spatial planning and development tasks towards territorial cohesion with EU neighbour states with regard to people, markets and stability? On which territorial level do these elements need to be addressed in order to pursue the goals of competitiveness and cohesion?
- What new demand could arise for the EU Cohesion Policy and Structural Fund due to the future accession of New EU Member States? What would be the probable impact on the EU territory?

*Elements of the research process*

The current state of relations between the EU territory and third countries are generally not well known and the size of transnational territories is strongly affected by the economic themes addressed. By aiming to extend the existing ESPON knowledge base with equivalent information on the EU neighbour regions and their cities the territorial evidence shall be further enlarged. The TPG is asked to provide data on territorial flows presenting the relationships between the ESPON territory and its neighbourhood. An overview of relevant territorial policy priorities existing in the three neighbourhood areas under observation shall be presented in addition.

The analysis of the data shall allow policy makers to better understand development potentials inside the ESPON territory that could be addressed by European neighbourhood policies. Territorial potentials of EU neighbour regions and their cities with respect to various forms of connections towards the ESPON territory shall be identified. Comparative advantages and territorial potential have to be detected with regard to people, markets and stability. Of specific importance is the topic of accessibility for the neighbour regions of North Africa, the Black Sea area and other territories in the east of the EU neighbourhood. The TPG is asked to provide clarification on how these potentials can be better utilized and strengthened. A focus shall be put on cooperation options for authorities and stakeholders on the trans-national and cross-border level. Also options for partnerships with the private sector and the civil society might be of interest by taking for example account of multi-national and cross-border companies.

Territorial challenges that should be worked at, like missing links and barriers hampering the movement and access to markets in order to turn them into development options shall be highlighted as well as peripheral metropolitan regions that have potential to turn their geographical position into an advantage by building links with economic centres outside the EU.

Interdependences and cooperation within networking activities and the balance between these two aspects on regional as well as national level play an important role that might be considered within the research work when analyzing potentials and challenges. The Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 highlights in this respect that growing interdependence of regions generates demand for better connectivity at global, European and national level. Also the Council of Europe is considering the development of a neighbourhood policy as many of the core issues under their mandate are being influenced by developments outside Europe. Hence a consultation with the Council of Europe might be considered during the implementation of the project.

The TPG is expected to analyse territorial policy actions that were taken in the recent years to increase the integration and cohesion of the EU territory after the enlargement process of 2004 and 2007. In this respect the project shall also consider the results and their policy relevance of the ESPON project 1.1.3 'Enlargement of the EU and its polycentric spatial structure' that focused on the 2004 EU enlargement. The project developed a typology of border regions in the New Member States of the 2004 enlargement, resulting in four types of regions based on their integration potential. Also the ESPON project 3.4.1 'Europe in the world' might be of use as it had a focus on neighbouring countries and their functional integration into the ESPON space within the perspective of the EU enlargement question.

New membership in the EU will only happen when the necessary requirements are met. Also in this respect might the implementation of strategic partnerships and networks create a win-win situation for all countries involved. Against this backdrop the project is expected to provide information on possible territorial impacts of a further enlarged EU taking into account the identified territorial structures, dynamics and flows. Attention shall be also paid to potential future changes in existing relationships with the western neighbourhood of the EU, considering the ongoing accession negotiations for Iceland.

In order to receive more focused and detailed information on specific regions of the close ESPON neighbourhood, the research shall include a minimum of 5 targeted case studies (e.g. to better understand the territorial development potentials of these regions but also highlighting difficulties that might support the formulation of a European policy agenda for territorial cooperation). The case studies need to have a geographical distribution and shall cover the Mediterranean area, south-east Europe and north-east Europe as well as EU accession and non accession countries.

It has to be taken into account that the general situation in the eastern and the southern neighbourhood differs considerably. Already the situation between the countries of one of the three neighbourhood territories under observation might be very diverse. This initial situation is asking for an identification of areas in which similar policy approaches might be useful and where individual solutions need to be found.

On the basis of the results of the previous steps the TPG is asked to highlight topics of interest that can be addressed from European policy makers in their territorial agenda. The

importance of the different factors as traditions of cooperation, differences in the political system, economic or cultural differences, natural borders, infrastructure connections, etc. shall be analysed resulting in a ranking identifying the areas for the most promising policy actions.

