



ESPON 2030 – Key Results from 2024

With as many as 8 Thematic Action Plans already up and running, several new territorial research activities were launched to expand the stock of those already ongoing or completed to 40. In addition, further 15 are in preparation. On the territorial knowledge transfer side, more than 50 events were carried out since the start of the programme, including ESPON seminars and policy events at European, transnational or national level.

The following specification informs about major developments.

Production of territorial evidence:

- Launch of 5 new [European research projects](#) to provide a pan-European perspective of territorial development trends and patterns, and advice on how to cope with them through place-based policies:
 - Under the TAP on European territories in global interactions - **STARTER** (European regions between free trade agreements and Open Strategic Autonomy);
 - Under the TAP on Living, working and travelling across borders - **COREIB** (Collecting and analysing data for next generation of INTERREG programmes) and **CROSSGOV** (Governance mechanisms for cross-border functional areas);
 - Under the TAP on Smart connectivity – **DIGIREG** (Territorial perspectives of digital transition in European regions);
 - Under the TAP on Nature-based adaptation to climate change - **READAPT** (Re-Naturing Territorial Development for Climate Risk Adaptation).
- Completion of 2 [targeted analyses](#):
 - [INTERALP](#) - Interface Territories across the Alpine region
 - [RURALPLAN](#) - Innovative planning in shrinking societies
- Launch of 6 new targeted analyses responding to specific policy support needs raised by stakeholders in the EU member states and partner countries:
 - Under the TAP on Governance of new geographies - **MEDCOOPNET** (Mapping Mediterranean Cooperation Networks and Governance) and **PREPARED** (Policy Rethink: Enhanced Planning and Governance for North Sea-Rhine-Mediterranean Corridor);
 - Under the TAP on Perspectives for all people and places: **URDICO** (Urban Dimension of Cohesion Policy and other EU programmes);
 - Under the TAP on Governance of new geographies – **RE-INDUSTRY** (Capacity building for Re-industrialising regions in a globally decarbonising economy);

- Under the TAP on Smart connectivity – **DHAK** (The role of digital helpers in reducing digital inequalities);
- Under the TAP on Nature-based adaptation to climate change - **GILL** (Methodology for Quantifying the Demand for Green Infrastructure at Local Level).
- Launch of **5 new [on-demand territorial studies](#)**:
 - for Malta on “**The Economic Cost of Malta’s insularity**” under the TAP on Places resilient to crisis;
 - for Poland and the Netherlands on the “**Territorial instruments of national policies as a tool for designing territorially sensitive policies**” under the TAP on Governance of New Geographies;
 - for Switzerland on the “**Regional effects of housing shortage in urban areas**” under the TAP on Perspectives for all People and Places;
 - for European Heritage Heads Forum on the “**Methodological framework for a satellite account on material cultural heritage**” under the TAP on Perspectives for all People and Places;
 - for Poland on “**Enhancing resilience along the eastern EU’s external borders**” under the TAP on Living, working and travelling across borders;
- Publication of 2 **ESPON policy papers** prepared together with the EU Council Presidencies:
 - “[No net land take – policies and practices in European regions](#)” (Belgium);
 - “[Provision of public services in lagging regions and areas with special needs](#)” (Hungary).
- Preparation of 2 **ESPON thematic papers** under the TAP on Smart connectivity:
 - “[State of the digital transformation of regional and local governments, 2024](#)”;
 - “[Local and Regional Digital Indicators - a methodological framework for indicator collection \(LORDI\)](#)”.
- Completion of the [performance review of the EU Territorial Agenda 2030](#);
- Conducting a territorial impact assessment to support authorities of seven Interreg NEXT programmes in the programme implementation.

Transfer of territorial knowledge:

- Organisation of **2 ESPON Seminars** dedicated to debating ESPON research feeding the territorial cohesion priorities of the respective EU Council Presidencies focussing under the Presidency of
 - in Belgium on “No net land take trajectories in Europe”, and
 - in Hungary on “Ensuring quality services for all people and places”;
- Organisation of 23 **European, transnational and national knowledge transfer events** arranged by either ESPON EGTC or ESPON Contact Points
 - to present and discuss policy implications of the latest ESPON research as well as
 - to break it down into the specific policy context of policy makers.
 - Topics are widely range such as from the role of territories in the crisis, housing affordability, digital tools for planning, circular economy, sustainable urbanisation, to climate change, just to name a few of the themes;
- Launching of the **new [ESPON website](#)**;
- Publication of 3 issues of the well established [ESPON TerritoriALL magazine](#).