



Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

## PRE-EVENT BRIEF

# ESPON Peer Learning Workshop

**ESPON and the Territorial Agenda  
inspiring the ÖREK-2030 process  
in Austria - an example for  
enriching national strategies with  
European knowledge**

Virtual

13 November 2020, 9:30 - 13:00 (CET)



## Introduction



Spatial challenges such as climate change adaptation and mitigation or the transformation to a decarbonised society play important roles in national spatial planning strategies across the European Union. Sustainable spatial development has a long and cross-generational perspective (Adscheid and Schmitt, 2019).

Spatial developments are very slow and constant: any large spatial change is induced by a large number of decisions that only become noticeable and recognisable after a long period of time (Albrechts and Balducci, 2013). It is difficult to reverse these developments and it is very costly to compensate for the undesired consequences of previously chosen paths (Jokinen et al., 2018). Therefore, a national spatial development policy committed to sustainability needs a centralised common ground to be effective.

Organised within the ESPON) programme, this online workshop will deal with several subjects relating to the SDGs through the lens of spatial planning. The central focus of the workshop is mutual learning from the implementation of national-scale territorial development plans dealing with climate change adaptation and mitigation. One such plan, the Austrian Spatial Development Concept (ÖREK), offers a strategy for the proactive handling of social, environmental and technological transformation processes on a national level and presents contributions made through spatial planning for coping with pressing economic, social and ecological challenges created by looming climate crisis.

## Objective

The process of developing the next Austrian Spatial Development Concept ÖREK 2030 is ongoing and will be finished by the mid-2021. The main policy focus will be the contributions and responses of spatial planning towards climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The ESPON Peer Learning Workshop 'ESPON and the Territorial Agenda inspiring the ÖREK-2030 process' will take the ongoing process of developing the next spatial development of Austria as an example of how national strategies can be inspired and enriched with European knowledge. The objective is to show and discuss, how knowledge developed in ESPON projects can inspire the development of national policy instruments and how national and regional stakeholders can make (better) use of trans-European knowledge and case studies from other countries.

The discussions during the workshop will be framed around the following policy questions:

- 1. How can European cities and regions empower the sustainability concept of the Green Deal, making full use of the energy transition, decarbonisation of national economies, green infrastructure and ecosystem services?**
- 2. Which climate change adaptation measures could be put in place as part of an integrated, place-based development strategy?**
- 3. How should regions and cities cooperate to ensure the efficiency and coordination of adaptation and mitigation measures at wider geographical scales?**

The workshop addresses policymakers responsible for national and regional development strategies in Austria and its neighbouring countries. Invitations are also extended to researchers and stakeholders that were involved in ESPON projects to reflect on how to better make use of, and bridge territorial evidence into, national and regional practice.

## Goal and Expected Outcomes

Climate change is becoming a major challenge for the public authorities of the European member states. Numerous policy documents and programs address the issue of implementing adaptation and mitigation measures. While the actions should be taken in several fields targeted by UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the question remains of how to target them efficiently in national-scale territorial development. The present workshop will serve as an excellent opportunity to share practices on how to better make use of, and bridge territorial evidence into, national and regional practice in national-level strategies targeted to climate adaptation and mitigation.

## Structure and Input

ESPON Peer Learning Workshop 'ESPON and the Territorial Agenda inspiring the ÖREK-2030 process' is structured into three parts:

For the **introduction**, presentations by Daniel Meltzian (Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community) and Roland Arbter (Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism) will focus on the strategic grounds for EU transnational territorial policy, the Territorial Agenda and Agenda 2030, which encourage policymakers at a national governance level to think and design policies that contribute to an inclusive and sustainable future.

**The first session** will focus on the territorial evidence provided by ESPON that has inspired Austrian Spatial Development Concept ÖREK 2030. The [SUPER](#) (Sustainable Urbanisation and land-use Practices in European Regions) project, introduced by David Evers (Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency) provides a framework how sustainable land use can be promoted and how land-take, soil sealing and urban sprawl can be avoided, reduced and compensated. [ALPS 2050](#) (Common Spatial Perspectives for the Alpine Area) offers an analysis of territorial scenarios for sustainable development inclusive in economic, environmental and energy perspectives.

Finally, the **second session** provides reflections by experts from neighbouring regions and countries and opens the 'virtual floor' for discussion.

## Agenda

**9:30 - 9:40**

### Welcome

Wiktor Szydarowski, Director of ESPON EGTC

Roland Arbter, ESPON Monitoring Committee Member for Austria,  
Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism

**9:40 - 10:30**

Setting the scene: for introduction

1. Territorial Agenda - a framework for action towards territorial cohesion and a future for all places in Europe (Daniel Meltzian/BMI)

2. ESPON in the overall EU Territorial policy making; Agenda 2030 process (Roland Arbter/ESPON Monitoring Committee Member for Austria, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism)

3. Introduction into the ÖREK 2030-process in Austria (Paul Himmelbauer/ÖROK)

Questions & Answers

**10:30 - 12:00**

**Session 1: ESPON inspiring the ÖREK 2030-process: Sustainable spatial development, climate change and territorial visions**

*Moderated by Ingmar Pastak (University of Tartu)*

Right to the point: three presentations

1. ESPON SUPER project: Sustainable Urbanisation and land-use Practices in European Regions (David Evers)
2. SUPER Case Study: German land take reduction target (Anna Hellings/BBSR)
3. ESPON ALPS 2050: Territorial visions and climate change (Tobias Chilla/University of Erlangen–Nuremberg)

Comments from experts of ÖREK-team

Questions & Answers

**12:00 - 12:40**

**Session 2: ESPON support for Austrian case studies - until now and possibly in the future**

*Moderated by Paul Himmelbauer (ÖROK)*

Pitching and open debate

1. Overview (AT ECP)

2. Pitches by:

Alois Humer (University Vienna),

Stefan Obkircher (State of Vorarlberg),

Thomas Dax (Federal Institute of Agricultural Economics, Rural and Mountain Research)

Bernd Schuh, Austrian Institute for Regional Studies (ÖIR)

3. Q&A and open debate, experiences

**12:40 - 12:50**

**Conclusions**

Short summing up and final thoughts by Roland Arbter

(ESPON Monitoring Committee Member for Austria, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism)

## Resources

Adscheid, T., Schmitt, P. (2019) Mobilising post-political environments: tracing the selective geographies of Swedish sustainable urban development, *Urban Research & Practice*, DOI: 10.1080/17535069.2019.1589564

Albrechts, L., Balducci, A. (2013) Practicing strategic planning: In search of critical features to explain the strategic character of plans. *DisP - The Planning Review*,49:3, 16-27

Jokinen, J., Leino, H., Bäcklund, P. and Laine, M. (2018) Strategic planning harnessing urban policy mobilities: the gradual development of local sustainability fix, *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, 20:5, 551-563, DOI: 10.1080/1523908X.2018.1454828



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The ESPON EGTC is the Single Beneficiary of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme. The Single Operation within the programme is implemented by the ESPON EGTC and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

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