TPM
Territorial Performance Monitoring

Targeted Analysis 2013/02/13

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This report presents a more detailed overview of the analytical approach to be applied by the project. This Targeted Analysis is conducted within the framework of the ESPON 2013 Programme, partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

The partnership behind the ESPON Programme consists of the EU Commission and the Member States of the EU27, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Each partner is represented in the ESPON Monitoring Committee.

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The web site provides the possibility to download and examine the most recent documents produced by finalised and ongoing ESPON projects.

This basic report exists only in an electronic version.

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1 Introduction

This inception report clarifies some of the issues raised by the evaluators and stakeholders concerning our initial proposal. Due to the limited number of pages, some of the issues are only dealt with in a brief manner, highlighting the main issues.

The first chapter recalls the general approach in the project including some revisions discussed at the first steering committee meeting. The following chapters then detail particular aspects.

The following questions have come up during the elaboration of this report and need particular attention and an answer from the stakeholders:

- Does the translation of the global challenges into regional issues and, following, into indicators correspond to the needs of the stakeholders ? Linked to the previous point: should the project focus on the monitoring of spatial planning issues, or more on general territorial development issues ? The types of issues and indicators to use fundamentally differ between the two. (chapters 3.1 and 3.2)
- Does the proposed methodology for a first qualitative evaluation of the regions meet the expectation of the stakeholders ? (chapter 3.5)
- Is the proposal to analyse all 4 challenges for the Europe-level benchmarking, but only 2 challenges per region for the region-level analysis (with different challenges possible for each region) acceptable ? If yes, stakeholders should propose two challenges for their respective regions.
- Specifically for the Dublin stakeholder: to what extent is an approximation of the Dublin Greater Region by the NUTS 2 region IE02 "Southern and Eastern" acceptable for the Europe-level benchmarking exercise ?

2 More detailed overview of the analytical approach to be applied

2.1 Summary of proposed approach

As mentioned in the project proposal, the call asked for two things: a detailed analysis of each region and the elaboration of a model performance monitoring tool kit. The fact of seeing them as independent parts seems to weaken the project as a whole, and we believe that it would be wise to insist more on the development of the tool kit and integrate the elaboration of reports on the regions into the testing of the tool kit, but in light of the request for detailed regional reports in the interim report, we suggest to combine them as much as possible, providing first reports on the regions in the interim report in order to allow the use of the results in the respective regional policy making exercises, but then elaborating on these reports based in a test of the monitoring tool in all stakeholder regions.

Figure 1 shows the general structure we proposed for the project. In line with the main objective as declared in the project specifications, i.e. the elaboration of a performance monitoring tool is the central work package of the project. We will go through a more detailed review of existing systems in order to elaborate a detailed proposal for a draft monitoring tool. This proposal will also be fed by the two other work packages which will cover the quantitative and qualitative elements of monitoring and provide first reports on the stakeholder regions for the interim report. The monitoring tool kit will then be tested for all the stakeholder regions (and possibly other test regions) in order to provide insights into its robustness facing very diverse regional structures, scales and data availability. This test will then allow the elaboration of a final prototype of the tool, including detailed guidelines for its usage and recommendations for future research, as well as further, more detailed, reports on each region.

