



Pierre Mauroy

President of Lille metropolitan area urban community

President of the MOT and of EUROMOT



Why do you attach so much importance to the Eurometropolis?

The establishment of the "Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis" European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation is an event. It is in fact the first time that this European legal instrument has been used. The Eurometropolis is a front-ranking force in the Paris-London-Brussels triangle and can be included in the top 15 European metropolitan areas. Finally, its establishment contributes to the necessary construction of a Europe of citizens. The EGTC does not replace any competent authority participating in the Eurometropolis. Each authority will continue to exercise its competences in full. They will consult each other and combine their forces to ensure the success of Eurometropolis projects.

Do you already have projects?

It is still too soon to give details of the projects, but we have many studies and proposals which have to be prioritized. When the Eurometropolis was established, I set out some proposals for building the Eurometropolis of the citizens. I think this territory of nearly 2 million inhabitants needs structuring facilities, requalification of spaces, introduction of new means of travel, development of the economy and employment, and provision of new services to the population.

The EGTC has voted its first budget. This will enable it to ramp up its activity, establish the cross-border agency and define its initial 2008-2010 work programme.

What is the role of EUROMOT?

This EGTC is the first to be set up in Europe, but many other territories are also working to structure their governance at a cross-border level. EUROMOT*, European network of cross-border local authorities, must support them in these major developments. Cross-border local authorities need to share experience at European level, but they also need stronger links between themselves and with national and European Community institutions to ensure that these changes are taken into account. That is the aim of my commitment today as president of EUROMOT.

* constituted since 8 November 2007 by the MOT, Eixo Atlântico and City Twins; further information at www.espaces-transfrontaliers.eu.

Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis

Establishment of the first EGTC in Europe

The Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis was officially established on 28 January 2008 in the form of a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). This signature marks the success of a policy pursued by Pierre Mauroy for more than 15 years for the benefit of cross-border cooperation.*

The EGTC covers a territory of 3550 sq. km encompassing 145 French, Flemish and Walloon municipalities and bringing together 14 partners determined to work together to develop this cross-border territory of two million inhabitants.

As emphasised by Pierre Mauroy on 28 January, this polycentric, tricultural and binational European metropolitan area "wants to become an exemplary laboratory and territory for European integration".

The EGTC has the following priority missions:

- ensure consultation and dialogue and encourage political debate by bringing together all the competent institutions;
- generate cross-border cohesion on the scale of the territory as a whole;
- facilitate, sponsor and carry out projects implementing the jointly-prepared development strategy;
- facilitate the daily life of the population of the French-Belgian metropolitan area.

It is the first time that all the authorities concerned in the cross-border area, including the municipalities (through their intermunicipal organisations) as well as the provincial,



departmental, regional and central authorities, join together under the same banner. This is a very important step forward for cooperation, since it will enable the Eurometropolis to make decisions and undertake projects resulting from genuine joint consultation and, above all, backed at all levels.

The Eurometropolis has two political bodies and a technical and administrative body. The latter is a cross-border agency. The political bodies are an Assembly (a deliberative and monitoring body comprising 84 representatives from the 14 members) and a Bureau (executive body). A budget has been voted and will, over the next few months, enable recruitment of staff for the cross-border agency, fitting-out of the workplaces and preparation of a work programme.

* New legal instrument for "European territorial cooperation" during 2007-2013, introduced by the EC regulation of 5 July 2006.

Transposition of the EGTC into French law

On 29 January 2008, the French National Assembly adopted in first reading the provisions to make French law conform to the European Community regulation introducing the EGTC (which came into force on 1 August 2007). They will be incorporated into the General Code of the Territorial Authorities (CGCT) after their adoption by the Senate, which will examine the provisions during its session on 3 April 2008.

The EGTC differs from previous mechanisms in:

- the partnership, open to any "contracting authority" (in the meaning of directive 2004/18/EC of 31 March 2004), i.e. the state, local authorities and their groupings, certain public establishments and other legal persons meeting the criteria of the directive
- a very broad scope of action, covering all scales of cooperation: cross-border, transnational and inter-regional, i.e. the three

components of "territorial cooperation" in the Community meaning

- a purpose capable of adapting to all cooperation approaches: its missions must contribute to "facilitating and promoting territorial cooperation in order to strengthen economic and social cohesion" through the management of Community funding or the completion of projects or facilities with or without Community funding
- a genuine capacity of intervention: the EGTC has a legal personality; to accomplish the missions entrusted to it by the members, it can employ staff, sign contracts, issue calls for tender and manage a joint budget
- recognition of the possibility for local authorities and their groupings, within the framework of the establishment of an EGTC, to sign an agreement with a foreign member state of the European Union, and also with a bordering state that is only a member of the Council of Europe.



