

## **SPECIFICATION**

### **ESPON Scientific Platform/Tools Project 2013/3/5**

## **ESPON Atlas on European Territorial Structures and Dynamics (2012-2014)**

### ***(o) Territorial challenges relevant for ESPON 2013 projects***

The development of the European territory is facing several ongoing mega trends and impacts of policies:

- The integration of the EU in global economic competition is accelerating, offering more options for regions and larger territories in deciding on their development path as development is no longer a zero sum game for Europe.
- Interaction is growing between the EU territory and the surrounding neighbour countries as well as the other parts of the world, becoming apparent by e.g. migration pressure on more developed countries, which are themselves confronted with population decline and by access to and investment in new markets.
- Market forces and the evolution of society in general are supporting a geographical concentration of activities. The current economic downturn is having asymmetrical impacts on regions and cities, often mostly related to their national context and more local economic base.
- The ongoing demographic change with an ageing European population and migration is affecting the regions differently and boosts the competition for skilled labour.
- The occurrence of hazards is increasing due to climate change while different parts of Europe experience different types of hazards.
- Increasing energy prices and the emergence of a new energy paradigm have significant territorial impacts, some regions being more affected than others, some of which have particular potential for production of renewable energy sources.
- The enlargement of the EU to 27 Member States, and soon with additional countries, presents an unprecedented challenge for the competitiveness and internal cohesion of the Union.

ESPON results have revealed that territorial capital and opportunities for development are inherent in the regional diversity that is a characteristic of Europe. Consequently, different types of territories are endowed with diverse combinations of resources, putting them into different positions for contributing to the achievement of the Europe 2020 Strategy as well as to EU Cohesion Policy. Territorial diversity, particularly in the economic base, implies the need for tailor-made regional strategies building on endogenous potentials and synergies through

cooperation in order for regions, cities and larger territories to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The ESPON 2006 Programme provided integrated analysis and long term spatial scenarios which enriched the European policy debate and knowledge base. The results and observations produced by ESPON on territorial structures, trends, perspectives and assessment of EU policy impacts had not been fully evident before and supported a better understanding of the European dimension of territorial dynamics. Therefore, interest is growing among policy makers and practitioners for the information, knowledge and understanding ESPON can offer.

The ESPON 2013 Programme shall bring this knowledge base one step further by carrying out applied research and targeted analysis, indicator development and data collection, capitalisation events presenting results, etc. All these actions will be related to an improved understanding of territorial structures, development trends, perspectives and policy impacts.

The European-wide evidence provided by the ESPON 2007-2013 Programme will potentially benefit stakeholders all over Europe at all levels. Policy makers dealing with territorial development require sound evidence and comparable regionalised information as well as medium and long-term development perspectives in order to draw up sustainable and efficient integrated policy responses for their territories.

All in all, the European process moves towards a more integrated approach to policy making which makes the territorial dimension important for policy makers. The aim of territorial cohesion included in the Treaty supports this approach by taking the territory as an element in the framework for policy making. Due to its provision of evidence based on analyses of territorial units the ESPON 2013 Programme is of strategic importance for the European policy development and cooperation.

By further extending and deepening the existing knowledge and indicators, the ESPON 2013 Programme will play a strategic role in supporting the policy process of the current period 2007-2013 and contributing to the development of Cohesion Policy beyond 2013.

### ***(i) General objectives of projects under Priority 3***

The general objectives of applied research scientific platform projects within the ESPON 2013 Programme are the following:

- Contribute to the consolidation of the scientific platform of the ESPON 2013 Programme and to the territorial knowledge base needed for informed policy formulation and application
- Ensure data, territorial indicators and tools that are usable for policy makers and practitioners at all administrative levels
- Respond to needs for public access to the ESPON data and tools
- Ensure availability of comparable and robust regional (and urban) data at as detailed geographical scale as possible as well as statistical quality control and data validation
- Ensure that European standards for spatial referencing and storage of data are respected (such as applying the ETRS1989 standard and the Inspire Directive).

- Support a concrete application and use of data for policy, strategy and planning processes, including tools and techniques for forecasting and modelling
- Continuously provide an updated basis for monitoring and assessing territorial development trends in relation to territorial policy objectives at European level based on relevant territorial indicators/indices.

