



*Ministero delle Infrastrutture  
e dei Trasporti*

# ESPON ITALIAN EVIDENCE IN CHANGING EUROPE

edited by  
**Maria Prezioso**



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The book reflects the positions and opinions expressed by the Italian partners in the execution of projects. More information on the ESPON Programme and the projects can be found on the website [www.espon.eu](http://www.espon.eu).

Initiative taken on occasion of the Italian Semester of Presidency of the European Union

The volume is co-funded by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport. We thank the Monitoring Committee and the Italian Directorate General for Infrastructure, General Affairs and personnel for their support and collaboration in the activities of Italian ESPON Contact Point, Prof. Maria Prezioso, as well as the Italian team ECP and in particular Isabella Carbonaro, Maria Coronato, Angela D'Orazio

*Cover:* Zaira Piazza "2020" Mixed media on canvas, cm. 60 x 80

*Translation:* Monica Martino and Authors where indicated

*Layout and editing:* Maria Coronato

*E-book Project:* Eusebio F. Giandomenico

© 2014 University of Rome "Tor Vergata"

*Editor:* Università degli Studi di Roma "Tor Vergata", via Orazio Raimondo, 18 - 00173 Roma

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*Print:* Print on demand, Roma



ISBN: 9788890976520



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## List of abbreviations

AC	Alpine Convention
ADES	ESPON Project: Airports as Drivers of Economic Success in Peripheral Regions
ARTS	ESPON Project: Assessment of Regional and Territorial Sensitivity
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India, China
CaDEC	ESPON Project: Capitalisation and Dissemination of ESPON Concepts
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CBP	Capacity Building Policies
CEC	Commission for Environmental Cooperation
CEMAT	Council of Europe - Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial/regional planning - Conférence Européenne des Ministres de l'Aménagement du Territoire
CLIMATE	ESPON Project: Climate Change and Territorial Effects on Regions and Local Economies in Europe
CSF	Common Strategic Framework
DEMIFER	ESPON Project: Demographic and Migratory Flows Affecting European Regions and Cities
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EATIA	ESPON Project: Territorial Impact Package for Transport and Agricultural Policies
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
EDORA	ESPON Project: European Development Opportunities in Rural Areas
EGTC	European grouping of territorial cooperation
ENPI-CBC-MED	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument - Cross-Border Cooperation - Mediterranean sea basin
ESI	European Structural Investment (Funds)
ESPON	European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion
ESPONTrain	ESPON Project: Establishment of a transnational ESPON training programme to stimulate interest to ESPON2013 knowledge
ET2050	ESPON Project: Territorial Scenarios and Visions for Europe 2050
EU2020	Europe 2020 Strategy
EUROISLAND	ESPON Project: European Islands and Cohesion Policy
EUSAIR	EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
EU-SILC	EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
FOCI	ESPON Project: Future Orientation for Cities
FUAs	Functional Urban Areas
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GERD	Gross Expenses in Research and Development
GHG	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
GIS	Geographical Information System
HDC - IRC	Human Development and Capability - International Research Centre
IC	Institutional Capacity
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INTERCO	ESPON Project: Indicators of Territorial Cohesion
INTERSTRAT	ESPON Project: ESPON in Integrated Territorial Development Strategies
IT	Institutional Thickness
ITDS	Integrated Territorial Development Strategies
JWG	Joint Working Group
KIT	ESPON Project: Knowledge, Innovation, Technology
LUA	Large Urban Area

