



EUROPEAN SPATIAL PLANNING
OBSERVATION NETWORK



Terms of Reference for ESPON-INTERACT Thematic Study

Environmental Hazards and Risk Management

Environmental hazards and risk management/preventions are important elements in the discussion of future Structural Funds. Already today a wide range of activities are carried out in this field under the framework of INTERREG and ESPON. This topic is one of the meeting points between INTERACT, facilitating mutual learning between different INTERREG areas, and ESPON, analyzing spatial development trends at European scale. The present document outlines the study to be carried out, analyzing and comparing the various ongoing activities related to environmental hazards and risk management in order to draw up proposals for future action, identify gaps and stimulate synergies. The study shall run from May to November 2005, with an important milestone being a INTERACT event centered on this study in October. This size of the study is 20,000 Euro (incl. VAT if applicable).

In the following the INTERACT Programme and the ESPON Programme are presented, before outlining the general objectives of this study, the primary research issues envisaged, the timetable and key deliveries and the budget.

1. The INTERACT Programme and the IP Qualification & Transfer

Cooperation between countries and regions promoted by the Community Initiatives INTERREG II and III has become a fundamental element of EU cohesion policy. The positive impacts of INTERREG II and III programmes and projects on social, economic cohesion and territorial development are acknowledged. However, their implementation is not always easy, insofar as it requires specific transnational knowledge and know-how which might not be sufficiently available at national or regional level. This holds especially true for the transnational and interregional cooperation programmes under strands B and C of INTERREG III.

The major problems concerning the INTERREG programmes and the adjacent project implementation obviously stem from difficulties to “manage the difference”: differences of legal, administrative rules, traditions between countries etc. In order to overcome these obstacles, but also to explore major opportunities and gain more benefits from the results

of the programmes and projects, more exchange and provision of information and good practices and examples among the INTERREG community is required.

INTERACT as part of the Community Initiative INTERREG is designed to address these weaknesses, and also to take advantage of the previous and ongoing experiences, with a view to increasing the impact of INTERREG III on economic, social cohesion and cooperation throughout the EU and with neighbouring countries. By capitalising the broad expertise in the fields of regional development, cross-border cooperation, transnational cooperation and interregional cooperation developed through INTERREG in all Member States of the EU the purpose is to provide support to the implementation of programmes and projects for all 3 strands of INTERREG.

More precisely, INTERACT aims at promoting the exchange of experience, making best practices accessible to interested stakeholders in the European Union through an active programme of dissemination, developing and offering decentralised training interventions and workshops for implementing bodies and project leaders.

In that perspective, major expected outcomes of the INTERACT programme are:

- To enable and encourage transfer of experiences and good practice between institutions and players in different geographical areas, programmes and INTERREG strands
- To provide a joint platform for INTERREG and establish common standards and procedures for the implementation of INTERREG programmes (especially for inter-regional and transnational cooperation and for cooperation with neighbouring countries)
- To enhance know-how, technical and organisational capacity of institutions, organisations and persons directly involved in the realisation of INTERREG programmes and projects and improve the link between regional and national instruments and INTERREG
- To enlarge the group of project applicants for all strands of INTERREG through broad information activities and support for project development and implementation
- To act as a platform for the transfer of data and information between related initiatives like ESPON, URBACT and the INTERREG programmes in both directions.

INTERACT serves as a major service provider for the INTERREG Community, as well as for the national and regional actors directly involved, by providing technical and scientific assistance; by increasing the quantity, and improving the quality of information necessary to the implementation of INTERREG programmes and projects; by facilitating the access to this information.

The services of the programme are developed by the Programme Secretariat and the five INTERACT Points:

- Information and Animation,
- Qualification and Transfer,
- IIC coordination,

- Tool Box
- Managing Transition and External cooperation

In this framework, the Interact Point Qualification and Transfer has two related specific objectives:

- to provide opportunities and forums for INTERREG operators to exchange knowledge and experiences.
- to provide opportunities for them to learn or update skills that are tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities of the INTERREG world.

These two objectives will be approached through a process involving all INTERREG operators in the discussion and identification of good practice, training on this good practice, evaluation of results and subsequent improvement of the training offered.