This project shall contribute to these general objectives during its implementation, and in doing so make best use of existing ESPON results, new results in other ESPON projects as well as other research results and relevant studies.

### ***(ii) Relation of this project to the ESPON 2013 Programme***

The priorities describing the work-programme of the ESPON 2013 Programme are structured in four strands:

- Applied research on territorial development, competitiveness and cohesion: Evidence on European territorial trends, perspectives and policy impacts**  
The applied research projects will opt for information and evidence on territorial potentials and challenges focusing on opportunities for success for the development of regions. Cross thematic applied research will be a major activity integrating existing thematic analysis and adding future analysis of new themes. Territorial impact studies of EU policies will be another focus under this priority.
- Targeted analysis based on user demand: European perspective to development of different types of territories**  
This priority responds to a clear demand of practitioners for user and demand driven actions within the ESPON 2013 Programme. By convening an analytical process where ESPON findings are integrated with more detailed information and practical know-how, new understanding of future development potentials and challenges may arise, which could be transformed into projects and actions.
- Scientific platform and tools: Territorial indicators and data, analytical tools and scientific support**  
The scientific platform and analytical tools built up within the ESPON 2006 Programme will be maintained and further expanded. New actions shall be undertaken to develop current achievements and make use of the indicators, data and tools.
- Capitalisation, ownership and participation: Capacity building, dialogue and networking**  
Under this priority, actions are foreseen that will be aiming at making the evidence and knowledge developed operational through measures raising awareness and involving stakeholders in the results and their practical use.

Priority 3 of the ESPON 2013 Programme includes essential actions for this project, in particular the ESPON Database, the project on Territorial Indicators and the development of a Territorial Monitoring and Reporting system at European level for the continuing assessment of territorial development dynamics in relation to territorial policy objectives.

### *iii) Thematic scope and context*

The results of ESPON 2013 Projects under Priority 1 and 2 are main providers of new facts, evidence and knowledge about European territorial structures, trends and perspectives and policy impacts. Together with the indicators and datasets included in the ESPON Database produced by Priority 3 Projects, this project shall support the mission of the ESPON 2013 Programme supporting policy development by compiling an “ESPON Atlas on European Territorial Structures and Dynamics” by the end of the ESPON 2013 Programme.

This ESPON Atlas shall enable comparisons amongst regions, cities and support the understanding of European territorial diversity of potentials and challenges. The ESPON Atlas is envisaged to present a synoptic and comprehensive overview of key findings from ESPON P1 and P2 projects. Basically, the results of all ESPON 2013 Projects (P1, P2) and the ESPON Database should be considered in the framework of this project. Then, a selection of the most policy relevant maps and findings should be made to be included in an ESPON Atlas.

The main current policy developments at European level related to territorial development shall provide a framework for the selection of themes and arrangement of the thematic structure of this ESPON Atlas. In this respect it is important to take into account the following policy documents:

- Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion - Turning territorial diversity into strength (06.10.2008) and the policy actions mentioned on three fronts: concentration, connection and cooperation.
- The Europe 2020 Strategy (03.03.2010), aimed at supporting the European recovery from the economic and financial crisis and to prepare the EU economy for the next decade, which is expected to see increasing international competition and a new order of world powers. In this document, the Commission identifies three key drivers for growth, to be implemented through concrete actions at EU and national levels: smart growth, sustainable growth and inclusive growth.
- The Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion from the European Commission (9.11.2010), which indicates that the Cohesion Policy should be concentrated on the Europe 2020 objectives and targets. In addition, in the current discussion, an evidence-based and result-oriented approach is being promoted for Structural Funds 2014-2020. The development of this debate shall also be taken into account in the project implementation.
- The Territorial Agenda 2020 (19.5.2011), adopted at an informal Ministerial meeting during the Hungarian EU Presidency, which includes the following six territorial priorities for the EU: promote polycentric and balanced territorial development; encouraging integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions; territorial integration in cross-border and transnational functional regions; ensuring global competitiveness of the regions based on strong local economies; improving territorial connectivity for individuals, communities and enterprises and; managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values of regions.