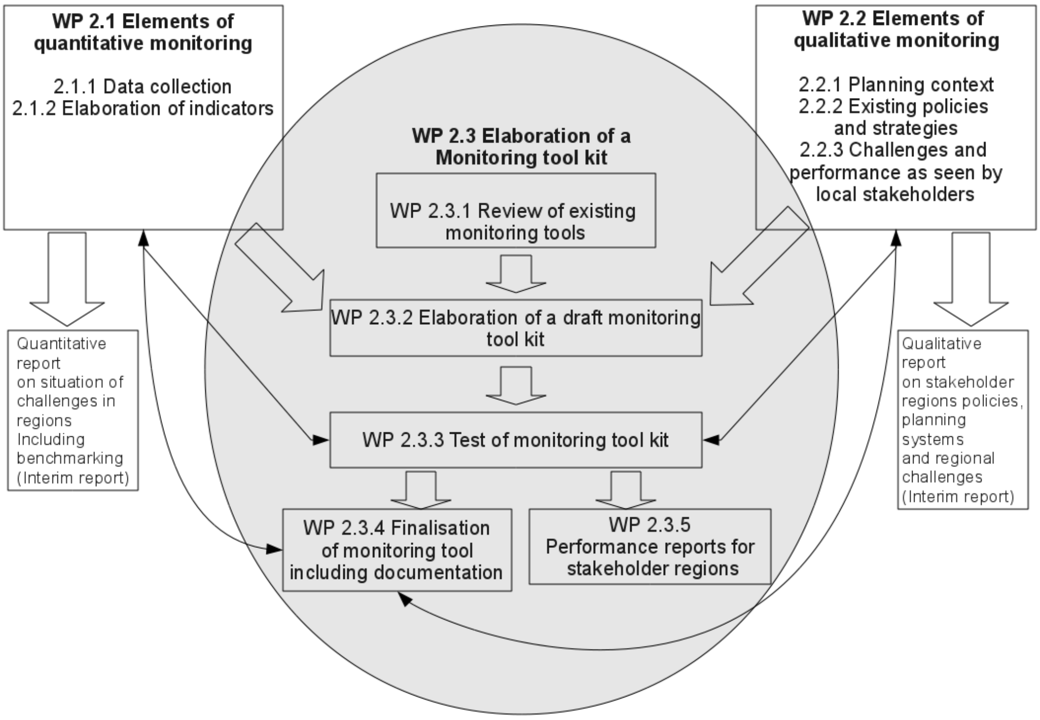

Figure 1: Structure of the TPM project in terms of workflow

2.2 Revision of approach based on kickoff meeting

The stakeholders agreed to the focus on the monitoring tool as the main objective of the project. In addition, the following elements were highlighted:

- The project should not develop one grand new monitoring tool, but should rather propose recommendations and a tool kit to allow each region to amend and improve their existing tools. Where such systems do not exist, however, a more complete proposal should be made.
- Benchmarking at European scale is deemed important by the stakeholders.
- Stakeholder regions do not necessarily want to focus on the same challenges.
- Moving away from a one-size-fits-all tool to recommendations and a tool kit from which regions can then pick what they want, but also

different priorities concerning relevant challenges, reduces comparability of results. We, therefore, propose to do the following:

  - Use the European-level data for comparison and benchmarking purposes in all four challenges.
  - Use the regional analyses (qualitative and quantitative) to focus on those specific challenges that seem the most important for the region, without bothering with comparability questions.

- Policy evaluation, i.e. actual policy impact assessment should not be the aim of the monitoring tools.
- A very important element that the project should provide for the tool kit is methods of qualitative analysis and the integration of the results of such methods into indicator-based monitoring tools.

3 Methodology and hypothesis for further investigation

3.1 Presentation of translation of global to regional challenges

The challenges highlighted in the call are the four main regional challenges identified by the ESPON 3.2 Scenarios project as being the permanent challenges mostly independent of the political choices explored in the prospective policy scenarios of that project. Each of these challenges has clear implication at European scale, but sometimes the effects at regional scale are exacerbated, while for some regions some challenges seem less relevant. At the same time, if Europe wants to meet these challenges, all spatial levels have to address them, including the regional level. It is thus important to understand how these challenges translate to the regional level and how each region performs.

When analysing the challenges at regional level, two dynamics have to be studied:

1) the impact of the challenge itself on the region and the capacity of the region to face it
2) the impact of policies and policy objectives defined at European and/or national level on the region

Figure 2 shows a mind map analysing the different paths by which the global challenges can influence regions by either of the two above dynamics. The map is incomplete in so far as it does not include the many cross-linkages between the different branches. In addition, some issue raised in one branch might also be relevant in other branches, but was not repeated for each in order to reduce redundancy.

