

“Cross-border territories: day-to-day Europe”
European conference - 8 and 9 November 2007 in Lille

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Manifesto

for cross-border cooperation in Europe

EUROMOT

European network
of cross-border
local authorities



CityTwins

MANIFESTO

FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

*Recommendations to the national and European authorities
for bringing Europe closer to its citizens*

EUROMOT - April 2008

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Introduction

EUROMOT, a European network of cross-border local authorities, was launched officially by the signature of a cooperation agreement between the Mission opérationnelle transfrontalière¹, Eixo Atlántico² and City Twins³ on 8 November 2007 during the European conference on “Cross-border territories: day-to-day Europe” held in Lille (8 and 9 November 2007).

Complementing this agreement, a strategic alliance was signed between EUROMOT and the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR).

The chairman of EUROMOT is Pierre Mauroy (chairman of the MOT); two vice-chairmen have been appointed: Luis Filipe Menezès (chairman of Eixo Atlántico) and Joachim Paulick, mayor of Görlitz (D), representing the City Twins network. This policy committee is completed by its secretary, Alain Lamassoure (member of the European parliament and vice-chairman of the MOT). The executive committee comprises a chairman (Jacques Houbart, director-general of the MOT) and two vice-chairmen: Xoan Vazquez Mao (secretary-general of Eixo Atlántico) and Klaus Baldauf (international cooperation officer of Frankfurt (Oder) (D) city council, representing the City Twins network).

During the conference **the cross-border territory** appeared as the most federating and most operational concept for bringing Europe closer to the citizen. **The cross-border territory is a space for projects which, even when it is legally constituted, does not aim for administrative functions but rather the coordination of the policies of local, national and European authorities to develop programmes of actions which meet the aspirations and the needs of the inhabitants of cross-border regions.**

The development of cross-border territory projects is thus a concrete response to the needs of the inhabitants of cross-border regions with regard to the environment, transport, health or the economy. Such territories gradually become spaces of multicultural dialogue between socio-economic actors and local authorities, forging a European citizenship and acting as powerful vectors for integration of internal borders and pacification of external borders of Europe.

The objective of EUROMOT is to form a strong European network to bring together local authorities and collaborate more effectively with national and European institutions. Its activities will include operational assistance for projects, studies, training and research on cross-border cooperation, networking, and political and technical interfacing from local to European levels.

Attended by more than 800 persons from 36 countries in Europe, **the conference on 8 and 9 November 2007** was an opportunity for topic-by-topic foregrounding of issues, projects, good practices, etc., in order to generate **concrete proposals in the form of recommendations. These recommendations are collected in this publication.** The proceedings of the conference⁴ provide the basis for the present document.

¹ MOT: network of territorial authorities and their groupings involving France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Luxemburg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and Andorra.

² Eixo Atlántico: network of border cities involving North-Portugal and Galicia in Spain

³ City Twins: network of twin cities involving Germany, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Sweden, Finland and Russia.

⁴ Available at www.espaces-transfrontaliers.eu.

The genesis of recommendations

The European conference “Cross-border territories: day-to-day Europe” was organised around two political panel discussions and 12 technical workshops, which provided opportunities for the presentation and discussion of a diagnosis and proposals on the major topics of cross-border cooperation.

The first series of workshops, “Living and working in cross-border territories”, covered economic development, employment and training, public transport, culture and territorial integration, environment, and health.

The second series, “Building cross-border territories”, covered cross-border territories, cross-border conurbations, cross-border rural and natural territories, maritime cooperation, legal instruments of cooperation, and training in cross-border professions.

Each of these 12 workshops was prepared by a working group⁵. The role of the working groups was to identify significant experiences in cross-border territories in Europe and produce a draft contribution, which was “validated”, or corrected and supplemented if necessary, during the workshop. This process initiated work on the various topics by a European network which is intended to be continued after the conference.

