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ESPON 2013 Programme

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ESPON Supports Territorial Development and Cohesion Policy

In cooperation with the European Commission DG Regio, the ESPON Programme has organised a Workshop to raise awareness of ESPON results and to support their use in policymaking at European level. The event took place in Brussels on 6 May 2009.

The workshop welcomed a mix of officials and policymakers working in European Institutions and regions to discuss recent ESPON results on accessibility, migration as well as spatial scenarios and the position of Europe in the world.

Introducing the Workshop, Director General at DG Regio Dirk Ahner said: *“ESPON plays an important role in the development of Cohesion Policy. The programme is an important tool for developing indicators and other information also across borders.”*

The workshop confirmed that the introduction of the territorial dimension in European policy can improve policy design. Many policymakers look forward to the results of the new projects under the ESPON 2013 Programme. *“ESPON is moving in the good direction of becoming a reliable source of crucial information on territorial development for stakeholders at all policy levels.”* - Ahner added.

The researchers involved in ESPON presented how changing territorial patterns of accessibility and demographic trends in Europe might influence strategies and investment decisions in regions. The spatial scenarios for Europe and the position of Europe in the world added an important and novel perspective on European territorial development that merits attention in regional and urban development decisions as well as at EU and national level.

Among the interesting messages provided by the researchers were:

- Investing in regional airports may be a risky strategy as destinations of (low-cost) flight carriers change rapidly, especially in times of economic uncertainty.
- Demographic trends and migratory flows, climate change and globalisation are posing challenges to regional development. These seem to impact less-favoured regions more negatively than other regions in terms of both GDP and employment.
- The global economic recession is having significant impacts on European regions and cities. However, a more in-depth analysis of its effects will only be possible once new statistics will become available.

The presentations given during the day are available at the ESPON Website www.espon.eu

Interested in ESPON?

The ESPON 2013 Programme is part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

It shall support policy development in relation to the aim of territorial cohesion and a harmonious development of the European territory. ESPON shall support Cohesion Policy development with European wide, comparable information, evidence, analyses and scenarios on framework conditions for the development of regions, cities and larger territories. In doing so, it shall facilitate the



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mobilisation of territorial capital and development opportunities, contributing to improving European competitiveness, to the widening and deepening of European territorial cooperation and to a sustainable and balanced development.

The Managing Authority responsible for the ESPON 2013 Programme is the **Ministry of the Interior and for Spatial Development of Luxembourg**. More information: www.espon.eu