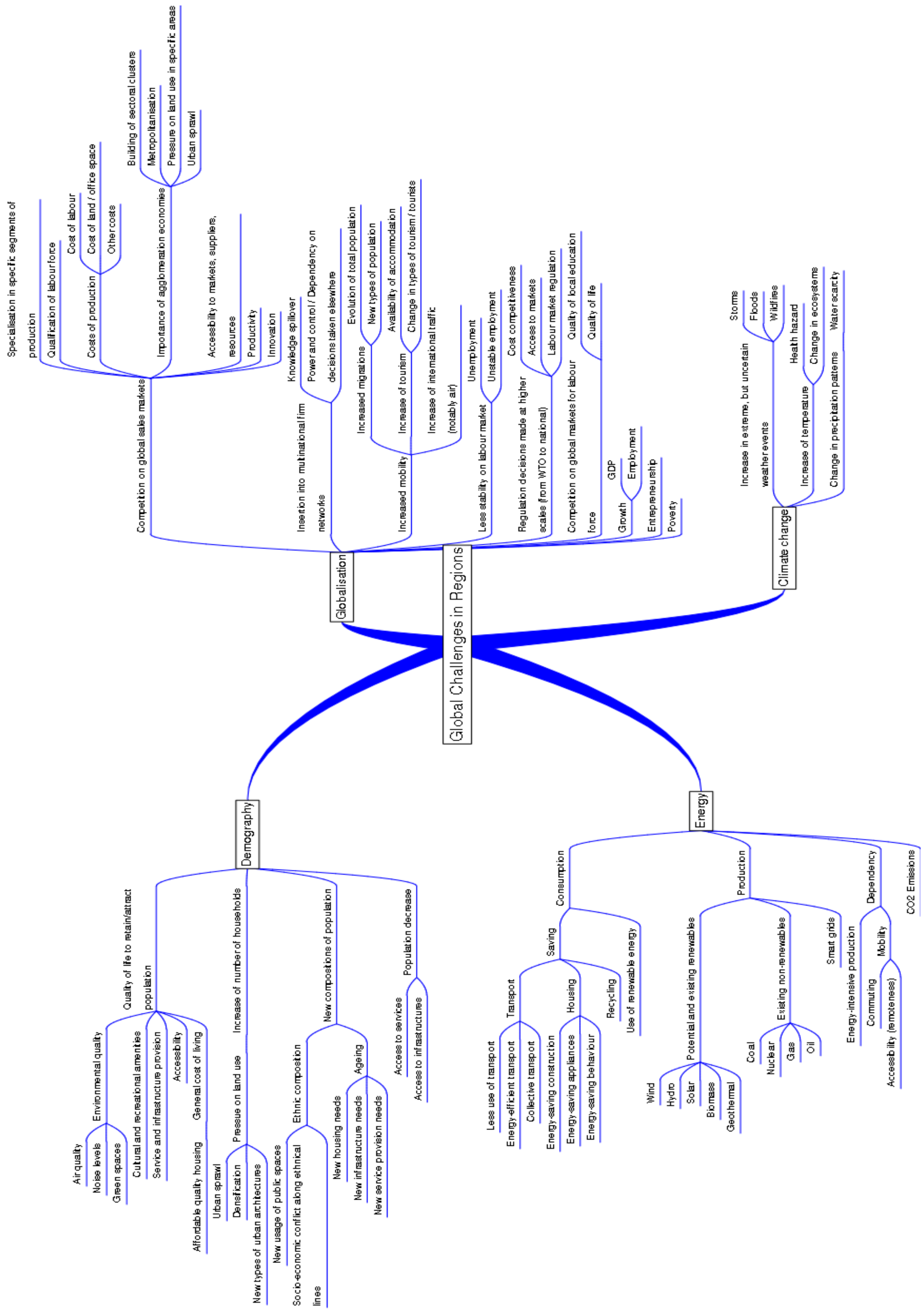

Figure 2: Mind map of the regional manifestations of the global challenges

3.2 From challenges to indicators

In the idea of not reinventing the wheel, but rather reinforcing the existing tools, we also analysed monitoring efforts in the stakeholder regions in order to identify indicators used that respond more or less to the issue presented in the mind map.

All stakeholder regions except for Nordrhein-Westfalen have some form of system (either in place or in planning) that should allow them to monitor their regional development plans. Table 1 presents the main systems chosen by the research team for analysing the indicators used.

