

# Press Kit: All you need to know about ESPON



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Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

## ESPON in a nutshell

ESPON is about evidence. It is an EU funded programme that provides data, analyses and tools to policy makers and stakeholders. These tools help them to benchmark their region or city in Europe, identify new challenges and potentials and shape successful development policies for the future.

## More than just a press kit

In this publication we combined all the information you may need about ESPON: the aim of the programme, the structure and how you can use our evidence for your journalistic work. We also included insights from different projects to introduce you into our work.

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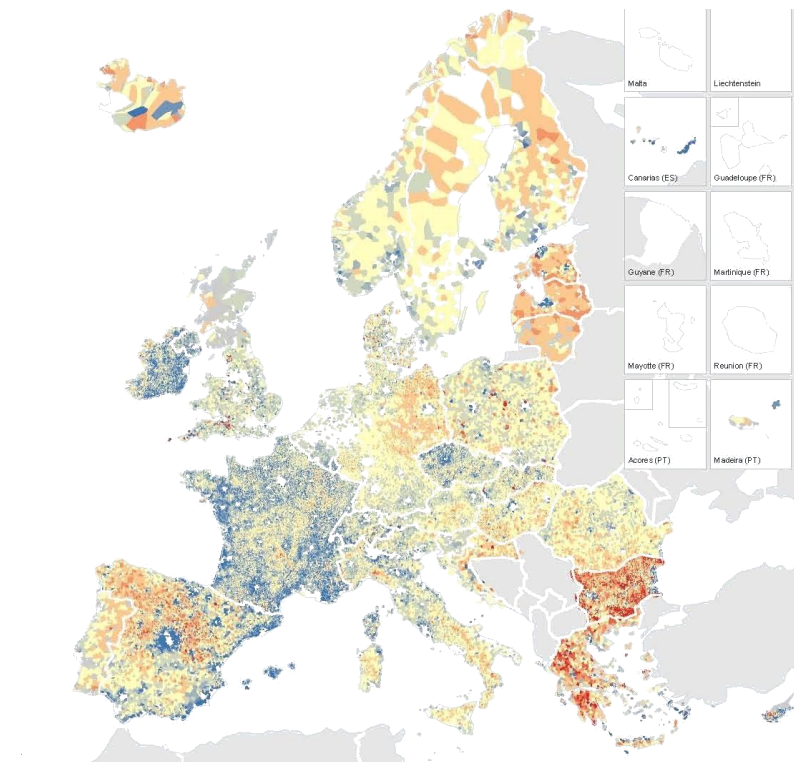


## Is ESPON for journalists?

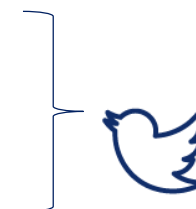
- Journalism is based on facts. And in times of misinformation and fake news, facts are the only way to create solid arguments and analyses and take decisions that can be backed with data.
- If you are writing about migration, SMEs, youth unemployment, infrastructures, environmental issues, about circular economy or the use of structural funds ESPON provides you data and visuals produced by experts in the fields to support your articles. And we are here to assist you in locating and extracting them.
- You can also find new ideas: How other cities, regions, countries found solutions that your area is still struggling with? What European territories will look like in 20-30 years? Is Europe able to address the challenges mountain areas, islands or metropolitan areas are facing in the era of globalization?
- Plus, through ESPON you can access a vast pool of experts around Europe from the public and private sector if you need further comments, statements, analyses. We are happy to assist you on that.

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## [shrinking rural areas in Europe]



Shrinking population has become the normal trajectory for many European rural regions as employment concentrates in urban centres. By 2050, urban regions will increase population by 24.1m whereas rural regions will fall by 7.9m

