

**ESPON**



Co-funded by  
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Interreg

# Reinforcing territorial cooperation and addressing challenges to European integration

*Wiktor Szydarowski, Director of the ESPON EGTC*

Group of high-level specialists on the future of Cohesion Policy - 5th meeting  
Brussels - 4 July 2023

# About ESPON

- ESPON bridges research with policies
- We are one of EU **Interreg** programmes and are in service for over 20 years

We provide territorial **analyses**, **data** and **policy advice** to 27 European Union countries + 4 partner states (Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, Switzerland)

- We help public authorities to **benchmark** their country, region or city, **identify** new challenges and potentials, and **shape** successful policies for the future



# Dedicated **ESPON** service to cross-border, transnational and macroregional stakeholders

**ESPON**

**METROBORDER**  
Cross-border Polycentric Metropolitan Regions

Targeted Analysis 2013/2/3  
Final Report | 31/12/2010

**ESPON**  
Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund  
Inspire policy making by territorial evidence

**Territorial Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation**

Targeted Analysis  
**Final Report**  
19/08/2019

**ESPON**  
Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund  
Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

**POLICY BRIEF**  
**Cross-border monitoring and observation in Europe**

**ESPON**  
Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund  
Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

**OUTREACH AND UPTAKE OF TERRITORIAL EVIDENCE //**  
**Cross-border Public Services 2.0 (CPS 2.0)**  
Upgrade and update of the European-wide inventory on Cross-border public Services (CPS)  
Final report // September 2022

**European and Macro-regional Territorial Monitoring Tool**

EUROPE BALTIC SEA REGION DANUBE REGION ADRIATIC & IONIAN REGION ALPINE REGION

Travel time to next regional centre (min)