2. Relation to the ESPON Programme

In this context, the participation of ESPON in the Interact Point Qualification and Transfer aims at ensuring interaction on thematic issues. The purpose of this activity is to build on the use and exchange of knowledge accumulated in ESPON projects and to combine the knowledge with the good practice experiences in Interact projects in order to support the project development and the generation of project ideas to the benefit of many of the INTERREG programmes.

Furthermore, by interlinking and exchanging experiences from INTERREG III A, B and C and ESPON, mutual learning and benefits can be obtained, which in turn can support the development of new project ideas within INTERREG A, B and C programmes as well as new research within the ESPON programme.

ESPON has been contracted to provide content for events (seminars) on thematic issues and will as an input to these seminars, guide studies crossing assessment of project activities within INTERREG programmes with state-of-the-art research, analyses, and concrete project ideas for implementation in different strands of INTERREG.

The seminars should address several of the main INTERREG interests, by providing:

- an opportunity for project promoters and project managers from different programmes to meet, exchange knowledge and know-how
- an opportunity for actors coming from outside the INTERREG community to be informed on the development of INTERREG projects related to their field of activity.

As an essential input to thematic slots at INTERACT seminars, thematic studies need to be carried out, which are the subject of the present Terms of Reference. In order to address the mentioned interests, the thematic studies should concentrate on:

- scientific inputs on trends in a selected field, to “feed the content” of projects, better define the orientation that has to be given to the future projects in relation to ESDP objectives, and provide programme managers and project promoters with new project ideas. Indicators, tools and methods should also be partly envisaged in order to

improve analytical skills, and subsequently, implementation and evaluation of the projects

- case studies based on best practices examples taken among a wide range of INTERREG projects within the thematic focus, representing, as far as possible, all strands and main geographic areas.

Five themes of mutual interest have to be covered by ESPON based on INTERREG priorities, as well as on Commission priorities and ESPON's major areas of expertise:

- Transport, communication and accessibility
- Environmental hazards and risk management
- Polycentric development and urban-rural relations
- Cross-border cooperation
- Spatial visions and scenarios

3. General Objectives of the Study on Environmental Hazards and Risk Prevention

In the discussion on the **future Structural Funds**, environmental risk prevention is mentioned, including the promotion of maritime security and protection against flooding, marine and inland water pollution and protection against erosion, earthquakes and avalanches. Future programmes may address the provision of equipment and development of infrastructure, drawing up and implementing transnational assistance plans, risks mapping systems and the development of common instruments for studying, preventing, monitoring and controlling natural and technological risks. Furthermore, issue such as water management, with a clear transnational dimension, including protection and management of river basins, coastal zones, marine resources, water services and wetlands may be addressed.

Already **today, the INTERREG Community Initiative** is an important channel to develop, apply and test ideas furthering ESDP objectives in practice. In the context of risk management these objectives provide good opportunities for working with European meso-level governance issues. As such INTERREG programmes and projects address transboundary aspects and hazards and thus they help to overcome the discrepancies between ecological regions and administrative jurisdictions. Furthermore, INTERREG provides an opportunity for horizontal networking and information exchange for a wide variety of actors such as regional governments.

INTERREG cooperation seems especially promising in relation to hazards which cut across specific environmental conditions such as the Alpine region and European water bodies (e.g. Mediterranean, North Sea). Thus they can be useful in risk management efforts concerning risks related to environmental conditions such as coastal flooding, river basin flooding, droughts, forest fires or avalanches, landslides or earthquakes.

It should be recognised that a number of the activities carried out under INTERREG are considered as important resources for developing innovative practices in dealing with hazards. Therefore learning from these activities as well as the further use of both territorial cooperation in the field of risk management might inform policy makers at the European and local level. All three strands of INTERREG A, B and C are equally to be considered.

In parallel to the activities carried out under INTERREG, **ESPON** has analysed the spatial effects and management of natural and technological hazards in general and in relation to climate change. The ESPON study 1.3.1 “The Spatial Effects and Management of Natural and Technological Hazards in General and in Relation to Climate Change” presents for the first time insight into the spatial distribution of hazards such as floods, droughts, forest fires, winter storms, landslides/avalanches, earthquakes, volcanic eruption, extreme precipitation and extreme temperatures. Furthermore, the study explores the vulnerability of areas and provides policy recommendations for the handling of environmental risks.

In addition there are certainly also key activities outside the framework of INTERREG and ESPON which can be considered, not at least those activities related to the regulations of Structural Funds.