For a detailed overview of indicators present in these systems as well as additional proposals from the team, see annexes II.4 and II.5.

An important question that was raised by the team during the work on the challenges and indicators was whether the work should focus on spatial planning issues, or more generally on territorial development. The indicators to be used will depend on that choice. A decision will, therefore, have to be taken at the next steering committee meeting.

Region	Name of tool / indicator set	Plan or policy the tool should monitor	Includes spatial differen-tiation ?	Includes qualitative elements ?
Catalonia	Indicadores de seguimiento del Plan Estratégico Metropolitano de Barcelona 2009[1]	Plan Estratégico Metropolitano de Barcelona 2009	no	no
Dublin	Potential indicators for Future Monitoring and Reports on RPGs Implementation	Regional Planning Guidelines	yes	yes
Navarra	New Territorial Monitoring System of Navarra	Estrategia Territorial de Navarra 2005	yes	no
NRW	None at the level of the Land, some do exist at lower levels	Different plans at different levels	sometimes	no
Flanders	Ruimtemonitor Vlaanderen	No direct link to a specific policy	yes	no

Table 1: Summary of assessment systems analysed for choices of indicators

1 As the Catalunia monitoring system of the general spatial plan was not yet in place, we decided to analyse the indicators monitoring the Barcelona Metropolitan Area plan.

3.3 Review of qualitative methods

As mentioned above, a particular demand from the stakeholders concerns the integration of qualitative methods into monitoring. For a discussion of advantages and disadvantages of quantitative versus qualitative methods see annex II.2. In the following we concentrate on a first review of different qualitative methods with their strengths and weaknesses.

3.3.1 Document analysis

In a document analysis, researchers analyse a set of essential and theme relevant documents. The documents analysed are text-based and follow a predefined framework. It can lead to a series of open-ended comments or a more structured way of assessment.

In TPM a document analysis could be used as a starting point and baseline for all research approaches.

3.3.2 In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are a special type of qualitative research methods that allow a direct interviewer to interviewee discussion. The main advantage of an in-depth interview is the inside into experts' belief, behaviour, and motivation and thereby into the research topic.

Normally the interviewer poses questions in a simple and neutral manner to start the interview. After the answers of the interviewee the "discussion" starts with follow-up or new questions.

A trustful atmosphere provides the best condition to collecting reliable data during the interview phase.

Strength	Weaknesses
Face-to-face discussion	No statistical evidence
Visuals may be used	High cost per interview
Complex questions are possible	Highly influenced by the interviewer
Insight into experts´ minds	
Lots of data (via length of the interview)	
Flexible Process	

3.3.3 Delphi method

The Delphi method is a structured communication and interaction method that relies on a panel of experts, who should answer questionnaires in two or more rounds. Delphi is based upon the principle that decisions by a collective and structured group of experts are more precise than those decisions made by individuals or unstructured groups (collective intelligence).

The Delphi method is mainly used for forecasting exercises, in which after each round, a facilitator provides an anonymous summary of the experts' forecasts from the previous round as well as the reasons they provided for their judgements. Thus, the experts are encouraged to revise their earlier answers in light of the replies of other members of their panel. In this way, the range of the answers will decrease round by round, and the group should converge towards the "correct" answer. Finally, the process ends after a pre-defined stop criterion (e.g. number of rounds, achievement of consensus, or stability of results) and the mean or median scores of the final rounds determine the results.

The methodological aspect that appears interesting for TPM is the articulation in two or more rounds of the interaction process with stakeholders. The first contributions from the stakeholders can be collected in the form of answers to questionnaires and their comments to these answers. In specific cases, some pre-structured interviews could also be used. Later, the coordinator controls the interactions among the participants by processing the information and filtering out irrelevant content.

This procedure avoids the negative effects of face-to-face panel discussions and solves the usual problems of group dynamics. Participants can comment on their own forecasts, the responses of others and on the progress of the panel as a whole, revising their earlier statements, while in regular group meetings participants tend to stick to previously stated opinions and often conform too much to group leaders.

