

European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation

Promoting and improving territorial cooperation

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About the EP-REGI study (and further research on EGTCs)

Assess

- Role of EGTCs in Cohesion Policy and ETC
- Potential role of EGTCs in neighbourhood policy and outermost regions

Also reflecting the EP's position about EGTCs during negotiations (amending regulation)

About the EP-REGI study (and further research on EGTCs)

Strengthened legal links with Cohesion Policy

- CPR / ETC Regulations / Common Strategic Framework
- MA – CLLD / ITI – sole beneficiary
- Strengthen integrated & inclusive approach for local development
- What about other EU policy areas?

Questions for today:

- 1. What issues, in which sectors, do EGTCs deal with?**
- 2. What kind of cross-border obstacles do EGTCs solve?**
- 3. What are the limits of the EGTC as an instrument?**
- 4. Is there a need for reform?**

At the time of writing..

The EGTC instrument

Considerable variety of EGTCs

- Rarely used for initial purpose ⇒ MA

Typical tasks:

- Conducting joint projects, communication, facilitating exchange and learning, developing and managing mutual infrastructure and developing thematic plans, strategies or visions.

Different thematic fields:

- Foremost in the areas of spatial development, transport, tourism, environment and culture. (Few EGTCs focus on a single sector or field of activity.)



EU Cohesion Policy - Objectives

Application level by the EGTCs of aligned objectives	Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 Thematic Objectives	EGTC relevant themes
High	TO 1 Strengthening research, technological development and innovation	Research, knowledge and innovation
	TO 6 Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	Environment/resource efficiency Preserving natural and cultural heritage
	TO 7 Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures	Transport/Accessibility
	TO 10 Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning	Education
Medium	TO 2 Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT	Improving access to communication/information/telecommunications/communication networks
	TO 4 Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	Environment/renewable energies
	TO 3 Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs	Support to SMEs
	TO 8 Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility	Employment/training/tackling unemployment
	TO 9 Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination	Health
Low	TO 5 Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management	Maritime security
	TO 11 Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration	Institutional capacity

Tackling obstacles

Not directly part of the reserach questions of this study, but tasks/motivations were examined, examples:

- Providing SGEs (hospital)
- Development of specific sectors of economy in the border area (ceramic)
- Common management of cultural, natural, landscape heritage
- Networking, knowledge sharing (urban)
- Cooperation in the field of tourism
- Framework for cooperation/joint „planning“ in the field of transport infrastructure
- „formalisation“ of existing cooperation

Limitations – challenges

Challenges during creation & for operation of EGTC

- Unclear or even conflicting implementation rules
- Uncertainties & limited/missing knowledge/understanding
- VAT, procurement, application procedures, insurances etc.
- Different national rules (standards, regulations) remain a challenge – especially with third countries
- “The EGTC instrument is not a universal remedy to overcome national differences in the EU” (e.g. Nordic countries – EGTC versus established cooperation structures)

Limitations - EU external cooperation

No EGTCs with members from neighbouring countries / accession countries / outermost regions

Neighbouring countries – many discussions without effect

- Very rare: 'observer' membership status
- Loose networks rather than formalisation
- More concrete approaches of EGTCs with CH
- Different reasons: geopolitical uncertainties, governance imbalances, complexity, institutional incoherence, ...

One approach in outermost region under way

Other EP-REGI studies

Review of adopted European Territorial Cooperation programmes

- Coordination with the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) is explicitly mentioned **in few** programmes and if so, mostly as potential beneficiaries.
- The only exception is the Greater Region CBC programme , which was managed by an EGTC in the 2007-2013 programming period. For 2014-2020, a new EGTC with a leaner structure takes over as **managing authority** of the Greater Region programme.
- ...the involvement of local partners in drafting programmes. ...These involved mainly public bodies, SMEs, and **sometimes** also the EGTCs, ...

