

## ESPON

### Terms of Reference Project 1.4.5

#### Preparatory study on spatially relevant aspects of tourism (2006)

##### *(o) Political challenges for the ESPON Programme*

In the Second and Third Reports on Economic and Social Cohesion (published 2001 respectively 2004) the Commission addresses an approach on territorial cohesion within the European Union. Beside economic and social cohesion, territorial cohesion is essential for better co-ordination and policy-making in the relationship to a more balanced and sustainable development of the European Union.

In this context the Reports on Cohesion follow up the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), adopted in May 1999. Territorial development within the above mentioned framework seizes an integrated approach in the way that it concentrates on the balance of areas and regions of the European territory considering all spatial applicable factors. From this outlook, territorial development covering a variety of factors stretching from economic to cultural, from natural to social. However, territorial development is a multifarious process and it should be emphasized that it can not be simplified and it is a subject for continuous exploring.

The projects proceeded within the ESPON 2006 Programme shall follow the integrated approach as above mentioned as well as to cover a wide range of additional concerns, mentioned in the Interreg III Community Initiative- Art.53. Supplementary to this, the ESPON 2006 projects shall cover a wide range of issues on spatial development acknowledged in the ESPON 2006 Programme:

- Identifying the **decisive factors relevant for a more polycentric European territory**; accessibility of a wide range of services in the context of enlargement; integration of wider transnational spaces; promotion of dynamic urban growth centres; linking peripheral and disadvantaged areas with those centres; etc.
- Developing **territorial indicators and typologies** capable of identifying and measuring development trends as well as monitoring the political aim of a better balanced and polycentric EU territory.
- Developing **tools supporting diagnoses of principal structural difficulties as well as potentialities**, such as disparities within cities and regenerating deprived urban areas; structural adjustment and diversification of rural areas; strategic alliances between neighbouring cities at transnational, national and regional scale; new partnerships

between rural and urban areas; potential support from infrastructure networks in the field of transport, telecommunication, energy; etc.

- Investigating **territorial impacts of sectoral and structural policies** in order to enhance synergy and well-co-ordinated decisions relevant for territorial development within policy fields such as Structural Funds, agriculture, transport, environment, research and development; developing methods for measuring the territorial impact of sectoral and structural policies; etc.

- Developing **integrated tools in support of a balanced and polycentric territorial development**; approaches to enhance the potential of cities as drivers of regional development, new tools for integrated urban-rural development and planning, etc.

With the results of all the ESPON projects, the Commission and the Member States expect in particular to have at their disposal: **a diagnosis of the principal territorial trends** at EU scale as well as the difficulties and potentialities within the European territory as a whole; **a cartographic picture of the major territorial disparities** and of their respective intensity; a number of **territorial indicators and typologies assisting a setting of European priorities** for a balanced and polycentric enlarged European territory; some **integrated tools and appropriate instruments** (databases, indicators, methodologies for territorial impact analysis and systematic spatial analyses) to improve the spatial co-ordination of sector policies.

In this respect, the ESPON projects are intended to serve as an evidence and knowledge base for further policy development, in particular at European level, in relation to the Structural Funds 2007-2013 and in relation to the ongoing inter-governmental process on the state and perspectives for territory of the European Union.

### ***i) Relation to the ESPON 2006 Programme***

The priorities for the ESPON 2006 Programme are as following (The ESPON work-program p.13f):

1. **Thematic projects** on major spatial developments on the background of typologies of regions and the situation of cities.

2. **Policy impact projects** on the spatial impact of Community sector policies and Member States' spatial development policy on types of regions with a focus on the institutional inter-linkages between the governmental levels and instrumental dimension of policies.

3. **Co-ordinating and territorial cross-thematic projects** represent a key component of the programme. These projects evaluate the results of the other projects towards integrated results such as indicators system and data, typologies of territories, spatial development scenarios, etc. The cross sections projects help to thematically co-ordinate the whole programme and add value to the results and to fill gaps which are unavoidable when different themes are dealt with in different projects.

4. **Scientific briefing and networking** in order to explore the synergies between the national and EU sources for research and research capacities.

The first strand also includes deepening projects, and studies on new thematic projects.

Project 1.4.5 fits in under the first strand and particularly under studies on new thematic projects.