LUZ	Large Urban Zone
MAN-3	Mass at Nuts 3 model
MASST	Macroeconomic, Sectoral, Social, Territorial model
MED	Europe in the Mediterranean Programme
MEGAs	Metropolitan European Growth Areas
METREX	European Metropolitan Regions and Areas network
METROBORDER	ESPON Project: Cross-border polycentric metropolitan regions
MIT	Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport
NGO	Non-Governmental organization
NSRF	National Strategic Reference Framework
NSS	National Spatial Strategy
NUTS	Nomenclature des Unités Territoriales Statistiques
ODR	Old age Dependency Ratio
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OP	Operational Programme
P.I.G.S.	Portugal, Ireland, Greece, Spain
PIA	Polycentric Integration Area
POLYCE	ESPON Project: Metropolisation and Polycentric Development in Central Europe: Evidence Based Strategic Options
PST	Project Support Team
PTR	Territorial Regional Plan
R&D	Research & Development
ReRISK	ESPON Project: Regions at Risk of Energy Poverty
RES	Renewable Energy Sources
RSA	Report on the State of the Alps
RUICS	Regione Umbria Innovation and Competition Scoreboard
SEARCH	ESPON Project: Structured Empirical Analysis for Convergence Regions: Identifying Success Factors for Consolidated Growth
SeGI	ESPON Project: Indicators and perspectives for services of general interest in territorial cohesion and development
SGPTD	ESPON Project: Secondary growth poles in territorial development
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SIESTA	ESPON Project: Spatial indicators for a 'Europe 2020 Strategy' Territorial Analysis
SME	Small and medium size enterprises
SMART-IST	ESPON Project: Institutional capacity for territorial development
SOIA	System of Observation and Information on the Alps
SPAN-3	ESPON Project: Spatial Perspectives at NUTS 3 Level
SPESP	Study Programme on European Spatial Programme
SS-LR	ESPON Project: Spatial Scenarios: New Tools for Local-Regional Territories
SURE	ESPON Project: SUccess for convergence Regions' Economies
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TANGO	ESPON Project: Territorial Approaches for New Governance
TeDI	ESPON Project: Territorial Diversity in Europe
TERCO	ESPON Project: European Territorial Cooperation as a Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life
TerrEvi	ESPON Project: Territorial Evidence Pack for Structural Funds Programme
TIA	Territorial Impact Assessment
TIGER	ESPON Project: Territorial Impact of Globalization for Europe and its Regions
TIP RED	ESPON Project: Transport Infrastructure for Peripheral Regions' Economic Development
TIPTAP	ESPON Project: Territorial Impact Package for Transport and Agricultural Policies

TNA	Transnational Networking Activities
TPG	Transnational Project Group
TRACC	ESPON Project: TRansport ACCessibility at regional/local scale and patterns in Europe
UERA	Urban Europe Research Alliance
UPM	Union pour la Méditerranée
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
WGI	Worldwide Governance Indicators
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## 16. CAPITALISATION AND DISSEMINATION OF ESPON CONCEPTS - ESPON CADEC. THE ITALIAN EXPERIENCE

*Maria Coronato<sup>1</sup>*

### 16.1 THE ROLE OF “CONCEPTS” IN THE TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION EXPERIENCE

The ESPON experience has revealed that a bigger capitalisation of results and concepts, developed at central level, can help national stakeholders to develop their institutional activities such as mapping (e.g. ESPONmaps) of data and policy recommendations. However, during the several meetings (e.g. Info-Day), seminars, workshops held at a national level in order to promote the knowledge of the Programme, participants were urged to overcome the idea that European Programmes, as ESPON, employ a planning scale being apparently different from the one normally used “countrywide” in the current development actions.

This request, more and more urging in the period 2007-2013, created the need to have an interface between methodologies, concepts and practices, and also underlined the importance to harmonize the communitarian language with a view to reach a shared definition of ESPON concepts and to improve the territorial planning practices.

The project “Capitalisation and Dissemination of ESPON Concepts” (CaDEC)<sup>2</sup> was born from the awareness that the implementation of concepts and principles established at central level may vary in the European countries: this generating many problems in the lay-out and implementation phase of the cohesion actions of territorial development and/or transnational cooperation.

The project evaluated the discordance between the “official” definition of the concepts and their users' knowledge and implementation in the several territorial scales (stakeholders, practitioner, researchers). With this aim it used an elaborated methodology and a questionnaire composed by 102 questions distributed to a national Target Group (TG) of academicians, representatives of institutional and private sector<sup>3</sup> with no experience of ESPON Programme.

The methodology aims at overcoming the traditional exegetic approach of concepts, which links their meaning to their context. The CaDEC project took into consideration the process of European integration in the light of two crucial issues: multilevel Europeanisation and governance. The Europeanization can be defined as the influence of European Union on national policies and instruments. From this point of view we may reckon that the usage and the definition of the concepts within ESPON Programme can contribute to a Europeanization of territorial planning in the EU countries. In fact the Project aimed at contributing to this process either for the dissemination of ESPON production, or for the identification of the necessities of the actors in charge of elaborating policies and instruments, especially at the most operational levels. In the light of this a multilevel governance plays the role of a general

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<sup>2</sup> Lead Partner of the project was Université Paris Diderot - Paris 7, Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving (NL), Observatorio de la Sostenibilidad en España, Université Libre de Bruxelles (BE); Universitatea “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”; Inštitút urbanizmu a územného plánovania URBION (SK); Valsts reģionālās attīstības aģentūra (LV); Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (BG); University of Rome “Tor Vergata” (IT).

