

INSPIRED LIVING, THRIVING PLACES

Shifting Perspectives: Redefining Successful Territorial Development Through Quality of Life and Housing, as well as the Added Value of Cultural environment

// Hybrid event 14-05-2025 | 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM (Vilnius time, EEST / UTC+3)



A. Jaksto street 4, 01105 Vilnius

Registration

(open until 9th of May, invitations to online sessions will be sent out afterwards)





// Summary

During the event, experts will present three most recent ESPON program documents by one of ESPON thematic actions plans (TAP) - "Perspective for all people and places" that are already available or will be ready by 2025.

The aim of the documents produced under this TAP is to strengthen the knowledge and evidence base on territorial patterns of growing economic and social convergence. They will analyze various policy strategies that support the pursuit of broader collective goals—such as prosperous development, social inclusion, territorial justice, quality of life—and explore how to effectively involve all stakeholders in spatial planning and policy-making processes.

The environment in which we live in is influenced by countless factors, but not all of those factors have been sufficiently clarified and / or assessed, especially – factors and influence of cultural heritage and historical environment. In **2019** ESPON tried to fill this data gap by preparing the targeted analysis **HERITAGE - The Material Cultural Heritage as a Strategic Territorial Development Resource: Mapping Impacts Through a Set of Common European Socio-economic Indicators** and in **2022** by preparing the applied research **HERIWELL - Cultural Heritage as a Source of Societal Well-being in European Regions**. In **2025** ESPON presented targeted analysis **HERMES - Material cultural heritage satellite account – methodological framework**, a methodological framework designed to enable the collection of more precise data on the **economic impact** of **specific cultural heritage objects or sites**.

Our environment affects the quality of our lives, but even more so - our resident houses. In the recent years, affordable but also high quality housing has become number one priority among European Union countries. In 2025 ESPON will present the results of the European research project **HOUSE4ALL - Access to affordable and high-quality housing for all people**, that will analyse the housing situation in all of the EU countries and provide policymakers with information and recommendations on affordable and high-quality housing policies.

Life happens where someone lives. Unfortunately, the latest living trends in Europe and all around the world are shrinking and aging societies. New times force us to look at things in a new way. ESPON's targeted analysis **RURALPLAN - Innovative planning in shrinking societies** invites us to take a **new approach** to the development of territories - i.e. to **measure its success no longer** by the **increasing number of residents**, but **by the quality of life** of the remaining residents living in a specific territory, despite the demographic decline. The RURALPLAN researcher will also present a planning tool **RUPIL - Rural Planning and Innovation Lab**, where the most essential factor of spatial planning is the involvement of the most various members of society living in the specific territory. The more diverse the expertise, education, and attitudes of those involved in planning, the better!

The ESPON documents and their theses will be supported by Lithuanian representatives, analyzing these topics by presenting the situation of shrinking Lithuanian cities or towns; their current or planned political strategies. Lithuanian speakers will also review the influence of cities and the living environment in general, on human wellbeing through a social and cultural prism. Representatives from innovative, proactive, and active communities will share their experiences in creating a sustainable living environment in shrinking territories.

**// AGENDA**

9.30AM – 10.00AM	Morning coffee
10.00AM – 10.15AM	Introduction
	Speakers:
10.20AM – 10.45AM	// Selim Banabak <i>Vienna University of Technology, Dr. MSc.</i> HOUSE4ALL - Access to affordable and quality housing for all people (European research project)
10.50AM – 11.15AM	// Tadas Sarunas , researcher at Klaipėda University <i>Housing Policy in Lithuania: Could Community Housing Practices Inspire Its Vision?</i>
11.20AM – 11.45AM	// Dr. Alessandra Gandini , Senior researcher at Tecnalia Research and Innovation HERMES - Material cultural heritage satellite account – methodological framework
11.50AM – 11.55AM	ESPON survey on the SLIDO platform <i>Audience will be asked a number of questions about ESPON, and there will also be opportunities to submit questions to the speakers, which they will address during discussion time</i>
12.00PM – 12.55PM	Lunch / Afternoon coffee
1.00PM – 1.25PM	// Mindaugas Pakalnis , Head of the Construction Sector Development Agency (SSVA) Unit
1.30PM – 1.55PM	// Ulla Higdem , professor at University of Inland Norway, planning department RURALPLAN - Innovative planning in shrinking societies and RUPIL - Rural Planning and Innovation Lab
2.00PM – 2.25PM	// Guoda Bardauskaite , a co-founder of the community "Port of Forest" (lith. "Misko uostas"), established in a shrinking territory of Svencionėliai in Lithuania
2.30PM – 2.55PM	ESPON survey on the SLIDO platform <i>Audience will be asked a number of questions about ESPON, and there will also be opportunities to submit questions to the speakers, which they will address during discussion time</i>
3.00PM – 3.45PM	Discussion <i>All speakers participate in the discussion</i>
4.00PM	The End