



On behalf of the European Commission, DG Regional Policy
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**Study on “territorial cohesion, lessons learned from the ESPON
programme projects and strategy for the future**

**Appendix B – Case Study on ESPON
National Contact Points**

June 2006

This draft document is based on the following information sources:

- primary information:
 - ECP questionnaire – 8 responses on 25 countries with ECPs → 32 percent response rate
 - Interviews with 5 TPG lead partners¹
 - Interviews with ECPs
- Secondary information:
 - ESPON ECP contact list
 - ESPON MC contact list
 - ESPON ECP comment paper
 - ESPON ECP ESPON II paper

¹ The results of the ECP questionnaire will be treated in a confidential manner, which means that we will neither indicate the respondents name or working countries. Moreover, we will eliminate all elements of the responses that could allow for the identification of the respondent.

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1. Introduction

ESPON national Contact Points (ECPs) have to comply with the following criteria according to the ESPON 2006 Programme.

- *ESPON Contact Points (ECP)*

One ESPON Contact Point will be established in each Member State in order to facilitate the implementation of the Programme within the Member States (see V.8 on non-member states). The ESPON Contact Points will act as a network which, in co-operation with the Co-ordination Unit, will assist the process of project development in co-ordination with the CSD delegation in each Member State. (A list of ESPON Contact Points is attached in annex 1). The ESPON Contact Points and the Transnational Project Groups will work closely with the Co-ordination Unit to promote the programme and assist project partners in the development of high quality projects.

The ESPON Contact Points will have expressed their commitment to contribute to the network by a letter of intend.

- *The ESPON 2006 Programme page 77*

Additionally, the ESPON Contact Points could play a role in advising the Transnational Project Groups on the preparation and implementation of projects. It is the responsibility of each Member State to determine how this will be organised in its respective country. The ESPON Contact Points will be involved in the Promotion Strategy of the Programme.

The ESPON Contact Points will provide links with and knowledge about policy oriented and national research institutions in all spatially relevant sectors of research. They also ought to be able to organise a study on the data sources in their country. These tasks could be undertaken by (depending on the situation of each Member State):

- A departmental unit of government (in principle other than the member of the Monitoring Committee) which has established strong links with the national research institutions;
- A state or public research institution which is appointed to undertake this function;
- A private research institution which is appointed to represent the ESPON Contact Point on behalf of government. (Of course, a consortium of public and private research bodies could also hold this position).

The last two would be able to contribute by own research whereas the first would specifically appoint an appropriate partner as a national representative for each study and/or topic. Furthermore, it would be expected that the ESPON Contact Points would incorporate the expertise of any public and private research institute or consultancy, if better results were expected. In this respect, the ESPON Contact Points may act as a central node for a national network of spatial research.

It is strongly advised that at least one ESPON Contact Point for Member State, preferably of the country of the Lead Partner, has to be project partner in a Transnational Project Group in order to secure the network approach of the ESPON. The ESPON Contact Points will be responsible for the networking part of the project carried out by the Transnational Project Group.

The results of all projects should be assessed by all ESPON Contact Points to receive a comprehensive picture of the variety of European approaches. Commenting other projects belong to the crucial network elements of the whole programme.

The ESPON Contact Point for each Transnational Project Group will also represent the Transnational Project Group's link to the Co-ordination Unit.

Costs for ESPON Contact Points in Member States which cannot be covered within the preparation of projects will have to be covered by the Member States in order to secure the fulfilment of all tasks. This rule shall ensure that the ESPON Contact Point is not represented by the same persons in the monitoring Committee and in Transnational Project Groups.

- *The ESPON 2006 Programme page 78*

As the approaches on Contact Points differ much between the Member States, it is the task of the CSD delegations to find an individual agreement in their own countries. Each participating State appoints (according to national procedures and requirements) one institution as a ESPON Contact Point, which should undertake this task for a longer period, in order to secure the best continuity of co-operation. However, in the event that a Member State wishes to replace their Contact Point, the best time would be the launching of the second programme phase in 2003.