Strength	Weaknesses
Combines qualitative and quantitative elements	Expert panel is vulnerable (e.g. composition of the panel,)
Judgement by a panel of experts´ (collective intelligence)	The whole process takes a lot of time
Iterative Process (i.e. rounds)	High costs
Individual statements mediated by the panel (Feedback)	Tendency to a median judgement
Gets beneath the surface of issues	
More structured than in-depth interviews	
Flexible Process	
Anonymity of the Process	

3.3.4 Focus group discussion

A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards a study agenda. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members. It should bring together a small homogeneous group (usually six to twelve persons) with the purpose of reveal underlying opinions, attitudes, and reasons for their behaviour, using the social dynamics of the group, in which a moderator/ facilitator stimulates the participants to focus on specific items.

The discussion should be led by a moderator/facilitator (preferably experienced), assisted by an observer who takes notes and arranges any tape recording. The moderator uses a prepared guide to ask general questions to the group. Usually more than one group session is needed to assure good coverage of responses to a set of topics.

In TPM, this technique could be used in the second round, when stakeholders are gathered in order to discuss some issues that rise from the analysis of the first round of questionnaires or interviews.

Strength	Weaknesses
Information about experts´ attitudes	Resource intensive
Small Group (therefore: ensure involvement for testing ideas and gaining opinions	Information (Data) collected based on a small group (small sample versus best evidence principle)
Focus group follows the nature of group interaction	Leans heavily on moderating skills of the researcher
Flexible process	

3.4 Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods into a monitoring system

One major challenge for this project will be the integration of qualitative and quantitative information into a coherent monitoring system. The use of qualitative information is absolutely crucial to provide insights into many non-measurable, but determinant, issues. In addition, qualitative approaches as listed in the previous section can also sometimes compensate for missing quantitative data.

Generally, we have to distinguish two types of qualitative data:

3.4.1 Qualitative data that can be translated into pseudo-quantitative indicators

Examples of such data are results of delphi-rounds and scoring or ranking exercises that can be part of any of the other methods listed above. Experts can be asked to judge a particular issue on a given scale describing things like "situation is very bad to very good", "situation is worsening vs improving", policies address the issue "not at all to absolutely sufficiently", etc. By defining such a scale, the representation of information within a monitoring tool becomes fairly easy. However, when using such pseudo-quantitative variables in conjunction with real quantitative variables in order to build synthetic indicators, care has to be given to issues such as the comparability of scales (e.g. how to compare a percentage of unemployed with a score between 1 and 10 describing job security) and, more generally, the weight to give to such opinions.

3.4.2 Qualitative data that cannot be translated into pseudo-quantitative indicators

Such data are, for example, interviews and focus group discussions without any scoring or ranking exercises. The information can, therefore, not be translated into indicators, but has to be taken as a whole, including the nuances discussed (and which are generally lost during the transformation into pseudo-quantitative indicators). Such information should also be part of the monitoring system, but will probably serve in a second line, i.e. as background information to more rapidly readable indicators. As an alternative, one or several expert(s) can subjectively translate the information into an overall judgement of "good" or "bad" which can then serve as a very rough indicator.

3.5 Presentation of qualitative reporting guidelines

3.5.1 Introduction

Next to the quantitative benchmarking presented above, the next phase of the project will contain a qualitative analysis of each region and their relationships with macro spatial challenges. This section presents the framework for this qualitative analysis. In its first part, implemented until the interim report in August 2011, the approach is exploratory in order to provide both a first overview of the situation in each region, and empirical input into the elaboration of the qualitative part of the monitoring tool kit.

Qualitative research is intended to give a better insight in how the regions are dealing with global challenges. Such a process not only involves the researchers. The way this qualitative data is collected should be subject to peer review by other stakeholders. They provide insights and knowledge from the policy-maker side and can contribute to fine-tuning the evaluation of strategies and policies.

In order to ensure coherence to the approach adopted by each regional partner, the document frames some guidelines for monitoring the capacity of the Regions in dealing with the four macro-challenges through:

- Planning systems and governance structures
- Strategies and planning documents (see the regional annexes I.1-I.5 for lists of relevant documents)

In order to do that, the framework draws on the methodology of previously developed qualitative-analysis frameworks, some other ESPON projects, and on a literature overview.