The preparatory study must comply with the aim of setting out the means of expression for the coming study and it is therefore of high importance that this study from the beginning undertakes the right integrated perspective and objectives of the ESPON Programme. Consequently, a strong co-ordination is needed with projects under the same strand as well as with coordinating project 3.2, and the ESPON Co-ordination Unit.

## *ii) Thematic scope and context*

Tourism is of vital importance to the global economy and for many regional economies. The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) estimates that tourism is directly and indirectly responsible for generating up to 10% of the world's GDP and 100 million jobs. The European Commission says that 9 million people are directly employed in the EU tourism sector, which accounts approximately for 5% of the GDP.

In general terms, tourism is an important economic factor for the development of many European regions. For less favoured areas in particular tourism is often the dominating "industry" providing employment and development perspectives. Also for urban areas tourism is an increasing income source.

Tourism has great potential as it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development, economic growth, employment, economic, social and territorial cohesion and it helps bridging divides between European regions. However, the existence of negative effects in certain type of regions is obvious in particular due to the concentration of tourist activities in specific periods during the year and also because of the intensive exploitation of some tourist regions. These elements explain the political attention given to tourism by the EU through the many Community policies and the emergence of the concept – Sustainable Tourism.

Even though there seems to be a rather large amount of new knowledge and information on tourism in Europe, tourism has proved to be very difficult to define and to measure, in particular its spatial effects. In fact, according to World Tourism Organisation (WTO), tourism is more than just vacation-related activities<sup>1</sup>, it also comprehends business travelling, attending conferences, cultural excursions, studies abroad, sport-

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<sup>1</sup> "Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business or other purposes."

related travel, shopping trips, health tourism, visiting friends, going “away” for the weekend and it is both domestic and international<sup>1</sup>.

Thereby taking into consideration the substantial growth of tourism as an economic and social phenomenon, an attempt to improve the understanding of its regional diversity and spatial effects seems to appear as a major aim in order to support a European development towards a better balance, regional competitiveness and territorial cohesion.

### *iii) General objectives*

The study should therefore unite to the following general objectives:

- The study should be built and expound upon the existing ESPON research framework and objectives within ESDP with regard to balanced, sustainable development and territorial cohesion. Of particular interest are the projects on cultural heritage (1.3.3), polycentric development (1.1.1), rural-urban relations (1.1.2), demography (1.1.4), Europe in the world (3.4.1), integrated tools (3.1), spatial scenarios (3.2) and feasibility on flows analysis (1.4.4).
- The study should lay down a scientific research basis, i.e. overview of existing studies, research works and policies in the field, including data sources, definition of appropriate concepts, proposals for indicators, datasets which are relevant in the scope of a future applied research project, to measure and display trends and disparities within and between the EU 25+2+2 and its regions. It is envisaged that the work provides an overview on policies, existing studies and research works, and indicators in the field including information on data availability and comparability. The list of indicators proposed should be regionalised indicators, covering the EU 25+2+2 territory, preferably at NUTS 3 level, or at another appropriate territorial scale (lower than national) to be defined by the study.
- The main final aim should be the elaboration of a proposal for a future applied territorial research covering the theme.

Moreover this project needs to take into account a number of starting points:

- 3-Level-Approach  
All ESPON projects are asked to apply the 3-Level-Approach meaning that research results and their implications need to be discussed at macro (European), meso (transnational/national) and micro (regional/local) level.
- Relation to existing ESPON findings  
ESPON works towards a better integration of results deriving from different studies. Therefore it is necessary to assess how tourism can link to existing studies and contribute to increasing the understanding of territorial development trends in various fields already assessed by ESPON.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on Eurostat - European Commission, *Panorama of European Business 1999*, EC Official Publication Office, 2000, Volume 4 p. 425-441 as well as ETAG and others, *Europe's Tourism, How important is it?*, 1999.

- Relation to policy relevance  
The main aim of ESPON is to provide new insights for evidence-based policy making. Therefore it is necessary to assess how the tourism analysis can link to current policy debates as document in relevant documents such as, the Community Strategic Guidelines, the draft Structural Funds Regulations or the scoping document on the Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union.