It needs to be clarified on which territorial level actions can be taken to support a successful implementation of territorial neighbourhood policy. Policy relevant options, policy instruments and good performing mechanisms for the implementation of activities with the EU neighbourhood need to be identified.

The policy relevant findings should be presented in such a way that policy makers can use them in their considerations for territorial development strategies and policies on national, regional and local level. These findings shall be presented for each of the three neighbourhood territories observed. A potential policy agenda for future steps towards cooperation activities and further integration of the EU territory with its neighbour regions shall be elaborated taking into account the presented territorial evidence and the multi-level understanding of territorial cohesion.

#### *Data & Mapping*

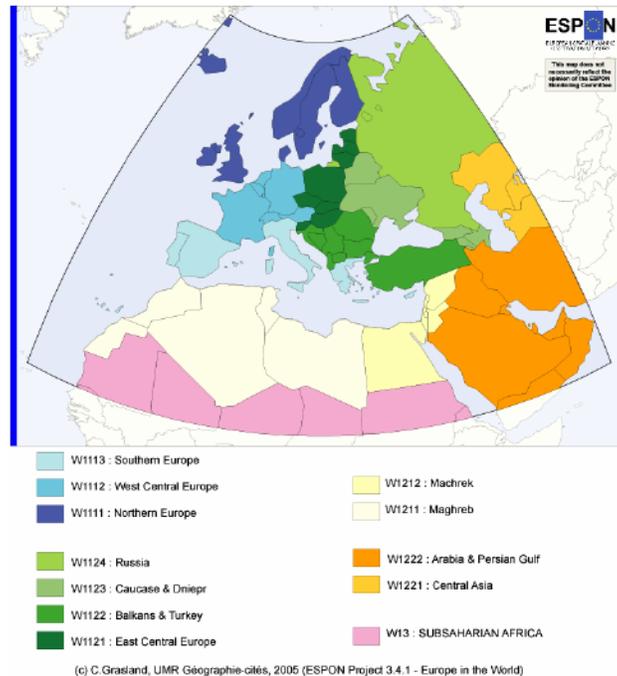
The scale of analysis (NUTS1-3, Urban Areas, etc.) might differ for the specific topics. Before this backdrop adaptation might also be needed with regard to the timeframe when presenting changes over time on different scales, due to missing data availability especially on regional level. The TPG is asked to select for each topic the most appropriate scale and accordingly timeframe. Especially with respect to the countries neighbouring the north-east of the ESPON space it is of high importance to collect data at NUTS3. In this respect and taking account of the limited data availability for some neighbouring countries it might be useful to consider the elaboration of maps with a combination of NUTS2 and 3<sup>3</sup>.

The TPG is strongly advised to work on this project in close cooperation with the ESPON Database project that can provide access to a comprehensive data collection on neighbouring regions but also other ESPON projects might have collected or elaborated relevant data of neighbour countries.

The collection and territorial representation of data forms an important part of this applied research project. The work developed so far within the ESPON Programme on the choice of territorial units for analysis, in particular from the 'ESPON 2013 Database' project, 'TIGER' and 'Europe in the World' (the latter within ESPON 2006 Programme) shall be taken into account. The ESPON project 3.4.1 'Europe in the World' developed a Map-Kit displaying Europe and neighbouring regions and the ESPON Database project elaborated a technical report 'ESPON World database'. Here the countries'/territories' subdivisions used by global providers and Eurostat are included.

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<sup>3</sup> As an example the NUTS division in the map on 'Natural population development for 1996-1999' included in the ESPON Territorial Observation No.1 might be used.



Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have already adopted the NUTS classification. For these countries NUTS shapefiles (including NUTS2 and NUTS3) are provided by Eurogeographics. The rest of the Western Balkan countries are at the present in the procedure of adopting it. Furthermore, the ESPON Database project has developed ‘similar NUTS divisions’ for some countries in the ESPON neighbourhood. The cooperation with this project shall also involve the ESPON CU when discussing the most reliable and adequate choice in relation to the territorial units of analysis.

Finally, during the implementation of the project, the TPG will be asked to provide the ESPON Database Project with the necessary inputs (i.e. geographical and statistical information) to produce a new ESPON Map-Kit tool displaying the countries included in the analysis at sub-national levels.

