

ESPON 2030 – Key Results from 2025

With as many as 8 Thematic Action Plans already up and running, several new territorial research activities were launched, bringing the total number of ongoing or completed projects to 58. In addition, a further 26 are currently in preparation. On the territorial knowledge transfer side, about 80 events have been organised since the start of the programme, including ESPON seminars and policy events at European, transnational and national level.

The following provides an overview of major developments.

Production of territorial evidence

- **Completion of 6 European research projects:**

- [COBREN](#) - Territorial cooperation for blue renewable energy.
- [TANDEM](#) - Territorial Analysis of Decentralised Energy Markets.
- [HOUSE4ALL](#) - Access to affordable and quality housing for all people.
- [OVERLAP](#) - Overlapping crises (re)shaping the future of regional labour markets.
- [TERRES](#) - Territorialising Resilience: Transforming Europe for an Age of Crisis.
- [NOSTAGEO](#) - Territorial governance of non-standard geographies.

Launch of 4 new [European research projects](#) providing a pan-European perspective on territorial development trends and patterns, and advice on how to address them through place-based policies:

- Under the TAP on Climate Neutral Territories - **RECOCLIN** (Regional contributions to climate neutrality).
- Under the TAP on European Territories in Global Interactions – **PROPOLIS** (Projecting regional outcomes of policies aimed at industrial sovereignty).
- Under the TAP on Smart Connectivity – **TRANSITOR** (Territorial outlook on the security and resilience of transport infrastructure and services across European regions).
- Under the TAP on Nature-based Adaptation to Climate Change - **TERRBOUND** (Rethinking territories within planetary boundaries).

- **Completion of 5 targeted analyses:**

- [KARPAT](#) - Determinants and opportunities for the socio-economic and spatial development of the Carpathian region.
- [CLEANENERGY4CE](#) - Putting clean energy transition policies into practice in central Europe.
- [ATLANTICMRS](#) - Orientations for the development of an Atlantic Macro-Region.
- [CHANEBO](#) - Challenges at EU's North-East External Borders.
- [VREPO](#) - Vulnerability, REsilience and REcovery POLicies of the physical living environment).

Launch of 4 new [targeted analyses](#) responding to specific policy support needs raised by stakeholders in the EU member states and partner countries:

- Under the TAP on Climate Neutral Territories – **ITADZ** (Decarbonising zones).

- Under the TAP on Climate Neutral Territories – **METROLAND** (Metropolitan territories: Land take reduction and net zero development).
- Under the TAP on Governance of New Geographies – **SECC** (Spill-over effects of European cultural capital on territorial development policies).
- Under the TAP on Living, Working and Travelling across Borders – **CROSSSHOP** (Cross-border shopping the French-German border region).
- **Completion of 4 on-demand territorial studies:**
 - [HERMES](#) - Methodological framework for a satellite account on material cultural heritage.
 - [TERRA-RES](#) - Territorial Exaptive Resilience along EU Eastern Borders.
 - [SENPO](#) - Territorial instruments of national policies as a tool for designing territorially sensitive policies.
 - [RESH](#) - Territorial Studies: Regional effects of housing shortage in urban areas).

Launch of 4 new [territorial studies](#):

- For Denmark on “**Making space for renewable energy transition**” under the TAP on Climate Neutral Territories.
- For Malta on “**Economic cost of Malta’s insularity**” under the TAP on Places Resilient to Crises.
- For Cyprus on “**Analysing competitiveness through the lens of cognitive regional distance**” under the TAP on European Territories in Global Interactions.
- For Slovakia on “**Analysing potential cross-border functional areas on the Slovak borders with Czechia and Poland**” Under the TAP on Living, Working and Travelling across Borders.
- **Publication of 1 ESPON policy paper** prepared together with the EU Council Presidencies:
 - “[Territorial Exaptive Resilience](#)” (Poland).
- **Preparation of an ESPON stocktaking paper** on [functional urban areas](#), requested by the Polish EU Council presidency.
- **Establishment of a pool of editors** to help develop content for ESPON’s knowledge development campaigns. So far, 4 articles ([1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#)) have been published on ESPON’s website, TerritoriALL magazine, various online and offline publications, advertorials, social media, etc.
- **Production of 3 podcasts and radio shows** ([1](#) [2](#) [3](#)) that use the recent ESPON evidence to address issues that are high on the agendas of citizens and policymakers, such as depopulation, energy poverty, urban development and more.
- **Conducting 2 territorial impact assessments** to support European-level institutions in providing reviews of EU legislative proposals – on the [EU Anti-poverty Strategy](#) and the [European Commission’s Water Resilience Strategy](#).

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:
 - In Poland: “Exaptive resilience in border regions.”
 - In Denmark on “Making space for the renewable energy transition.”
- **Organisation of almost 30 European, transnational and national knowledge transfer** events arranged by ESPON EGTC or ESPON Contact Points to present and discuss policy implications of the latest ESPON research and adapt them to specific policy contexts at EU, national, regional

and local levels. Topics cover the role of territories in boosting social and economic resilience, housing affordability, digital tools for planning, circular economy, sustainable urbanisation, and climate change, just to name a few.

- **Running and updating of the [ESPON website](#) and the ESPON [Data and Knowledge Portal](#).**
- **Publication of 3 issues of the well-established [ESPON TerritoriALL magazine](#).**