In practical terms, this Atlas should inform national and regional policy makers about the position and situation of their regions, cities and territories in the European context and eventually to support them to define tailor-made, ‘place-based’ policies.

#### ***iv) General objectives***

Based on a selection and compilation of maps from ESPON P1 and P2 projects, the ESPON Atlas on European Territorial Structures and Dynamics should have the character of giving basic and comprehensive information on the state, trends and perspectives for the European territory, its regions and cities within the different themes that have been researched and analysed within ESPON 2013 Programme. The policy framework mentioned above and the main policy documents and objectives related to Territorial Cohesion should be considered and reflected in the structure of the Atlas.

The basic and comprehensive approach should make the Atlas useful and appealing for deeper studying, in principle of all themes and aspects of European territorial development that may be interesting in a place-based approach. With this comprehensive approach also the Atlas would become important and useful as teaching material at university level. In particular the latter focus will bring substantial added value on top of other ESPON activities decided.

A digital version of the ESPON Atlas, next to a printed version, should make it possible to access the Atlas in a user-friendly and interactive way and should stimulate the interest and support the use of the ESPON Atlas by students and in teaching. The digital Atlas should make it possible to access, search, navigate (e.g. pan, zoom, reset) and visualise the various elements of the Atlas (i.e. maps, text, supporting data and information) in an interactive way. Moreover, it should also be possible to download all datasets and maps included in the Atlas.

#### **Structure and content**

The ESPON Atlas should cover the themes of all applied research projects and targeted analyses covered by the ESPON 2013 Programme, displaying information on territorial structures, trends, perspectives and policy impacts. The Atlas will not take a particular policy defined point of departure, but aims at covering the multitude of ESPON themes in a comprehensive manner.

It should include a wide variety of maps, easy readable, understandable and policy relevant, which shall always be accompanied by a text presenting the main messages of the map and key policy observations in relation to European territorial development and Cohesion Policy. The findings of the various ESPON projects presented in various ESPON reports (Draft Final and Final Reports) from where the maps are selected shall be considered in the framework of this project in order to avoid incongruence or discrepancies between the ESPON Atlas and other ESPON reports. Besides the selection of maps from ESPON P1 and P2 projects, a limited amount of time and resources should be devoted to update/complete datasets on a couple of key topics and maps selected (if relevant) but also for producing new maps, diagrams and graphs on the themes covered by the Atlas. In this respect, main elements of the ESPON scientific platform such as the ESPON Database and the ESPON HyperAtlas should be considered in the production of new maps and diagrams.

Based on the maps selected and produced, the project is expected to analyse and make an interpretation each map. The maps selected and produced should be accompanied by a short text with the main key messages and relevant policy observations at different geographical levels and for different types of regions.

The interpretation of maps included in the Atlas should be made in a highly communicative and understandable way and presented in a simple style for policy makers; however the Atlas shall

still be giving solid, accurate and reliable explanations on the phenomena studied and displayed in order also to be able to serve teaching purposes.

In order to achieve these objectives, the following aspects shall be taken into account in project proposals and during the project implementation:

