

**IMPLEMENTATION REPORT FOR THE EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL  
COOPERATION GOAL  
PART A**

**IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

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## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(3)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

### **Key information on the implementation of the cooperation programme for the year concerned, including on financial instruments, with relation to the financial and indicator data.**

This section provides a general appreciation of progress made in 2019 with the implementation of the Single Operation regarding content, infrastructure, and outreach and capitalisation.

The main **strategic objectives** for 2019 were:

- To continue the development of territorial evidence towards key policy processes at all levels by building on the results of completed research activities and in relation to the research agenda of other programmes/networks/institutions;
- To capitalize on the available research outputs and ensure their contribution to policy processes and specific target audiences at all levels.

### **Key accomplishments and support to policy processes**

Considering the strategic priorities indicated above, the activities implemented during 2019 have actively supported the following policy processes:

**The Territorial Agenda:** the support was provided in the framework of the applied research activity “Towards the European Territorial Reference Framework”. In particular ESPON brought the results and main message resulting from this project within the debate of the Task force in charge of the preparation of the next Territorial Agenda.

**The Urban Agenda:** Building on the positive feedbacks received during the European Week of Regions and Cities where several Urban Partnerships were involved in the sessions organised by ESPON, a specific session was organized at the ESPON Seminar in Finland to reinforce the links between ESPON and four Urban Partnerships: digital transition, energy transition, circular economy and housing. The purpose of the sessions was to link ESPON research to the Partnerships of the Urban Agenda to give further support to their implementation.

**Macro-regional strategies:** specific support to macro-regional strategies are included in section 11.3 of this report.

**National policies on regional development and spatial planning and sectoral policies.** The results of the Applied Research projects Employment Dynamics, the European Territorial Reference Framework, Green Infrastructure, Inner Peripheries, Low-carbon economy and COMPASS have been reportedly used, among others, by:

- the South Aegean Region's Managing Authority for consultations on the regional operational programme;
- the Romanian Presidency for their work related to territorial cohesion and the revision of Territorial Agenda;
- the Romanian Ministry of Public Works for drafting the state of national territory reports and other territorial analyses including the work on functional areas;

- the department of Environment and Spatial Development Flanders;
- the Polish Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy in the context of the European Border orientation papers;
- the City of Amsterdam for the evaluation of metropolitan development;
- MOT for their work on cross border metropolitan regions;
- the Liguria region for the implementation of port-city interaction policies
- the Piedmont region for the design of their regional territorial plan;
- VASAB for the update of the Long-term Perspective;
- Innlandet County Council (NO) for Interreg cross-border programme management
- the City of Warsaw for developing metropolitan cooperation frameworks;
- the European Commission for drafting country profiles.

Under **SO1** by the end of 2019 two applied research projects were launched (Interregional Relations in Europe and Cultural Heritage as a source of societal well-being in European Region) bringing at 21 the total of applied research projects launched. In the reference year, additional seven activities have been finalized with the provisions of the final deliveries. These activities provided significant knowledge, insights and recommendations on Spatial planning systems in Europe; Financial instruments and territorial cohesion; Green infrastructure and ecosystem services; Circular Economy and territorial consequences; Impacts of refugee flows to territorial development in Europe; Territories with geographical specificities and the Territorial Reference Framework for Europe.

Under **SO2**, eight targeted analyses have been finalized focusing on Common spatial perspectives for the Alpine Space, Future Digital Health in EU; Cultural Heritage as a strategic territorial development resource; Cross-border Public Services; Territorial Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation; Potentials of big data for integrated territorial policy development in the European growth corridors and Improving Urban-Rural connectivity in non-metropolitan regions. In addition, ESPON provided specific territorial evidence support for ETC programme. Additional seven have also been launched during 2019, bringing the total to 24 targeted analyses. Those deal with Metropolitan Industrial Strategies; Capacity methodology for tourism; Business development opportunities on EU external borders; Maritime Eco(nomic) clusters governance Strategy; Metropolitan-regional imaginary in Milan-Bologna urban region; Spatial dynamics and integrated territorial development scenarios for the functional area of central Europe and the Evaluation of spatial planning practices with digital plan data.

Still Under **SO2**, two policy briefs on Digital innovation in urban environments and Labour migration challenges in Europe have been delivered. These thematic papers responded to policy demand from the Presidencies of the Council and the intergovernmental networks on territorial cohesion and urban matters and were also closely related to the needs of national and regional authorities. The first one supported discussions among national, regional and local stakeholders surrounding digital innovation in cities and urban policy during the Finish presidency. The second one, initiated under the Romanian Presidency, contributed to the promotion of functional area governance to deal with the long-term trajectories of migration patterns, calling for more coordination across administrative or political boundaries.

Under **SO3**, of the 8 tools foreseen a total of 6 have been launch of which one has been finalized, the ESPON map finder which is one of the tools most used in practice according to the annual evaluation.

