ESPON

EUROPEAN UNION

Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

Transnational Brief

Cross-border planning, governance and public services

1. Strategic planning in cross-border metropolitan areas

Latest from ESPON research

How do authorities define a metropolitan area? A recent ESPON research reveals that despite the harmonised definition of urban areas as 'functional economic units' developed by the OECD and the EU, spatial planners tend to use different approaches. In order to identify the most relevant configuration of a metropolitan area, the ESPON SPIMA project developed an alternative approach referred to as Metropolitan Development Area (MDA). MDA does not represent a new spatial concept. It is the delineation of the areas based on distinctive concepts/scenarios for an individual area. MDAs illustrate the views of the local or regional authorities on the spatial extent of the metropolitan areas, and consequently, they can have fixed borders or 'fluid' borders. Some MDAs are based on catchment areas of transport networks while others represent specific institutional arrangements between regions and municipalities. The MDA method is particularly beneficial for local spatial planners as it allows them to assess the relevance of the defined metropolitan area against key urban development factors including transport, urbanization, environment and housing. Planners can visualise the overlap of an MDA with Functional Urban Area (FUA) and Morphological Urban Areas (MUA) and show the relation between the local administrative units, within the core urban area and beyond the FUA. This helps making a more precise definition of the metropolitan area in order to support future spatial planning strategies. The method uses GIS tools based on local spatial data and data from European and OECD databases. It allows a breakdown of spatial data at the spatial scales of MDA, FUA and MUA, based on aggregation of LAU2 (local administrative units). As there is no one single definition of a metropolitan area that matches ongoing urbanization trends, administrative borders or perceptions of actors, the delineation of its relevant spatial scale can be facilitated by an individual MDA tailor-made approach. An assessment of the 'spatial fit' of a proposed MDA with regard to key urban trends and its relation to FUA and MUA can be a useful decision-support tool in planning and management of the metropolitan areas. Based on the MDA delineation, the ESPON SPIMA research team developed a typology for metropolitan areas:

Typology A for metropolitan areas based on size of the metropolitan area (MA) and population density

Population density (number of inhabitants per km²)	Size of MA (km2)		
Moderate to high population density (≥500)	Large-sized (>7000)	Medium-sized (2000-7000)	Small-sized (<2000)
	Type 1: Large-sized MA with moderate to high population density	Type 3: Medium-sized MA with moderate to high population density	Type 5: Small-sized MA with moderate to high population density
Low population density (<500)	Type 2: Large-sized MA with low population density	Type 4: Medium-sized MA with low population density	Type 6: Small-sized MA with low population density

Typology B for metropolitan areas based on the status of the metropolitan area (MA) and number of municipalities

Number of municipalities	Status of metropolitan area		
	Formal (based on law/regulation)	Semi-formal (based on agreements)	Informal (based on collaboration)
High number of municipalities (≥500)	Type 1: Formal MA with high number of municipalities	Type 3: Semi-formal MA with high number of municipalities	Type 5: Informal MA with high number of municipalities
Low number of municipalities (<500)	Type 2: Formal MA with low number of municipalities	Type 4: Semi-formal MA with low number of municipalities	Type 6: Informal MA with low number of municipalities

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Further reading:

The research team has identified the policy challenges for each of the 12 categories and defined a mix of relevant policy tools, which need to be considered when developing the spatial strategies and interventions at metropolitan scale: www.espon.eu/metropolitan-areas

ESPON research in the cross-border practice

Cross-border metropolitan areas are a function of the growing interdependence between metropolitan catchment areas, people and markets across national borders. The metropolitan area of Lille, for example, represents a dynamic structure of urban agglomerations that have been formed over time and is still evolving, following more recent changes in the national territorial cohesion planning framework of France. The geographical location of the Lille Metropolitan Area is exceptional as it is at the crossroads between major European capitals such as Paris, London and Brussels. This brings a unique cross-border perspective of the metropolitan development of Lille and development issues such as commuting, population distribution and marginalization in relation to these European capitals.