2. ECP typology

2.1 Dimension type of organisation

Type of organisation	Number of ECPs	Countries
Scientific organisation (University or research institute)	12	Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden, UK, Norway
National Ministry	7 (8) ²	Cyprus, (Estonia), Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia
National Governmental Agency	4	Germany, Malta, The Netherlands, Switzerland
other	1	Austria
No ECP	2	Lithuania, Slovakia
Provisional ECP	1	Estonia
No ECP due to non paying status	2	Bulgaria, Romania

Table B1: type of organisation

The table illustrated above suggests that the ECPs are not homogenous as regards their affiliation to the organisations/institutions by which they are employed. Out of a total of 27 ESPON member countries, the ECPs of 12 countries belong to scientific organisations (public and private), 7 (or 8 if the provisional contact point of Estonia is included in this section) belong to national Ministries and an additional 4 to national agencies. In the case of Austria, the ECP belongs to an organisation that is equally subordinate to the federal and the regional administrations. Two countries, Lithuania and Slovakia, do not have as ECPs at all, whereas Bulgaria and Romania though being covered by ESPON in the studies are not full ESPON members.

2.2 Dimension ECP – MC relation

Assumption:

- This typology solely refers to the institutional relations or linkages between the ECP- and MC organisations.
- It does not take into consideration probable financial linkages, such as ECPs being paid by the national administration and some universities and institutes being financially dependent on funds from the national or regional administrations.

Type of relation	Number of ECPs	Countries
ECP – MC part of same institution	8	Cyprus ³ , Italy, Latvia, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Switzerland
Strong Institutional linkage	1	Germany ⁴

² Estonia, though it currently only disposes of a provisional ECP has been counted in this category since the ECP belongs to a national ministry.

³ Cyprus seems to be lacking adequate research institutions on spatial and regional planning in the country.

between ECP and MC institutions		
Slight suggested linkages	2	Estonia ⁵ , France ⁶
Independent organisations	14	Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Spain, Sweden, UK
Countries with MC but no ECP	2	Lithuania, Slovakia

Table B 2: Relation ECP - MC

This table suggests that solely due to their institutional affiliation, ECP and MC of 9 countries may have a very strong relation. For two countries the table suggests slight linkages. In the majority of ESPON member countries (14 out of 27 = 51.85 percent) the ECP and the MC member belong to different and independent organisations/institutions.

In all countries, in which the same institution provides ECP and MC, this institution is either a national ministry or a national administration.

Respondent	Explanation
1	Interactions with the MC: through regular meetings with the Hungarian MC member and through informal meetings with other MC members at the ESPON seminars, with the Coordination Unit: at the ECP meetings, ESPON seminars, the national research community: through regular communications via the Internet, meetings, with the national administration: at regular meetings, with the national contact points: meetings at ECP meetings, ESPON seminars, Internet, telephone, personal meetings
2	Cooperation with CU and fellow ECPs is quite good, but much more interest and involvement from national administrations and scientific community is needed.
3	Impossible to answer this question briefly. Too vague
4	The Swiss representative in the ESPON Monitoring Committee is also working at the Federal Office for Spatial Development, so we are in close contact. Regular coordination meetings and discussions. Contact to the national research community is established via the national ESPON network that we are organizing (2-3 sessions a year, E-Mail newsletters etc.). National administration: there are two other federal offices directly involved in the national ESPON network, and we inform other agencies if there are new results that are of importance for them, or we ask them to check interim and final reports etc.). Other ECPs: not a lot of contact, except from ECP meetings (good and steady exchange with neighbouring ECPs from Germany and Austria, next year will probably see an even increased collaboration, as there are plans for Transnational ECP activities).

⁴ The German ECP works for the "Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung" (Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning). The German MC belong to the "Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau- und Stadtentwicklung (formerly: Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau- und Wohnungswesen)" (Federal Ministry for Traffic, Building and Urban-development). The former is subordinate to the latter, which is why we presume a strong institutional linkage of the German ECP and MC.

⁵ The provisional ECP of Estonia belongs to the Ministry of Internal Affairs while the MC is part of the national Ministry of the Environment, Spatial Planning Department.

⁶ The French ECP though belonging to a university institute also works together with DIACT (ex-DATAR) which is the national spatial planning agency. The French MC is part of this latter organization so that a slight dependence seems understandable.