Under **SO4** 26 additional events have been organized during 2019. Two European seminars on the Role of functional areas for territorial cohesion and on Digital Innovation, held in Romania and Finland, a peer-learning workshop on the Common Future Vision for the Polish-German Interaction Area 2030 in Poland and a series of nine workshop within the EWRC. The remaining events were organized in the framework of the Transnational

Outreach and included four e-learning; five trainings; one workshop; three conferences and two seminars. These events were organized in different European regions and their content was tailored to the specific needs of the national, regional and local target groups. Finally, in addition a territorial observation reports on State of the European Territory and 8 publications have been produced.

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRIORITY AXIS

#### 3.1 Overview of the implementation

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
P1	Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach	<p>During 2019, the activities reported under the overview section were implemented taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the context of recently completed and ongoing research activities on territorial development subjects performed/ financed by other institutions/organisations/ networks and the follow-up of previous ESPON research;</li> <li>- the need to develop cross-sectoral links among different subjects to support the design and implementation of integrated strategies that promote cross-sectoral (horizontal) coordination, present a development perspective beyond administrative borders (for functional areas) and address multilevel governance (vertical coordination);</li> <li>- Closer relevance to topical policy and political issues by supporting identified policy processes;</li> <li>- More focus on methods, approaches and tools to support post-2020 programming at national, regional and local scale, based on the proposed EU policy framework for post-2020;</li> <li>- More advisory and knowledge exchange (capacity building) activities in the framework of the outreach strategy, such as exchange and peer learning workshops, TIA workshops, use and support to the use of tools.</li> <li>- Intensified engagement with local and regional policy makers to increase the use of ESPON results among local and regional policy-makers;</li> <li>- Wider outreach beyond “ESPON community” and the scientific community.</li> </ul> <p>During 2019 some activities have faced some problems which will delay the availability of the final results of this specific outputs. Details are provided in section 5.a</p> <p>In relation to the output and results targets, the implementation of the Single Operation is proceeding without mayor delay or other problems.</p>
P2	Technical Assistance	<p>During 2019 the efforts were concentrating mainly on the steering and monitoring of the implementation of the Single Operation whose fourth Annual Work Plan was approved in January 2019. From a management point of view, a key objective for the first months of 2019 was the successful implementation of the audits audit of operations) and the kick-off of the programming of the post-2020 ESPON programme.</p> <p>The the major communication event due in 2019 was postponed for the beginning of the following year in order to provide information on the ESPON programme to newly nominated key players at EU level (European Commission and European Parliament)</p> <p>The cooperation and coordination with the Certifying Authority was continued to ensure the submission of the certification of expenditures to the EC submitted by the CA and for the report on irregularities due by the 31 March 2019.</p> <p>From a financial point of view the TA is being implemented according to the initial forecast.</p>

ID	Priority axis	<b>Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems</b>
		<p>In relation to the Steering of the Single Operation, the focus has been in particular on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to coordinate the dialogue between the MC and the Single Beneficiary on the Annual Work Plan for 2020;</li> <li>- to assess and approve (together with the Monitoring Committee) the two Activity and Financial reports submitted by the Single Beneficiary within the year,</li> <li>- to follow up of the dialogue/cooperation between PST and Single Beneficiary.</li> <li>- to assessment the Annual Work Plan for 2020 by the Assessment Committee.</li> </ul>



### 3.2 Common and programme specific indicators (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

#### Priority axes other than technical assistance

<b>Priority axis</b>	<b>P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach</b>
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)

**Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators - P1.11f**

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2019	Observations
F	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	Number	22.00	13.00	7 Applied research projects have been finalised in 2019.
S	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	Number	22.00	21.00	A total of 21 applied research projects have been so far launched since the beginning of the programme implementation until the end of 2019, 13 of which have been finalised.
F	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	Number	25.00	12.00	8 targeted analyses have been finalised in 2019.
S	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	Number	25.00	24.00	A total of 24 targeted analysis projects have been so far launched since the beginning of the programme implementation until the end of 2019, 12 of which have been finalised.
F	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers etc	Number	45.00	20.00	20 Thematic Papers have been published to date 3 of which published in 2019.
S	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers etc	Number	45.00	20.00	20 Thematic Papers have been published to date 3 of which published in 2019.
F	OI04	Number of ESPON tools maintained and created under S03	Number	8.00	1.00	The maintenance/creation of 1 tool has been completed in 2018.
S	OI04	Number of ESPON tools maintained and created under S03	Number	8.00	6.00	No additional maintenance/creation of tools has been launched during 2019.
F	OI05	Number of ESPON outreach events held under SO4	Number	40.00	67.00	26 additional outreach events were held during 2019 the total for outreach events to 67 since the beginning of the programme implementation.
S	OI05	Number of ESPON outreach events held under SO4	Number	40.00	67.00	14 additional outreach events were held during 2019 the total for outreach events to 67 since the beginning of the programme implementation.
F	OI06	Number of ESPON outreach publications produced under SO4	Number	20.00	48.00	The target initially accounted only for the European outreach publications, The indicator has been outperformed due to the fact that the number of transnational publications was defined only at the stage of drafting the ToR for the TNO service contract and therefore was not possible to consider them at the moment of setting the target for this indicator.
S	OI06	Number of ESPON outreach publications produced under SO4	Number	20.00	48.00	The target initially accounted only for the European outreach publications, The indicator has been outperformed due to the fact that the number of transnational publications was defined only at the stage of drafting the ToR for the TNO service contract and therefore was not possible to consider them at the moment of setting the target for this indicator.
F	OI07	Establishment of the ESPON EGTC implementing the single operation	Number	1.00	1.00	The ESPON EGTC, single beneficiary of the programme, was set up in 2016.
S	OI07	Establishment of the ESPON EGTC implementing the single operation	Number	1.00	1.00	The ESPON EGTC, single beneficiary of the programme, was set up in 2016.