The MDA of Lille represents the 'Aire Métropolitaine de Lille' or Lille Metropolitan Area (LMA), covering 7,516 km2 with population of about 3.9 million inhabitants and density of 520 inh./km2 (Fig. 1). It is a cross-border urban conurbation covering 682 municipalities (622 in France and 60 in Belgium). The LMA has been supported by a collaboration formerly led by 'Aire Métropolitaine de Lille'. Although the Association has been dissolved, the territorial extent of the collaboration is currently acknowledged in the SRADDET plan (French regional plan for territorial development) as the key metropolitan perspective. The LMA collaboration consists of the important conurbation and a formal body of MEL (Métropole Européenne de Lille) which is a constituent area within the EGTC ELKT (Eurometropolis Lille Kortrijk Tournai). LMA is much larger than FUA and is densely populated in its core. Due to its large size and cross-border dimension, the overall urban sprawl appears relatively low, but more intense towards the North. The key challenges in the metropolitan development of Lille arise from the need to increase the economic prosperity and sustainability of the cross-border area between France and Belgium. As a unique metropolitan cluster with intensifying urban functions, exchange of public services and economic activities, the area shall be part of the coherent strategic plan. In order to effectively manage urban sprawl and traffic congestion, the national government should also recognise the Coal mining belt as part of the metropolitan polycentric structure of LMA.