#### *Use of existing ESPON results*

The TPG should consider existing data and indicators for the analysis. Data, indicators and maps of the ESPON 2006 and 2013 Programme are important sources for this project. The project shall in particular be informed and make use of results from the following projects:

- ESPON 2013 Applied Research Project “European Territorial Cooperation as a Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life” (TERCO) is looking into territorial cooperation and how these can benefit from facts concerning potential drivers for cooperation, determinants and governance structures.
- ESPON 2013 Applied Research Project “Territorial impact of globalisation for Europe and its regions” (TIGER) is looking at the trends, dynamics and the spatial pattern of globalisation in Europe as well as the flows and networks in the globalising world from a European perspective.

- ESPON 2013 Scientific Platform project ‘Indicators of Territorial Cohesion (INTERCO) will provide a set of comparable and reliable indicators and indices that can be used to measure territorial cohesion, complex territorial development, structural issues, territorial challenges and opportunities as well as territorial effects at different geographical levels and types of regions.
- ESPON 2013 Applied Research Project “Demographic and Migratory Flows Affecting European Regions and Cities” (DEMIFER) assessed the effects of demographic trends and migration flows and examined the implications for economic and social cohesion.
- ESPON 2013 Applied Research Project “Regions at Risk of Energy Poverty” (ReRisk) focused on the question how the increase of energy prices might affect regional cohesion and competitiveness. Also the significance of the transport and energy networks within the EU is considered in this respect.
- ESPON 2013 Targeted Analysis “Metropolisation and Polycentric Development in Central Europe: Evidence Based Strategic Options” (POLYCE) has a focus on the Danube Region in which the cities Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Bratislava and Ljubljana are important drivers of development. The project shall carry out a territorial analysis at macro-regional and city-level for these capital cities to identify potentials and strategies to become driver of development for their direct hinterland but also as a network to be a driver of development for the entire Danube Region as global integration zone.
- ESPON 2006 Project “Enlargement of the EU and its polycentric spatial structure” (project 1.1.3) focused on future implications of the 2004 enlargement on EU territorial development from both the perspectives of the Member States and their regions as well as from the perspectives of candidate countries and their regions. Particular attention is paid to border regions in the EU Member States and EU candidate countries. A special account is included of trends affecting neighbouring countries bordering the enlarged EU displaying development potentials and direct effects on EU territorial development.
- ESPON 2006 Project “Europe in the World” (project 3.4.1), the forerunner of the above mentioned TIGER project, analysed trends, goals and strategies of European spatial development from a global view, taking into account flows between Europe and other parts of the world, comparing territorial structures and embedding Europe into its geographical neighbourhood.

Also the new ESPON project ESPON TANGO on ‘Territorial Governance – Best Practices for New Perspectives’ and other relevant projects that will start in parallel to this one should be considered.

#### *Research output*

In order to create coherence with project findings of other ESPON applied research projects, the project should where possible present the main final results in relation to different types of cities and regions. Therefore, in the analysis and where relevant, the project may take inspiration of the nine standard ESPON Territorial Typologies: urban-rural; metropolitan regions; border regions; islands regions; sparsely populated regions; outermost regions; mountainous regions; coastal regions; regions in industrial transition. These typologies are used by previous and ongoing ESPON projects in order to test whether significant results related to specific types of regions are present. The first six were

developed by DG Regio and the remaining three were proposed in the ESPON project on Typology Compilation. Moreover, it might be considered by the project to present the final results for transnational cooperation areas, and - where appropriate and possible - also for cross-border cooperation areas and inter-regional cooperation areas.

The project should strive for a comprehensive and integrated research approach, taking into account social, cultural, environmental and economic aspects. In addition a five-level approach (global/European neighbourhood, European, macro-regional, national, regional/local) to the analysis should be applied where relevant in order to support a clear presentation of results, which might vary depending on the geographical scale.

The project shall also strive to deliver innovative results which can support the policy development in the field of territorial development, competitiveness and cohesion. It should demonstrate an inventive approach with regard to the scientific answers to the policy questions and should aim at showing new development opportunities for the European territory. There should be a combination and interrelation of various sectors and territorial insights on the development in order to contribute to the creation of new development paths and visions.

A set of basic territorial data and indicators shall be delivered to extend the geography of the existing ESPON knowledge base, identifying the territorial structures and key trends within neighbouring regions as well as flows from and towards the ESPON territory.

Case studies on specific regions of the close ESPON neighbourhood shall be elaborated. The findings of the applied research at European level should be applied on the case studies for which more focused and detailed information should be created.