Europe

Baltic Sea Region

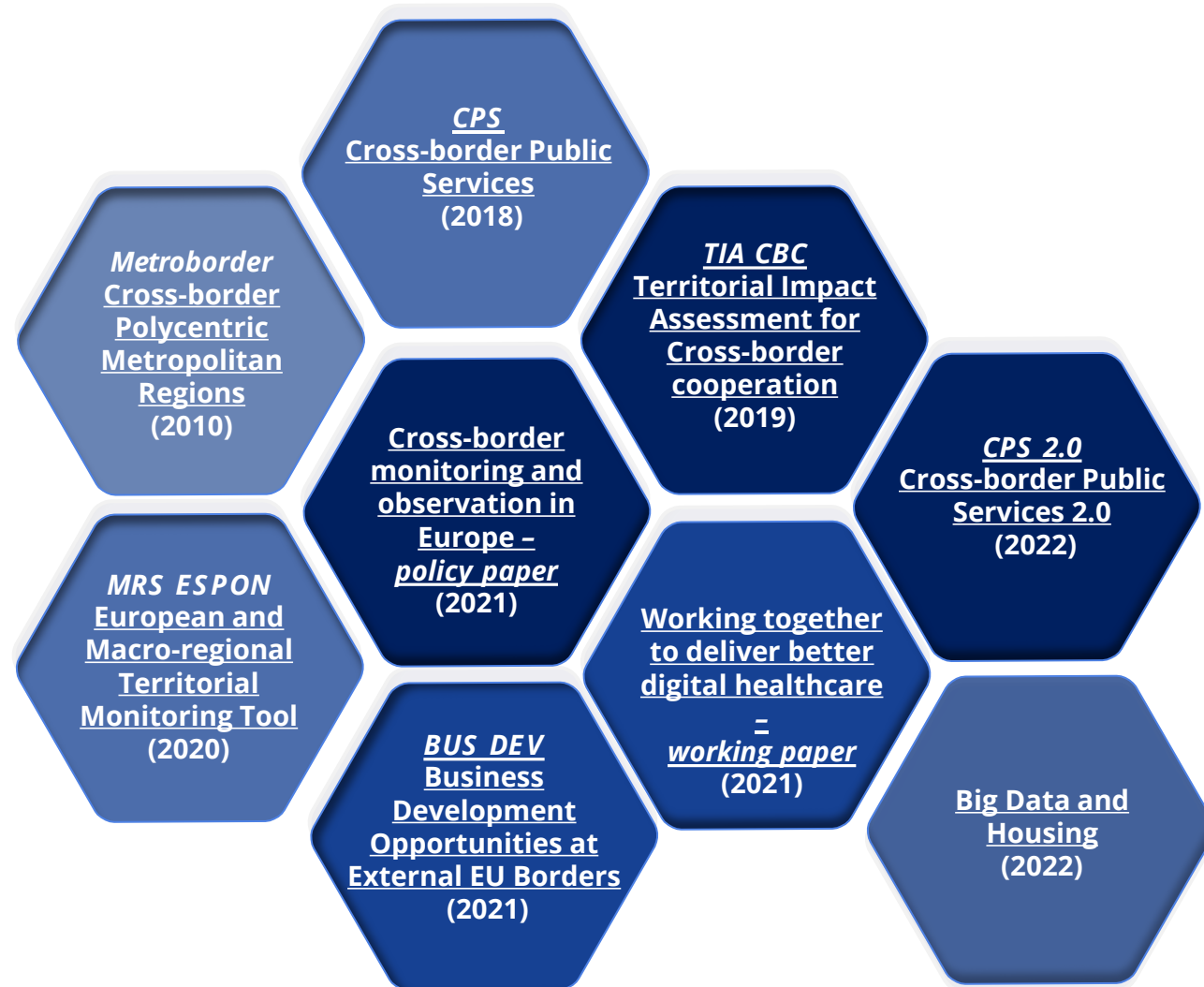
Danube Region

Adriatic & Ionian Region

Alpine Region

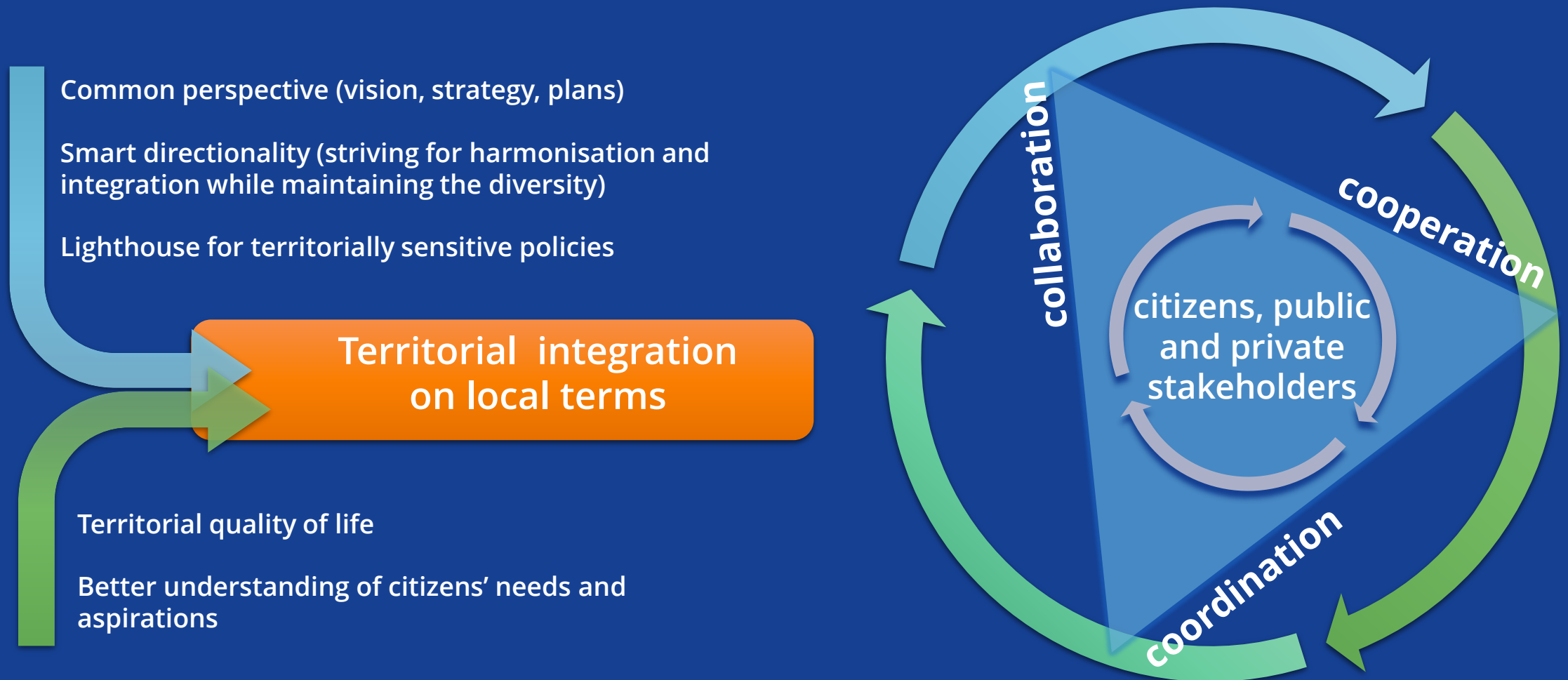
Tips and Tricks

# Key stakeholder takeaways from the **ESPON** work



- ✓ No access to granular data and empirical knowledge to prosper from geographical proximities
- ✓ Interest to monitor, compare and benchmark territories (Are we in the same class? Are we on a good track?)