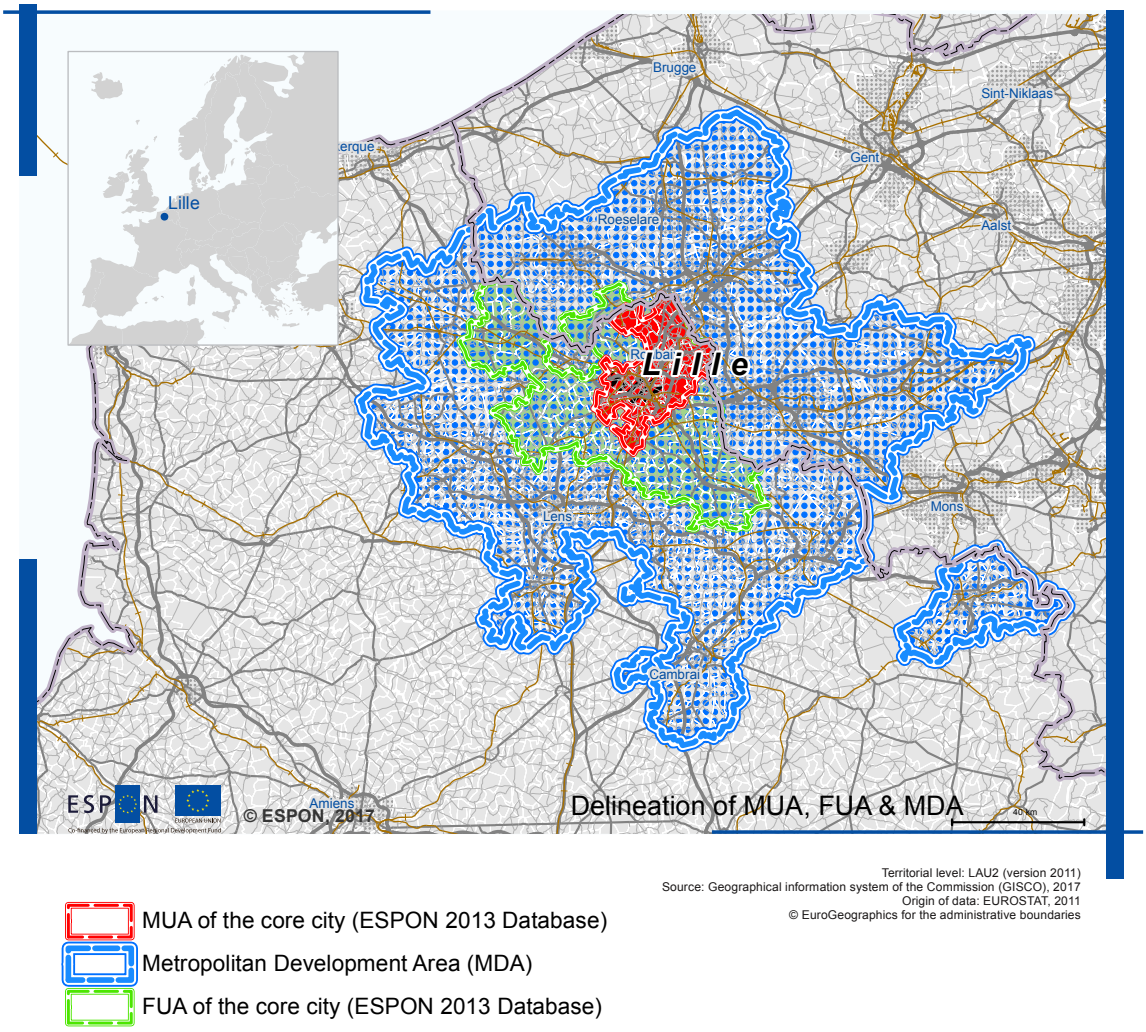

Figure 1
Cross-Border MDA of Lille

2. Flexible cross-border governance models

Latest from ESPON research

Recent ESPON research has investigated the propensity of local communities to engage in cross-communal soft governance initiatives for the joint management of occurrences which exceed the jurisdictions of single administrative units, notably economic spill-over effects and environmental causalities. These soft governance initiatives define the sectoral scope and geographical boundaries in an 'open' or 'fuzzy' way. They may operate at the level of functional areas, however, in many cases, the focus is on generating functional integration, rather than on adapting to a 'functional area'. In other words, 'functional areas' are approached as products of policy design and implementation rather than as external variables. The starting point is in most cases a latent 'community of intent'. This notion refers on the one hand to the concept of deliberative democracy, which postulates that political action cannot only rely on formalised procedures organised in territorial 'boxes' but has to consider practical and dynamic aspects. On the other hand, communities of intent follow a neo-institutionalist thinking that considers institutions to be more than jurisdictional issues.

ESPON research in the cross-border practice

The Danish Business Regions are a policy framework that allow municipalities and regions to cooperate in a new, not predefined and soft framework. The Greater Copenhagen cooperation is a cross-border business region, jointly governed by municipalities and regions in eastern Denmark and southern Sweden (Fig. 2). The main aim is to promote business and growth in the region for example by attracting foreign companies and investments. In order to facilitate collaboration and growth development across administrative boundaries, the Greater Copenhagen cooperation was formed. These developments followed the Øresund Cooperation which was primarily developed to support the development of the respective Øresund bridge. Swedish and Danish politicians developed the idea to transform the existing cooperation into a new organisation, which aims to further intensify cooperation between the Danish Capital Region, the Region of Zealand and the Swedish region of Skåne. Starting the process in 2013, the Greater Copenhagen Region was established as a Business Region and became operational in 2016, with an office in Copenhagen. The area covered includes these three regions with more than 4 million inhabitants. In the joint cross-border governance model, the 79 municipalities play an important role.