(1)	ID	Indicator	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
F	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
S	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	17.00	14.00	7.00	0.00	0.00
F	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
S	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	17.00	14.00	3.00	0.00	0.00
F	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers etc	17.00	10.00	5.00	2.00	0.00
S	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers etc	17.00	10.00	5.00	2.00	0.00
F	OI04	Number of ESPON tools maintained and created under S03	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
S	OI04	Number of ESPON tools maintained and created under S03	6.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
F	OI05	Number of ESPON outreach events held under SO4	41.00	12.00	5.00	1.00	0.00
S	OI05	Number of ESPON outreach events held under SO4	41.00	12.00	5.00	1.00	0.00
F	OI06	Number of ESPON outreach publications produced under SO4	38.00	23.00	18.00	5.00	0.00
S	OI06	Number of ESPON outreach publications produced under SO4	38.00	23.00	18.00	5.00	0.00
F	OI07	Establishment of the ESPON EGTC implementing the single operation	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
S	OI07	Establishment of the ESPON EGTC implementing the single operation	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00

(1) S=Cumulative value - outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries], F=Cumulative value - outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]

<b>Priority axis</b>	<b>P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach</b>
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO1 - Enhanced European territorial evidence production through applied research and analyses.

**Table 1: Result indicators - P1.11f.SO1**

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	Observations
RI01	Number of potential users within selected target groups affirming use of ESPON applied research outputs and results in policy and programming processes.	% Change	59% of potential users within selected target groups affirming use of ESPON outputs and results	2015	Increase by 15-25 % (to increase up to between 70% and 75%.)		85%	The 2017 annual value represents a 36% increase from the baseline value. The 2018 annual value represents a 31% increase from the baseline value. The 2019 annual value represents a 44% increase from the baseline value.

ID	Indicator	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative
RI01	Number of potential users within selected target groups affirming use of ESPON applied research outputs and results in policy and programming processes.		77%		80%		n.a		59%

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI01	Number of potential users within selected target groups affirming use of ESPON applied research outputs and results in policy and programming processes.		n.a

<b>Priority axis</b>	<b>P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach</b>
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO2 - Upgraded knowledge transfer and analytical user support.

**Table 1: Result indicators - P1.11f.SO2**

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	Observations
RI02	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming they are satisfied with ESPON knowledge transfer and analytical user support.	% Change	83% of potential users in selected target groups affirming being satisfied	2015	Increase by 15-25 % (to increase to at least to 95% of potential users affirming being satisfied)		92%	The 2017 annual value represents a 10% increase from the baseline value. The 2018 annual value represents a 13% increase from the baseline value. The 2019 annual value represents a 11% increase from the baseline value.

ID	Indicator	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative
RI02	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming they are satisfied with ESPON knowledge transfer and analytical user support.		94%		83%		n.a		83%

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI02	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming they are satisfied with ESPON knowledge transfer and analytical user support.		n.a

<b>Priority axis</b>	<b>P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach</b>
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO3 - Improved territorial observation and tools for territorial analyses.

**Table 1: Result indicators - P1.11f.SO3**

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	Observations
RI03	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming use of ESPON territorial observations and tools for territorial analyses in policy and programming processes.	% Change	40% of potential users affirming using of ESPON territorial observations and tools	2015	Increase by 15-25 % (To increase up to between 45% and 50%)		87%	The 2017 annual value represents a 98% increase from the baseline value. The 2018 annual value represents a 110% increase from the baseline value. The 2019 annual value represents a 117% increase from the baseline value.

ID	Indicator	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative
RI03	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming use of ESPON territorial observations and tools for territorial analyses in policy and programming processes.		84%		79%		n.a		40%

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI03	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming use of ESPON territorial observations and tools for territorial analyses in policy and programming processes.		n.a

<b>Priority axis</b>	<b>P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach</b>
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO4 - Wider outreach and uptake of territorial evidence.