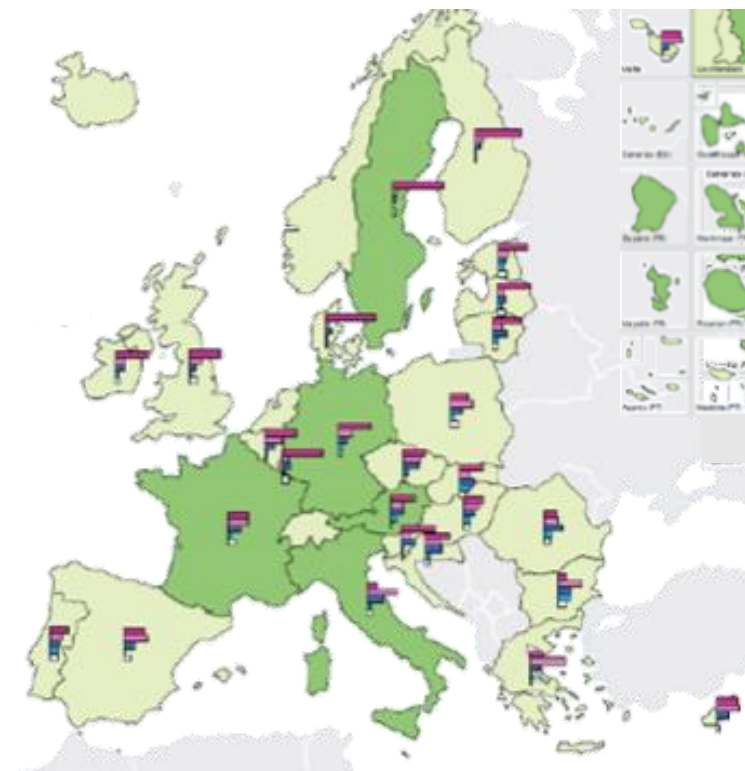


## Who can benefit from ESPON?

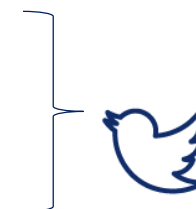
- ESPON addresses policy makers on EU, national or local level involved in designing development processes that require territorial approach that exceeds the structured administrative borders. Some examples are:
- We support European Commission's DG REGIO in shaping the territorial dimension of EU's Cohesion Policy providing tools for the ex-ante Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) related to [legislative and policy initiatives](#).
- We deliver a targeted analysis on the Common Spatial Perspectives for the Alpine Area, towards 2050, upon request of the relevant ministries of 7 countries from the [Alpine Area](#).
- We conducted an applied research on Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and how could regions and cities better adapt their regional development strategies to attract [foreign firms](#).

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## [Migration Policies in Europe]



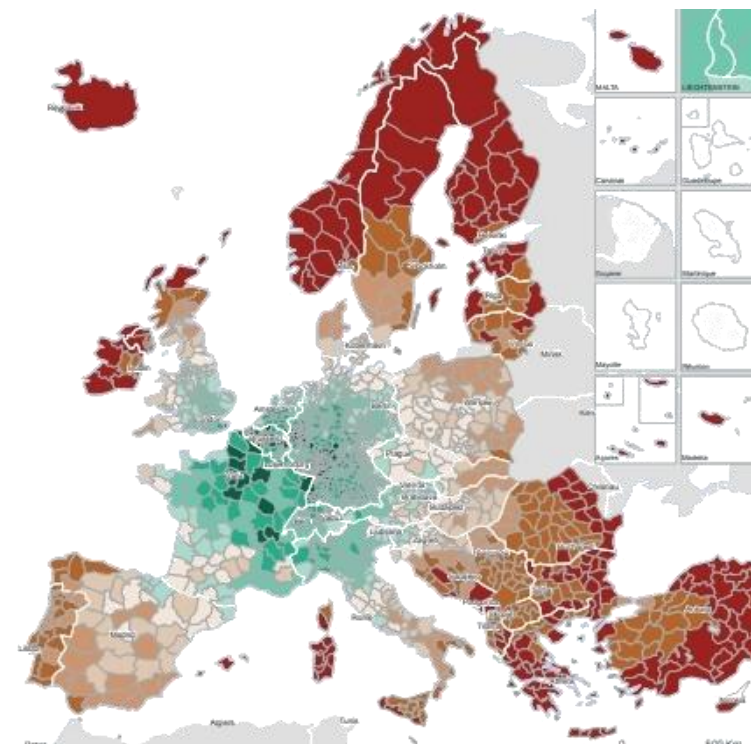
EU regions were able to pioneer creative integration solutions in the aftermath of the 2015 refugee crisis. Long-term integration strategies need transnational coordination in the context of labour market demands and cultural adaptation



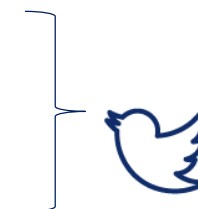
## Who can benefit from ESPON?

- ESPON is also a unique resource of information for academia, professors, researchers and students. Since 2006 ESPON has been cited more than 17.000 times in academic publications. At the same time many European Universities are contracted by ESPON to conduct analyses or develop interactive tools.
- As our content is free for anyone to access and download, the private sector is also benefiting from our work. Consultancies, SMEs, even industries can use our publications to better position themselves in certain markets and/or adjust their products and services.