#### ***iv) Primary research issues envisaged***

The preparatory study should base itself on existing material and provide information and guidance covering the following:

##### **1. Concepts and definitions**

*How should tourism be defined?*

*What type of tourism and tourist areas can be identified?*

*What are the most relevant concepts in which a common understanding should be achieved?*

The diversity of the European regions justifies *per si* the existence of different types of tourism and tourist areas. Besides this, demographic evolution (in particular ageing population) and socio-economic changes in Europe during recent years, lead to the development of new forms of tourism, in some cases incorporating also environmental concerns, such as cybertourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism and health or medical tourism.

The project is asked to look into different meanings of tourism and its classification and assess whether it is possible to create a common understanding and harmonised notion and classification of tourism and of the main relevant concepts related to tourism (i.e. tourist, tourist accommodation, destination, sustainable tourism, sustainable development and its application to the tourism) taking into consideration the specificities of the ESPON space and the main aims of the ESPON programme.

##### **2. Tourism patterns and trends**

*What are the main tourist patterns and trends?*

*What patterns are of most interest to ESPON?*

*How to analyse the demand and supply functions?*

Globalisation, use and development of information and communication technologies, political stability, hazards, monetary union, among others, can be considered as determinants that structure and influence tourism patterns. In general terms, one could say that tourism is changing, driven by new consumer demands and information technologies. In fact, taking into consideration the complexity of the demand the

emergence of a segmented and client-oriented tourism is obvious, in contrast to the traditional type of tourism “characterised as mass standardised and rigid packaged”<sup>1</sup>.

The project is envisaged to discuss what type of determinants shall be taken into account for analysing tourism patterns and also to propose a methodology to measure its importance and to analyse demand and supply functions considering the concept of tourism flows at various levels (generating/destination areas and relation between these two sets of locations). Therefore, concepts as tourist destinations, tourist capacity, tourist infrastructures, inbound/outbound international tourism, internal tourism, domestic tourism and national tourism shall be considered. The project should also try to discuss a typology of tourist areas for the ESPON space, comprehending different type of indicators, which could reflect the *level of tourist development*<sup>2</sup>. The project is also asked to provide some examples on how this methodology could work in practice.

Finally, the project should create a database on the main data sources related to tourism, considering the geographical coverage of the ESPON projects, including an indication of the relevant indicators, level of desegregation, available year and time reference. Special attention should be paid to data published by European and international organisations such as EC, in particularly DG Enterprise, Eurostat, OECD, UN and National Statistics Offices. This issue is particularly important considering the scarcity of regionalised data in this field.

### **3. Spatial effects of tourism**

*Which are the spatial effects related to tourism?*

*Which are the regions most positively and negatively affected by this activity?*

Tourism is a geographically focused activity with peak seasons, in which the place and its specificities play a very important role. This means that certain places are favoured in relation to other to support tourist activities.

Considering this fact, the existence of positive and negative spatial effects in regions and countries (i.e. job creation, changes in the productive structure, pressure on natural resources and on the local carrying capacity or local communities, congestion) need to be considered by the project. Existing typologies developed by ESPON projects such as urban-rural relations (1.1.2) and polycentric development (1.1.1) give some ideas about the type of areas in which a analysis of the spatial effects of tourism would be interesting to perform and could therefore serve as a starting point for discussion.

Additionally some aspects which could serve as basis for the discussion on the spatial effects of tourism are listed below:

- Migration
- Employment
- Environment
- Housing

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<sup>1</sup> OECD, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Schürmann, C (1999) - *Quality of Life in European Regions: a multicriteria analysis, IRPUD, University of Dortmund* (<http://www.raumplanung.uni-dortmund.de/irpud/pro/sasi/ap165.pdf>)

- Rural and urban development
- Natural resources and coastal areas

#### **4. Future ESPON research related to tourism**

What should the main focus be of future ESPON applied research in the field of tourism?