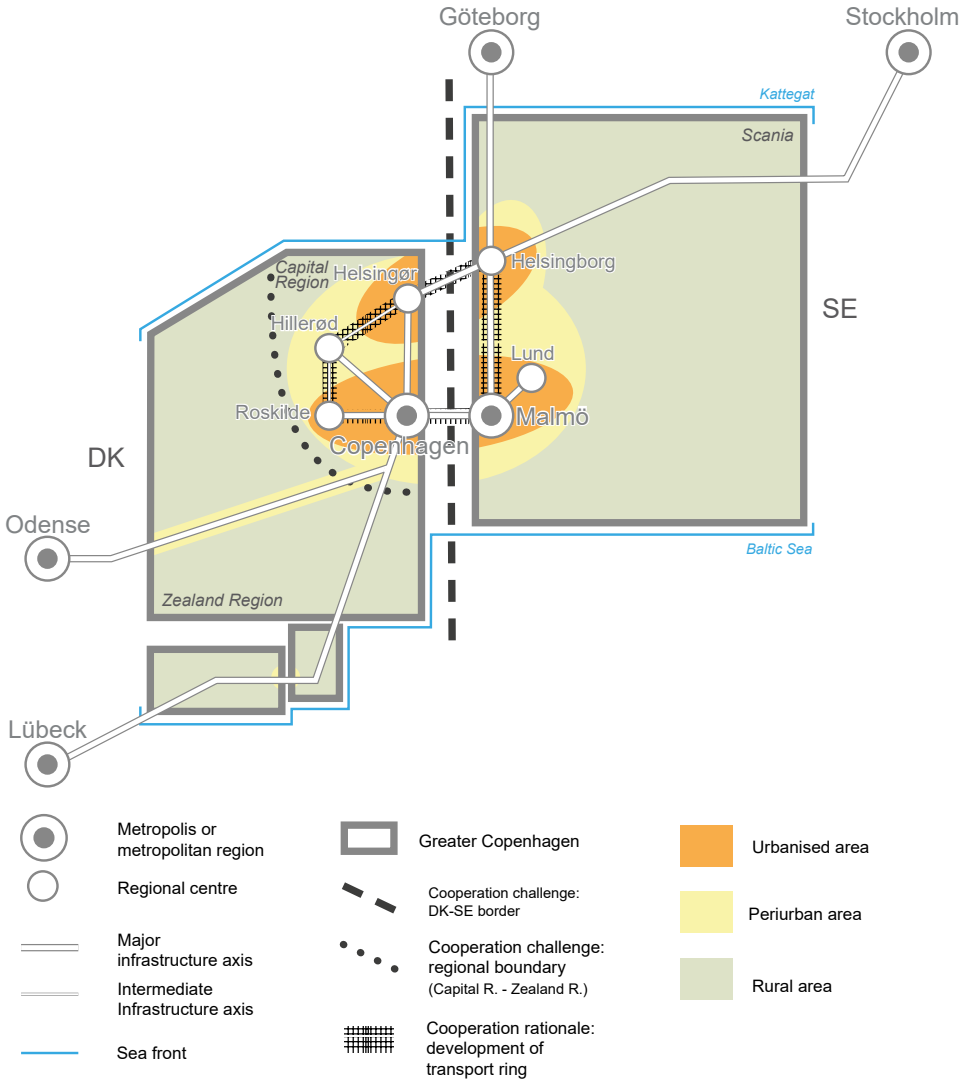

Figure 2
Mapshot of the Greater Copenhagen cooperation area

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Further reading:

Find out more about the institutional arrangements and types of joint cross-border interventions at: www.espon.eu/actarea

3. Cross-border public services

Latest from ESPON research

ESPON research on cross-border public services (CPS) released an interim report in April 2018 with preliminary conclusions. An online survey collected views from 211 respondents and on 98 CPS. In total, the research team identified 473 CPS across the EU. According to the researchers, the number of CPS provided in two or more countries and jointly managed by authorities in these countries is steadily increasing with an average of 5-10 CPS every year. Reportedly, the number of existing services is higher than the initial estimates at the beginning of the research. The majority of surveyed CPS address needs originating from existing cross-border flows including mobility, tourism, labour and education. Other services which might gain in popularity in future include jointly managed cultural heritage sites and museums. Unsurprisingly, a long cooperation tradition as well as population density determine the number of available CPS. Interreg funding is an additional leverage for the establishment of CPS through feasibility studies, infrastructure development or facilitation of governance processes.

ESPON research in the cross-border practice

The highest share of CSP has been recorded at the German-French border as well as in Scandinavia, the former accounting for approximately 16% of all CPS identified (Fig 3).