<sup>3</sup> Italian TG was composed by ten precisely selected interlocutors: representatives of national, regional and local institutions, organizations and agencies (Ministries, Regions, Provinces) corresponding to NUTS 1, 2 and 3, and Academicians (Universities and researchers) with no experience of ESPON Programme.

methodology aimed at the implementation of European Union policies. The adopted methodology composes national and transnational activities on a regular basis, identifying the best capitalisation method for each of them in accordance with their target. Nevertheless a multilevel governance of territorial policies requires suitable and congruent information.

Sharing the comprehension of a concept does not necessarily mean finding an agreement on the meaning of the concept itself: it rather means understanding the meaning ascribed to it by the different actors on the basis of their professional experiences and on their geographical and institutional contexts.

The methodology (Elissalde and Santamaria, 2011) did not aim to define the concepts in a “regulatory standard”, but to test the knowledge level of the given concepts in the several projects in order to disseminate suitable information on their usage and their relevant results within the framework of the different relations and depending on the different needs.

Thanks to the questionnaire – carried out and analysed two transnational workshops- every ECP has been able to explore the specific issues/concepts linked to their countries and at the same time to synthesize and hence evaluate the discordance between the definition given for each of the selected concept and their correspondence to the several territorial scales.

As regards Italy the analysis of the following concepts has been taken into consideration:

- Regional competitiveness, because this concept seemed poorly linked to the territorial dimension;
- Territorial Impact, because on the scale of implementation of this concept there were many disagreements;
- Sustainability, because, in spite of its diffusion at national level, this concept is often used in an improper way;
- Territorial Governance, because the concept resulted to be rarely used at national level;
- Territorial Cohesion, because the cohesion came out to be the leading concept for the interpretation of each concept.

In addition to the above listed concepts, also the multiple meanings of terms like convergence and regional decentralization have been explored.

Every summary document, each one in specific national language, has been designed according to the different meaning/usage relevant to the same concept used in the objectives of ESPON project. This has led to the necessity to either create “a path” where the shared principles/concepts and the specific objectives can come together - both of them partitioned at local level according to their sector and/or their territory; and to establish a regulatory system so avoiding different interpretations or localist interests.

The Target Group expressed the opinion that the connection between concept definitions and their operational practice is lacking. The Programme should drive to implement the subsidiary and trans-scalar connection between policies and plans, and also to provide for - with a glossary- precise and shared definitions of the concepts. In the Programme their in depth analysis comes to be elements of the “system-territory” (e.g. Governance and Territorial Impact are interconnected instruments), yet without any ESPON highlight on their tight connection.

The study of concepts and definitions permitted many interesting considerations. For instance, *regional competitiveness* resulted to be linked to innovation on one side and to a cultural problem on the other. The TG associated regional competitiveness with energy sources, these meant to be an economic factor able to enhance residents' life quality. As an economic good, the sources have to be transformed, distributed and commercialized at local, regional, national and international level. On this regard, the summaries were based on the reports of two projects dealing with the analysis, on regional basis, of the



impact of two issues considered to be “the global challenges” in the new European Strategy 2020: energy issues (ReRISK. Regions at Risk of Energy Poverty) and global competition (TIGER - Territorial Impact of Globalization for Europe and its Regions).

A new dynamic vision of the concept of *regional competitiveness* came to light. It was used in the layout of Programmatic documents and in the actions of territorial policies. Possible further usages are relevant to the development of instruments able to evaluate the competitiveness of enterprises and of enterprises networks. The concept is adopted above all by the institutions operating at regional level and developing transnational and regional policies. Hence competition factors are identified by productive and technological factors as well as by (domestic and external) market characteristics, by territorial relationships and by regional governance. The concept usage results to be totally linked to the implementation of European policies of sectoral and territorial level and only partly relevant to more extensive transnational policies. The TG defines the regional competitiveness either as a set of instruments aimed at developing the infrastructures, tourism, environmental and business opportunities of the territory in a strategic way, or as a strategic objective to accomplish. Thus in both cases regional competitiveness is meant to be an objective: As the capability of an economic system to innovate in production and technology.