## [accessibility potentials]



Over the last decade EIB and ESIF invested nearly 70 bn for infrastructure in the Southern EU regions. Citizens and businesses benefitted. But evidence shows that infrastructure pays off when well aligned with other place-based investments.



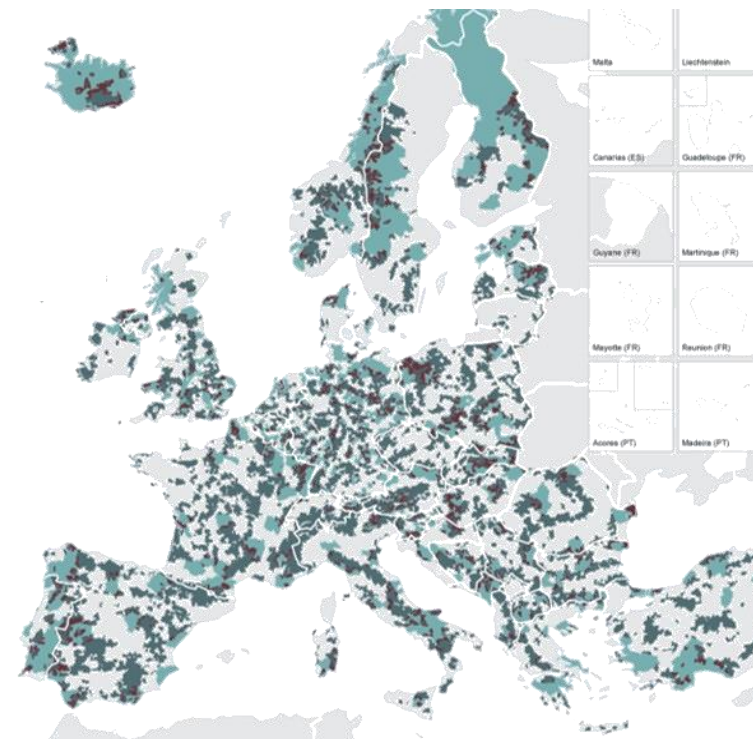
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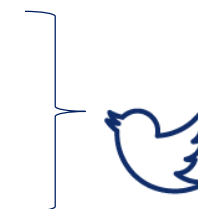
## ESPON is about results

- **Policy briefs:** These are short publications (usually 16-24 pages) that are addressing a certain policy challenge, presenting in a clear and comprehensive way the main elements of the topic and our main policy recommendations. Policy briefs are produced in house and we offer an online and a printed version.
- **Example:** In September 2018 we published a [policy brief on the Inner peripheries](#) in Europe, that was both explaining the term and exploring challenges and opportunities. The policy brief was also including maps that were analysing different aspects of the European inner regions and policy recommendations on how to support the actions of local stakeholders to deal with the associated challenges.

## [inner peripheries]



80% of the inner peripheries with low economic potential or poor accessibility are located in non-urban regions. Almost half of poor accessibility IPs are in mountainous regions. Areas lacking relational proximity are more often in urban (32.2%) and metropolitan areas (43%)



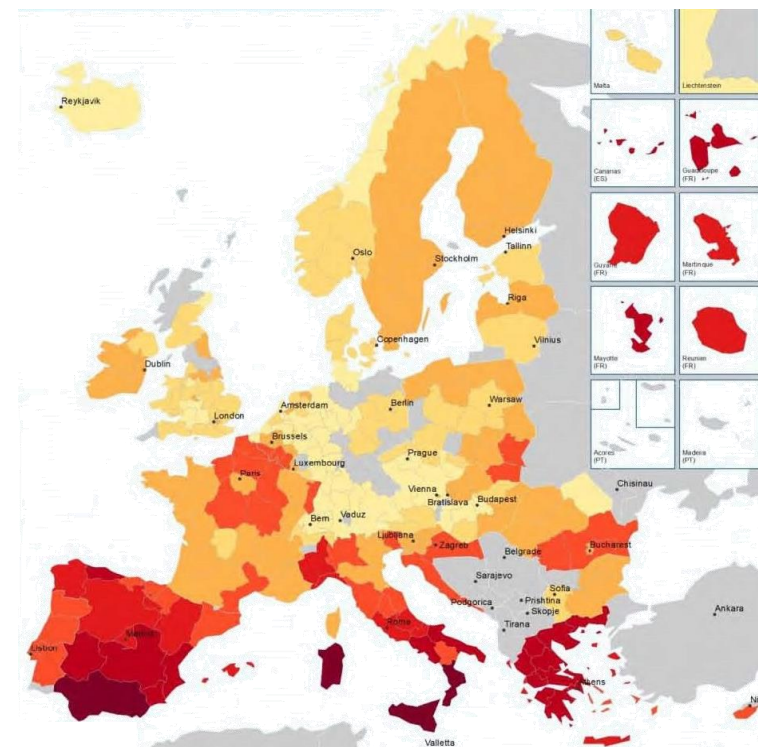
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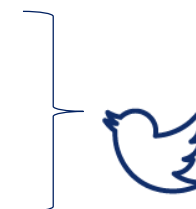
## ESPON is about results