A short report on the trends and perspectives shall be elaborated for each of the three neighbourhood territories under observation focusing on territorial flows. Project results shall be picked-up and synthesised, identifying areas of interest and translating the results into policy options for policy makers on national, regional and local level. These reports shall include a potential policy agenda for future steps towards cooperation activities and further integration of the EU territory with its neighbour regions.

The TPG is expected to present in the proposal an appropriate methodology and research approach that allows the project to answer the key policy and research questions mentioned above. The methodology should take into account possible limitations in data availability that might require an innovative research approach.

The identification of available and required data is of high importance in this project. The teams of experts interested in this project are asked to give a clear indication already in their proposal on the quantitative data they will use and how this data will be obtained. A check of the data available in the ESPON Database should be the starting point in order to further build up on the data existing for the ESPON space.

When enlarging the focus of existing ESPON results the geographical coverage of the project should also encompass all the countries participating in the ESPON 2013 Programme. Furthermore, the TPGs of all other ESPON 2013 projects are asked to assess the data situation within their field of research for Croatia and in the EU Candidate Countries (i.e. the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Montenegro) and/or the other countries of the Western Balkans (i.e. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Albania,

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244), and report their findings in the Inception Report (see below chapter (v)). Depending on the respective data situation these countries would then be included in the specific analysis providing relevant results for this project.

The deliveries of the project should make use of and complement the existing scientific platform and tools of ESPON, which are accessible on the ESPON website. The project may enhance the scientific platform of ESPON through the development of data and indicators and is expected to develop:

- Data input, to the development, update and mainly extension of the ESPON 2013 Database, on territorial states, structures and trends of EU neighbour regions and territorial flows between them and the ESPON territory (preferably NUTS2/3 level) gathered within the project. Indicators need to offer compatibility with a map-making facility, to provide a consistent, homogenous, reliable and up-datable database.
- Indicators offering information on territorial potentials for advantageous cooperation options with EU neighbour states.
- Typologies of different patterns of neighbour regions classified by territorial evidence based on regional data on territorial dynamics and flows. In addition the TPG is asked to consider the creation and use of a ‘desert’ typology.
- A minimum of 5 targeted case studies providing more focused and detailed information.
- Necessary inputs (i.e. geographical and statistical information) to produce a new ESPON Map-Kit tool displaying the countries included in the analysis at sub-national levels.
- European maps revealing, (1) territorial key structures, dynamics and trends within the neighbour regions of the ESPON territory as well as flows between these regions and the ESPON territory in order to identify new development opportunities, including:
  - 3-5 maps on the territorial structure of EU neighbour regions as for example the urban-rural structure, European Metropolitan Urban Regions or the labour market by extending the territorial coverage of existing ESPON maps,
  - 5-10 maps on territorial flows and trends in relation to EU neighbour regions as for example on migration, accessibility or energy transport,(2) typologies of regions, (3) a zoom-in on the three neighbourhood territories where appropriate and (4) potentials for cooperation options with the case study areas.

Regarding the development of new data and maps and/or the use of existing data, the TPG is expected to cooperate closely with the TPG being in charge of the development of the ESPON 2013 Database.

The project is also expected to contribute to the ESPON 2013 capitalisation and communication strategy by providing at strategic moments during the project implementation the following:

- A short report on the trends and perspectives for each of the three neighbourhood territories under observation translating the project results into policy options for European policy makers on national, regional and local level.

- Slideshows explaining the assumptions, the methodology and the results of the project (one for the intermediate, draft and final delivery).
- A selection of 5-10 maps for the communication of project results and to be used for creation of posters, postcards, exhibition materials.

The results and conclusions of the applied research within the project should be formulated in relation to policy orientations present at European level and make use of the new typologies – if applicable – and maps resulting from the project.

Following the logic of the Territorial Agenda 2020, orientations for policy makers should refer to the respective territorial development opportunities and the available options to mobilise these for the benefit of the cities, urban agglomerations and surrounding regions in question. In this respect, references to future policy options should take account of European Cohesion Policy orientations, in particular expressed in the Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion 2007-2013, the Fifth Report on Cohesion, as well as (the debate on the) Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion.

Finally, the project should consider avenues for further applied research on the theme.

### ***(v) Outputs and timetable***

One of the main objectives of the ESPON 2013 Programme is to focus on research with policy relevance and to contribute to the development of relevant policies. Therefore, the outputs of the research project should be highly operational and coordinated in time, as far as possible, to fit into the relevant political agenda.