5	<p>ESPON MC: Very good coordination and feedback.</p> <p>ESPON CU: Prompt replies to the CU and excellent communication with the CU team.</p> <p>National research community: No spatial research institutes currently in Cyprus.</p> <p>National administration: Both ECP and MC are civil servants.</p> <p>ECPs from other countries: Vibrant interaction, mainly with the ECPs of Greece, Malta, Luxembourg, Germany, Spain, Hungary, Slovenia, Belgium.</p>
6	<p>Good working relations with all the above mentioned organizations, more intensive links with the Nordic ECPs (transnational conference in April 2006).</p>
7	<p>Interaction with:</p> <p>the ESPON Monitoring Committee: strong relationship with the French representative;</p> <p>the Coordination Unit: administrative relationship;</p> <p>the national research community: dissemination of calls for tenders, expertises and benchmarking on each final report from a national viewpoint.</p> <p>the national administration: relative strong relationship with the DIACT (ex DATAR);</p> <p>the national contact points of other countries: strong relationship with the Belgian contact point.</p>
8	<p>MC: weekly contacts, CU:ECP-seminars - four times a year, mail- weekly, national administration - monthly (excl MC), others - sporadically</p>

Table B 3: Explanation on interaction ECP - MC

Re-spondent	ECP sufficiently independent from member state administration?	Explanation
1	Yes	In "this country", both the MC and ECP are based in the "same institution". There is strong coordination between ECP and MC members but also sufficient independence in the work that each of these members is called upon to undertake.
2	Yes	"This country's" ECP has good working relations with the representatives of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Environment – with a shared understanding that there is a clear-cut division of responsibilities and tasks.
3	No	Currently, "our institute" is financially dependent of the national government but scientifically independent.
4	Yes	No explanation
5	No	In "this country" the ECP and the national administration are interlinked. The ESPON organization, in general, gives preference to this interrelation. Furthermore, the national administrations are expected to finance the work of ECPs.
6	No	Because every Member States has a possibility to decide how to organize work within ESPON programme, including ECP nomination and work organization. That is a reason why some ECP's are financed better and get more support and can reach better and more results at national level, and at the same time other countries does not pay so much attention to the work of ECP and ESPON in general. Some idea could be to have ECP's be paid by the programme but not by Member States, but it is very

		disputable issue.
7	Yes	We provide MC members with scientific comments on ESPON reports. These comments are not changed for political or any other reasons.
8	Yes	Even though I am working within the national administration, I am quite independent. There were never any restrictions (maybe there is one: I do not get "enough" time budget or money to really fulfil the ECP tasks; the result is that I can only do the minimum, unfortunately - maybe if the ministry or office would give the participation in ESPON a higher priority, this would be different).

Table B 4: Interdependency ECP from national states

As you can see in the table 3 out of 8 ECPs (37,5 %) do not consider themselves to be sufficiently independent from their national administration. Moreover, one of these three respondents is ECP for a country where ECP and MC do not belong to the same organisation (see table B 2 above). On the other hand, of the 5 ECPs that stated to be sufficiently independent, two belong to member states that fall in the category of countries where MC and ECPs belong to the same institution.

2.3 Dimension ECP structure

This table builds on both, the ESPON table on ESPON contact point addresses as well as statements of ESPON contact points gathered in the course of the ECP questionnaire and other occasion in the course of the ESPON study.

Type ECP	Number of ECPs	Countries
Single ECP	18	Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, , Greece, Italy, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, UK, Norway, Switzerland
Network ECP	7	Belgium, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Spain, France

Table B 5: Explanation on interaction ECP - MC

This table suggests that the organisation of ECPs varies between the different member states. With the exception of Switzerland, there appears to be a slight correlation between those countries that do have ECPs with network structure and those countries the political organisation of which has clear federal traits. The occurrence of an ECP networking structure within a country seems not to correlate with the size of the ESPON member countries.

2.4 Dimension paid working hours

In the table below the monthly working hours paid by the national government for the ECPs are listed.

Respondent	ECP Type	Monthly working hours related to ESPON paid by the government
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1	Network	>= 30 and < 60 hours
2	Single	< 30 hours a month
3	Network	>= 120 hours
4	Single	< 30 hours a month
5	Single	>= 30 and < 60 hours
6	Network	>= 30 and < 60 hours
7	Network	>= 120 hours
8	Single	< 30 hours a month

Table B 6: Monthly working hours ECPs

This table illustrated that the ECPs that responded to our questionnaire do have very different monthly working hours related to the ESPON programme. Whereas 2 (25%) of these ECPs come close to a full-time involvement into the programme, the remaining 6 (75 %) are not even paid for a half-time position. 3 (37,5 %) are only paid to work for the ESPON programme for less than 30 hours a month.