These groups represented the diversity of European borders and of cross-border cooperation actors: the local authorities in the front line, but also regional, national and European authorities, private-sector and civil society organisations, university experts and others.

The aim was to highlight both the issues and the difficulties of cooperation and to put forward recommendations for cross-border cooperation. The contributions of the workshops and the two panel discussions make up these “Recommendations for cross-border cooperation”.

Issues and recommendations: summary of the 12 workshops

First of all four “territorial” workshops covered the concept of cross-border territories, conurbations, rural and natural areas, and maritime territories.

These territories are all living, development and employment areas, characterised by the lack of harmony between the national systems separated by the border, a source of difficulties, and by a high potential for the generation of economic, social and cultural wealth for their inhabitants and their businesses, as well as for Europe as a whole.

⁵ Refer to page 39 “Acknowledgements”.

The conurbations, or cross-border metropolitan areas on some borders, by pooling their different national components, are emblematic of the European city of the 21st century, strong, diverse and innovative.

Along a large proportion of the length of European borders, rural and natural spaces are “links” in the construction of Europe, in the same way as urban territories. They are not “negative” areas, but they do suffer from a lack of recognition and a lack of networking.

For territories separated by the sea, the latter has always formed a link as much as a barrier, and the challenge is now to ensure a European territorial continuity between them which goes beyond national outlooks alone, initiated by local authorities which are the driving forces behind such cooperation.

To meet the needs of the inhabitants of cross-border territories, integrate internal borders and pacify the borders that remain the most sensitive, political governance of cross-border territories must be implemented:

- based on cross-border local authorities developing a sustainable development project for their territories
- associating higher institutional levels with management of the project, according to their competences
- using technical tools (monitoring, planning, territorial engineering)
- dialoguing democratically with the inhabitants, civil society and economic actors. In this connection the importance of bilingualism, transparency and communication was emphasised, underlining the role of the press and the other media.

“Sectoral” policies and projects also contribute to the integration of cross-border territories and thus to the integration and sustainable development of the territory of Europe, as shown by the “topical” workshops.

The involvement of businesses in cross-border economic development (within cross-border clusters, for example) and the mobility of workers within cross-border employment areas favour the mastery of linguistic and cultural diversity.

They are factors for opening-up not only on the local cross-border scale but also on the European or even global scale. This places cross-border territories at the core of the Lisbon innovation and competitiveness objectives (economic development and employment workshops).

However, involvement of the inhabitants in such a project requires social and territorial cohesion, developed by building cross-border health communities, for example (health workshop).

The sustainable development of cross-border territories, at the core of the Gothenburg objectives, necessitates joint enhancement of the environment, whether urban or natural (environment workshop). Also discussed was European recognition of cross-border urban public transport, through the authorisation of cross-border cabotage (amendment of regulation 12/98/EC) (public transport workshop).

Lastly, a border, as a line of contact between the populations of two or three states sharing a community of culture, or on the contrary between populations with different cultures, which enables knowledge of the other, makes the cross-border territory a place for learning a European citizenship promoting unity in diversity (culture workshop). In broader terms, culture contributes to development and to social and economic cohesion of cross-border territories.

In order to help the development of these cross-border territories, they must be taken into consideration in:

- monitoring and information tools
- (Euro-)regional, national (to be coordinated on each border) and European planning and development strategies; an emblematic example is that of cross-border metropolitan areas
- funding programmes; in this regard, Community support for cross-border cooperation must be continued after 2013 (on both the internal and the external borders of the EU)
- national and Community legislations, whether this involves territorial development policies, sectoral policies or the legal instruments of cooperation (for example implementation of the EGTC coordinated between states - workshop on legal instruments of cooperation).

Of course, it is also necessary to capitalise and transfer good practices (workshop on training in cross-border professions).

This will make cross-border territories a laboratory of the convergence of national and Community policies and legislations.

Needs and objectives in support for cross-border cooperation

A cross-cutting reading of the work and recommendations of the workshops and the discussions of the two panel discussions identifies a number of core needs and objectives. These can be organised under three major headings.