- **Applied researches:** They focus on key EU priorities as these are set by the Europe 2020 Strategy, the Investment Plan for Europe, the Cohesion Policy, the Territorial Agenda and the Urban Agenda 2020. Applied researches have a European approach and aim to reply to a specific set of questions. Answering those questions will allow us to draw concrete conclusions that can be then transformed to policy recommendations.
- **Example:** The [YUTRENDS project](#) is tackling youth unemployment in Europe to identify the main trends of youth unemployment and youth migration and how they are linked with the European regions and cities. The aim is to identify best practices where EU schemes like Youth Guarantee support youth employment and find ways to increase transferability of these practices in other regions.

## [youth unemployment]



Resilient local economies fight better youth unemployment. Accessibility, internationalisation of local markets, entrepreneurial spirit high qualification and occupational mobility improve economic sustainability and create opportunities for young people.



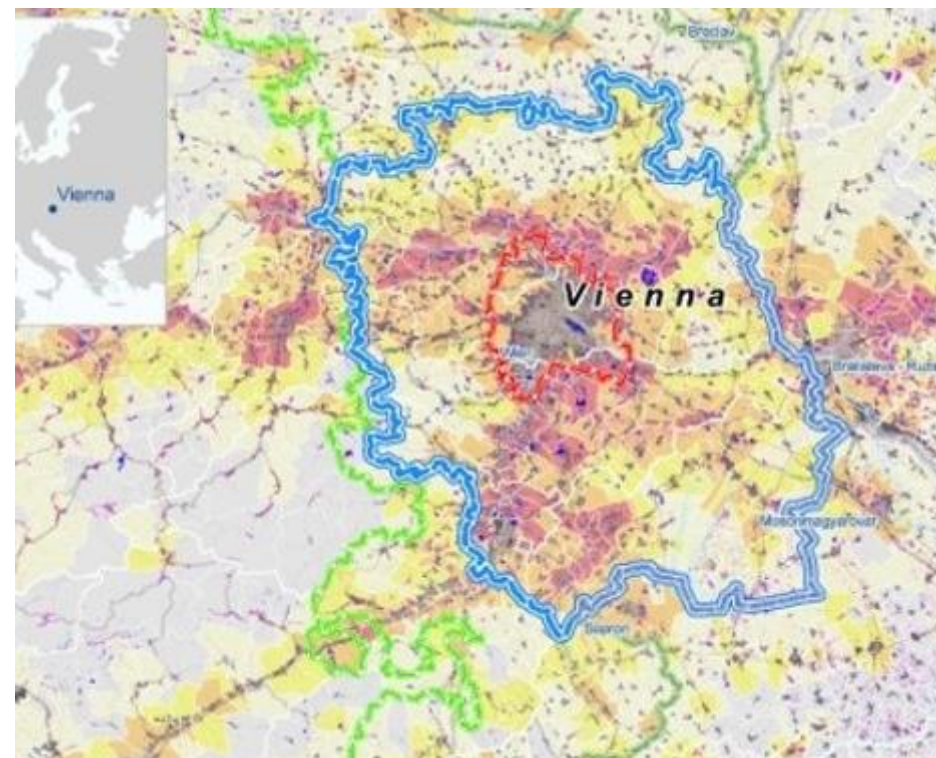
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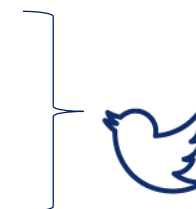
## ESPON is about results

- **Targeted analyses:** They are targeting on a specific topic a defined group of regions and cities faces and offer them evidences from a European perspective to support their policy decisions. They provide case studies of the focused areas backed by data collected on local or EU level. Targeted analyses can also support other EU funded programmes, macroregions, networks etc.
- **Example:** 11 stakeholders from 8 countries asked ESPON for an analysis focusing on the strategic role of special planning for cities within metropolitan areas. ESPON delivered a targeted analysis ([project SPIMA](#)) providing policy recommendations related to the use of land, protection of environment, stakeholders' engagement and potential financial risks related to spatial development. The analysis included also case studies from 10 cities: Vienna, Zurich, Prague, Brussels, Brno, Oslo-Akershus, Turin, Terrassa, Lille and Lyon.