Thus, a wide range of work on the analysis of environmental hazards and risk management is currently ongoing with various geographical and thematic foci, as well as different processes and intentions.

Bringing together all this material should provide a good opportunity for mutual learning and inspiration and an added value for the future development of INTERREG cooperation activities and a future objective within Structural Funds framework dealing with territorial cooperation. It should enable project development officers and programme managers to better understand the distinct spatial characteristics and development trends within their programme area, and to consider them in a wider context.

For this purpose the present call for tender has been developed. The aim of this study is to provide a systematic and comparative overview of current work analysing environmental hazards and risk management in various INTERREG projects and to draw up an analysis their differences and in particular on how ESPON results can support the develop of risk management measures in other INTERREG programmes.

The focus of this study has to be set in close relation with the needs and expectations of the INTERREG programmes and projects, in order to provide appropriate answers to their needs, and stimulate synergies between them. Indeed, the study will be subject to an INTERACT seminar at which various actors of the INTERACT and INTERREG community will come together for discussing issues related to this study.

In order to assure client oriented and applicable results, following access points are to be considered:

- *Identification of environmental hazards and risk management suitable for interregional, transnational crossborder cooperation*
For the implementation of the thematic study, cooperation with other Interact Points (IPs) will be necessary, notably with IP Information and Animation for the analysis of INTERREG projects and identification of good practices (a project bank is currently being developed by this IP). Also activities undertaken by IP Tool Box and Managing Transition should provide some useful inputs to the thematic study.
- *Cooperation with INTERREG programme secretariats and projects*
Information on INTERREG projects and programmes is to varying degree available from the Internet. In order to have a comprehensive view of programmes and projects, the contractor will have to obtain information directly from the INTERREG secretariats and projects. The contractor will have the support of the ESPON CU and INTERACT Points regarding this particular task.
- *Cooperation with ESPON coordination unit and projects*
Most of the knowledge on trends and policy impacts within the European territory as well as background and methodological information will have to be found in and collected from the ESPON results dealing with environmental risks and natural heritage. This is in particular the ESPON project 1.3.1, but also other projects such as 3.2 or, 1.3.2 might be of relevance with regard to their work on environmental hazards and risk prevention.

4. Primary Research Issues Envisaged

Taking into consideration the EU cohesion policy, as well as the objectives of INTERREG and ESPON related to the ESDP, the thematic study needs to compile and compare INTERREG and ESPON projects/activities dealing with natural hazards and risk prevention at transnational and European level. The main purpose of this exercise is to provide new insights and ideas for the discussion on future programmes and key projects.

The key deliveries of the thematic study should address:

1. Compilation and comparison of the issues dealt with in various INTERREG and ESPON projects

A first brief overview of the topics dealt with under INTERREG and ESPON will address following aspects:

1.1. Project database

First comprehensive quantities and quantitative analysis of projects undertaken with INTERREG III (all III B and C and a selection of IIIA programmes) dealing with environmental hazards and risk prevention. The analysis shall be documented in a comprehensive database of INTERREG strands A (significantly representative samples), B and C (all) dealing with the theme. In that respect the production and analysis of questionnaires to INTERREG actors (at programme and/or project level) will be necessary.

1.2. Types of transnational hazards

Overview on environmental hazards and risk management approaches genuinely suitable for cross-border, interregional and transnational cooperation.

1.3. Transnational, interregional and cross-border risk management
Overview on the concrete tasks and recommendations of the various INTERREG and ESPON projects.

1.4. Geography of hazards and vulnerabilities
Analysis of the correspondence of the geographical information regarding where which kind of hazards and vulnerabilities are located and to what degree this relates to the existing of INTERREG projects in these areas.

2. Compilation and comparison of the approaches and processes in the field of risk evaluation techniques

The study will compare the various projects regarding the processes and approaches chosen for risk monitoring and evaluation techniques:

2.1. Qualitative and quantitative approaches in ESPON

Making a brief review of methodologies and indicators developed by the ESPON research regarding the theme.

2.2. Qualitative and quantitative approaches in INTERREG

Making a brief review of main methodologies and indicators developed by INTERREG research regarding the theme.

2.3. Identifying examples of good practice

Providing an overview on successful operations in relation to the objectives pursued as well as unachieved objectives, and factors of success/failure, with reference to specific types of regions (coasts, mountains, islands ...).