Organising and developing cross-border territories

- Develop governance models for cross-border territories, in particular using the EGTC.
- Develop technical assistance for the structuring of cooperation.
- Support the implementation of cross-border projects (setup, running, monitoring, assessment),
- Improve the inclusion of project developers in the definition and implementation of cross-border programmes.

Taking account of the specific features of cross-border territories

- Ensure that specific cross-border needs are taken into account in regional, national and European policies (territorial development policies and sectoral policies).
- Coordinate, at European level and on each border, national policies (for example public services) in sectors where their differences cause difficulties in cross-border territories; failing this, fund the short-term extra costs related to the need to work with different standards, techniques and frameworks in cross-border territories, it being understood that in the medium term this coordination generates added value for the cross-border territories and for the EU.
- Open up systems for access by third countries neighbouring the EU (to the east and south of Europe, and in countries neighbouring the outermost regions).

Capitalisation

- Support sharing of good practices and promote knowledge and information on cross-border territories.
- Store acquired experience and train on cross-border matters.
- Make use of experience to develop and enrich future strategies.

When the results of this work are compared with the strategic alliance agreed on 8 November 2007, it can be seen that EUROMOT and the AEBR cover all areas of cross-border cooperation in Europe, whether cross-border conurbations, twin cities, city networks or Euro-regions incorporating rural and natural spaces, bringing together the maximum number of competencies in a spirit of complementarity to support cross-border cooperation in Europe.

In each of these areas EUROMOT and its strategic allies are capable of providing support meeting the needs expressed by cross-border territories:

Identified needs and objectives	Support from EUROMOT and its strategic allies
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Organising and developing cross-border territories

Develop governance models...	→	Study and develop governance models suitable for various cases
Develop technical assistance for the structuring of cooperation	→	Expertise on legal instruments, technical assistance
Support the implementation of cross-border projects	→	Operational assistance: advice on project setup and monitoring

Taking account of the specific features of cross-border territories

Coordinate national policies; failing this, fund extra costs ...	→	Expertise and consultancy for intergovernmental commissions and their structures
Coordinate national policies	→	Expertise for and lobbying of governments on cross-border matters
Open up systems for access by third countries	→	Expertise and consultancy for European bodies

Capitalisation

Support sharing ...	→	Organise sharing of good practices
Store acquired experience ...	→	Store and circulate acquired cross-border experience, support communication and establish arrangements for research and initial and life-long training in partnership with other structures; network of Euro-institutes

It can be seen that the first area concerns support for a clearly-identified cross-border territory, while the other two areas have more of a public interest character.

Consequences for political action

There is strong demand for support in the areas of public interest, “Taking account of the specific features of cross-border territories” and “Capitalisation”, and demand for individual technical and operational support.

The workshops have shown the need for “multilevel governance” of cross-border territories, the necessity for seamless working between territorial scales (local-regional-national-European) (vertical cooperation) and for overcoming barriers between actors at each level (horizontal cooperation).

However, it seems that the present arrangements for the support of cross-border cooperation have a gap: operational cooperation programmes are certainly being set up on all borders, including external ones, and the Interact programme is intended to network programme engineering at European level. **But there is no European-level strategic management or instrument for technical assistance to projects.** Assistance is left solely to the “bottom-up” approach.

This risks imperilling the very factor which gives life to day-to-day Europe in cross-border territories: the projects.

This failing is also an obstacle to the development of an overall neighbourhood policy.

So, how can the overall system be supplemented and reinforced at European level and how can the demands of cross-border territories be met?

EUROMOT and its partners can be an instrument for dialogue between the cross-border local authorities, the states and the European institutions and a gateway bringing together European systems of support for cross-border cooperation amounting to almost 6 billion euros of ERDF funding. EUROMOT can be a guarantee of effectiveness, a reference of quality.