Tightly linked to the *regional competitiveness* is the concept of *sustainability*, which is considered the foundation of the relaunch of territorial competitiveness of regions, provinces and metropolitan areas in Europe – with particular regard to the impacts caused by the missed implementation of the sustainable policies aimed at contrasting the effects of climate changes, by the increasing energy costs, by the use of conventional technologies. The concept of sustainability came to light as a crucial guideline of all the territorial policies and distinguished itself from the concept of growth so putting in evidence that ESPON did not provide for projects devoted to sustainability. The Italian summary documents have been worked out on the basis of the following projects: ESPON CLIMATE - Climate Change and Territorial Effects on Regions and Local Economies in Europe, FOCl - Future Orientation for Cities, RERISK Regions at Risk of Energy Poverty, TIPTAP - Territorial Impact Package for Transport and Agricultural Policies, EATIA - Territorial Impact Package for Transport and Agricultural Policies.

As regards the *Territorial Impact*, it is evident that the original ESPON definition, used in CaDEC, does not have any reference to the assessment, this in accordance with European Union intention of not providing the Member States with any methodology, but with only an assisting instrument which leaves the national policy makers to make their own decisions on a free basis. The summary documents has been worked out through the analysis of four projects: ESPON ARTS - Assessment of Regional and Territorial Sensitivity; TIPTAP - Territorial Impact Package for Transport and Agricultural Policies, EATIA - Territorial Impact Package for Transport and Agricultural Policies, TIGER - Territorial Impact of Globalization for Europe and its Regions.

Each project employs its own methodology for the evaluation of the territorial impact and what comes to light is a big uncertainty on which instrument to employ on the several scales. The Territorial Impact is so meant to be an evaluation instrument of the effects generated by the policies, though at different scales; it can be employed on only restricted territorial systems; it contemplates economic, social and environmental aspects; it evaluates the impacts deriving from planning/ Programming.

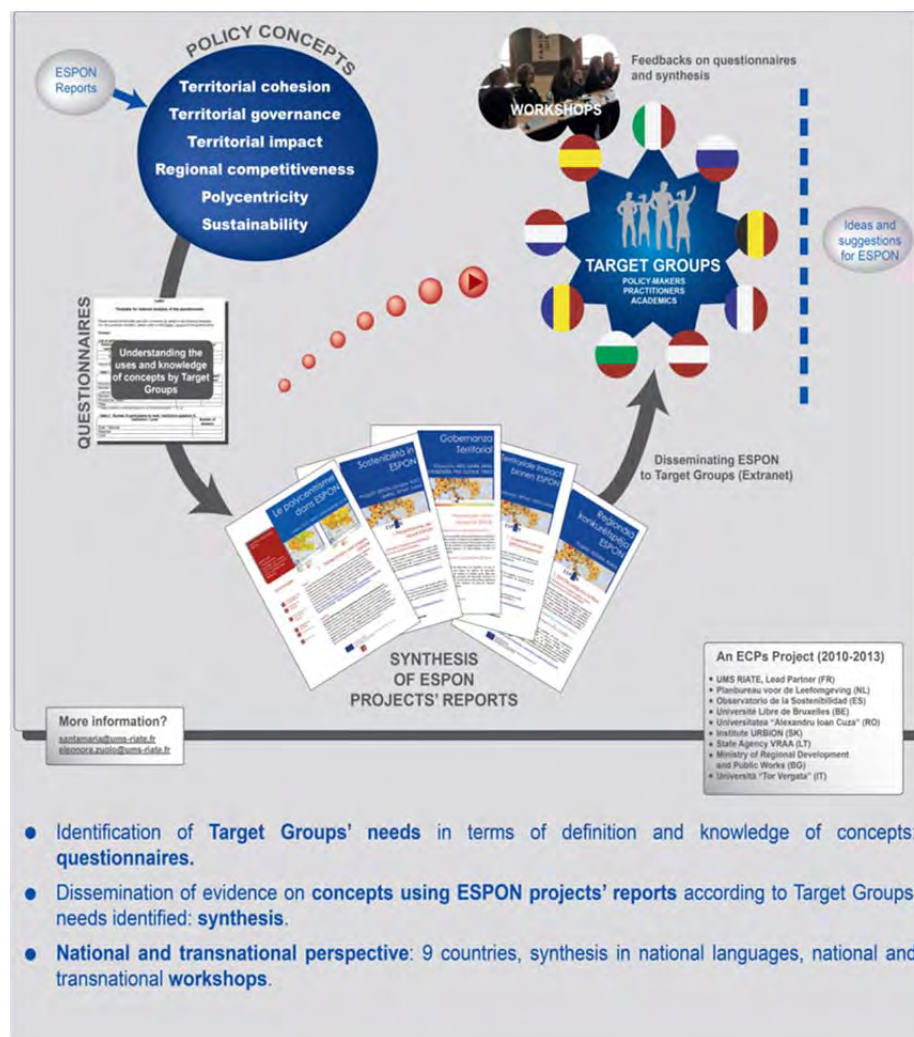
The concept of *territorial cohesion* resulted to be linked to the equality in distribution of resources among the populations of the different territories, to the sustainability and to the actions aimed at safeguarding territorial differences and promote local initiatives. The apparent high cost of non-coordination of policies at the different institutional levels (European, national and regional) request to search for an improvement of this coordination on a horizontal (among sectoral policies) and vertical (among levels) basis. The summary have been worked out on the following projects: DEMIFER -