The proposal for the project is expected to reveal individual work packages on project coordination, research activities, and dissemination, as well as a schedule for project implementation based on the following indicative<sup>4</sup> timetable and specification of outputs:

#### **May 2012 (Inception Report):**

Twelve weeks after the kick-off meeting, a more in-depth concept should be submitted by the TPG allowing for a detailed overview on the research approach to be applied, the methodology and hypothesis for further investigation, as well as a review of the main literature, data sources, etc. The Inception Report introduces the final selection of case studies that will be in-depth analysed. It also presents in detail the topics to be addressed and covered within the project as well as first results of the assessment of the territorial state of EU neighbour regions. The research team should also report more in detail on the findings regarding the assessment of the data situation and, on that basis, determine the geographical coverage for each of their foreseen research approaches. The final delineation for the EU neighbour regions that will be covered by this study shall be presented. The Inception Report shall also include an overview of more detailed deliveries and outputs envisaged by the project as well as an indication of likely barriers that the project

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<sup>4</sup> The final timetable for the project will depend upon the exact date of the project's Kick-off Meeting. At this meeting, the exact delivery dates for all project reports will be agreed upon with the Lead Partner.

implementation might face. The report shall give clear orientation for the applied research previewed towards the Interim Report. Finally, the TPG should outline how it envisages making use of existing ESPON and other results that are relevant for this project.

### **November 2012 (Interim Report):**

The content of the Interim Report shall reflect the orientations given in the Inception Report as well as the results of the discussions having taken place with the Sounding Board. The report is envisaged to include at least the following elements:

- a) Main results on the basis of available data, developed indicators, typologies (eventually including a 'desert' typology) and European maps, including:
  - An overview on concepts and methodology on analysing EU neighbour regions and possible final results;
  - A detailed presentation of a hypothesis on the typology;
  - Preliminary results of the case studies;
  - First indications on the conclusions and policy relevant options that could be the outcome of the project;
  - Data collection achieved, including an overview on statistical and geographical data collected by EUROSTAT, the Joint Research Programme and national Statistical Institutes etc.
- b) Additional material to contribute to the ESPON 2013 capitalisation and communication strategy, including:
  - Presentation of the structure foreseen for the reports for each of the three neighbourhood territories translating the project results into policy options for European policy makers on national, regional and local level;
  - A slideshow explaining the assumptions, the methodology and the results of the project so far;
  - A selection of 5-10 draft maps suitable for the communication of project progress and results at the different stages on the ESPON website, but as well suitable to be used for exhibition materials.
- c) Plan for the applied research towards the Draft Final Report as well as the Table of Content envisaged for the Final Report.

### **November 2013 (Draft Final Report):**

The Draft Final Report will take into account feed-back on the Interim Report from an ESPON seminar and by the Sounding Board. The report is envisaged to include at least the following elements:

- a) Main Report (max 50 pages) that includes:
  - The key findings/analysis/diagnosis of the project and the most relevant outcomes of the case studies;
  - Policy options for future EC Cohesion Policy;
  - Policy options for national, regional and local authorities.

- b) Executive Summary (max 10 pages) that is well elaborated, summarising the main results of the applied research and containing clear messages that can be easily taken up by policy makers and practitioners. This summary should be based on the report mentioned above.
- c) Scientific Report documenting the scientific work undertaken in the applied research including elements such as:
  - Literature and methodology/theory used;
  - Typologies, concepts developed and used;
  - Data collected and indicators used, including tables with the exact values of indicators;
  - Maps produced in support of the results, covering the territory of EU 27, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway; Switzerland and respective regions of the ESPON neighbourhood;
  - Models and other tools used or developed;
  - Detailed description and results of the case studies;
  - Roadmap for policy implementation and on the further research avenue to follow, including further data requirements and ideas of territorial indicators, concepts and typologies as well as on further developments linked to the database and mapping facilities.
- d) Additional material to contribute to the ESPON 2013 capitalisation and communication strategy, including:
  - Reports for each of the three neighbourhood territories translating the project results into policy options for European policy makers on national, regional and local level;
  - A slideshow explaining the assumptions, the methodology and the results of the project so far;
  - A selection of 5-10 maps suitable for the communication of project progress and results at the different stages on the ESPON website, but as well suitable to be used for creation of posters, postcards, exhibition materials.