Moreover, this section defines a methodological structure combining:

- Researchers' activities in a desktop analysis;
- Stakeholders' involvement for complementary analyses.

Formalized criteria should avoid being rigid, procedural or over-prescriptive. Therefore, the guidelines have been devised to be flexible, and to give the opportunity to each partner to tailor the qualitative analysis to the specificity of the Region.

The outcome of the analysis will be a report on each region, including some form of evaluation of which type of qualitative methods and which aspects of qualitative evaluation would be the most important for monitoring the respective region.

Moreover, it should include some recommendations about measures that are necessary at regional level in the planning domain to improve the capacity to tackle aspects of the global challenges.

3.5.2 Aims of the analysis

The framework is built on a set of five aims from which to derive and structure appraisal questions that should be explored in the analysis, according to different methodologies. Further questions might be also added depending on the case study to be analysed and on the adopted methodology. In line with the general perspective of the TPM research project, the aims of the qualitative analysis are to analyse the following aspects of policy making. See annex II.3 for a table breaking down these items and sub-items in appraisal questions.

1. Awareness of the macro challenges

The macro challenges might be explicitly addressed or implicitly considered in the policy strategies of the Region or can also have been ignored until now. There are different degrees of awareness of these challenges, and it is worth having a perspective in terms of discourses, forecasting capacity and or place-in-action policies. The focus is on the perception of them in policy documents and planning instruments and in specialized debates.

2. Resilience of the planning system

Each planning system, either if it is regionalized or structured at national level, has different way of reacting to macro challenges and trends that have important territorial implications. It is determined by its capacity to understand those spatial implications and to strategically address territorial processes; to coordinate and integrate policies among different sectors and public bodies; to coordinate policies in a multi-scalar way, without following in contradiction with other levels; to share its aims involving public and private stakeholders, with participatory processes.

3. Effectiveness of policy documents/strategies, programmes and tools;

Each document, strategy, programme or tool that influences spatial development processes and dynamics might have a specific approach to the macro challenges. It might have an explicit or an implicit approach to them, and it might provide more or less detailed measures to tackle their spatial connotations. The appraisal exercise, thus, should focus on different aspects: the awareness of the macro challenges and how they influence the way the bundle of policies (either directly or indirectly related to them) copes with the spatial dynamics; the effectiveness and the strategic capacities of this policy bundle, determined by the congruence of the spatial vision(s) with the development of the spatial characterization of the challenges; the articulation of the vision in feasible objectives, providing a more or less coherent development of it; the coordination of different tools and policies necessary for synergic processes.

4. Future threats/opportunities of the macro challenges

The macro challenges concern aspects that will be deployed in the future, or at least that their trends will be more pronounced in the future then today. Thus, the qualitative analysis of the regional answers has to be conducted at the same time with the reporting of the perception of the threats and the opportunities represented by these challenges. It implies an exercise of future forecasting, combining if possible what has been reported in the documents (if existing), other forecasting exercises, and the sensibilities of some key experts.

3.5.3 Structure of the qualitative analysis

The proposed method has a hybrid structure, combining different techniques:

1. Desktop analysis done by the different project partners;
2. Two-step procedure of involvement of stakeholders:
    a. first, a questionnaire or a semi-structured interviews;
    b. second, a procedure of feedback on the first outcomes, in which different techniques can be adopted (focus group, or simple singular feedback from the stakeholders, ranking technique, etc)
3. Supports from and confrontation with the quantitative-analysis process.

See annex II.3 for a more detailed description of the proposed procedure and the involvement of the different actors.

3.5.4 Stakeholders

The involved stakeholders will be selected on the base of the potential contribution that can come from their specific knowledge. See the regional annexes (I.1-I.5) for respective lists of proposed contacts in each region. In this first phase, only a limited group of stakeholders will be contacted. Others will then be added during the monitoring tool test phase.