- (1) The experiences obtained from the Atlas published under the ESPON 2006 should be considered and related to the selection of maps from ESPON 2013 Priority 1 and 2 Projects, as well, as policy relevant data and indicators included in the ESPON 2013 Database.
- (2) The geographical coverage of the project should encompass all countries participating in the ESPON 2013 Programme, also the 4 Partner States Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland. Furthermore, for Croatia for which the accession negotiations were closed, allowing for the signature of the Accession Treaty by the end of 2011 and in the EU Candidate Countries (i.e. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Montenegro) and/or the other countries of the Western Balkans (i.e. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Albania, Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244), shall be as much as possible covered by this project and the data situation evaluated and reported in the Inception report. Depending on the respective data situation these countries would then be included or not in maps presented in the Atlas.
- (3) The backbone statistical and mapping units for the Atlas are the NUTS regions (NUTS 3, NUTS 2 and combination of NUTS 2 and 3) as these play an important role in relation to the implementation of European policies. The maps selected and presented shall where relevant apply lower or higher the level of geographical aggregation on the basis of the information available and the topics addressed. For example, it is important to address cities and functional areas in Europe, as well as Europe's neighbourhood and the world level in relation to competitiveness and demographic issues. In addition, the ESPON Atlas shall target different types of territories including metropolitan urban regions, rural areas and other types of regions as stated in the Structural Funds Regulation and in the Treaty. When producing new maps, the TPG can consider to present other "types" of maps if relevant such as grid, smoothing or topographic maps.
- (4) The Atlas shall strive to apply a 5-level-approach. The 3-level-approach (European – transnational – regional / inter-regional) has been used in the context of the ESPON 2006 Programme. This approach should, where relevant and feasible, be considered enlarged to a 5-level-approach by adding (a) the global positioning of Europe as a whole and (b) a more detailed geographical level considering the local level. Furthermore, in relation to a given political question and the respective indicator(s) chosen different levels of geographical detailing should be covered. Results from ESPON targeted analyses projects should be used for illustrating local and regional implications of global, European and national trends and perspectives.
- (5) The Atlas should where possible to integrate a time dimension. The Atlas shall integrate time series in a selected number of territorial indicators. This should support a better understanding of the territorial dynamics and impact of policies in the short, medium and long term perspectives. It is important to stress that the TPG is expected to integrate statistical data and time series already available in the ESPON programme, in particular

in the ESPON 2013 Database. The gathering, production and completion of particular statistical information might be necessary in a few cases.

- (6) The Atlas shall be reflecting carefully the envisaged target groups. The target groups will be policy makers and practitioners as well as citizens having a special interest in being informed about the main structures, state, trends and perspectives on European territorial development. In addition, a particularly important target group are students and teachers of geography, regional economics and planning at higher educational levels. The style and complexity of information in the Atlas shall reflect and balance the ambition of communicating with these target groups.

### **Complementarity with other ESPON projects**

The basic and comprehensive approach of the Atlas differs from ESPON Synthesis Reports which are more selective focusing on issues and topics related to current policy debates in order to give targeted support to policy development and policy makers.

By its comprehensive approach, the Atlas will also be complementary to the Monitoring Report that will focus on selected territorial indicators and monitor and communicate trends related to key policy orientations towards policy makers.

The use of other ESPON tools such as the Hyper Atlas should also be considered when creating new ESPON maps for the Atlas.

The cartography applied in the ESPON Atlas shall consider the results of an upcoming ESPON project on modernising the cartographic language of ESPON.

### ***v) Analytical framework and deliveries expected***

This ESPON project, to be implemented during 2012-2014 in order to be able to include results from all ESPON projects under P1 and 2 and shall be based on a clear and consistent planning in relation to its objectives.

The project is expected to deliver the following as part of the project implementation:

- 1) A detailed Structure and Table of Content of the ESPON Atlas on European Territorial Structures and Dynamics, covering in a comprehensive way all themes addressed in the ESPON Priority 1 and 2 Projects and taking into account the main policy objectives and aims in relation to European Territorial Development. The structuring of the Atlas is envisaged to include a proposal with a pre-selection of key maps from the various ESPON projects and some ideas for additional new maps to be produced.
- 2) The ESPON Atlas as draft version for commenting and a final version ready for lay-out and printing. The ESPON Atlas on European Territorial Structures and Dynamics should have a volume of approximately 100 pages and become available both in a paper and a digital version. The Atlas should include a selection of key maps (app. 50-60 maps) and text with key messages related to the interpretation of each map, covering in a comprehensive and policy relevant way the entity of topics addressed by the ESPON Programme. The Atlas and maps produced should use the ESPON map layout design and templates, which will be made available by the ESPON Coordination Unit to the TPG selected.

- 3) A digital version of the ESPON Atlas should make it possible to access the Atlas in a user-friendly and interactive way. The digital Atlas should be structured in a way that allows to access, search, navigate (e.g. pan, zoom, reset) and visualise the various elements of the Atlas (i.e. maps, text, supporting data and information) in an interactive way. The digital version should also make it possible to download all datasets included in the Atlas, as well as to download the maps in formats such as .png or .jpeg with a high resolution. These functionalities would stimulate the interest and support the use of the ESPON Atlas by students and in teaching.
- 4) All maps produced and selected, as well as datasets created or completed in the framework of this ESPON project.