**Table 1: Result indicators - P1.11f.SO4**

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	Observations
RI04	Total number of potential users within selected target groups participating at ESPON events.	% Change	50%* of stakeholder respondents currently attend and/or participate at ESPON events.	2015	Increase by 15-25 % (To increase to between 58% and 63%.)		65%	The 2017 annual value represents a 40% increase from the baseline value. The 2018 annual value represents a 24% increase from the baseline value. The 2019 annual value represents a 30% increase from the baseline value.
RI05	Total number of potential users within selected target groups making use of ESPON publications.	% Change	62%* of stakeholder respondents currently making use of ESPON publications.	2015	Increase by 15-25 % (To increase to between 71% and 78%.)		92%	The 2017 annual value represents a 45% increase from the baseline value. The 2018 annual value represents a 47% increase from the baseline value. The 2019 annual value represents a 47% increase from the baseline value.

ID	Indicator	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative
RI04	Total number of potential users within selected target groups participating at ESPON events.		62%		70%		n.a		50%
RI05	Total number of potential users within selected target groups making use of ESPON publications.		92%		90%		n.a		62%

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI04	Total number of potential users within selected target groups participating at ESPON events.		n.a
RI05	Total number of potential users within selected target groups making use of ESPON publications.		n.a

<b>Priority axis</b>	<b>P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach</b>
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO5 - Leaner, and more effective and efficient implementation provisions and more proficient programme assistance.

**Table 1: Result indicators - P1.11f.SO5**

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	Observations
RI06	Total number of potential users within selected target groups affirming dissatisfaction with the implementation provisions of ESPON 2020 Programme	% Change	32%* of respondents currently affirm they are 'very dissatisfied' (14%) or 'somewhat dissatisfied'	2015	Reduce by 35-50% (To reduce to between 16% and 20%.)		n.a.	In terms of the overall efficiency of the ESPON 2020 programme architecture, the opinion of stakeholders was split generally regarding whether it was moderately or largely efficient. Compared to the previous programming period the stakeholders leaned towards the view that efficiency gains had been made during ESPON 2020. When asked regarding 'to what extent is participation in the ESPON 2020 procedures not burdensome', the moderate to large extent responses were selected most frequently. Moreover, compared to ESPON 2013, the results indicated that some gains had been made in ensuring that the procedures were less-burdensome under ESPON 2020. The observation is the same as last year as there is no new value available.

ID	Indicator	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative
RI06	Total number of potential users within selected target groups affirming dissatisfaction with the implementation provisions of ESPON 2020 Programme		18%		n.a		n.a		32%

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI06	Total number of potential users within selected target groups affirming dissatisfaction with the implementation provisions of ESPON 2020 Programme		n.a

## Priority axes for technical assistance

Priority axis	P2 - Technical Assistance
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**Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators - P2.Technical Assistance**

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2019	Observations
F	OI08	Guidance documents elaborated for the Single Beneficiary	Number	1.00	0.00	
S	OI08	Guidance documents elaborated for the Single Beneficiary	Number	1.00	1.00	
F	OI09	Computerised system set	Number	1.00	0.00	
S	OI09	Computerised system set	Number	1.00	1.00	
F	OI10	Communication strategies elaborated	Number	1.00	0.00	
S	OI10	Communication strategies elaborated	Number	1.00	1.00	
F	OI11	Evaluations carried out	Number	2.00	0.00	
S	OI11	Evaluations carried out	Number	2.00	2.00	Ongoing evaluation exercises and external mid-term evaluation.

(1)	ID	Indicator	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
F	OI08	Guidance documents elaborated for the Single Beneficiary	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
S	OI08	Guidance documents elaborated for the Single Beneficiary	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00
F	OI09	Computerised system set	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
S	OI09	Computerised system set	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
F	OI10	Communication strategies elaborated	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
S	OI10	Communication strategies elaborated	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00
F	OI11	Evaluations carried out	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
S	OI11	Evaluations carried out	2.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00

(1) S=Cumulative value - outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries], F=Cumulative value - outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]

### 3.3 Table 3: Information on the milestones and targets defined in the performance framework

Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone for 2018 total	Final target (2023) total	2019	Observations
P1	F	FI01	Absorption of Priority Axis 1 Programme Budget	Euros	5,600,000	45,758,109.00	24,348,814.52	
P1	I	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	Number	0	22.00	13.00	
P1	I	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	Number	0	25.00	12.00	
P1	O	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers etc	Number	15 thematic focus papers produced	45.00	20.00	

Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
P1	F	FI01	Absorption of Priority Axis 1 Programme Budget	Euros	10,816,719.40	3,864,157.44	1,229,099.62	0.00	0.00
P1	I	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	Number	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
P1	I	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	Number	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
P1	O	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers etc	Number	17.00	10.00	7.00	2.00	0.00