The ESPON programme

ESPON is an applied research programme on the planning of European territory. Its ambition is to contribute to the preparation of European policies linked with the territorial cohesion objective and to establish a permanent system of observation of the European territory by supplying uniform data, analyses and scenarios for the development of the cities and regions of Europe.*

The programme is open to European Union member states and to neighbouring countries. Its operation is based on calls for proposals issued on several themes, to which consortia of researchers respond.

The 2013 ESPON programme

The 2013 ESPON programme was adopted on 7 November 2007. It has a budget of 45.378 million euros. Five priorities have been defined for this new programme:

- Priority 1: applied research on territorial development, competitiveness and cohesion
- Priority 2: targeted analyses based on user demand at various levels
- Priority 3: construction of a scientific platform for production of comparable data and analytical tools
- Priority 4: ESPON activities
- Priority 5: communication actions

Following the demands expressed during the 2000-2006 phase of the programme, the emphasis for 2007-2013 is placed on the capacity to answer the demands of practitioners with a European dimension. **Priority 2 is devoted to the use of results obtained at different levels, including the cross-border level:** it will involve integrated studies, topic-based analyses and experimental and innovative actions. Operation will be based on partnership and stakeholder involvement, with implementation in two stages:

- a call for interest or proposals can be issued, for example by groupings of public authorities (regions, cities, etc.) from at least three member states; the selected public partners sign a contract defining their obligations in terms of co-piloting of the research (time spent, information to be communicated, etc.)
- a call for research bids leading to selection of a research consortium, which will receive 100% funding from the programme.

The call for projects for this new programme has been issued. Projects must be submitted before 22 March 2008. In this context, the MOT is preparing a project on cross-border territories aimed at clarifying the concept of "cross-border territory" and its variants on different types of border, and assessing the observation methods. The objective is to boost progress on these methods for the benefit of cross-border territory projects, and also to encourage their recognition by national and European bodies.

Authorities interested in taking part in this project are invited to contact:
Jean Peyrony, MOT development director, jean.peyrony@mot.asso.fr

* European Spatial Planning Observation Network. Further information at www.espon.eu.

■ Publication

A new brochure entitled "Working for the regions. EU regional policy 2007-2013" has just been published by the European Commission DG Regio.

Further information at: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/presenta/pres_en.htm

■ Seminar on the EGTC

An Interact seminar on the EGTC has been organised on 27 and 28 March 2008 in Brussels, Belgium.

It is intended primarily for cooperation project and programme sponsors, but is also open to the national and regional authorities concerned.

Further information at: www.interact-eu.net

■ Training courses at the Kehl Euro-institute

The Kehl/Strasbourg Euro-institute (Germany/France) is organising the following two training courses:

- **"Optimising cross-border and transregional networks"**, on 30 April 2008 in Kehl
- **"The management of cross-border projects"**, on 9 and 10 June 2008 in Kehl.

Further information at: www.euroinstitut.org

Press review

- **Pamina – Towards a Eurodistrict**, *Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace*, 30 January
"The Regio Pamina local cross-border cooperation grouping will be renamed Eurodistrict Pamina..."
- **Cross-border meeting**, *Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace*, 31 January
"The Centre de formation aux enseignements bilingues (training centre for bilingual teaching) hosted a day of meetings and exchanges between teachers from the two banks of the Rhine. Organised regularly since the beginning of the school year in September, these working meetings enable some fifteen teachers to improve their knowledge of each others' language during discussions on professional concerns and teaching experiences..."
- **BTE – Major projects before the summer**, *L'Alsace*, 27 January
"The Basle Trinational Eurodistrict recently turned one year old. After months of preparation and discussions, its managers are announcing a series of priority projects, which will be made public before next summer..."
- **The tunnel boring machine "Cécile" is operational**, *Le Dauphiné libéré*, 20 January
"A decisive step has been taken in water purification thanks to the exemplary nature of French-Genevan cross-border collaboration. The Technoparc site in Saint-Genis-Pouilly has seen the introduction of the tunnel boring machine christened "Cécile" [...] which is going to start boring a tunnel, partly in France and almost the entire length on Genevan territory..."
- **Energy at the centre of discussions at the France-Italy summit**, *TPBM*, 16 January
"Energy cooperation between France and Italy took up a large part of the discussions between the two heads of state..."
- **A 17-million-euro river contract to save the Sègre**, *L'Indépendant*, 30 January
"After a long study, a cross-border river contract has just been signed..."
- **Germans, Czechs and Poles jumping borders**, *Courrier International*, 31 January
"Without waiting for the opening of the German job market to workers from central Europe, border regions of Saxony, Lower Silesia and northern Bohemia have made arrangements to facilitate occupational mobility..."