This indicates why it is reasonable to believe that the different individual ESPON national contact points differ considerable regarding their performance as ECP, as it has been identified in the course of the interviews with various TPG leaders.

2.5 Conclusions typology ECP-network

The ECP-network is of a heterogeneous nature as regards the affiliation of the ECPs to the organisations/institutions by which they are employed. The majority is affiliated to scientific organisations. Another part is affiliated to national Ministries while a small number belongs to national agencies. The different background of the ECPs has an influence on the competences and workability of the ECPs. Moreover the working hours on ESPON for which the ECPs are paid by their government differ a lot. While some ECPs can work fulltime on the ESPON programme others have less than 30 hours per month to spend on the ESPON programme.

Those two discrepancies in the composition of the ECP-network seem to have an effect on the working capacity of the network. Not all ECPs can spend the same amount of time on the ESPON programme. Moreover, the amount of paid working hours by the national government is not correlated to the geographical scope of the country. Thus, it can't be expected from every ECP to do the same amount of work and this does not aid in establishing a homogenous well-functioning network. With regard to the data collection and consolidation, the workload should be related to the size of the respective country and to the availability and quality of the data in the respective country. The administrative functions of the ECPs should be more or less similar for all ESPON member states.

Another financially related issue is that the ECPs are not directly paid by the ESPON programme. This is considered to be an impediment to the accountability of the national contact points to the ESPON CU and MA in terms of steering the ECPs' performance for the ESPON programme.

The different affiliations and personal background of the ECPs seem to have an effect on the competences to collaborate on ESPON study projects. It appears that some ECPs do not have the competences or the time to work on an ESPON study project in the TPG. In regard to the data-facilitation it seems that the demands for data of the TPGs are sometimes misunderstood by the ECPs because they can not place the demands in the correct context. Some interviewed TPG lead-

ers indicated that due to the different background of the ECP's the data facilitation was sometimes hampered.

The strong relation of some ECPs with the MC raises the question on the political independence of ECPs. As one of the tasks of the ECP network is commenting on the study reports, the question can be raised whether those ECPs with strong relation to the MC can comment on the studies in a political independent and scientific way. This relationship could also influence the scientific work on an ESPON study project in a TPG.

The main recommendation for an ESPON II programme can be that a coherent and homogenous network structure of the ECP-network should be sought.

3. Dissemination

3.1 Dissemination of ESPON call for tenders

Respondent	Engagement in dissemination of ESPON calls for tender	
	Yes / No	Via which ways
1	Yes	Internet
2	No	
3	Yes	
4	Yes	ESPON network in country
5	No	
6	Yes	Personal contacts, e-mail
7	Yes	Mailing list, website, newsletter, telephonic contacts
8	Yes	

Table B 7: Dissemination ESPON call for tender

This table illustrates that the dissemination of the calls for tender is not done in a coherent way. Two ECPs didn't even communicate the calls.

3.2 Dissemination of ESPON results

Respondent	Engagement in dissemination of ESPON results	
	Yes / No	Via which ways
1	Yes	publications in journals and booklets, lectures and conferences
2	Yes	sending to regional development agencies, ministries, local governments and universities
3	Yes	
4	Yes	Articles in magazines, country related ESPON website, workshops and sent to federal offices
5	Yes	To country related ESPON network composed of ministries
6	Yes	Two in country's language translated reports on ESPON results and critical review of ESPON results
7	Yes	Link to ESPON website + translation executive summaries
8	Yes	National and regional seminars

Table B 8: Dissemination ESPON results

This table illustrates that the dissemination of the ESPON results is not always done in a coherent way. Several ways of dissemination are used like publications, sending to national networks and seminars. The ECPs indicated that the translated executive summaries or résumés into their native language.