### 3.4. Financial data

**Table 4: Financial information at priority axis and programme level**

As set out in Table 1 of Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1011/2014 (Model for transmission of financial data) and table 16 of model for cooperation programmes under the European territorial cooperation goal

Priority axis	Fund	Calculation basis	Total funding	Co-financing rate	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Proportion of the total allocation covered with selected operations	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	Total eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority	Proportion of the total allocation covered by eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries	Number of operations selected
P1	ERDF	Total	46,207,234.00	85.00	46,207,234.00	100.00%	46,207,234.00	23,584,300.88	51.04%	1
P2	ERDF	Total	2,471,617.00	85.00	2,471,617.00	100.00%	2,471,617.00	764,513.64	30.93%	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>ERDF</b>		<b>48,678,851.00</b>	<b>85.00</b>	<b>48,678,851.00</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>48,678,851.00</b>	<b>24,348,814.52</b>	<b>50.02%</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Grand total</b>			<b>48,678,851.00</b>	<b>85.00</b>	<b>48,678,851.00</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>48,678,851.00</b>	<b>24,348,814.52</b>	<b>50.02%</b>	<b>2</b>

**Where applicable, the use of any contribution from third countries participating in the cooperation programme should be provided (for example IPA and ENI, Norway, Switzerland)**

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**Table 5: Breakdown of the cumulative financial data by category of intervention**

As set out in Table 2 of Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1011/2014 (Model for transmission of financial data) and tables 6-9 of Model for cooperation programmes

Priority axis	Fund	Intervention field	Form of finance	Territorial dimension	Territorial delivery mechanism	Thematic objective dimension	ESF secondary theme	Economic dimension	Location dimension	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	The total eligible expenditure declared by eneficiaries to the managing authority	Number of operations selected
P1	ERDF	096	01	07	07	11		18	LU000	46,207,234.00	46,207,234.00	23,584,300.88	1
P2	ERDF	121	01	07	07			18	LU000	2,246,617.00	2,246,617.00	694,917.26	1
P2	ERDF	122	01	07	07			18	LU000	120,000.00	120,000.00	37,118.07	1
P2	ERDF	123	01	07	07			18	LU000	105,000.00	105,000.00	32,478.31	1

**Table 6: Cumulative cost of all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area**

1. Operation (2)	2. The amount of ERDF support(1) envisaged to be used for all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area based on selected operations	3. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 2/total amount allocated to the support from the ERDF at programme level *100)	4. Eligible expenditure of ERDF support incurred in all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area declared by the beneficiary to the managing authority	5. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 4/total amount allocated to the support from the ERDF at programme level *100)
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(1) ERDF support is the Commission decision on the respective cooperation programme.

(2) In accordance with and subject to ceilings set out Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

#### 4. SYNTHESIS OF THE EVALUATIONS

As annual exercise implemented by the Single Beneficiary, a survey is launched for the collection and analysis of data related to the five specific objectives results indicators. For the year 2019, the survey was launched on 15 November 2019 and remained open until 13 February 2020. Taking into account that the survey refers to the implementing year 2019, the results are presented in this report even though they became available only in March 2020.

The aim of the online survey was to elicit feedback and opinions on ESPON outputs and activities carried out throughout 2019 from a wide range of potential and actual users, with reference to

- 1) the degree to which target groups make use of ESPON outputs in their practical activities and
- 2) the perceived usefulness of the knowledge acquired.

The survey specifically aimed at collecting information from different categories of stakeholders to ensure that the specific target groups for each of the four content-orientated Specific Objectives of the Single Operation (SO1-4) as well as organisations involved in the implementation of the Single Operation (SO5) were reached.

In total, 176 stakeholders responded to the survey, representing 23 countries of the ESPON space. Of the respondents, 51 per cent indicated to belong to 'Policy / Administration /Governance' and 27 per cent 'Research' as their primary field of work, with the remainder working in 'Consultancy' or 'Other'. The most represented level of governance is the national, followed by local and regional alike.

The researchers indicated working in the fields of spatial planning, geography, economics, environment, political sciences, sociology and statistics. The survey uses cross-sectional data and compares results with cross-sectional data from the baseline year 2015 as well as with values observed in 2017 and 2018. The fact that the observations do not stem from the same individuals over time implies possible bias. Nevertheless, repeated cross-sectional data provides insightful information for examining changes in ESPON perception over time at aggregate level. Certainly, the primary purpose of the annual survey is the cross-sectional analysis for a given year. Using the same set of questions in separate cross-sectional surveys once a year, however, allows for additional insights about the aggregate change over time.

The numerical representation of ESPON's performance in 2019 reveals an achievement or overachievement of the defined target values in five out of the six result indicators.

The slightly downward-sloping trend in the use of Applied Research observed in 2018 has been corrected in 2019. The satisfaction with ESPON Targeted Analyses registers a slight downward trend of two percentage points relative to 2018 but remains slightly above the value observed in 2017. Consequently, the target value of 95 per cent could not be reached in 2019 but the results reflect the already very high baseline value for this indicator. With 92 per cent, however, the performance of SO2 has clearly improved as compared with the baseline value of 82 per cent.