In this context, EUROMOT is prepared to cooperate with all national and European bodies in order to answer these questions, within the framework of the implementation of the present policies (2007-2013 cohesion policy; Lisbon-Gothenburg agenda, etc.) and in discussions on future policies (application of the new treaty; 2014-2020 budget).

In particular, it is capable of experimenting with a new European system of technical assistance backed by the Commission. This will involve technical assistance to individual projects and to cross-border territory projects, based on capitalisation and networking of practices intended to improve integration of internal borders and pacification of the external borders of Europe.

It also proposes to be associated with the various European technical processes and policies concerned by cross-border cooperation:

- consultation processes conducted by the institutions: Commission, Parliament, Committee of the Regions, Economic and Social Council, Council of Europe;

- meeting of directors and ministers with responsibility for cohesion policy and territorial cohesion (territorial agenda action programme).

The new treaty signed in Lisbon confirms the territorial cohesion objective and explicitly identifies the border regions as deserving particular attention. It thus provides a legal basis for the territorialisation of Community sectoral policies and the Lisbon Agenda and for the development of new instruments in favour of cross-border territories. **In this context, EUROMOT could be a preferred channel for the application of this policy.**

Twelve emblematic recommendations

Cross-border territories

Encourage the establishment and networking of local statistical monitoring bodies on the scale of the cross-border territory.

Cross-border conurbations

Make cross-border conurbations places of convergence of national and European policies within the framework of European strategic implementations and network them at European level.

Cross-border rural and natural territories

Organise the governance of cross-border rural territories and natural spaces to manage biodiversity and natural resources on the cross-border scale and to develop human activities, in particular by pooling public services.

Maritime cooperation

Develop assistance for the definition and implementation of joint local maritime cooperation projects.

Economic development

Encourage the setting-up of cross-border development agencies involving local authorities, businesses and research centres.

Employment and training

Develop the Eures-T system (involving employers, trade unions and public employment services) on all internal borders of the EU to facilitate worker mobility and encourage the development of businesses in cross-border living areas.

Health

Contribute to the emergence of true cross-border health communities linked with cross-border territory projects.

Environment

Encourage joint management of the cross-border environment with regard to pollution, waste, and prevention of natural and technological risks (flooding, fire, water quality, etc.).

Public transport

Organise dialogue and cross-border governance of local cross-border transport, and create an awareness of its issues and the necessity for funding at local, national and European levels.

Culture and territorial integration

Encourage the emergence of lean cross-border cultural cooperation platforms able to bring together local authorities and the actors concerned to implement cultural action programmes, components of the territory project in their own right.

Legal instruments of cooperation

Develop operational assistance for the setting-up of cross-border projects and in particular for the governance structures of cross-border territory projects, and network their users to encourage exchange of good practices and transfer of know-how.

Training in cross-border professions

Promote the establishment and development of training and consultancy bodies such as “Euro Institutes”; network them to introduce a “EUROMOT” label certifying the quality of training courses in and on cross-border topics.

Workshop 1: cross-border territories

"understanding in order to act"

Living areas, employment areas, urban areas or metropolitan areas, rural districts, etc. Such "lived spaces" do not fit in with established political and administrative processes. These spaces cross national borders, a process that European integration can only encourage. Reflecting the debate on the future of the Union, the challenge today is to know what cross-border territories we want to build for tomorrow. Are we moving towards simple free trade areas (free movement of persons, goods, services and capital) or towards genuine territories formed within defined perimeters, backed politically and managed technically by cross-border governance?

While the territorial (and in particular urban) dimension of the cohesion policy is asserted, and territorial cooperation is now one of the stated objectives of the cohesion policy, neither the objectives of this cooperation in terms of territorial development nor the territorial concepts that it uses (euroregions, eurodistricts, etc.) have been defined precisely at Community level. The economy (productive, residential) of cross-border territories also remains a field in which practically no research has been done. Concepts, typology and scales of cross-border territories... there is an urgent need to propose suitable methodologies and obtain recognition of the completely specific position that such territories occupy in the construction of Europe.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 : Know and raise awareness of cross-border territories

Monitoring of the operation of cross-border territories is fundamental for building a cross-border territorial project in phase with the forces in play and also for developing public policies consistent with the reality of the problems with which these particular territories are confronted (and the needs of the populations).