- ✓ Understand/measure flows, interrelations and dependencies – functional approach to cross-border integration
- ✓ From ‘policy shadow’ to ‘policy spotlight’
- ✓ Agile governance of cross-border realms based on shared visions and strategies
- ✓ Low awareness of territorial impacts
- ✓ Ownership and institutional memory

# Multi-level and place-based approach by **ESPON**





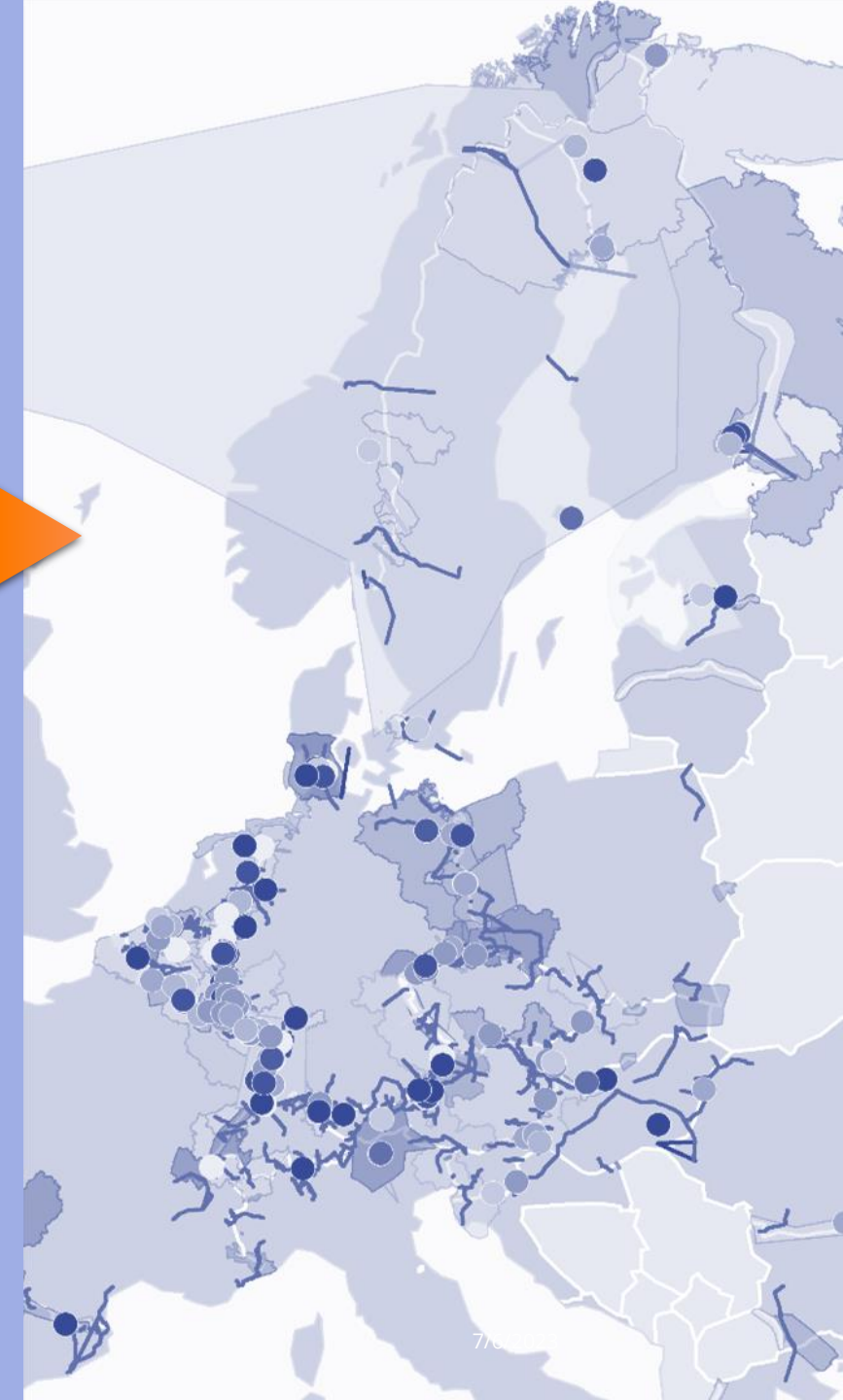
# ESPON advice on tackling persistent cross-border obstacles

