

Opportunities for UK development policymakers to set the research agenda



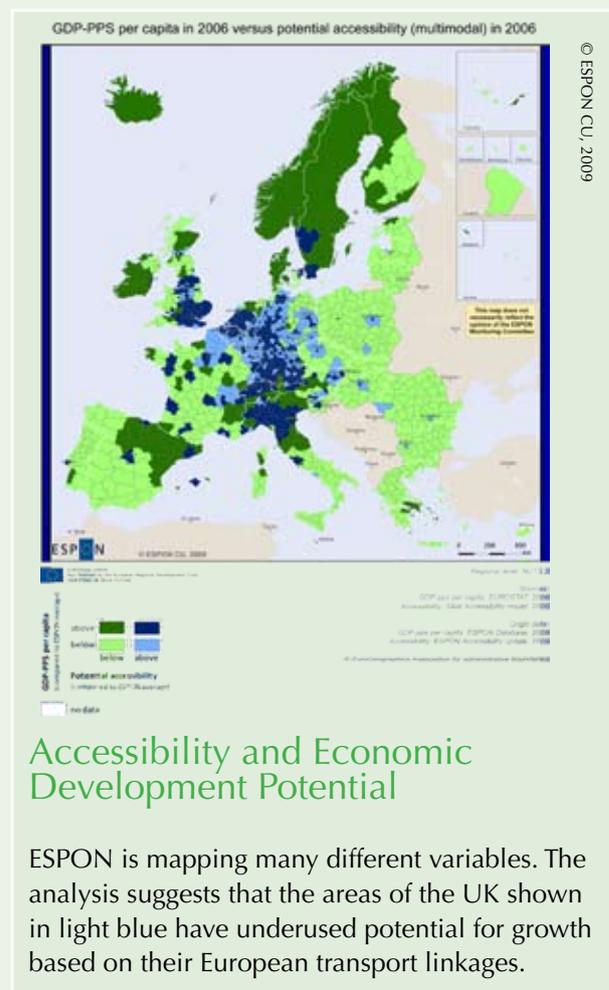
Councils and agencies involved in spatial planning, regional development and regeneration have a unique opportunity to set the agenda for research and to get customised results that they can use. The ESPON programme is the European Observation Network on Territorial Development and Cohesion. From now until 2013 it will launch a wide range of studies about regional change across 31 countries – from Iceland to Cyprus.

An innovative part of the programme is the invitation to public bodies involved in regional development to become active partners (“Priority 2” projects). What is on offer is the chance to obtain customised and up-to-date information that can be used in policy-making and implementation.

ESPON is calling for ideas about the kind of studies that you would want it to commission and that you could then use in practice. For example, you might want to get a better understanding of how your area compares to others across Europe, or to get new information about the key development challenges that affect your region. The available budget for up to 10 targeted analysis projects in this call is €3.5 million.

UK councils are already winners

Two projects proposed by UK authorities under Priority 2 have already been accepted by ESPON for research worth over €400,000. North Yorkshire County Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Welsh Assembly Government have won approval for a study of the potential of rural regions. The Manchester city region is the focus for an analysis of agglomeration economies by researchers from University of Manchester.



No co-financing is required.
You just have to cover your own time and travel costs.

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In a nutshell:

Targeted Analyses enable public authority partners to

- (1) enhance their understanding of the development context,
- (2) make comparisons to other territories, regions and cities,
- (3) provide a European perspective to their analysis and policymaking, and
- (4) work closely with leading regional scientists and development analysts in a major European research programme.

How does it work?

Targeted Analyses are defined by stakeholders interested in adding a new European perspective to their understanding of development opportunities in their areas.

Who can apply?

Public authorities at local/regional or national level are considered as stakeholders in the framework of this call.

Will you need partners?

Public authorities below national level will require partners from at least two other EU countries.

First Step:

Develop your ideas with partners

The public authority partners are invited to submit their expressions of interest in the forthcoming round of calls under "Priority 2". All the documentation related to the calls, including the procedure for applying, the eligibility rules, the evaluation criteria and the submission material, will be made available from 16 September 2009 onwards at www.espon.eu.

Second Step:

Submit your proposal by 11 November 2009.

Third Step:

Proposals that are approved by ESPON will be developed into research specifications by the ESPON Coordination Unit in Luxembourg, working with the successful public authority partners. A further call for researchers to deliver the research, working closely with the stakeholders, to ensure that it is relevant to their evidence needs, will be launched in 2010.

Where to find assistance?

To find out more, including the identification of possible partners, please contact your UK ESPON Contact Point at research@rtpi.org.uk or ring Cliff Hague on 0131-447-5265 / 0131-226-2086.

You can also take part in the ESPON UK Network by joining at www.espon.org.uk