## [Metropolitan Areas]



What is a Metropolitan area? Our SPIMA project redefines them as clusters of administrative and functional areas, Policymakers have to focus more on the metropolitization process to better understand spatial planning and governance approaches



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## ESPON is about results

- Tools: ESPON has developed a “[toolbox](#)” to facilitate access and use of its data from stakeholders or policymakers. These data are gathered through the different projects over the past years and they provide valuable information related countries, regions, cities, and people.
- Example: The Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) tool allow policy makers to better understand the future impact of their policies before decisions are made. This tool can adapt to decision making on local, national or EU level and on the specific needs of the users. The Committee of the Regions is using the TIA tool to support rapporteurs in preparing their opinions and [impact assessments](#).
- Peer learning workshops: Those are [workshops](#) aim to offer a rapid know-how transfer and capitalize on the experienced gained by the stakeholders who were involved in ESPON targeted analyses. They are organised in a flexible format that adapts to the needs of the applicants.

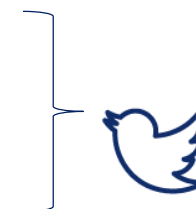
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## [ESPON database portal]



Name	Type	Data
Active enterprises	★	🗄️
• Ageing index of total population	★	🗄️
• Aggregate impact of climate change on Europe's regions	★	🗄️
Air transport	★	🗄️
Annual total emissions of greenhouse gases	★	🗄️
Area of Protected area	★	🗄️
Area of statistical regions	★	🗄️
At risk of poverty rate by NUTS 2 regions	★	🗄️
Average size of school class lower secondary education	★	🗄️
Average size of school class primary education	★	🗄️
Busses, motor coaches and trolley busses	★	🗄️
Car travel time to next regional centre (grid)	★	🗄️
Change in annual mean number of days with heavy rainfall	★	🗄️

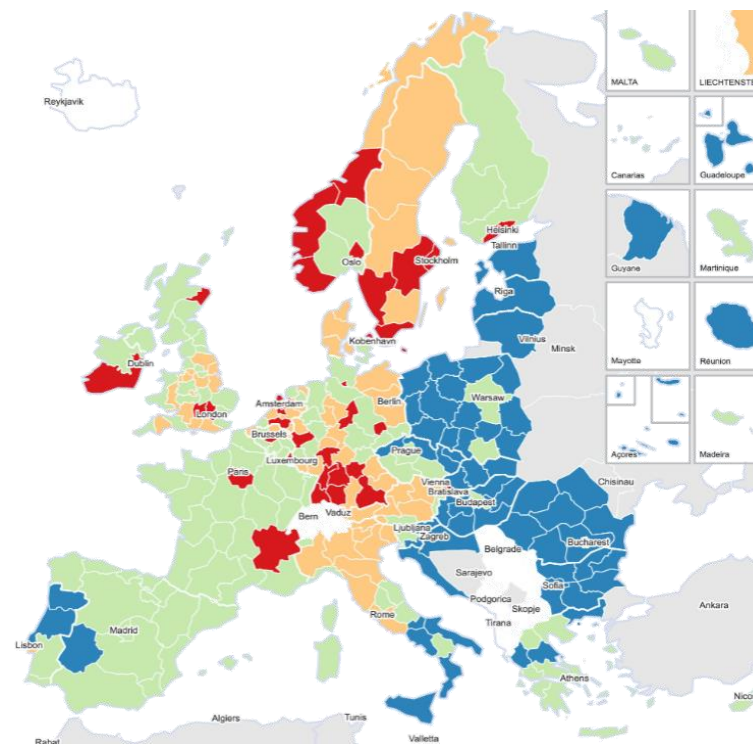
In the times of #FakeNews journalists need reliable data to back up their stories. ESPON is offering a database portal to analyse current European trends. A source of information and inspiration for #datajournalists and #policymakers



## Who is ESPON?

- All 28 member states and 4 partner states (programme countries that are not EU members), Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland participate to ESPON programme and contribute to its co-finance.
- As every EU funded programme, ESPON is managed by a Managing Authority, which is the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure of Luxembourg - Department of Spatial Planning and Development (DATER), Division for European Affairs.
- The programme is implemented by ESPON EGTC ([European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation](#)), which is a structure jointly created by Luxembourg together with the three Belgian regions of Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels Capital.