- Lay the foundations of genuine cross-border monitoring, initiated by politicians and reclaimed by them in order to enable shared understanding of cross-border territories:
 - . mobilise the existing local statistics institutions, encourage the dissemination of know-how and develop the networking of existing cross-border monitoring bodies,
 - . involve national statistics institutes and Eurostat,
 - . link cross-border monitoring at all scales: local (conurbation, employment area, urban area, metropolitan area, rural territory, etc.), (Euro-)regional, by border, national (networking of national monitoring bodies) and European (ESPON, Urban Audit, etc.).

- Use the basic statistical level, the municipality, and define a set of common indicators at European level. The municipal level can be used to compile a reliable statistical base (which assembles all the municipal data), produce results of varying scope according to the topics examined, and provide feedback to the mayors of the municipalities concerned.

- Go beyond monitoring, develop applied research on the present operation of cross-border territories: their productive and residential economy; typology of the different border configurations in Europe; territorial overview of the potential of cross-border integration in attaining the Lisbon objectives; etc.
- Take account of the cross-border dimension in territorial concepts of planning policies (metropolitan area cooperation (France), Metropolregionen (Germany), local agenda 21, etc.).

Recommendation 2 : Mobilise knowledge for better action in the service of cross-border territories

- Link cross-border monitoring and territorial and sectoral planning (e.g. PDUs (urban travel plans) and PLHs (local housing plans) in France).
- Amend the regulations governing public and planning policies according to statistical results at cross-border level, rather than at strictly national level.
- Assert the need for cross-border territorial engineering tools (and their funding) to do this.

Recommendation 3 : Raise awareness of cross-border territories and their role in the construction of Europe

- At local level, in order to develop their ownership by the populations, the socioeconomic actors and the public authorities, pacify sensitive borders, control border effects, enhance border potential and initiate a process of democratic governance of these territories.
- At the level of regions and states, among bodies whose policies have an impact on these territories: sectoral policies, planning policies which have to develop cross-border strategies (e.g. metropolitan area cooperation in France), cohesion policy implementation by managing authorities of European programmes.
- At Community level: obtain recognition for the contribution of cross-border territories in European planning and in the ongoing political processes (strategic follow-up of the cohesion policy, green paper on territorial cohesion, territorial Agenda).
- Label the cross-border territories on different scales (eurocities, eurodistricts, euroregions, etc.) to contribute to reinforcing their identity.

Workshop 2: cross-border conurbations

"building the city together"

Managing complexity

The MOT has identified more than sixty cross-border conurbations in Europe. They form genuine cross-border living areas, laboratories for a European citizenship in the making. Until now they have been virtually ignored as specific entities by European policies and national legislations, contractualization and financing. Involving two or even three countries, their cross-border situation exacerbates the complexity of the problems faced by "national" conurbations. The workshop presented the issues specific to these spaces in terms of:

- spatial planning: joint planning instruments, public transport, facilities, public services, etc.
- economic issues: border worker movements, economies of scale, cross-border business parks, local taxation, etc.
- political issues: establishment of governance structures, coordination of urban, economic, social and cultural policies on either side of the border, legislation changes, etc.

The problems specific to cross-border conurbations were also discussed: interdependence of land and property markets, potential savings on under-used facilities, access to cross-border housing, degradation of border peri-urban landscapes, growing saturation of road infrastructures, added cost of lack of conurbation-wide institutions, administrative and legal incompatibilities, interleaving of levels of competency between local authorities.

Cooperating for extending reach

In addition, many cross-border metropolitan areas and cross-border networks of geographically-separate towns enter into cooperation arrangements. Their purpose is to develop on a larger scale in order to exist in the European and global context. This determination to reach out, to establish an identity, to pool facilities and services is implemented in the day-to-day management of their organization (social policy, public facilities, transport, sustainable development, etc.).

