

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Reports on the Interactive ESPON-INTERSTRAT**  
**Meetings organised by**  
**the Greek ECP- Panteion University**



**First Interactive INTERSTRAT meeting in Athens - 10th of march 2011- at PANTEION UNIVERSITY, entitled : «Integrated territorial development strategies» : ESPON findings in the creation and monitoring of ITDS, Towards a Greek Observatory for territorial development and cohesion.**

- The objective of the interactive Workshop was to inform and promote a learning process for Greek public and private institutions directly or indirectly involved in the development of territorial development policies, on **the findings of studies and projects** developed under this programme.
- Greek teams that had participated in ESPON Projects and TPGs (P1, P2) have presented their projects and have commented on how to use the ESPON findings at national and regional level and especially on the occasion of the ongoing elaboration of the new **«Regional Frameworks for spatial planning and sustainable development»**. (FOCI, EUROISLANDS, RERISK, EDORA.....)
- In this Meeting, the participants were informed on the ESPON2013 programme, the studies already carried out and those that are ongoing.

Both with their presentations and in the ensuing discussion, representatives of public bodies and other stakeholders were engaged in the formulation and implementation of spatial policies, taking into account the ESPON2013 findings.

1. What was highlighted was the urgent need for the **constant information of the institutions** that are directly or indirectly involved in the production of territorial development policies for **applied research studies and targeted analysis** prepared by the ESPON 2013 Programme.
2. Thus the representatives of the organizations participating in this meeting committed to put under consideration the findings of the ESPON2013 studies and projects. **This commitment is indeed the first and main objective of the activity of the transnational ESPON-INTERSTRAT network.**
3. The above pointed out the need to create **a mechanism to inform the institutions and the interactive learning of this knowledge**, something that could institute the core of the **Greek Observatory for “Territorial Development and Cohesion”**
4. The need for a new development structure of the state was highlighted – based on the new “Kallikrates” administrative reform– with the need for the creation of **“Integrated Territorial Development Strategies” under the jurisdiction of the new Regions”** and with them as primary reference.
5. Regional representatives insisted on the opinion that new integrated territorial / development projects **should be developed by regions and not by central government.**

**Second Interactive INTERSTRAT Meeting in Athens- 8th of November 2011- at PANTEION UNIVERSITY, entitled : “ESPON findings in service of a new paradigm of regional development in Greece”**



On November 8, 2011, the 2nd Interactive Workshop under the Programme ESPON-INTERSTRAT took place at Panteion University, entitled “ESPON findings in service of a new model of regional development” The Interactive Workshop was organized by the EL ECP within the framework of ESPON-INTERSTRAT project, a joint TNA aiming at capitalising and disseminating of ESPON2013 results.

Major objective of this Workshop was the completion of the dissemination of ESPON2013 Projects, focusing mainly on Greek territorial development issues focusing on the regional level.

The meeting was structured in three Round Tables with the following respective subject matters:

1. Regional organisation based on the new geography created by the administrative reform «Kallikrates» and how this new reality can integrate strategic planning and

integrated territorial development strategies in favour of the new municipalities and the new regions, especially in the framework of the post 2013 cohesion policy

2. The ESPON findings deriving from the ESPON Project and their potential contribution in Greek policy making at regional and local levels and
3. The future orientation and the role of cities as driving forces for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe, through the procedure of strategic planning and regulation.

The Meeting was attended by

1. **politicians and policy makers** ( the Panteion University Vice Rector, the Head of the Special Service for Strategy, Planning and Evaluation of Development Programmes, Ministry of Development, Competitiveness and Shipping, the National Representative at the ESPON2013 Monitoring Committee, the Regional Commissioner of Peloponnesus Mr Petros Tatoulis, the Regional Councilor of Attica Mr Spyros Spyridon, the Regional Councilor of Attica Mr George Dimaras, the General Secretary of the Ministry of Development, Competitiveness and Shipping, responsible for shipping policy, Mr Athanasios Pallis, the representative of the ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (Planning Department) Mrs Doxa Moustaki, the President of Organisation of Planning and Environmental Protection of Athens Prof. Giannis Polyzos, the responsible for the City of Volos Regulatory Plan-Architect-Planner Mrs Ourania Kloutsinioti and the President of Technical Chamber of Greece Mr Christos Spirtzis....)
2. **Researchers and Professors** : Presentations of ESPON studies were undertaken: Prof.M.Aggelidis, National Technical University of Athens (FOCI, INTERCO), Prof. G.Skouras, University of Patras (EDORA), Ass. Prof.G.Sylaios, Democritus University of Thrace (ULYSSES), Ass. Prof. Maria Lekakou, University of the Aegean (Euroislands), Mrs An. Biska, Senior Researcher, National Technical University of Athens (ReRisk), Mr Nicholas Karachalis, Senior Researcher Panteion University (TEDI), Mr Lefteris Topaloglou, University of Thessaly, Regional Association of Municipalities of Western Macedonia (TERCO)....
3. From the **EL ECP**, organiser and coordinator of the meeting : Stella Kyvelou, Assistant Professor, Panteion University, ECP director, professors Lydia Drakaki, Pavlos Loukakis, Olga Papadaki and Nikitas Chiotinis, Dr Maro Sinou, Dr Stratos Manos, Ioanna Pothitaki and the entire ECP working group.
4. Many **journalists either as moderators or as presenters or observers** : Mrs. Irini Anastasopoulou, Greek Parliament Channel and Greek Dept of Deutsche Welle, Mr. Prokopis Dukas, journalist and president of the NGO for the preservation of the historic center of Athens, Mrs Katerina Christifilidou, journalist at SKY TV. Pavlos sidiropoulos, Journalist at SKY TV that produced a TV spot on the event ( Eco News),
5. Many graduate or post-graduate students mainly from the Department of Economic and Regional Development, Panteion University attended the meeting.