Demographic and Migratory Flows Affecting European Regions and Cities; ESPON CLIMATE - Climate Change and Territorial Effects on Regions and Local Economies in Europe; TIPTAP - Territorial Impact Package for Transport and Agricultural Policies; TERCO - European Territorial Cooperation as a Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life; TIGER - Territorial Impact of Globalization for Europe and its Regions.

In the end, as regards *Territorial Governance* the global/local relation comes out to play a strategical role. The concept has been analysed through three different projects: FOCI - Future Orientation for Cities, TIGER - Territorial Impact of Globalization for Europe and its Regions, SGPTD - Second Tier Cities and Territorial Development in Europe: Performance, Policies and Prospects. If a strong connection to those European policies applied to any scale, and in particular to the transnational scale, comes evident on one hand, on the other the academicians constantly called the attention on the concept of “regulation”.

TG exchange among different countries and the participation of researchers on the matter of spatial planning, who came from Spain, Portugal, Great Britain and Sweden, permitted the steady enrichment of the project issues within the transnational meeting and the creation of long-term relations of transnational partnership.

Figure 10: Diagram of CaDEC project





The book is part of the activities of ESPON Contact Point Italy. It includes the results of the contribution of the Italian partners in the development of projects under the ESPON 2013 Programme, which stands for European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion. The texts summarise and highlight, among other things, the relations with the regional development policies of Italy, placing them in a framework of transnational cooperation involving the 28 + 4 EU Countries.

Addressing aspects of European territorial policy, ranging from innovation and knowledge accessibility, from the polycentrism to metropolitan areas, from migration to globalization, the authors highlight the position of Italy and of regions also in relation to the objectives set by Europe 2020. A place is devoted to the regional experiences that in the ESPON found a stimulus and an opportunity for discussion, as well as to the concepts behind the vocabulary, to the principles of guidance, and new planning models in Europe, and to the training experiences aimed at the younger generations and the decision makers

The book forms part of the initiatives of the Italian Presidency of the European Union and is co-financed by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transportation (MIT) in charge of the national ESPON Programme. It is aimed at researchers, institutional users, policy makers, at "practitioners" and "non-specialists" including students, so that they can make use of the results of the constant and rigorous work also respectful of the territorial diversities that have characterized the experimental and applied research since 2007, so contributing to the growth of Italian society as an integral part of the European system.

The ESPON Monitoring Centre, for those who still do not know, can be a journey into the European territory, its territorial, economic, social, cultural diversities to integrate and make cohesive and sustainable, by maintaining and developing the increasing potentials of competitiveness and, at the same time, by innovating and disseminating new ways, methodologies, tools and practices to make the territory a common and shared good. Data, references and useful policy recommendations to the growth of the country are also included in the book.

Presentation by the Minister of Infrastructure, Mr. Maurizio Lupi

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ISBN 978-88-9097-6520