3.3 Dissemination of ESPON events and publications

Respondent	Engagement in dissemination of ESPON results	
	Yes / No	Via which ways
1	Yes	publications in journals and booklets, lectures and conferences

2	Yes	sending to regional development agencies, ministries, local governments and universities
3	Yes	
4	Yes	Articles in magazines, country related ESPON website, workshops and sent to federal offices
5	Yes	only ESPON mid term results disseminated
6	Yes	Seminars, conferences and discussion forums
7	Yes	Ways of dissemination are currently studied
8	Yes	

Table B 9: Dissemination ESPON events and publications

The dissemination of ESPON events and publications is mostly done via the same ways as the dissemination of the ESPON results. But it seems that the dissemination of the ESPON events and publications is not done in a coherent and consequent way.

3.4 Conclusions on the dissemination

The global conclusion that the dissemination of the ECPs is not done in a coherent way. This can be linked to the differences in work hours to be spent on the ESPON programme. It can not be expected from ECPs with different work schedules to pay a same amount of time and effort to the dissemination regarding the ESPON programme.

It appears that the effort of the ECP-network put into dissemination related to the ESPON-programme is rather limited. This has to be put in perspective of the production of the results from the programme. In an ESPON II programme the dissemination should be attributed a bigger role in the work plan of the ECP-network.

The same recommendation as on the ECP-typology can be made here for an ESPON II programme. A coherent and consequent network structure will aid in the dissemination regarding the ESPON II programme. A task description on dissemination for the ECPs could also improve the overall dissemination.

4. ECP-network in an ESPON II programme

4.1 General comments

Below are the summarised comments provided by the ECPs through the questionnaires on the general ideas that ought to be implemented in an ESPON II programme.

- Greater scope for qualitative, case study based research, a broader thematic scope and the updating of earlier ESPON findings.
- Data quality and comparability is a crucial issue
- More concentration on specific regions and their demands
- Better dissemination
- Better scientific quality
- link with meso and local scales
- less but bigger research projects
- Focusing on key questions (defined politically) instead of dozens of (underfinanced) projects
- Better TPG-formation process (more transparent)
- Targeting NUTS 5 level
- A more academic emphasis in defining research issues would contribute to the diffusion and use of ESPON results
- in a more efficient way in the future
- a scientific council for validation
- Dealing with scientific contents of the ESPON programme, it could be interesting to list some transnational/national/regional/local case studies relevant to the ESPON programme
- Contracts with EUROSTAT or the European Environment Agency (EEA) in order to receive or collect and disseminate databases...
- Dissemination
- quality check

Summarising, there are two issues that are mentioned four times. Firstly the stress is put on the geographical scope of the studies. The overall impression is that ESPON II should try to achieve a deep level of geographic coverage. Secondly the quality issue is mentioned four times. The ECPs are under the impression that an ESPON II programme should pay attention to the scientific quality of the reports.

The need for better dissemination is identified three times while the need to solve the data issues from the current ESPON programme is mentioned two times.

4.2 Comments on role of ECP-network

Below are the summarised comments provided by the ECPs through the questionnaires on the role and structure of the ECP network in an ESPON II programme.

- Clear duties and principles of financing of ECP network would be defined.
- ECPs used to comment reports, to give advise to TPGs, to make case-studies
- Better interaction with TPG during the commenting process (at least a feedback on ECP's comments)
- More involvement and greater efforts by all ECPs

- More active part in the research process and more involvement in the TPGs
- Greater involvement in the actual research process
- I have the impression that the work that was done by the ECPs (data, scientific and policy oriented inputs, dissemination of results etc.) is undervalued by the project community
- They should be given a more independent role in relation to the coordination unit
- As long as ESPON is only an "INTERREG programme", it seems that it is impossible to build a real structure able to develop work in a long term perspective. So it important to reinforce the independence of the ECP by building bridges between the ESPON programme and other opportunities at the EU level,
- ECP could make specific research, for instance specific feedback on how ESPON research results and policy recommendations are seen and received
- ECPs could be involved into commenting, data gathering for TPGs, could assist to a process of forming TPGs, networking and dissemination of ESPON results.

Generally spoken, the ECPs have the opinion that the ECP network should have the same duties and responsibilities in an ESPON II programme.

The need for greater involvement in the actual research process is mentioned four times by the ECPs. Two ECPs share the opinion that the ECPs should have clear duties and the same support in order to have a consistent network.

