

WHAT IS ESPON ABOUT?

Since 2002 ESPON promotes and fosters a European territorial dimension in development and cooperation by providing evidence, knowledge transfer and policy learning to public authorities and other policy actors at all levels.

The objective of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme is to support the reinforcement of the effectiveness of EU Cohesion Policy and other sectoral policies and programmes under the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), as well as national and regional territorial development policies, through the production, dissemination and promotion of territorial evidence covering the entire territory of the EU Members States, as well as the four Partner States of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

WHICH TARGET GROUPS IS THE ESPON 2020 ADDRESSING?

ESPON 2020 primarily focuses on the support of policy making and is thus targeting the following stakeholder groups:

- European policymakers
- National policymakers and practitioners
- Authorities implementing ESIF programmes and preparing periodical reports
- Regional and local policymakers and practitioners.

However, ESPON 2020 sees also the importance to serve a wider public and in particular the following secondary target groups:

- Organizations promoting regional/urban interests at EU level
- University academics, researchers as well as students as future decision makers
- The private sector and wider European audiences.

Academics, scientists and researchers are important providers of ESPON outputs, bringing in the necessary research capacity and scientific excellence. In that way, the ESPON 2020 Programme will benefit the scientific community across Europe in the field of territorial research.

WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE IMPLEMENTED BY THE ESPON EGTC UNDER THE ESPON 2020?

The activities of the ESPON 2020 Programme are grouped around the Specific Objectives (SO) 1-5 in order to ensure a targeted and efficient delivery to the users of the Programme.

Enhanced European territorial evidence production through applied research and analyses (SO1):

The implementation of at least **22 applied research projects** based on policy demand mostly covering the whole of Europe shall foster the European territorial and analytical evidence base. These activities are key for the essential knowledge evolution and evidence production. An innovation regarding this operation is the involvement of external senior expertise to ensure scientific quality. The research projects are publicly tendered.

Upgraded knowledge transfer and use of analytical support (SO2):

At least **25 targeted analysis projects** proposed by and implemented in partnership with groups of stakeholders shall support the provision of territorial evidence and provide evidence support to European funding programmes. Furthermore **45 thematic papers** in form of policy briefs and working papers on specific themes in response to policy demand shall be prepared. These activities in cooperation with stakeholders from EU, national, regional and local levels are a continuation of successful activities within the ESPON 2013 programme. More emphasis is now given to evidence support to ESIF programmes. A major innovative action will be the rapid delivery of tailor-made evidence responses.



Improved territorial observation and tools for territorial analyses (SO3):

The creation or maintenance of at least **8 territorial observation**, monitoring and analytical online tools is intended. Furthermore, the publication of **3 major territorial monitoring reports** is planned at significant moments over the programme period in order to inform and support important policy development processes. These activities will take a further step in monitoring territorial dynamics vis-à-vis policy priorities as well as in macro-regions, and also result in a more integrated and easy to use toolbox of ESPON.

Wider outreach and uptake of territorial evidence (SO4):

At least in total 60 activities covering minimum **40 events** and **20 publications** related to European, transnational and national levels are planned in order to support outreach to users and the widest possible use of European territorial evidence in practice. These activities will include dedicated outreach at European level as well as profound transnational outreach. A shift towards digital media and communication and less printed material will constitute a major modernization of the ESPON Programme's approach.

Leaner, more effective and efficient implementation provisions and more proficient programme assistance (SO5):

The establishment of the Single Beneficiary, the **ESPON EGTC**, has been specifically designed for the purpose of efficiently implementing the objectives of the ESPON 2020 Programme. This major innovation in the history of ESPON shall support the territorial dimension of policy-making in Europe. The improved, streamlined and strengthened institutional setup offers increased in-house specialist staff and scientific capacity ensuring a prompt and efficient delivery of evidence to policymaking processes.