During the meeting the **deep political dimension and importance of the ESPON**

**Programme** and the **INTERSTRAT TNA objectives** were highlighted. It was broadly documented that current economic and especially political crisis Greece faces should lead to a **new perception for spatial planning and territorial development at national and regional levels**, incorporating the ESPON findings.



The Ministry of Development, Competitiveness and Shipping representative stressed on the fact that the Ministry aims at **developing "integrated regional development strategies and programmes"** holding its coordinating role. Besides, according to the "Kallikrates" administrative reform, the new regions formed will be the main responsible for the design and implementation of such programmes and actions.



The Regional Commissioner of Peloponnesus, Mr Petros Tatoulis firstly stressed the importance of this event, which was correctly not named Conference but rather Workshop **where policy proposals will be elaborated and developed**, as was also stressed by the Vice Rector of Panteion University Prof Ev. Prontzas.

Moreover, Mr Tatoulis explained that the most significant problem today in Greece is not economic but rather political, noting that due to political weaknesses decision-making is rather poor. The country's geostrategic position should be analyzed in terms of political thought and practice, in order to choose a precise action plan. This was also stressed in the first Workshop which was undertaken in the framework of ESPON-INTERSTRAT, last March. The institution of "Kallikrates" said Mr. Tatoulis, the biggest administrative reform since the establishment of the Modern Greek state, can lead regions to salvage the country with their own development and their ability to serve national policy and national strategy on their own power, individually and voluntarily. Since the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, shows weakness in shaping regional development plans the region of Peloponnesus, headed by Mr Tatoulis, seeks to "trap" -as he said- spatial planning within the territorial development planning of the Region, in full consultation with all involved actors and stakeholders, up to every citizen. A «fast track» process and self-financing mechanisms could serve towards an efficient implementation.

Finally, the papers presented and the whole debate, yielded four issues of particular importance, which we think can become tools of today's output from the imminent economic and political crisis:

**1.**The proposal on the need to establish and institutionalize a "title surface" mechanism in the country.

2. The proposal on the need to establish **Special Economic Zones** by the new Regions
3. The proposal to use NSRF in order to raise funds and use them to **leverage private investment funds**, mainly as far as infrastructure is concerned.
4. The need to encourage the Regions in the preparation and implementation of “integrated territorial development strategies”, based on the above and the new administrative reform “Kallikrates”.

**The second part** was devoted to the report of the ESPON2013 Projects findings and the analysis of their usefulness for territorial development related policy making in Greece. After a detailed presentation of projects, the ensuing discussion evolved through questionnaires addressed both the public and all territorial scientists involved in the ESPON Projects.

**In the third part**, concerning the cities as engines for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe and in Greece, discussions were directed towards the case of the Athens and of the Volos master plans and the problems that the historical center of Athens faces nowadays. It was highlighted that there are still essential issues that hinder an efficient implementation<sup>1</sup> of greek cities’ regeneration.

The whole event was filmed and posted on the website of the ESPON ECP. A video spot is being prepared summarizing the main issues of the event and the filmed material is being formed in order to be used as additional educational resource concerning policy implications of ESPON in the framework of the ESPONTrain TNA being implemented by the Greek ECP together with nine other ECPs. It was also widely disseminated in print and electronic media.

---

<sup>1</sup> It can be noted at this point that the President of Planning Organisation of Planning and Environmental Protection of Greece Prof Ioannis Polyzos resigned from his position, reacting to political decisions that were in conflict to the already completed Plan of Athens.