

The ESPON 2030 Programme

Monitoring Committee meeting

5 -6 December 2022

**Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic,
address: Staroměstské náměstí 6, 110 15 Praha**

Decision notes

1. Agreement on the Agenda

The MC approved the agenda after two countries requested to add some topics to the agenda.

HR asked whether Serbia could be involved in the ESPON programme.

CH asked for a discussion on the selection process of targeted analyses and claimed for a stronger involvement of MC members in the selection of projects.

The two points were added to the agenda.

2. General Provisions for the ESPON 2030 Programme

1. ESPON MA Info note on management (document, question and answer):

a. Member and Partner State Agreement on the ESPON 2030

The MA informed the MC on the status of signatures of MS/PS agreements and indicated that 20 are signed and 13 still to be signed.

b. Transfer of contributions

The MA gave an update on the payment of national contributions to the ESPON 2030 programme including the Liability mechanism.

3. State of affairs after the last MC meeting and next steps of the Programme

1. Programme Management and Control System Description (MCS D) (documents and decisions) including elements

The MA presented the Draft MCS D of the ESPON 2030 Programme. It was underlined that the MCS D represent an update of the MCS D of the ESPON 2020 Programme taking into account the new regulations. This means there are no fundamental changes as there are no major differences between the two programming period.

Some updates in the internal guidelines for travel reimbursement, external expert contracting, public procurement rules and ESPON week organization have been introduced for administrative simplification and discussed separately under a)-f).

The MC approved the MCS D and its annexes apart from those which are adopted separately under the following subsections.

a) Travel reimbursement rules (documents and decision)

The MA introduced the new travel reimbursement rules. Hotel and accommodation costs, similarly to the subsistence costs, will be reimbursed as lump sums as from the 1 January 2023.

The MC approved the Travel reimbursement rules.

b) Guidelines for contracting external experts (document and decision)

The MA presented the updated guidelines for contracting external experts, in which the fees have been slightly adjusted with the latest indexations.

The MC approved the Guidelines for contracting external experts.

c) Guideline to MS on the organisation of ESPON seminars (document and decision)

The MA presented the guidelines for the organisation of ESPON seminars.

The MC approved the Guidelines for the organisation of ESPON seminars.

d) Scope and methodology for the MA quality checks (document and decision)

The MA presented the revised methodology for the Quality checks and explained that the focus was better balanced to cover both the achievements of the Single Operation and not only its administrative and financial implementation.

The MC had no comment or observations to the principles and approved MA Quality Checks methodology.

e) Specific provisions for Public Procurements

The MA presented the specific provisions related to the public procurement procedures that will be applied for the activities implemented and financed under the Technical Assistance budget.

The MC had no comment or observations to the principles and agreed on the specific provisions for public procurements.

f) Evaluation strategy and nomination of the members of the Evaluation Steering Group (documents and decision)

The MA presented the evaluation strategy indicating that was developed according to the principles discussed and approved by the MC at the last meeting in September.

After the discussion the MA asked to the MC members to share their interests in participating in the Evaluation Steering committee. The Croatia, Netherlands and Switzerland expressed interested.

The MC approved the Evaluation Strategy and appointed Croatia, Netherlands and Switzerland as members of the Evaluation Steering Committee.

g) Additional agenda point related to the approval of the Targeted Analysis

The MC discussed internally the process related to Targeted Analysis and concluded that according to the information available so far clarification should be asked to the EGTC under agenda point 4 and, depending on the outcome, a possible follow-up should be considered.

Sessions with the ESPON EGTC

4. Single Operation: update on the implementation (ppt and discussion)

ESPON EGTC made a presentation on the implementation status of the Single Operation, with concise information on the involvement of MC members in the scoping of first seven European research projects, the just launched call for targeted analyses, outcome of the first knowledge development activity also, the ESPON EGTC recollected the global targets of the SO and the TAP implementation plans by end of 2023.

5. Scoping notes for Horizontal Measures (documents and decision)

Confidential agenda point due to possible related procurements.

6. Proposal on future consultation process (document discussion and decision)

The ESPON EGTC presented the proposal on the consultation process for the four new TAP themes. ESPON EGTC explained that the purpose is to approach the various target groups (stakeholders and researchers) to obtain advice on how to strategically profile the TAPs to respond to territorial research gaps and fit the needs of relevant policy frameworks.

The MC approved the proposed consultation approach.

7. Strategic frameworks for the new TAPs / launching open consultation on the four new TAP themes (documents, discussion, decision)

The MA recalled that among the 4 new proposed themes, 3 are mentioned and described already in the ESPON 2030 Programme. The last one listed below on Adaptation on Climate Change was already discussed and proposed in the context of the consultation round of the first TAPs in early 2022. At that time the MC members who were part of the Advisory Panel assisting the ESPON EGTC in profiling the TAP “Climate Neutral Territories” already suggested this theme in July 2022.

The ESPON EGTC introduced briefly each input paper (challenges, policy context, tentative research and policy questions) on which the MC members were asked to comment.

The MA also invited the MC members to indicate if there is a need to establish an Advisory Panel and, in this case, to raise their interest to be included in.

The four TAPs discussed were:

- **Smart connectivity**
- **Living, working and travelling across borders**
- **European territories in global interactions**
- **Adapting to the impacts of climate change**

The MC approved the proposed TAPs under the conditions that the comments made during the meeting will be taken into account in a revised version to be submitted to the MC together with the draft minutes of this meeting.

The MC decided to set up an Advisory Panel for all TAPs. Nominations from the MC are still open until 10 January 2030.

8. Stakeholders’ mapping (ppt, information, and discussion)

a) State of ongoing stakeholder mapping at EU and transnational level

b) Organisation of the stakeholder’s mapping at the national, regional and local level, including clarification on the role and involvement of MC and ECPs

ESPON EGTC presented the state of art regarding mapping the stakeholders at the European, transnational and macro-regional level.

The EGTC conclude to further proceed with the activities in the light of the discussion of the day.

c) Clarification on the process regarding targeted analyses and other services on demand

ESPON EGTC presented the process behind the submission and selection of targeted analyses and other services on demand.

After the request of some clarifications by the MC, it was concluded that:

- the EGTC will indicate in the call for the expression of interest the number of proposals to be selected for the first cut-off date. Following the analysis of results and discussion with the MC, a target for following cut-off dates should be set.
- the EGTC will share with the MC the actual expression of interests received and as well their respective evaluations.

HR volunteered as observer in the evaluation and selection procedure to be performed by the ESPON EGTC.

9. Discussion on the structure of the MC Info note (information, document and discussion)

ESPON EGTC asked feedback to the MC members on the current format and use of the MC Info Note in the view of proposing a new format for the future that would include a leaner content and an easier to read format.

After the exchange the ESPON EGTC concluded to submit a specific MC Info Note proposal for the next MC meeting.

10. Updated on the contracting of ESPON Contact Points (information, ppt and discussion)

ESPON EGTC presented the status of exchanges launched with the ECPs to agree a work plan for national knowledge activities.

The EGTC conclude to further proceed with the activities in the light of the discussion of the day.

11. Timetable MC/MA and EGTC (two documents, one by the MA on 2030, one by the EGTC on SO, and decision)

The MA presented the timetable of the next milestones for the ESPON 2030 programme.

The ESPON EGTC presented the timeline of activities for the Single Operation.

The MC approved the timetables.

12. AOB

The MA presented the point raised by HR on the possible involvement of candidate and accession countries in the ESPON programme and recalled that the rules of procedure of the ESPON Monitoring Committee.

The MA will prepare a note with a proposal for the next MC meeting in March 2023 to take a decision.