3.5.5 Expected Output

A final report of the qualitative analysis will be delivered per each Region. It will be composed according to the following table:

Report		
Session	Pages	Notes
1. Awareness of the macro challenges	6 (+1)	To be considered as 1,5 page per each macro-challenge plus an extra page for a specific regional challenge.
2. Resilience of the planning system	4 – 5	Overview of the resilience of the planning system, without distinction of macro-challenges
3. Effectiveness of policy bundles	6 (+1)	To be considered as 1,5 page per each macro-challenge plus an extra page for a specific regional challenge.
4. Future threats/opportunities of the macro challenges	4 (+1)	To be considered as 1 page per each macro-challenge plus an extra page for a specific regional challenge.

Table 2: Proposed structure of the qualitative reports on regions

4 Review of the main literature, data sources, etc. distinguishing between EU level and the particular case study level

4.1 Existing monitoring tools

As mentioned above, in most stakeholder regions (with the notable exception of Nordrhein-Westfalen) some form of monitoring of spatial or territorial developments exists. They differ in terms of the precise policies , but also the focus of the indicators chosen.

In line with the existing history of environmental assessments, several monitoring tools focusing on this topic exist.

The following main conclusions can currently be drawn from the ongoing analysis of existing monitoring tools:

- The absence of qualitative evaluations: real qualitative information is not taken into account in any of the reviewed monitoring tools.
- The content of regional monitoring tools differs very strongly depending on whether monitoring is about spatial planning (e.g. Flemish Ruimtemonitor or Dublin potential indicators for monitoring the Regional Planning Guidelines) or more generally about regional development (Dublin city indicators, Monitoring indicators for the strategic plan of the Barcelona metropolitan area).
- The spatial differentiation also greatly differs, pretty much in line with the content difference highlighted in the previous point, with spatial planning (but also environment) oriented systems more spatially differentiated (including maps) than the more socio-economic regional development systems.
- Some sort of dashboard system can be found in most regions, be it the example of traffic lights in Barcelona, the smileys used in the Irish "Environment in Focus" or system in Navarra containing green, yellow or red colours in a table allowing to differentiate evaluations according to different scales of reference.

See annexes II.1 for more detailed reviews of some of the systems.

4.2 Data sources

4.2.1 European-level data

In the next phase of the project, we will provide European-level benchmarking for each region (at NUTS 2 – 3 level, possibly NUTS 1 for Flanders and Nordrhein-Westfalen) on the chosen set of indicators, based mostly on data from Eurostat (Regional database), complemented by data from the ESPON Database, including data not yet in the database, but available from DEMIFER (Demography), ReRisk (Energy) and the Climate Change project, but also first data from TIGER as well as data from FOCI (globalisation and cities).

Most indicators listed in annex II.4 are available from Eurostat, or from ESPON projects. A major difficulty will be any data only available at NUTS2-level (actually most of the data) which will make analysis difficult for the Dublin case as the two NUTS3-regions representing the Dublin Greater Region only account for a bit more than 50% of the population of the relevant NUTS2, thus making the use of this NUTS 2 as a proxy for the region questionable (although both the FOCI project and DG Regio use this approximation when working on city data). The Dublin stakeholders will have to provide a decision on that question.

In case data are not available, we propose the following procedure for the Europe-wide benchmarking exercise:

- If data are not available for any region, then the indicator will be dropped, as the aim of TPM is not to create new data, but to use existing results.
- If the data exist for all regions except one or two, then two options exists:
    - If data at higher levels exist, these values can be used for demonstration purposes of the monitoring tool, but with the necessary mention of caveats
    - If data do not exist at higher level, the region will be left out of the benchmarking for this indicator.

4.2.2 Region-level data

In the third phase of the project after the interim report in August, we will then go into the quantitative analysis of specific indicators for each region, depending on choice of challenges, choice of types of policies to monitor and local data availability.

For a detailed review of available region-level data see the relevant tables in the respective regional annexes (I.1-I.5).

5 Distribution of work packages among partners, the break down of the project's budget on the individual partners per budget line

For the distribution of work packages see the project proposal. The detailed project budget has already been transmitted to the ESPON CU, but is annexed to this report for the record.

6 Orientation of the project previewed towards the Interim report

The work during the next months until the interim report in August 2011 will include the following:

- qualitative analysis of the regions
- benchmarking on the basis of European data
- collection of regional data on the basis of the choices by stakeholders of regional challenges and types of indicators

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