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ESPON 2013 Programme

COMMUNICATION ACTION PLAN FOR 2009

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Introduction

This document describes the priorities, target groups, actions, calendar and budget which can contribute to the visibility of the ESPON 2013 Programme for the year 2009.

The Coordination Unit (CU) and the ESPON national contact points (ECP) will be in charge of the regular handling of information and publicity activities under the supervision of the MA and of the MC of the Programme.

The communication activities are fully complementary with another document, the Capitalisation Plan. The Communication Plan responds only to the technical requirements for information and transparency set out in the EU Regulation. The capitalisation activities fulfil another purpose by providing information to stakeholders and users on content and applied research achievements by actions under the ESPON 2013 Programme with the aim of creating awareness and application of ESPON evidence by actors concerned. Both work plans consult each other accordingly.

1. Communication priorities 2009

The overall objective of the Plan is to set out all information and communication aspects into a common framework in order to ensure coherence, efficiency and impact of the actions. For the 2009 the following priorities will be addressed:

- A. Ensuring a wide dissemination of information on calls as well as on application procedures and hereby support the widest possible participation of research institutions and/or organizations.
- B. Explaining the added value of the EU assistance, highlighting the role of the Community.
- C. Describing the procedures for accessing the ESPON 2013 funds, ensuring that the financing from the Programme is transparent.

2. Target groups

A distinction is necessary between three main audiences with partly different needs: potential and final beneficiaries, stakeholders, general public.

- **Potential and final beneficiaries:** The potential and final beneficiaries are public or public-equivalent bodies described in the Programme Manual and governed by public law.
- **Policy makers and practitioners** (target group of the results of the Programme) involved in carrying through programme and project activities outside and within Structural Funds' funded programmes dealing with territorial development and cooperation;
- **Stakeholders** (users) of the Programme results are European authorities, national authorities, Structural Funds Programmes (Objectives 1, 2 and 3) as well as groups of regional/local administrative entities (regions, cities).
- **General public**, in particular to underline the central role that the European Union plays in the ESPON 2013 Programme in cooperation with the Member and Partner States. This objective will be achieved by marketing the programme through different kinds of media.

In addition two more specific target groups are listed below:

- **Research institutes and universities** carrying through the analysis.

- **Organisations and parties outside** the EU and the ESPON Member/Partner States: Institutions, Administrative Authorities having an interest in the ESPON Programme It is the intention to consider involving further countries in the applied research and targeted analysis. EU Candidate Countries and direct neighbours of the EU will be primarily taken into account¹.

3. Coordination and synergies between Communication Plan and Capitalisation Strategy

The key messages of the Communication Plan will be as well channelled through media and action belonging to the Capitalisation Strategy, in particular:

- The ESPON website will be a key information source;
- Newsletters, information on new call, approved projects, seminars for potential and contracted beneficiaries will be made available to the main programme target groups and stakeholders;
- Information on the implementing actions of the Communication Plan will be as well provided at seminars and workshops targeting the programme stakeholders.

4. Actions 2009

Information about the programme will be spread through a variety of channels in order to reach the different stakeholders and raise general awareness. All actions will be implemented in the full respect of the information and publicity requirements of the ESPON Programme as well as of EU Requirements as stated in Articles 8 and 9 of Commission Regulation 1828/2006.

For the year 2009, the ESPON 2013 Managing Authority, with the support of the ESPON Coordination Unit, intends to implement the following actions:

4.1. Information tools

4.1.1. Programme Manual

The Programme Manual is a beneficiaries' handbook which will be regularly updated and completed with the relevant information providing a detailed picture of the priorities, their background and objectives, the principles for applying, assessing, approving and monitoring projects. It will be published on the ESPON website and disseminate during the events.

4.1.2. Applicants' package

The applicants' package will be update and made available prior the opening of the calls. The Applicants' package includes the application form, the Operational Programme, the Programme Manual and the Regulation providing the legal framework for the ESPON 2013 funded operations.

4.1.3. Programme database

The programme database needed for the management of the ESPON 2013 programme and the monitoring of the funded operations will be completed during first half 2009. The computerised management system will serve to processing and storing information about the projects and subsequently also information about the various priorities and

¹ In June 2008 for the first time an ESPON Seminar targeted also countries that are not partners in the Programme.

measures on the programme level. The database will serve as the main source for both quantitative and qualitative data on projects implementation and achievement.

