Version 8 December 2011

ESPON Results related to Specific Types of Regions

Guidance to ESPON Lead Partners for P1 Projects on the use of Regional Typologies within the ESPON 2013 Programme

1. Introduction

Taking into consideration the policy development in relation to EU Cohesion Policy, the Treaty of Lisbon and the description of the new European aim of territorial cohesion, regional typologies are receiving particular attention by policy makers.

In particular focus are the types of territories mentioned in the Lisbon Treaty §174: urban/metropolitan regions; rural regions; sparsely populated regions; regions in industrial transition; cross-border regions; mountainous regions; islands and coastal regions.

This guidance serves the purpose to ensure results from ESPON applied research projects in relation to these types of regions. It first explains the setting of the regional typologies to be used, then how these typologies are envisaged to be used and finally gives some examples.

2. ESPON MC decision

The ESPON Programme carried out a Typology Compilation during 2009-2010 under P3, delivering a document named "Quick Scan", which gives recommendations on the use of the regional typologies proposed within the ESPON Programme.

The ESPON Monitoring Committee by February 2010 asked the ESPON CU to test the use of the regional typologies before further dissemination. Later on, by November 2010, based on the testing and the development of new regional typologies by the European Commission services, and in order to support consensus and consistency at European level, the ESPON MC decided 9 regional typologies. If relevant, the ongoing and future ESPON applied research projects and ESPON publications should make use of these regional typologies for analytical purposes.

3. Regional typologies to be used

The 9 regional typologies cover the following types of regions:

(1) Urban-Rural:

- predominantly urban region
- intermediate region, close to a city
- intermediate region, remote
- predominantly rural region, close to a city
- predominantly rural region, remote

(2) Metropolitan regions:

- capital city region
- second tier metro region
- smaller metro region"
- other regions

(3) Border regions – type A:

- programme area
- programme area (partly)
- no programme area

Border regions – type B:

- internal border programmes (EU + EFTA)
- external border programmes
- internal and external border programmes
- other regions

(4) Islands regions:

- major island < 50 000 inhabitants
- major island between 50 000 – 100 000 inhabitants
- major island between 100 000 – 250 000 inhabitants
- island with 250 000 – 1 million inhabitants
- island with >= 1 million inhabitants
- not an island region

(5) Sparsely populated regions:

- sparsely populated region
- not a sparsely populated region

(6) Outermost regions:

- outermost region
- not an outermost region

(7) Mountainous regions:

- regions with more than 50% of their population living in mountain areas
- regions with more than 50% of their surface covered by mountain areas
- regions with more than 50% of their surface covered by mountain areas and with more than 50% of their population living in mountain areas
- other regions

(8) Coastal regions:

- coastal regions with a low share of coastal population
- coastal regions with a medium share of coastal population
- coastal regions with a high share of coastal population
- coastal regions with a very high share of coastal population

- areas not covered by classification

(9) Regions in industrial transition:
- region with industrial branches losing importance
- region with industrial branches gaining importance
- region with internal industrial structural change
- area not covered by typology

4. How should the regional typologies be used within P1 projects?

The 9 regional typologies mentioned above are a complementary tool in addition to the analysis that is carried out in the framework of the ESPON applied research projects. The typologies are to be considered in the European context and might not fully reflect national and regional specificities if used only at these levels.

The typologies are to be used ONLY for analytical purposes. In practical terms this means that NO maps just showing the regional typologies should be included or displayed in ESPON reports. The typologies are conceived as providing a quick-scan tool for ESPON projects under Priority 1 to interpret their main results in relation to the specific types of territories mentioned under point 3 and to compare their situation and performance in the European framework, preferably leading to additional key messages related to these different types of regions.

In order to support the Lead Partners in this process, "filtering" main results in relation to types of regions, the ESPON CU prepared an excel file (available on the ESPON intranet) including data and metadata on the 9 regional typologies. This information can easily be integrated in the ArcMap software or other mapping systems in order to combine it with data related to the topic of a specific project. The basic idea is to filter the results of the project in relation to specific types of territories. In this process the following questions should be kept in mind:

- Is there any particular pattern, trend or observation related to the topic of this project in relation to any of the 9 regional typologies (e.g. rural, urban, costal, border, ...),?
- Is there any particular observation in relation to different categories within the same type of territories (e.g. larger islands and smaller islands, ...)?

In addition, the 9 regional typologies are integrated in the structure of the ESPON Database, which is online through the ESPON website.

5. Examples of good practice

Based on the Quick Scan approach developed by the above mentioned ESPON project on this topic, some examples on the practical use of the 9 regional typologies can be found below. The examples presented show how the typologies can be used to make a cross-analysis with other ESPON results and indicators, and lead to additional conclusions relevant for policy development.

Example 1

The first example of a Quick Scan shows the GDP per capita in PPS, 2005, for the different types of regions. It becomes evident that in particular urban and sparsely populated regions tend to have higher

GDP per capita values than the other types. Rural regions for instance tend to show the lowest GDP per capita. The high performance of the sparsely populated areas might surprise, but can be explained by the fact that merely regions in Northern Scandinavia fall into this category and they mostly have a GDP per capita above European average.
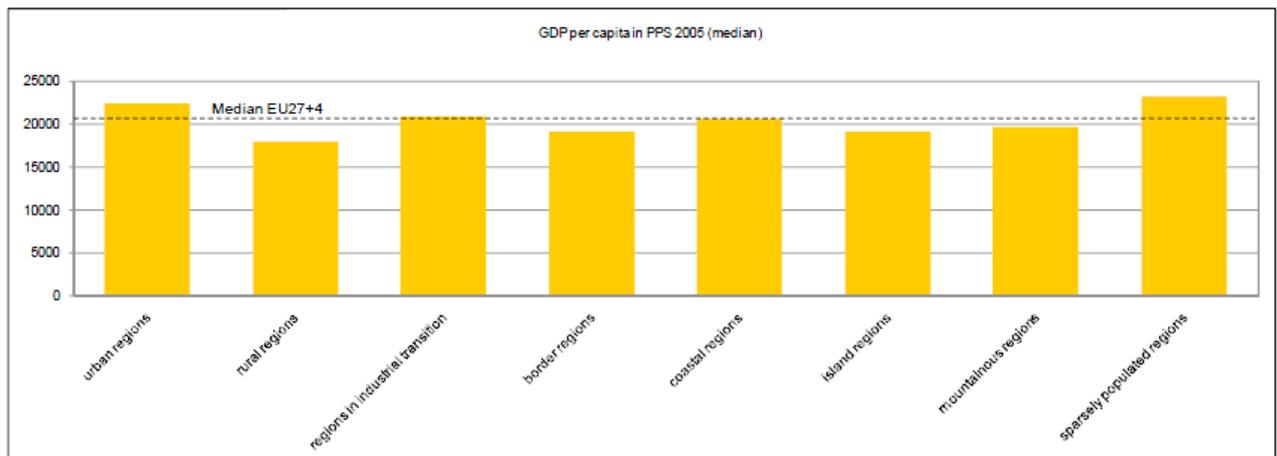
Example 2

The second example is focused on multimodal accessibility in 2006. It becomes clear that urban regions and industrial regions tend to have the highest multimodal accessibility. Indeed they are the only cases in which the accessibility of the regions covered by the classification (read urban & industrial) is higher than of the regions not covered by the classification (read non-urban & non-industrial). Furthermore, sparsely populated areas have the lowest accessibility figures, even lower than islands.