## [knowledge economy]



39% of the cities saw a substantial increase in uptake of specific services because of digitalisation and 1 in 3 cities has seen a substantial reduction in operating costs. 91% of city services have improved because of this process



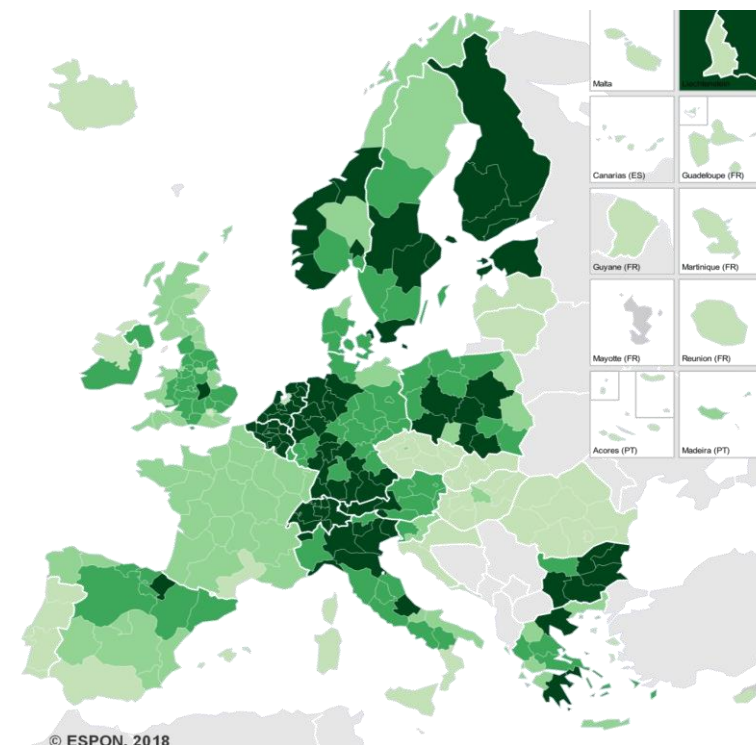
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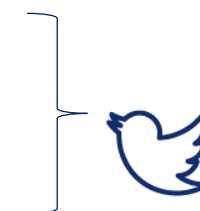
## What is ESPON?

- ESPON is an EU funded programme that is bridging policy makers with academia to provide data and insights to the first that will support them in taking decisions based on facts and evidences. We use experts to collect our information through applied research projects and targeted analyses and all our content is then open for anyone to download and use them through our website.
- We are organising peer learning workshops and we developed interactive online tools to facilitate further the use of these findings. We also offer a variety of publications that are addressing the needs of different audiences, from academics to politicians and members of the administration.
- Our aim is to improve the effectiveness of policies on EU, national and local level and to reinforce cooperation among larger European areas (territories).

## [circular economy]



Transitioning towards a circular economy could result in overall benefits of €1.8 trillion by 2030 for the EU countries and create significant opportunities in creating new, better quality jobs



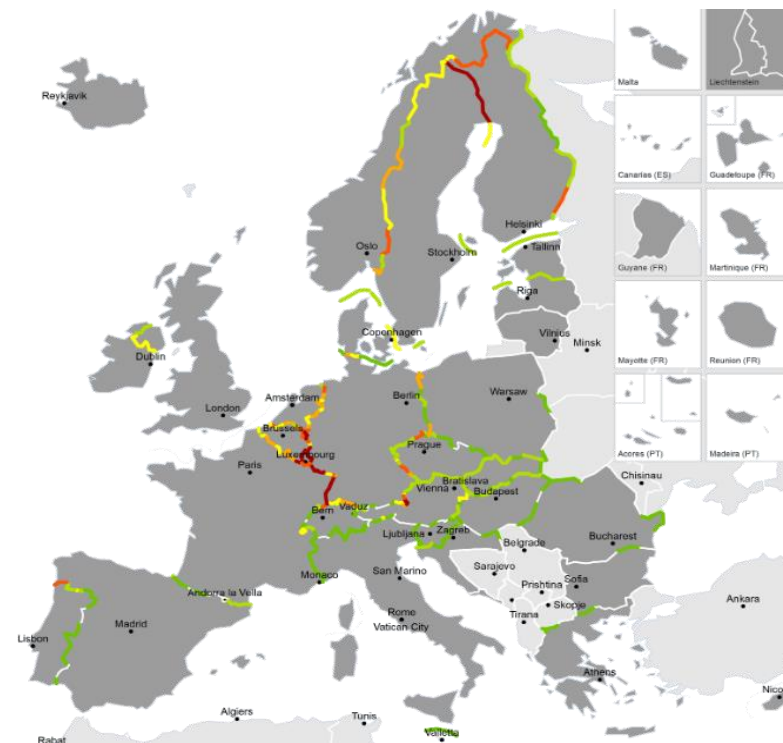
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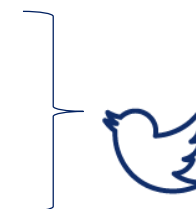
## What is NOT ESPON?