4.1.4. The ESPON Coordination Unit (CU)

The CU provides continuously information about the programme. It can be contacted by telephone, fax, e-mail, via web sites as well as visits. External information requests will be answered as well as documents will be provided on demand.

4.1.5. Programme Bodies, Beneficiaries, Stakeholders, ECP

As well as being a target group for internal communication within the programme, the programme bodies will be utilised as a channel to reach beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries, policy makers, other stakeholders and the citizens. The ESPON Contact Point Network, when will complete cover 31 countries and be active implementing Transnational Networking Activities in projects of capitalisation, will provide information about the programme as well as the calls.

4.1.6. Internal information flow

In order to enable the flow of information between the various management units of the programme, i.e. between the CU, MA, CA, AA, MC regular meetings and contacts between the different units and actors will be held.

4.2. Communications tools

4.2.1. Publications

In the framework of the Capitalisation Strategy, a call for tender for the Corporate Identity and Lay-Out was launched in 2008; the ESPON 2013 Corporate Design should be presented for the MC in June 2009. It aims to provide visibility and recognisability of the programme throughout all its communication efforts. The programme statement, the European emblem and a reference to the ERDF funding will be included on communication materials.

In connection to e.g. seminars, conferences, speeches, exhibitions and fairs a wide range of publications will be produced and distributed. Information material for final beneficiaries on the framework and purpose of actions will be published and distributed at appropriate occasions.

In 2009 the programme will produce the following printed publications, which will be printed and/or distributed in electronic form:

- Programme and Guide Documents: Programme Manual and Application Pack.
- Corporate publications: a Programme presentation leaflet which also promoting the approved projects.

4.2.2. Newsletter

Regular electronic newsletters, developed in the framework of the Capitalisation Strategy give a direct and up to date overview of the latest news on issues connected to the programme and its implementation.

For each of the newsletters disseminated in the framework of the Capitalisation Strategy during 2009, the ESPON CU will elaborate a short article targeting the launch of the call for proposals and expressions for interests. In addition, information on the timetable

of events will be as well provided. The newsletters are distributed via e-mail to project partners and other parties interested in the work and progress of the programme.

- In 2009, it is foreseen to have at least 6 Newsletters.

4.2.3. ESPON Website

The ESPON website is the main form of communicating with target audiences. The website offers the opportunity of reaching a wide audience whilst at the same time being able to service specific audiences such as beneficiaries. The regular updating of the website is a continuous part of the CU's work. The website is constantly filled with relevant information and data on e.g. ongoing activities and calls for proposals, as well as facts and figures about the programme and its implementation.

A more ambitious phase is going to be implemented in 2009, in coordination with the further development of the website foreseen under Priority 4 dealing with Capitalisation. A call for tender "Webservice and IT solutions" is being processed in order to select a tenderer that can implement an updated version of the current Website as well as ensure its development, programming, maintenance.

4.2.4. ESPON Intranet

The intranet will be regularly updated in order to enable the flow of information from the authorities of the programme to the beneficiaries and between the different members of a group.

4.2.5. Media

At the launch of the first round of calls, press releases will be elaborated and channelled to the relevant media. The press release will be elaborated by the ESPON CU and will be mainly targeting the general public and the potential beneficiaries. This task will be realised in the framework of the Capitalisation Strategy. In 2009, the Capitalisation Plan is envisaged to opt at the following concrete output:

- 6 Press Releases
- 2 Articles (dependent on demand)

4.3. Targeted activities and actions/Events

In 2009, the following events are foreseen:

- Seminar for 1st Level financial controller, *22 January 2009*.
- Financial seminar, *31 March 2009*;
- Annual event (Info Day including a Q&A session), *29 April 2009*;
- Participation in at least 5 external events: Future Cohesion Policy - *March*, Informal Ministerial - *April*, Global Statistics - *June*, Open Days - *October*, Territorial Potentials - *December*.

Additional external events will probably be added during the year.

4.3.1. Seminar for 1st Level Financial Controller

On January the CU, in cooperation with URBACT, will organize a seminar for the first level controllers on financial and control issues. The attendance of the seminars will be compulsory for the staff of the beneficiaries involved in financial management. The seminar aims at improving the preparation of monitoring and financial reports,

increasing the image of the programme's implementation and administration procedures.

4.3.2. Financial seminar

Seminar on management and administration of projects will be organised on March for Lead and Project Partners of approved projects under the second round of calls launched in August 2008. Information about e.g. eligibility rules, programme manual, subsidy contract, reporting and monitoring procedures will be given, as well as information about administrative, legal and practical matters of relevance concerning project co-ordination and management.