Both digital and paper versions of the ESPON Atlas are meant to be published and available for free via the ESPON website. The digital version should be built in such a way that it can easily be integrated into the ESPON website.

An edition of 5000 copies of the paper version is planned and the costs related to lay-out and printing will be financed outside the project budget.

#### ***(vi) Expected results and timetable***

This project is envisaged to last until late 2014. The implementation of the project for 2012-2014 shall include a flexible approach where frequent contact meetings with the ESPON CU will continuously support the development of this project and clarify open questions. A feedback from the ESPON MC on the structure and a draft version of the Atlas is envisaged.

The results and maps of these ESPON projects are the main providers and input of information to the ESPON Atlas and should be reflected in its structure and content. The exact timing of the project flow is influenced by deliveries of ESPON Draft Final Reports from Priority 1 and Priority 2.

For the preparation of project proposals, the following known timing of the delivery flow of ESPON Final Reports from Priority 1 and Priority 2 can be taken into account:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2012, a total of 29 Final Reports should be available.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2013, an additional 12 Final Reports should be available.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2014, the last 7 Final Reports should be available.

The Draft Final Reports will normally be delivered three months before the Final Reports, and will after agreement with the CU be used in the preparatory work on the Atlas.

Following the kick-off meeting of this project, an updated and detailed list of the deliveries of the Draft and Final Reports of all projects can be made and will be provided by the CU to the TPG. This can then be considered in the detailed planning of activities related to the project implementation.

The project is supposed to follow, as far as possible, a timetable and specifications of outputs as presented below:



**May 2012 (Inception Report):**

- Detailed description of the project, taking into account the objectives envisaged, including the identification of priorities, resolution of problems, evaluation of the data situation and definition of delimitations.
- Draft version of the ToC and structure of the ESPON Atlas (cf. Points IV and V), including a first selection of maps and ideas for new maps to be produced.
- Presentation of a strategic overview of all activities and an overall time planning and work plan envisaged for the Atlas.

**February 2013 (Interim Delivery):**

- Final version of the Structure and Table of Content of the ESPON Atlas, including draft versions of new maps proposed.
- Examples of 5-10 pages of the Atlas including maps and texts that present the style of communication and cartography envisaged for the entire Atlas.
- Prototype of the digital version of the Atlas.
- Short reporting of the activities, both planned and realised, resolution of problems and definition of delimitations.
- Work plan until the Draft Final Report.

**March 2014 (Draft Final Report):**

- Draft version of the ESPON Atlas (both in paper and digital version), including all maps and graphic elements selected/produced in accordance with the cartographic standards of ESPON, as well as analytical work related to map interpretation and presentation of key messages.
- Maps (in a vector format, preferable .ai files) and datasets produced/completed (including metadata) in the framework of this project.

**July 2014 (Final Report)**

- Final documentation of all aspects of the implementation of the project.
- Final version of the ESPON Atlas (both in electronic and paper versions).

***(vii) Budget***

The maximum budget foreseen for this project amounts to €150.000. Proposals exceeding this value will not be considered. This budget does not include printing and layout of the paper version of the ESPON Atlas.

All real eligible costs incurred for carrying out the approved project will be refunded 100% by the ESPON 2013 Programme.

***(viii) Existing access points***

The access points listed below can serve the purpose of providing the TPG useful information for preparing a proposal. It is by no means meant to be exhaustive, but should be considered as information that can be helpful in tracing additional useful background information.

- ESPON Draft Final and Final Reports from Priority 1 and 2 Projects, available on ESPON website: [http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu\\_Projects/](http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Projects/)
- ESPON 2013 Database: [http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu\\_ScientificTools/ESPON2013Database](http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_ScientificTools/ESPON2013Database)
- ESPON HyperAtlas: [http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu\\_ScientificTools/ESPON2006Tools/HyperAtlas/](http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_ScientificTools/ESPON2006Tools/HyperAtlas/)
- ESPON 2006 Atlas: [http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu\\_Publications/Menu\\_ESPON2006Publications/esponatlas.html](http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Publications/Menu_ESPON2006Publications/esponatlas.html)
- ESPON Cartographic Language (upcoming).