Continuing the trend in 2017 and 2018, a particularly strong result has been measured in relation to the share of surveyed stakeholders using ESPON territorial observation and tools which has grown by more than 100 per cent as compared with the baseline value. This can be partly explained by the efforts to popularize ESPON tools. In 2019, ESPON seminars have been promoting tools via plenary presentations (Iasi) and networking sessions (Helsinki). The transnational outreach project has organized a series of trainings on the TIA tool and ESPON's database at national and subnational levels. ESPON data and territorial observations were presented to policymakers through more than 30 interventions at events, which is another lead generation measure able to nurture the demand for tools that facilitate data discovery.

It can be concluded that the use of ESPON is growing. SO1, SO2 and SO3 outputs are reportedly mostly useful for the stage of problem framing or design of policies, while tools appear to serve predominantly evaluation purposes. Project reports from SO1 and SO2 are likely to outweigh SO4 publications in their impact on policymaking.

The most frequently named projects in connection to their usefulness in policymaking are COMPASS (SO1), SPIMA (SO2), ETRF (SO1), BRIDGES (SO1), URRUC (SO2) followed by GRETA and Inner Peripheries (both SO1). Policymakers are reportedly resorting to policy briefs such as 'Territorial dimension of future policies', 'Polycentric development', 'Inner Peripheries', 'Indicators for integrated territorial development', 'Shrinking rural areas', 'Cross-border public services' and the 'Digital transition of public services' more often as compared with other ESPON briefs.

While the use of ESPON overall is increasing, a slight decrease in the intensity of use has been registered between 2018 and 2019. This is an important observation for the conclusions and implications for the annual work plan 2021.

As part of the TNO annual activity report, the service provider has carried out an impact assessment of the transnational outreach activities implemented in 2019, based on surveys distributed online and offline after every event. The survey design is aligned with the annual ESPON survey so as to feed the overall ESPON performance framework. In addition, the TNO survey elicits project-specific information related to both the project's mission and implementation. The performance analysis of all activities reveals that nine out of ten surveyed participants are satisfied with the event outcomes. More than a half of them had limited or no awareness of ESPON before the event. Furthermore, the results of the impact assessment reveal a well-balanced and purposeful segmentation of participant profiles, whereby the public sector (i.e. politicians, local, regional, national administrations and other public organisations) composes the largest stake of 63 per cent.

Name	Fund	From month	From year	To month	To year	Type of evaluation	Thematic objective	Topic	Findings
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## 5. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN

### **(a) Issues which affect the performance of the programme and the measures taken**

Following the open call on the activity Housing Market Dynamics in Cross-Border Areas (SO3) two offers have been submitted and evaluated being of insufficient quality and a new call new call will be launched during the first half of 2020, thus delaying the implementation of this activity.

Regarding the Macro-regional monitoring systems & ETMS it is to be noticed that this project shows important challenges and delays in relation to the initial timetable set up in the kick-off meeting. In concrete terms at this stage, the outcomes of this service contract do not meet sufficiently the requirements for an appropriate tool to monitor the EU macro-regional strategies. Besides the difficulties encountered in organising dialogues with the governance bodies in some macro-regions, the content related part of this service contract faces serious problems. The draft final report submitted on 18 December and disseminated to the MC on 24 December 2019 was not approved and received a negative appreciation from some Member States. The ESPON Single Beneficiary has drawn a plan with the service provider for this activity which include the involvement of two additional macro-regional experts. This activity should be concluded in June 2020.

Finally, one working paper foreseen on responsive transport planning has been abandoned. The reason is that the expected outcomes of the related ESPON Targeted Analysis on Potential of Big Data for integrated policy development in European Growth Corridors were not sufficiently elaborated to justify a working paper on this topic.

The entering into force of the e-procurement procedures, indicated last year as an issue affecting the performance of the Single Operation does not pose a problem any longer. Additional support measures have been put in place by the Single Beneficiary, the extension of the deadlines to submit offers have been allowed economic operators to access the e-procurement platform and participate. There has not been a decrease in the participation rate to the procurements launched during 2019.



**(b) OPTIONAL FOR LIGHT REPORTS, otherwise it will be included in point 9.1. An assessment of whether progress made towards targets is sufficient to ensure their fulfilment, indicating any remedial actions taken or planned, where appropriate.**

The progress with the implementation of the programme is considered to be on track on the basis of the target as detailed follows:

**SO1:** 21 activities out of the 22 (Applied Research Projects) have been launched by the end of 2019. Of the 21 Applied Research Activities that have been initiated, 13 are now completed.

**SO2:** the total target for the programme is to implement 25 Targeted Analysis Projects. 24 have already been launched. In relation to their stage of implementation it can be said that 12 have been completed and the remaining are still ongoing. The Programme intends to launch additional 4 Targeted Analyses in 2020 which will lead to an outperforming of the output indicator.