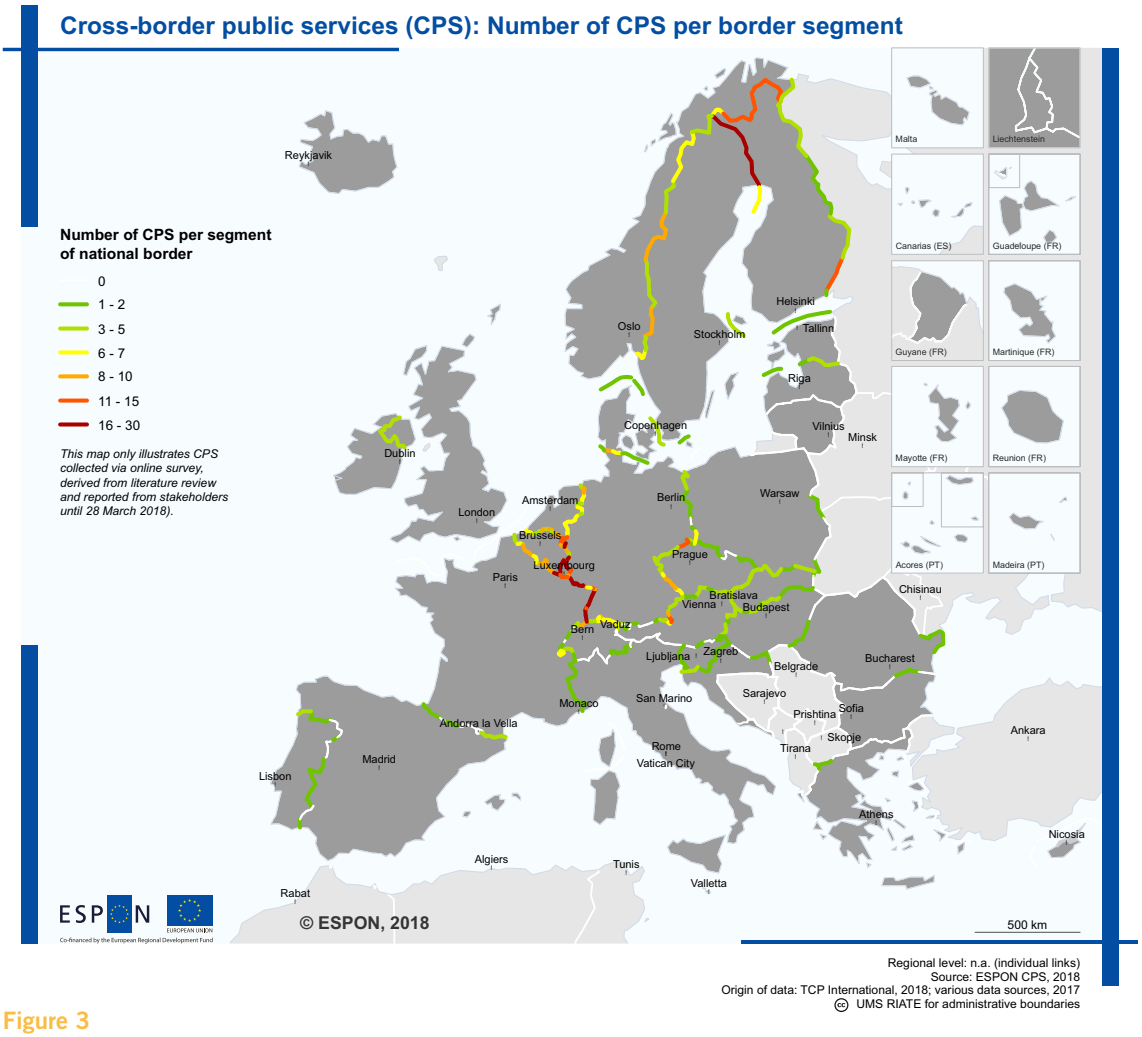

Figure 3
Number of CPSs per border segment

Most CPS identified are concerned with environmental protection, civil protection and disaster management as well as transport, followed by education and healthcare. About 25% address environmental issues including cross-border natural parks and sewage water treatment infrastructure. 23% deal with civil protection and disaster management such as cross-border firefighting or rescue services. The transport-related CPS include cross-border bus or tramway lines and joint ticketing solutions, and account for 13%. The share of bilingual schools, diploma recognition services, scholar mobility and other cross-border education and training services is 10%, followed by healthcare and social services such as jointly managed hospitals with 9.5% and joint tourism offices, cross-border trade development agencies and other spatial planning, tourism and culture CPS with 8%. Labour market and employment, for instance, a joint agency providing information and services to cross-border commuters; citizenship, justice and public security as well as cross-border broadband infrastructure or other communication services exist, however, they are less represented.

The distribution of CPS sectors is uneven across Europe, with borders that show a clear focus on one or two sectors, contrasted by borders showing a mixture of a wide array of services (Fig. 4). CPS in Scandinavia, for example, have a strong focus on civil protection and disaster management on the one hand, and healthcare on the other hand. In contrast, CPS along the Spanish-Portuguese border are related to labour market and employment, and CPS along the German-Czech and German-Austrian borders are mostly aiming at environmental and transport needs.

