



ESPON 2013 Programme/Press Release No 09/2012

Luxembourg/Nicosia, 16 November 2012

Role of cities, regions and EU Neighbourhood in the global economy

As recent ESPON evidence on globalisation shows, to strengthen competitiveness and to enhance Europe's strategic linkages, it is of great relevance to better understand the territorial development of the EU neighbouring regions.

ESPON's contribution to the formulation of adequate policy strategies to enhance Europe's competitiveness in the global context is in focus at the Internal Seminar on 5 and 6 December 2012 "Territorial Development Opportunities in Europe and its Neighbourhood to Foster Global Competitiveness", organised in cooperation with the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Phaedon Enotiades, from the Cyprus Ministry of the Interior, welcomed the topic of the event and said: *cooperation between the EU Member States and their neighbours is an opportunity for development from a global perspective. A "functional region of Europe", which goes beyond the EU borders, is becoming increasingly important in terms of flows of goods and people but also in transnational cooperation.*

At the event stimulating content, networking and inspiring talks from relevant speakers will ensure all attendees have an insight into the ESPON knowledge for better understanding the role, position and influence of European regions, cities and its neighbourhood in the global economy. Peter Mehlbye, Director of the ESPON Coordination Unit, said: *The ESPON Internal Seminar in Cyprus, which takes place in the year of the tenth anniversary of ESPON, is a good opportunity to create a dialogue between policy makers, practitioners and researchers on new territorial development opportunities and strategic options for cooperation with the European Neighbourhood that could promote Europe's competitiveness and territorial integration in the long perspective.*

The purpose of the event in Paphos - Cyprus is two-fold:

- debate and better understand the territorial development of structures, trends and perspectives in the Neighbourhood countries and cities by using ESPON evidence and tools;
- allow policy makers and practitioners to discuss themes for further mutual cooperation between Europe and its neighbourhood and approach new options for territorial development in the global context.

On the first day the theme “territorial structures and main developments in Europe and its Neighbourhood: priorities for cooperation” will be addressed to stimulate a thorough discussion based on concrete experiences making reference to the current political debate on the future Cohesion Policy, the EU 2020 Strategy, the Territorial Agenda 2020.

Keynote speakers from EU neighbourhood and ESPON projects will share their points of view on how to foster regions’ and cities’ competitiveness by making better use of territorial diversity in Europe and its neighbourhood. Key questions will be:

- How can the diversity of territories in the European neighbourhood be positively explored in the long term development and towards sustainable global integration?
- What main challenges related to disparities and territorial balance can be identified?
- What are the main priority areas for cooperation?
- What new demand could arise for the EU Cohesion Policy due to further accession of new EU Member States?
- And what examples could be mentioned as good practice in boosting the competitiveness and integration of cities and regions in the 21st century’s new era of international competition?

Researchers and experts will present new evidence in a series of workshops organised around thematic priorities (accessibility, transport, territorial factors for global competitiveness and growth, territorial cooperation at different scales, urban fabric, demographic change, core-periphery challenges). The Seminar will moreover offer insights on the tools, indicators and data made available by ESPON.

Further details and contact

- Considering that the theme is interesting to a wider audience, ESPON will produce a report which aims at disseminating the main outcomes of the event. The report shall be published early 2013 at the ESPON website.
- The ESPON Internal Seminars bring together for dialogue the Monitoring Committee, Contact Points and Project Groups on actions under priorities 1, 2, 3 and 4. The stakeholders participating in Targeted Analysis projects are a fourth group integrated in these events. The Internal Seminars shall contribute to ensuring the internal consistency and synergy related to the content of projects within the different programme priorities.
- Contact: ESPON Coordination Unit info@espon.eu

Interested in ESPON?

The ESPON 2013 Programme is part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and 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 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 Sustainable Development and Infrastructures, Department of Spatial Planning and Development of Luxembourg.

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