4.3.3. 2009 Annual Event

The Programme will organize a major information activity (Info Day including a Q&A session) to present the achievements of the operational programme, the new funding opportunities and the conditions for applying.

The event will be organised in April, will target stakeholders, potential beneficiaries and authorities, the wider public. Detailed information on the ESPON 2013 Operational Programme, the opened calls, the conditions to access the funding and any other relevant information will be provided. The event will be publicised widely to ensure a fair participation of actors from all participating Member and Partners States.

4.3.4. Participation in external events

The programme will be marketed at several events like conferences, seminars, exhibitions and fairs. Information will be disseminated on e.g. project and programme results, funding opportunities. The ESPON CU will select during 2009 key events, organised by different institutions and/or organisation (the European Commission, other European programmes, etcetera).

At this stage the following events can be foreseen for 2009:

- Future of Cohesion Policy, *March*; Informal Ministerial, *April*; Global Statistics, *June*; Open Days, *October*; Territorial Potentials, *December*.

4.4. Flying the EU flag

Each year, for one week, starting 9th May, the Managing Authority will fly the flag of the European Union in front of its premises. All year round the ESPON Coordination Unit flies the EU flag in front of its premises.

4.5. List of beneficiaries

The list of the beneficiaries will be published on the web site of the Programme, together with the names of the operations and the amount of public funding allocated to each single operation. The list will be updated periodically after each binding decision of the Monitoring Committee and will be free for download.

4.6. Promotional material

The production of Promotional material for the ESPON 2013 Programme will be taken up in 2009. In principle this can include items such as flyers and general brochures, pens, memory keys, exhibition stands, CD ROMs, posters, and similar aiming at providing general information about the programme and increasing its visibility. However, the exact items, apart from an ESPON pen, will be decided during the year.

5. Calendar for Communication Activities in 2009

Actions 2009		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Information tools	Programme Manual				x								
	Applicants' Pack				x								
	Programme database				x								
	CU and ECP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Programme Bodies, Benef., Stakeholders	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Internal Information	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Communication tools	Publications				x								x
	Newsletter		x		x		x			x		x	x
	Website	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Intranet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Media-Press Release		x		x		x			x			x
Targeted activities and actions	Seminar Fin. Contr.	x											
	Financial seminar			x									
	Annual Event				x								
	External events			x	x		x				x		x
	Flying of EU flag - ESPON MA					x							
	ESPON CU	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	List of beneficiaries						x						x
	Promotional material				x								x

6. Budget 2009

The budget for Communication Plan 2009 looks as follows:

BUDGET Commitments: Communication Plan		2009
Information tools²	EUR	Source of funding
Programme Manual	-	P5 - TA staff budget
Applicants' Package	-	P5 - TA staff budget
Programme database	-	P5 - Ad hoc TA budget line
ESPON Coordination Unit	-	P5- TA staff budget
Internal Information Flow	-	No cost
Communication tools³		
Publications	-	P4 - Capitalisation
Newsletter	-	P5- TA staff budget
Website	-	P4 – Capitalisation – website
Intranet	-	P4 – Capitalisation - website
Media	-	P-4 Capitalisation - Media Bureau
Targeted actions and activities		
Seminar 1st Level Financial Controller	€8,000.00	P5 - Communication Plan
Financial Seminar	€5,000.00	P5 - Communication Plan
2009 Annual Event	€30,000.00	P5 - Communication Plan
Participation in external events	-	P5 - TA travel budget
Flying of EU flag	-	No cost
List of beneficiaries	-	P5- TA staff budget; P4 – Capitalis.
Promotional materials	€25,000.00	P5 - Communication Plan
TOTAL Communication Plan 2009	€68,000.00	

7. Evaluation

The ESPON CU will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the main actions foreseen for 2009. The evaluation will be based on brief questionnaire disseminated at ESPON events. The ESPON CU will compile and process the answers given with the aim of:

- Verifying whether or not the objectives set at the beginning of the action were achieved;
- Determining whether or not the organisation and the content of the action met the needs and expectations of the target;
- Facilitating learning from experience, thereby making it possible to adjust or modify future actions;
- Providing quantitative and qualitative information which can be used in annual reports, in newsletters or transmitted to the media as press releases.

² Actions not financed by the Communication Plan budget and detailed in the Priority 5.

³ Actions not financed by the Communication Plan budget and detailed in the Capitalisation activities 2009.