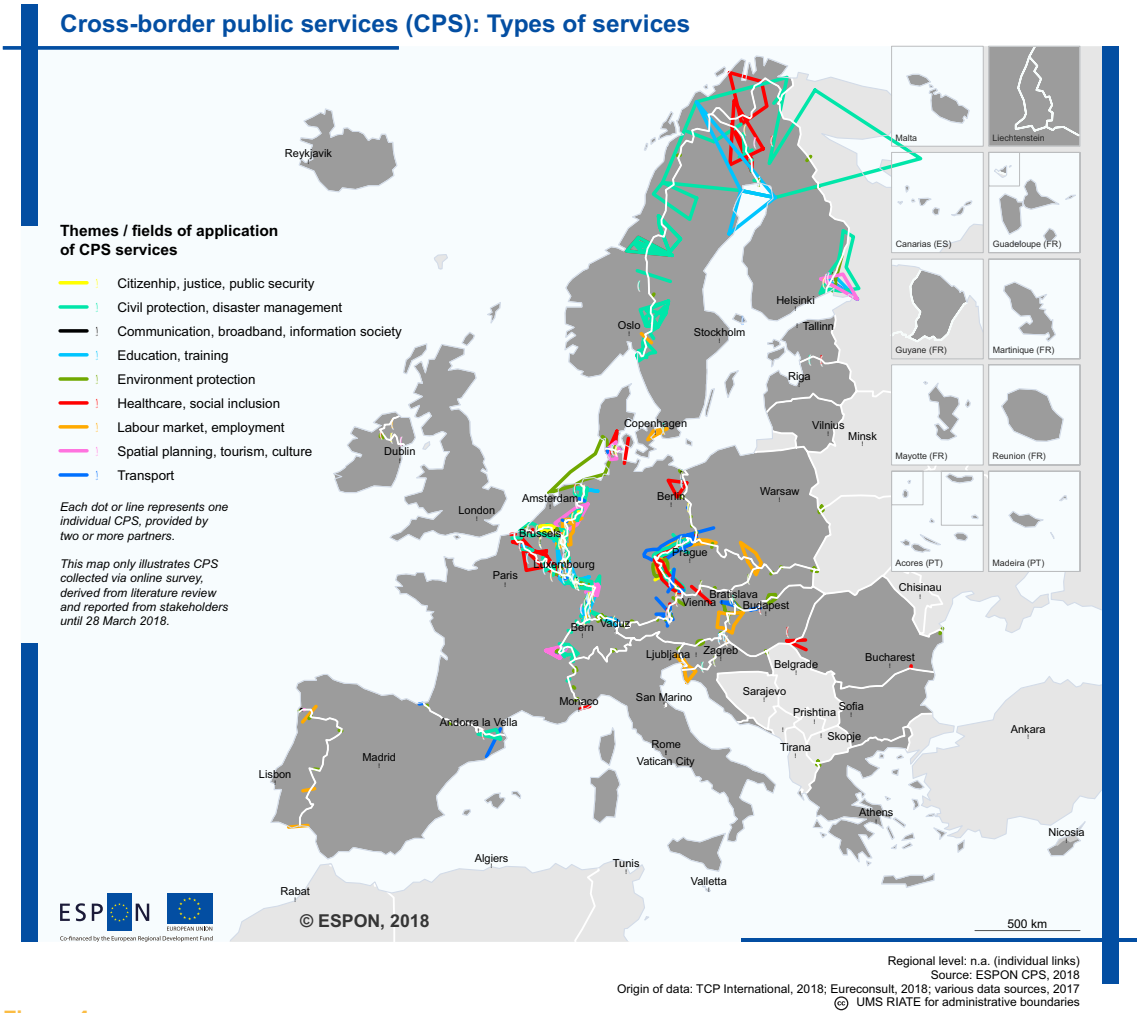

Figure 4
Types of CPSs

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Further reading:

Find out more about the project's progress at: www.espon.eu/CPS

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ESPON 2020

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