Other EP-REGI studies

Services of General Interest in the Funding Period 2014-2020

- SGI have explicitly been considered as tasks of EGTCs in the amended EGTC regulation ..So far, however, **hardly any** EGTC manages SGI infrastructures or provides ..such as healthcare through a hospital on the Spanish-French border

Other EP-REGI studies

Services of General Interest in the Funding Period 2014-2020

- **Practical difficulties of SGI provision across borders** – at least for the case of healthcare services. Being located on the Spanish side of the border, the EGTC aims to reach a share of 40 % French and 60 % Spanish patients after five years of operation. During the first few months French patients accounted for below 20 % with some increases in French patients' visiting the hospital in the following months. One year after opening the hospital the more recently higher rates of French patients are consolidating.

Other EP-REGI studies

Services of General Interest in the Funding Period 2014-2020

- The EGTC Parco Marino Internazionale delle Bocche di Bonifacio **is mentioned in the OP Italy-France Marittimo**. The EGTC was developed under Priority Axis 3 on natural and cultural resources of the 2007-2013 cross-border programme (Marittimo - IT FR - Maritime, 2014, p. 25). Apart from environmental protection and ensuring the strait's heritage, the EGTC aims to contribute to children education and exchange in the field of environmental education (PMIBB, 2012).

Other EP-REGI studies

Services of General Interest in the Funding Period 2014-2020

- Improved **possibilities to participate in EU programmes as a single beneficiary** and to apply for UNESCO World Heritage status as a single body were important drivers for the foundation of the EGTC Parc Européen Alpi Maritime – Mercantour.
- The two parks constituting the EGTC have cooperated before as project participants in cross-border cooperation (Alcotra), transnational cooperation (Alpine Space) and also in programmes directly managed by the European Commission (such as LIFE). The EGTC foresees the use of ESIF in the 2014-2020 programming period (Zillmer et al., 2015).

Other EP-REGI studies

Services of General Interest in the Funding Period 2014-2020

- EGTCs are a **promising interest** for the promotion of SGI at the cross border and transnational levels. ESIF could integrate the creation of SGI-related EGTCs in the Operational Programmes, in view of stimulating outward-looking dynamics and lasting cooperative arrangements.

Perspectives – need for reform?

- Effects of regulation amendment still to be seen - While it has removed some obstacles it may also give rise to new difficulties.
- Flexibility of instrument is appreciated
- Potential for increased use / involvement in ETC (subsequent studies hardly deliver evidence on this potential)
- Links to EU policies: are links to overall cohesion policy legislative framework sufficient? What about other areas such as SGIs?

Perspectives – need for reform?

- By 1 August 2018 the Commission shall forward to the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions **a report on the application of this Regulation**, evaluating, based **on indicators**, its effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, European added value and scope for simplification.
- The Commission shall be empowered to adopt **delegated acts**, in accordance with Article 17a, laying down the list of indicators referred to in the first paragraph (latest information from DG Regio: **by the end of 2016**)

Recent considerations in REGI

REPORT on European Territorial Cooperation - best practices and innovative measures:

27. ...recalls the **potential** of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), not only as an instrument supporting and promoting European territorial cooperation and managing cross-border projects, but also as a **vehicle** contributing to a comprehensive integrated territorial development and a flexible platform for multilevel governance;

Recent considerations in REGI

28. Welcomes the **simplified** EGTC Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 1302/2013), and calls on Member States to intensify their efforts to **facilitate** the creation of EGTCs; points out, however, that this regulation is not sufficient to overcome all existing legal obstacles to cross-border cooperation;...

Recent considerations in REGI

REGI report on cohesion policy in mountainous regions of the EU:

17. ...stresses the importance of INTERREG programmes and of other cooperation initiatives, such as European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) and European Economic Interest Groupings (EEIG), in developing shared areas and mountain ranges in a joint, coordinated manner in regions that contain **cross-border mountainous areas**;

REGI studies online:

[European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation as an Instrument for Promotion and Improvement of Territorial Cooperation in Europe](#)

[Review of Adopted European Territorial Cooperation Programmes](#)

[Research for REGI Committee - Services of General Interest in the Funding Period 2014-2020](#)

Link to all publications:

www.europarl.europa.eu/studies

Thank you very much for your attention !

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