On the basis of the review of the above mentioned questions and taking into consideration its relevance for the ESPON context, the project should give a deeper understanding of the complexity of the theme by providing guidance on the research framework and objectives for a future applied research to be carried out in an ESPON II Programme. Regarding this issue, the envisaged outcomes of the project are:

- Some suggestions to be included in the Terms of Reference of a future ESPON project related to the tourism covering the EU 29 situation and taking into consideration the above-mentioned issues and questions. This point should result in proposals for future policy-relevant research on the spatial dimension of tourism including analysis of trends, imbalances and potentials and considering it as an instrument for strengthening territorial cohesion and competitiveness.
- Recommendations for future data collection, in particular regionalised data and indicators (NUTS III level), pointing out the shortcomings of the sources identified on issues as: coverage, access, availability, copyrights, comparability and harmonisation.
- Listing of further data requirements and ideas of territorial indicators for future ESPON research on tourism. Suggestions should concern key indicators to be further developed, possible typologies, and possible synergies with other research and projects, in particular ESPON projects.

#### **v) *Expected results and timetable***

The deliverables of this study should be as far as possible highly operational and coordinated in time and fit into the relevant political agenda. The following time table for deliveries is supposed to reflect these priorities:

##### **Interim Report, 31 May 2006**

The interim report will mainly concentrate on delivering an in-depth examination of policy documents and already existing research works in the field, and a list of relevant data, existing at European level and/or from National statistical offices. The interim report will therefore include the following:

- a) Results of the review of ESPON results, scientific literature, existing data (in particular regionalised data and indicators) and policy documents addressing tourism and its spatial effects.
- b) First identification of tourism patterns and its main spatial effects and some insight on the methodology to analyse this issues in a future ESPON project.

- c) Preliminary proposal(s) on future applied research on tourism and its effects on the territory taking into consideration its relation to balanced development, competitiveness and territorial cohesion.

### **Draft Final Report, 31 October 2006**

The final results should incorporate:

- f) An executive summary of the main results of the study, including a synthetic presentation of the proposal for future applied research in the field.
- g) Further presentation of the methodology to analyse tourism patterns and its spatial effects for the EU 29, including some practical examples
- h) A database on the main data sources related to tourism, considering the geographical coverage of the ESPON projects, including an indication of the relevant indicators, level of desegregation, available year and time reference and mentioning also further data needs and ideas of territorial indicators for future ESPON research on tourism
- i) Recommendations for future research and focus of future ESPON projects in the field of tourism that can support current policy orientations on territorial cohesion (ESDP, Third Cohesion Report, Revised Lisbon Agenda and Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion and scoping documents on the Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union).

### ***vii) Existing access points***

The access points listed below will serve and provide the tender with constructive information in the process of preparing a proposal for this study. It is not meant to be exhaustive information; however it can serve as a guide in tracing additional existing information in this field. This list is presenting a majority of social studies and should be extended and complemented with more “territorially” oriented documents.

- **The ESPON website** ([www.espon.lu](http://www.espon.lu)) can serve as a helpful starting access point. All needed documents on how research studies within the ESPON 2006 programme are conducted, and previous research projects which can be helpful are especially those on cultural heritage (1.3.3), polycentric development (1.1.1), rural-urban relations (1.1.2), demography (1.1.4), Europe in the world (3.4.1), integrated tools (3.1), spatial scenarios (3.2) and feasibility on flows analysis (1.4.4). As well, available at the ESPON website, the ESPON Data Navigator should serve as tool for a first EU data and indicators review.
- **The SPESP – Study Programme on European Spatial Planning** (<http://www.nordregio.se/spespn/welcome.htm>) can also serve as a helpful starting point as the ground for a number issues has been laid there. With regard to flows, in particular work on spatial integration (sub-report 1.4) can be of interest (<http://www.nordregio.se/spespn/Files/1.4.final.pdf>).
- **COM (2003) 713 Final** – Basic orientations for the sustainability of European tourism
- **EC, DG Enterprise and Industry, Tourism Unit** (<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/services/tourismeu.htm>)
- World Tourism Organisation - <http://www.world-tourism.org/>
- OECD, tourism department, tourism committee, [http://www.oecd.org/departement/0,2688,en\\_2649\\_34389\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/departement/0,2688,en_2649_34389_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)



- ETC – Vienna declaration on the future of European tourism - [http://www.etc-corporate.org/resources/uploads/ETC\\_ViennaDeclaration.pdf](http://www.etc-corporate.org/resources/uploads/ETC_ViennaDeclaration.pdf)
- **Other sources** as regards scientific literature and relevant policy documents need certainly also to be consulted. First access points can be provided by the references used by relevant ESPON projects.

***viii) Budget***

Amount allocated to this preparatory study: 50.000 €max.