- ESPON is not a private consultancy. We offer applied researches and targeted analyses to policy makers and stakeholders (institutions, cities, regions, associations) under the priorities and the conditions of the programme and we cannot be recruited under any other circumstances.
- ESPON is not offering calls for grants to its stakeholders but supports them by directly providing services to them, through specialised service providers.
- ESPON is not the European Commission. We promote the implementation of the territorial and urban agenda and we support the work of different DGs but our work and our publications reflect the findings and the opinions of our researchers.

## [crossborder public services]



Environment civil protection and disaster management account for almost 60% of all identified CPS, also due to the substantial presence of many cross-border natural areas and border rivers.



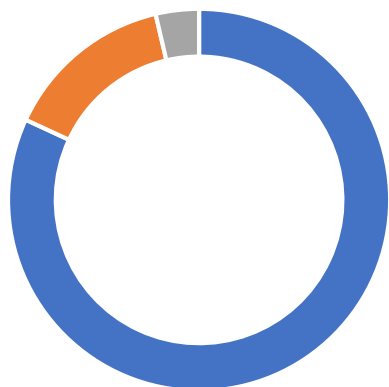
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## Who pays for ESPON?

- The budget of ESPON for the programming period 2014-2020 is 48,678,851.00€ out of which the EU contribution is 85% (41,377,019.00€) and the contribution of the 28 member states 15% (7,301,832.00€). In addition, the ESPON 2020 Programme receives a support of 1,850,000.00€ from the 4 Partner States.

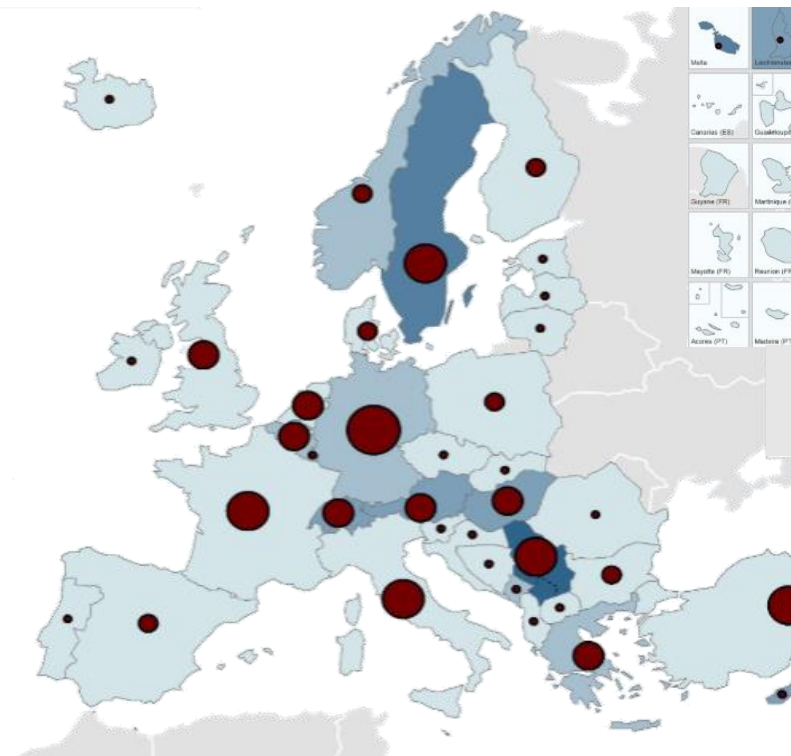
ESPON 2014-2020



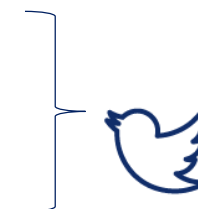
- EU contributions ■ Member states
- 4 partner states ■

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## [refugees and integration]