**April 2014 (Final Report):**

- a) Revision of the Draft Final Report on the basis of comments received.
- b) Final reports for each of the three neighbourhood territories.
- c) Slideshow and maps suitable for the communication of the project results.

**May – October 2014 (Dissemination):**

- a) Dissemination of project results by the TPG in the framework of international conferences and seminars, e.g. transnational activities of the ECP Network, events organised by the CU. These activities need to be reflected in the budget proposed by the TPG for the implementation of the project.

The ESPON 2013 Programme foresees in Priority 4 also capitalisation of project results including events, printed reports, website facility, etc. At transnational level, the Programme is supported in its capitalisation activities by the ESPON Contact Point

Network. The Programme includes, in other words, substantial dissemination activities at Programme level which all projects should make use of and support. This means that the project's dissemination activities shall ensure consistency and avoid overlaps with and repetition of respective activities organised at Programme level. The project team shall refer to the objectives of Priority 4 of the ESPON 2013 Programme "Capitalisation, ownership and participation: Capacity building, dialogue and networking" when considering dissemination activities and closely coordinate these with the ESPON CU.

Irrespective of the above mentioned reports to be submitted at certain stages in the project life cycle, the TPG is expected to give presentations on the state of their research or/and the results in the framework of internal and external ESPON seminars. Therefore, when setting up the project proposal, the TPG should also allow for travel expenses for the attendance of ESPON seminars.

The MC and the Sounding Board will address the Draft Final Report and eventually ask for clarifications.

#### ***(vi) Budget for the applied research project***

The maximum budget foreseen for this applied research project is 750.000 Euro. Proposals exceeding this value will not be considered.

Any trips of EU partners to the European neighbouring regions located outside the Member and Partner States must be clearly motivated by the project activities and necessary for a successful project implementation. Travel and accommodation costs of these trips have to be explicitly mentioned and justified already in the proposal. Changes might still be implemented during the contracting phase of the selected proposal. However, the approval of these trips by the ESPON Managing Authority before the signature of the Subsidy Contract, will be necessary to allow for the eligibility of the respective cost.

All real eligible costs incurred for carrying out the approved project will be refunded 100% by the ESPON 2013 Programme.

#### ***(vii) Existing access points***

The ESPON Website ([www.espon.eu](http://www.espon.eu)) provides access to all available project results from the ESPON 2013 and 2006 Programme. Synergies and use of results from outside the ESPON regime also shall be sought.

The access points listed below can serve the purpose of providing the TPG useful information for preparing a proposal. It is by no means meant to be exhaustive, but should be considered as information that can be helpful in tracing additional useful background information:

##### European Policy related documents:

- Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 – Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions  
(<http://www.eu2011.hu/files/bveu/documents/TA2020.pdf>)

- Europe 2020 – A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth ([http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm))
- Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion - “Investing in Europe’s future” ([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/cohesion5/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/cohesion5/index_en.cfm))
- The COPTA Website ([www.eu-territorial-agenda.eu](http://www.eu-territorial-agenda.eu)) provides access to most relevant policy documents on territorial cohesion and also includes policy working papers on topics that can be of relevance for this project, such as:
  - First Action Programme for the Implementation of the Territorial Agenda of the European Union, 23 November 2007
  - Territorial Agenda of the European Union. Towards a more competitive and sustainable Europe of diverse regions, 25 May 2007
  - The Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union, May 2007
  - ESDP European Spatial Development: Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the EU, May 1999
- Reference documents of the European Neighbourhood Policy including country reports ([http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm))
- The European Security Strategy 2003-2008: Building on common interests. Report - n°5, February 2009 ([http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/ISS\\_Report\\_05.pdf](http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/ISS_Report_05.pdf))
- A secure Europe in a better world: European Security Strategy, 2003 (<http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/solanae.pdf>)

Other relevant documents:

- The OECD Website ([www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)) provides access to the OECD Regional Database and Territorial Reviews.
- The INTERACT Website ([www.interact-eu.net](http://www.interact-eu.net)) includes references to projects on ENPI cross-border cooperation programmes that could be of interest and inspiration for this project.
- Gaubert, Nicolas & Yann, Richard: “European Cohesion Policy and Territorial Cooperation with Neighbouring Countries: Towards Deeper Coordination?”, Refereed Articles, October 2010, No. 41, European Journal of Spatial Development.