**SO2:** 20 thematic focus papers have been produced, 3 in addition to the previous year. Taking into account a foreseen increase in the annual output of papers during the period 2020 and 2022 there is no risk that the output target of 45 thematic focus papers will not be met.

**SO3:** 8 territorial observation tools should be created or maintained during the programming period, according to the targets. The maintenance/creation of 6 tools has been launched by the end of 2019 and the maintenance of 1 tool has been completed (MapFinder). The creation of the 5 other tools has been launched: the ESPON Database Portal, the TIA tool upgrade, the European and Macro-Regional Territorial Monitoring Tool, the Functional urban areas and regions in Europe tool and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) tool. It is therefore considered that the Single Operation is on track to achieve the target (8 tools). An additional tool as been kicked-off by the end of 2019, the Analytical Tool for Spatial Comparison an easy to use tool to support policy makers in analysing and comparing their regions with the local, regional, national and European situation.

**SO4:** The target to hold 40 outreach events during the programming period has already been met. 67 total have been organized by the end of 2019. The number of outreach events will outperform considerably. This is due to the fact that the number of events implemented under the Transnational Outreach project as such were not considered at the moment of defining the output target for this specific objective.

**SO4:** The target of 20 outreach publications during the programming period has already been met. So far a total of 48 publications have been produced. The number of publication will outperform considerably. This is due to the fact that the number of publications implemented under the Transnational Outreach project as such were not considered at the moment of defining the output target for this specific objective.

## **6. CITIZEN'S SUMMARY (ARTICLE 50(9) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013)**

A citizen's summary of the contents of the annual and the final implementation reports shall be made public and uploaded as a separate file in the form of annex to the annual and the final implementation report

You can upload/find the Citizen's summary under General > Documents

**7. REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (ARTICLE 46 OF REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013)**

**8. PROGRESS IN PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MAJOR PROJECTS AND JOINT ACTION PLANS (ARTICLE 101(H) AND ARTICLE 111(3) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(3)(B) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)**

**8.1. Major projects**

**Table 7: Major projects**

Project	CCI	Status of MP	Total investments	Total eligible costs	Planned notification/submission date	Date of tacit agreement/ approval by Commission	Planned start of implementation	Planned completion date	Priority Axis/ Investment priorities	Current state of realisation — financial progress (% of expenditure certified to Commission compared to total eligible cost)	Current state of realisation — physical progress Main implementation stage of the project	Main outputs	Date of signature of first works contract (1)	Observations
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(1) In the case of operations implemented under PPP structures the signing of the PPP contract between the public body and the private sector body (Article 102(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013).

**Significant problems encountered in implementing major projects and measures taken to overcome them**

Not applicable.

**Any change planned in the list of major projects in the cooperation programme**

Not applicable.

## 8.2. Joint action plans

Progress in the implementation of different stages of joint action plans

Not applicable.

**Table 8: Joint action plans (JAP)**

Title of the JAP	CCI	Stage of implementation of JAP	Total eligible costs	Total public support	OP contribution to JAP	Priority axis	Type of JAP	[Planned] submission to the Commission	[Planned] start of implementation	[Planned] completion	Main outputs and results	Total eligible expenditure certified to the Commission	Observations
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**Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them**

Not applicable.

**9. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 50(4) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(4) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)**

**9.1 Information in Part A and achieving the objectives of the programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)**

Priority axis	P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach
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Priority axis	P2 - Technical Assistance
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**9.2. Specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, in particular accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (d) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)**

An assessment of the implementation of specific actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, including accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations

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**9.3.Sustainable development (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (e) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)**

An assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on sustainable development, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of the actions taken to promote sustainable development in accordance with that Article

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**9.4. Reporting on support used for climate change objectives (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)**

Calculated amount of support to be used for climate change objectives based on the cumulative financial data by category of intervention in Table 7

<b>Priority axis</b>	<b>Amount of support to be used for climate change objectives (EUR)</b>	<b>Proportion of total allocation to the operational programme (%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>

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**9.5 Role of partners in the implementation of the cooperation programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 1, (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)**

Assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the role of partners referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, including involvement of the partners in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the cooperation programme

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**10. OBLIGATORY INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 14(4), SUBPARAGRAPH 1 (A) AND (B), OF REGULATION (EU) No 1299/2013**

**10.1 Progress in implementation of the evaluation plan and the follow-up given to the findings of evaluations**

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Status	Name	Fund	Year of finalizing evaluation	Type of evaluation	Thematic objective	Topic	Findings (in case of execution)	Follow up (in case of execution)
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**10.2 The results of the information and publicity measures of the Funds carried out under the communication strategy**

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**11. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE ADDED DEPENDING ON THE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 14(4), SUBPARAGRAPH 2 (A), (B), (C) AND (F), OF REGULATION (EU) No 1299/2013)**