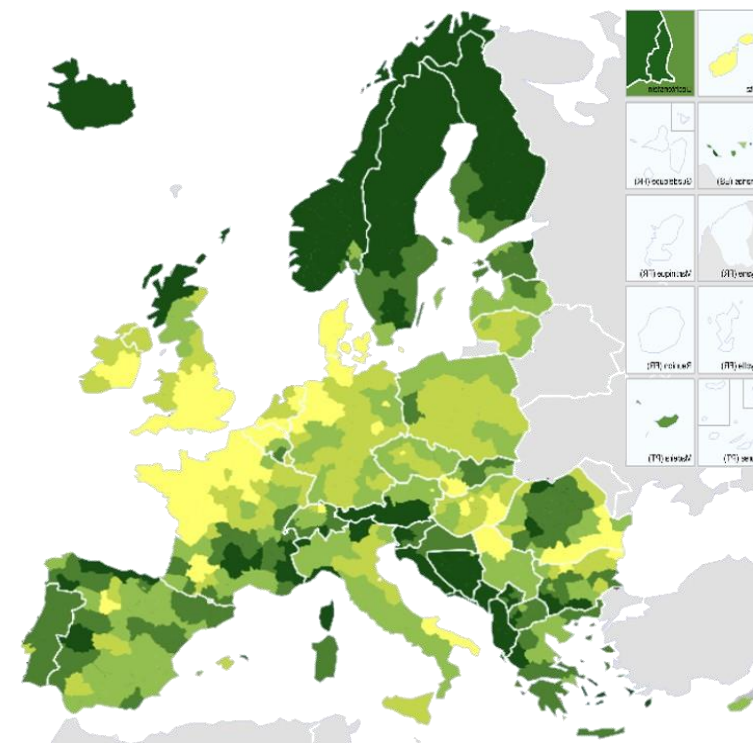
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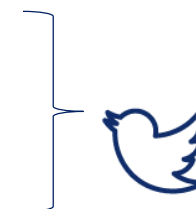
## 20 years of ESPON

- It was originally conceived as a study network for the observation of the European Community area
- After a test phase between 1998 and 2001, the first ESPON programme was launched between 2002 and 2006 as a programme financed by Interreg III
- a second ESPON 2013 programme followed for the 2007-2013 programming period..
- Adopted on 26 May 2016 by the European Commission, the ESPON 2020 programme for the 2014-2020 programming period aims to *support EU Cohesion Policy, European Structural Investment funds and other development policies at European, national and regional level through the through the production, dissemination and promotion of territorial evidence*

## [green infrastructure]



The Nordic countries, the Balkans, Adriatic Sea and the eastern Alpine region display the highest potential for Green Infrastructure networks but have the lowest share of protected core areas.



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## Talk to us

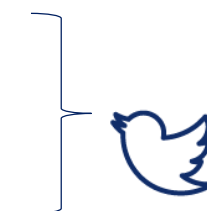
- Do you need more information about ESPON and our work? You can always contact us:
- **Ilona Raugze**, Director, Tel: +352 20 600 280; [ilona.raugze@espon.eu](mailto:ilona.raugze@espon.eu)
- **Laurent Frideres**, HoU Evidence and Outreach, Tel: +352 20 600 280 20; [laurent.frideres@espon.eu](mailto:laurent.frideres@espon.eu)
- **Nikos Lampropoulos**, European Outreach, Tel: +352 20 600 280 26; [nikos.lampropoulos@espon.eu](mailto:nikos.lampropoulos@espon.eu)
- There is also a network of ESPON Contact Points in each of the 32 countries. You can find who is in your country [https://www.espon.eu/countries\\_overview](https://www.espon.eu/countries_overview)

## [ESPON headquarters]



Contact us on twitter: [@ESPON\\_Programme](https://twitter.com/ESPON_Programme)

or on LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/espon](https://www.linkedin.com/company/espon)



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ESPON is about evidence



# Europe's places today – policy visions for tomorrow

In the light of the European elections in May 2019, European Union is in the spotlight. It is important to ensure that political dialogue will be based on real facts and empirical evidence, to avoid misperceptions and fight misinformation.

ESPON's results and data can be used as the canvas, offering the background information needed for the political debate on the future of the EU.

To facilitate the access to our results for policymakers but also for citizens interested, we selected findings and policy recommendations from our projects in 10 different thematic areas. They are presented in a very simple interactive format that makes them easy to read. There are also links to our research results for those interested to find more information.

[You can use this link to download our publication](#)