- ✓ Support and finance European-wide studies, analyses and territorial research on the subject
- ✓ Provide a European framework for integrated data collection and support the exchanges on cross-border obstacles
- ✓ Tackle cross-border obstacles in a concerted way, e.g., via macroregional strategies/ transnational projects and/or good practice transfer via interregional cooperation
- ✓ Counteract fragmentation by promoting the development of common public services and other forms of cooperation on borders lacking the appropriate measures



# ESPON advice on incentivising cooperation

- ✓ **Provide smart directionality to encourage a holistic approach to the management of shared resources and sectors critical to cross-border convergence:**
  - Common visions and strategic plans for cross-border areas
  - Places-based inventory of shared resources as well as sectors susceptible to/resistant to convergence
  - Local experimentation for best solutions
  - Innovative funding schemes (e.g., strategic cross-border investment envelope to facilitate convergence, combining cross-border Interreg, sectoral programmes and territorial instruments)
- ✓ **Consider favouring CPS-related actions in the regulation**



# ESPON advice on future priorities

- ✓ Strengthen the governance of cross-border areas, with due attention to their **different typologies** (maritime / mountainous / insular/ river-based, lake-based, outermost or within macro-regions)
- ✓ Brace for governance arrangements on **new functional areas** (flow-based) – e.g., stemming from transborder migration of pollution and the associated environmental hazards, the spread of communicable diseases and the resulting health risks, or the natural progression of green infrastructure
- ✓ Enhance a better territorial distribution of common public services and promote new types (e.g., e-governance, e-health and interoperability)
- ✓ Promote Territorial Impact Assessment for cross-border investments
- ✓ Defragment data collection on cross-border flows, drivers, trends and patterns, and integrate methodologies





# ESPON role in 2021-2027

## Deliver evidence-based knowledge on:

- ✓ Convergence status on internal and external EU borders, including maritime borders or outermost
- ✓ Territorial governance of cross-border functional areas
- ✓ Emerging types of functional border areas due to transborder flows, and their optimal governance arrangements
- ✓ Unexplored cooperation opportunities and potentials resulting from physical proximity
- ✓ Citizens' perception and needs for cross-border integration
- ✓ Effective cross-border public services in different types of territories



Living, working  
and travelling  
across borders



Governance  
of new  
geographies

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**// Thank you**

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