3. Compilation and comparison of the approaches and processes in the field of risk prevention and management

The study will compare the various projects regarding the processes and approaches chosen for risk prevention and management:

3.1. Qualitative and quantitative approaches in ESPON

Making a brief review of methodologies, techniques and recommendations developed by the ESPON research regarding the theme.

3.2. Qualitative and quantitative approaches in INTERREG

Making a brief review of methodologies, techniques and recommendations developed by the INTERREG research regarding the theme.

3.3. Identifying examples of good practice

Providing an overview on successful operations in relation to the objectives pursued as well as unachieved objectives, and factors of success/failure, with reference to specific types of regions (coasts, mountains, islands ...).

4. Provision on inputs for the definition of future cooperation themes and frameworks:

The thematic study is to be developed bearing in mind that the study and the interaction at the seminar will target mainly project officers and programme managers within the secretariats of INTERREG programmes. However, also participants in INTERREG projects and future project partners are to be addressed.

Project ideas that will be proposed should be on concrete realization of ESDP objectives, proving through action the continued relevance of European spatial development objectives. Furthermore, project ideas will have to take into consideration budgetary aspects, in relation to the size of the programmes, size and type of projects, but also orientations and perspectives for the next programming period, as soon as the new regulation for Structural Funds 2007-2013 becomes public. Taking this into account a proposal for future cooperation themes must be elaborated:

4.1. Identifying gaps

Are there specific themes that are not sufficiently addressed in the current INTERREG programmes (strands A, B and C) and to what extent are existing spatial disparities, challenges and potentials as identified by ESPON, targeted in INTERREG?

4.2. Distinct developments in programming areas

To what degree are the environmental risks target in the various programmes distinct for the specific areas or of more general nature?

4.3. Concrete ideas for future projects

Based on ESPON knowledge on territorial trends and policy impacts, related to different parts of Europe and different types of territories, and on findings of INTERREG projects dealing with environmental hazards and risk management concrete ideas for new projects in relation to the cooperation themes and frameworks, must be proposed.

6. Timetable and Key Deliverables

The implementation of the study should start mid May 2005, and be developed in accordance with the following timetable and deadlines for delivery:

• End of August 2005 : Draft Final Report

- Draft Final Report presenting all the above mentioned elements in a draft version, that will be finalised and complemented by the conclusions of the thematic seminar.
- Report presenting in a summarised version of approx. 20 pages the main outcomes of the thematic study, including the following elements:
 - Introduction
 - Findings on the European level, background information on current trends in environmental hazards analysis and risk prevention/management
 - Findings by topic, process and results (cf. research issues envisaged)
 - Identification of potential cooperation themes by type of regions in meeting respective programme objectives
 - Good practice in INTERREG projects with reference to specific types of regions
 - Concrete ideas for new projects and future perspectives
- Prior to the elaboration of the drafting of the Final Report a list of 10 key points is to be provided for coordination of the report with ongoing Interact and ESPON processes. This thematic document will be disseminated at least two weeks before the seminar, in order to prepare the participants for the discussion.

- **Beginning of September to end of October 2005: Consultation process**
 - The contractor, with the help of the Coordination Unit and the INTERACT Point Qualification & Transfer, will have to organise a consultation process involving the INTERREG programmes secretariats, for the validation of the results presented in the draft report. The recommendations given by the secretariats will have to be integrated in the report for its finalisation.

- **October 2005: INTERACT seminar**
 - The contractor will have to prepare and organise in collaboration with the INTERACT Point Qualification & Transfer team the thematic slot related to the study within the INTERACT seminar. He should be prepared to make a presentation of the results of the study, and to organise and lead the debate with the participants.
 - In time with the announcement of the event (that means before the submission of the above mentioned “thematic document”), the contractor will have to produce and communicate to the INTERACT Point Qualification & Transfer a list of the main elements presented in the thematic study draft final report, that will also be presented during the seminar.

- **End of November 2005: Final Report**
 - Presenting the finalised version of the thematic study, including conclusions from the INTERACT seminar.

The report is to be written in easily accessible English language which is appealing also to readers which are not familiar with environmental hazards and risk management.

7. Budget

The budget allocated for the implementation of the thematic study is 20.000 € VAT included if applicable (costs related to the participation to the seminar are not included).