



Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

## PRE-EVENT BRIEF

# ESPON Peer Learning Workshop on Digital Spatial Planning

Virtual (MS Teams)

24 November 2021, 10.00-13.00 (EET – Eastern European  
Time)



## Introduction



Future images see a heavy reliance on smart and disruptive technologies, such as real-time data collection, big data analytics and digital planning, all seamlessly integrated into the governance of cities (Townsend, 2013). In the past decade, many European countries have taken significant steps to digitise spatial-planning processes. The COVID-19 pandemic has substantially changed the way planners and policy makers work. The digitalisation of planning is thus not only driven by ideas of efficiency and improved public services, but also by rapidly-implemented solutions to the pandemic.

The current rush of transformation to digital plans and plan data opens a range of new opportunities for new planning practices. However, digitalisation is often implemented without a clear strategy on how to adapt existing and traditional planning instruments to a digital format. Digitalisation leads to a significant increase in the level of detail of the plans – both of local and national plans, but also of strategic plans; it also requires adapting the co-creative process, which is essential for urban planning (Lieven et al., 2021). Today's planners seek answers on how to network and interact with actors when using digital platforms that enable an information-rich planning process. This workshop provides an opportunity to know more about digital spatial planning in different spatial planning contexts, as well as the opportunity to learn from European countries at the forefront of discovering digital practices.

### Objective

Organised as part of the European Territorial Observatory Network (ESPON programme), this online workshop will deal with the transition to digital planning and long-term strategies in the digitalisation of planning. The central focus of the workshop is mutual learning from recent efforts to digitalise spatial planning. The objective is also to give an overview of the results of the ESPON DIGIPLAN study (<https://www.espon.eu/digiplan>) and to discuss the current state of digitalisation and its opportunities with international experts. The ESPON DIGIPLAN study is the first of its kind to provide evidence on the current state of the uses of digital planning data, and unravel the obstacles and main drivers for the digitalisation across EU member states.

The discussions during the workshop will include the following questions:

1. How can we standardise spatial planning and why?
2. How can we adapt existing/traditional planning instruments to a digital format?
3. How can we create a clear strategy for digitalisation?

The workshop addresses policymakers responsible for national and regional planning in Estonia and its neighbouring countries. It further invites researchers and stakeholders who were involved in the ESPON DIGIPLAN project to discuss the current status in digitalisation of spatial planning in the European Union, and to share evidence of best practices in Nordic national and regional planning practices.

## Agenda (Estonian Time)

- 10:00 - 10:15**                      **Introduction**  
Moderated by **Ingmar Pastak** (University of Tartu, Estonia)
- Welcome by **Mrs. Piera Petruzzi** (ESPON) and **Mrs. Triin Lepland** (Estonian Ministry of Finance, Department of Spatial Planning).
- 10:15 - 11:15**                      **Keynote presentation**
- (1) Evaluating Spatial Planning Practices with Digital Plan Data by **Prof. h.c. Dr Anna M. Hersperger** (Head of Land-Use Systems Group at WSL - Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research; ESPON DIGIPLAN)
- (2) 3D visualizations supporting participation and collaboration in land use planning by **Docent (PhD) Nora Fagerholm** (Academy Research Fellow, Adjunct professor at University of Turku, Finland)
- Discussion
- 11:15 - 11:30**                      **Break**
- 11:30 - 12:00**                      **Pitching session and discussion**  
Moderated by **Dr. Garri Raagmaa** (University of Tartu)
- The current uses of the digital planning data – an overview**
1. Estonia – **Mr. Taavi Pipar** (Estonian Ministry of Finance, Department of Spatial Planning)
  2. Denmark and Sweden – **Mr. Uffe Gross Nielsen** (Niras Denmark, Digital plan consultant)
  3. Norway – **Hilde Johansen Bakken** (Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, Department for Planning, Head of Analysis and Evaluation)
- 12:00 - 12:40**                      **Open debate on following questions:**
1. How does digitalisation impact the planning process?
  2. How to adapt existing/traditional planning instruments to a digital format?
  3. How to engage stakeholders with digital technologies?
- 12:40 - 12:50**                      **Conclusions** (Moderator: **Dr. Pille Metspalu**, University of Tartu, Estonian Planners Association)
- Short summing up and key take-aways by **Dr. Pille Metspalu** (Estonian Association of Spatial Planners)

## References

Lieven C., Lüders B., Kulus D., Thoneick R. (2021) Enabling Digital Co-creation in Urban Planning and Development. In: Zimmermann A., Howlett R., Jain L. (eds) Human Centred Intelligent Systems. Smart Innovation, Systems and Technologies, vol 189. Springer, Singapore.

Townsend, A. M. (2013) *Smart Cities: Big Data, Civic Hackers, and the Quest for a New Utopia*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.



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#### **ESPON 2021**

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