4.3 Possible budget for the ECP-network

The accountability of the national contact points to the ESPON bodies has been identified as a weakness of the ESPON-programme. In the course of the study it has been suggested to pay the ECP-network for their work directly from the ESPON II programme budget, in contrast to the current situation where they are paid directly by the member states. In table B 11, an estimate of the budgetary implications of paying the ECP-network with the programme budget is made. Due to the differentiation in income level, two wages are used, 15.000€ per year for the EU8 (new member states) + Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia and Macedonia and 20.000€ per year for the EU15 + Norway, Switzerland and Iceland. These countries are a presumption of member and partner countries of an ESPON II programme. This is a moderate estimation, with moderate wages, with only one person paid and without taking into consideration the size of the country and transport and overhead costs.

Countries	Full-Time	Half-time
EU 15	300.000 €	150.000 €
NOR, CH, ICE	60.000 €	30.000 €
EU 8	120.000 €	60.000 €
ROM, BUL, CRO, MAC	60.000 €	30.000 €
Total per year	540.000 €	270.000 €
Total of programme	3.780.000 €	1.890.000 €

Table B 11: ECP-budget

In order to improve the accountability of the ECP-network, they should be financed by the ESPON II programme. Compared with the current ESPON budget of around 17.415.000 €, the cost of financial support of ECP-network seems to be high. Even with a significant budget increase the cost of 3.780.00€ seems to be high.

Paying the ECP-network for example only half-time seems to fit better into the budget but it does also decrease the accountability of the ECP-network to the ESPON bodies. So this seems not to be an adequate solution.

Concluding, it appears to be that it is not advisable to pay the ECP-network from an ESPON II budget.

5. Conclusions

In the Discussion paper from the ECP network on the role of ECPs in ESPON II, they identified three possible roles for the ECP-network. The fourth option in the table B10 is the option derived from the results of this case study and our entire study process.

Role of the ECP-network	<i>Option 1: network only</i>	<i>Option 2: Network, comment and guidance</i>	<i>Option 3: Network, comment, guidance and research</i>	<i>Option Ramboll: Network, dissemination, communication</i>
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Networking ESPON-national - Dissemination - Data facilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Networking ESPON-national - Dissemination - Data facilitation - Commenting - Advisory/guidance board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Networking ESPON-national - Dissemination - Data facilitation - Commenting - Advisory/guidance board - Case studies and other research activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Networking ESPON-national - Dissemination - Communication - <i>Optional</i> : Case studies, involvement in TPG, involvement in sounding board, data validation

Table B 10: Role of ECP-network in an ESPON II programme

In the developed option, the main tasks of the ECP-network in an ESPON II-programme should be networking, communication and dissemination of ESPON results. The ECP-network in the current ESPON-programme did not seem to be always homogeneous and consequent. The two main reasons for this were the different professional background and the differentiation in the amount of working hours of the ECP's.

The professional background of the ECP's varies but they are all people with a background in or working in the field of spatial planning. As the emphasis in an ESPON II programme could be mainly on networking and communication, the professional background of the ECP's becomes less important but they should remain competent in the field of spatial planning. As data-facilitation and actual work in TPGs is no longer part of the main tasks of the ECP network, the need for academic skilled people in the field of spatial planning diminishes. Nothing however impedes ECPs of working on research activities in TPGs both for data-facilitation and as actual project partner. ECPs with the proper professional background could also envisage working on the sounding boards.

As analysed in the paragraph 2.4, the amount of working hours spend by different ECP's varies a lot and this was one of the main reasons for the network appearing to be heterogeneous. The hours that an ECP should spend on an ESPON II-programme should be seen in perspective of the size and population of the country they represent. A homogeneous distributed working time for the ECPs should lead to a better and consequent networking, communication and dissemination. The optional actual study project work or the work in a sounding board should not be included in the work package of the ECP-network. Thus in an ESPON II programme the hours spend from the ECPs on the programme should be equal in relation to the country size. As the ECP-network should not be financed through the programme itself (see paragraph 4.3), the ESPON member countries should be encouraged to engage themselves in paying their ECP for a certain amount of working hours. The tasks for an ECP should be clearly stated in the CIP of an ESPON II programme and the emphasis should lie on networking, dissemination and communication.