**11.1. Progress in the implementation of the integrated approach to territorial development, including integrated territorial investments, sustainable urban development, and community led local development under the cooperation programme**

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**11.2 Progress in implementation of actions to reinforce the capacity of authorities and beneficiaries to administer and to use the ERDF**

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### 11.3 Contribution to macro-regional and sea basin strategies (where appropriate)

As stipulated by the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, recital 19, article 8(3)(d) on the "Content, adoption and amendment of cooperation programmes" and article 14(4) 2nd subparagraph (c) "Implementation reports", this programme contributes to MRS(s) and/or SBS:

ESPON is developing a macro-regional monitoring system to improve the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of policy making processes, monitoring and evaluation across all four macro-regions. The webtool currently under development will provide territorial evidence to stakeholders and policymakers in the Baltic Sea, Danube, Alpine and Adriatic-Ionian macro-regions on key development trends over time and on the progress, implementation and contribution of policy objectives as defined in the EU macro-regional strategies. This activity should have been finalised in 2019 but due to problems during its implementation will be completed in 2020.

The targeted analysis on territorial scenarios for the Baltic Sea Region, concluded during 2019, has produced trend analyses and territorial scenarios for the BSR. The main objective of the BT2050 project was to provide evidence to support the revision of the VASAB-LTP and was of prime importance to identify thematic areas for policy recommendation. On the basis of the thematic areas that were discussed in relation to the BT2050 scenarios and their analysis, several policies were identified and clustered into eight key integrated policies with territorial relevance:

- Strengthening the network of Baltic medium-size cities acknowledging the increasing importance that medium-sized cities may have in the implementation of circular economy and providing advice on how to prepare urban settlements for their new role.
- Supporting cross border service networks based on new technologies, for instance the importance of developing integrated cross-border systems, based on unified technological and social standards for the provision of services of general interest.
- Connecting the Baltic infrastructure on the regional level, advises prioritizing investments on regional/local infrastructure networks rather than in European corridors and encouraging support of the BSR secondary networks, after the finalisation of the main continental projects.
- Supporting cross border metropolises to deal with the possibility of further polarisation of population and growth in larger cities, calling for further development of competitive advantages of the Baltic metropolises while, at the same time, safeguarding the quality of life and social inclusion of their inhabitants.
- Using the Baltic Sea assets wisely by supporting sustainable use of maritime resources (sustainable fisheries, sustainable tourism, local cabotage, construction of local power systems).
- Adapting to climate change, water and green cross-border clusters by mitigation and adaptation measures to climate change such as the implementation of financial means to incentivise climate-oriented activities and curb those that may harm the environment
- Attracting migrants to the BSR to enhance demographically and spatially balanced population structure. It includes programs of return migration, implementation of immigration programs targeting particular groups, improvement of residential attractiveness in particular areas to prevent depopulation, incentivise telework in peripheral areas.
- Improving BSR integration through data integration, monitoring, research and spatial planning such as monitoring of socio-economic changes, including flows within and outside BSR; territorial impact assessment (TIA) for strategic documents concerning BSR (EUS BSR) and integrating the spatial development plans for the maritime areas.

- EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)
- EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)

- EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)
- EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)
- Atlantic Sea Basin Strategy (ATLSBS)

## **11.4 Progress in the implementation of actions in the field of social innovation**

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**13. SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH**

Information and assessment of the programme contribution to achieving the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

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**14. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN  
— PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK (ARTICLE 50(2) OF REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013)**

Where the assessment of progress made with regard to the milestones and targets set out in the performance framework demonstrates that certain milestones and targets have not been achieved, Member States should outline the underlying reasons for failure to achieve these milestones in the report of 2019 (for milestones) and in the final implementation report (for targets).

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## DOCUMENTS

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
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## LATEST VALIDATION RESULTS

Severity	Code	Message
Info		Implementation report version has been validated
Warning	2.52.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 102.50% of the total target value for "S", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI05, year: 2018. Please check.
Warning	2.52.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 115.00% of the total target value for "S", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI06, year: 2017. Please check.
Warning	2.52.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 167.50% of the total target value for "S", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI05, year: 2019. Please check.
Warning	2.52.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 190.00% of the total target value for "S", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI06, year: 2018. Please check.
Warning	2.52.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 240.00% of the total target value for "S", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI06, year: 2019. Please check.
Warning	2.53.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 102.50% of the total target value for "F", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI05, year: 2018. Please check.
Warning	2.53.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 115.00% of the total target value for "F", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI06, year: 2017. Please check.
Warning	2.53.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 167.50% of the total target value for "F", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI05, year: 2019. Please check.
Warning	2.53.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 190.00% of the total target value for "F", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI06, year: 2018. Please check.
Warning	2.53.1	In table 2, the annual total value entered is 240.00% of the total target value for "F", priority axis: P1, investment priority: 11f, indicator: OI06, year: 2019. Please check.