The workshop covered the following points: the higher metropolitan functions that favour this outreach, the linkage between metropolitan approaches and conurbation projects focusing on the management of the cross-border living area, the form of governance necessary at this scale, the specific constraints of networks of towns, the different forms of national and European community backing.

Finally, the workshop discussed the networking of conurbations, metropolitan areas and cross-border networks (associations, political conferences). One means of establishing the existence of the cross-border urban factor at European level is to contribute to its recognition by the European institutions.

Recommendations

LOCAL LEVEL

Recommendation 1: Encourage political governance of cross-border conurbations

- Include different institutional levels according to their competences to the monitoring of the territorial project.
- Develop technical tools (observation, planning).
- Promote dialogue with the inhabitants.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

Recommendation 2: Ensure that the cross-border urban dimension is taken into account at regional level

- Promote linkage between the levels of cross-border conurbations and euroregions.
- Take cross-border conurbations into account in the implementation of the 2007-2013 European cohesion programmes.

Recommendation 3: Encourage states to take the reality of cross-border conurbations into account

- Enable local authorities to participate in cross-border intermunicipal structures, if they wish (encourage the development of the EGTC).
- Develop and coordinate support policies for the cooperation of cross-border conurbations and metropolitan areas.
- Organise the coordination of national policies border by border, taking account of cross-border conurbations and cross-border metropolitan areas.

EUROPEAN LEVEL

Recommendation 4: Take into account the European issue of cross-border conurbations

- Take cross-border conurbation monitoring and knowledge needs into account in Community tools.
- Make cross-border conurbations places of convergence of national and Community policies.
- Establish a network of cross-border conurbations in Europe.

Workshop 3: cross-border rural and natural territories

"promoting local resources"

Although cross-border cooperation first developed in urban settings, over the last ten years or so it has also been introduced in rural areas, which account for the majority of cross-border territories on European borders as a whole. These vast territories, coast, mountain or plain, often sparsely populated, are subject to specific constraints related to their more limited financial, technical and human resources compared with urban spaces. Whether the border cuts across a cross-border living area or physical or historical constraints make it more of a barrier, cross-border cooperation is a necessary means of local development for these areas.

Structured as rural districts (such as the "pays" in France), parks or other types of organisation, benefiting from targeted national and European aid (Leader, Interreg), these spaces should form networks to identify their needs, share their successful experiments and outline options for consideration in order to improve their cooperation. They are the basis of a new type of economic development for rural territories, through upgrading of local production sectors, promotion of tourism and joint planning.

Within this overall context, protected natural areas (national parks, regional nature parks, nature reserves, etc.) are breathing spaces in a Europe where urbanisation and its consequences on the natural environment are more visible every day.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Develop the management of biodiversity and natural resources at cross-border level

The management of biodiversity and natural resources at cross-border level is often the starting point for cooperation between natural and rural areas. These actions are aimed at managing the protection of ecosystems, including soils, water balance, vegetation, fauna and the natural operation of all the processes at work in complex systems such as forests, rivers, mountain ranges and seashores. Coordination or even standardisation of management tools is at the core of this type of cooperation, implemented in many parks but still too rare in rural areas.

Recommendation 2: Develop cross-border public services and improve the accessibility and internal cross-border "irrigation" of these territories

Cross-border rural areas have difficulties maintaining the public services necessary for their satisfactory operation. They need to consider the added value of their cross-border position, the pooling and maintenance of certain services (health, human services, schools, etc.), overcoming any national administrative barriers there may be. There is also the issue of cross-border internal linkage of these territories by effective means of communication (mobile telephony, broadband, etc.) and that of the accessibility of the cross-border territory to external public services (via transport infrastructures).

Recommendation 3: Manage urban and tourist pressure on a cross-border basis

Cross-border rural or natural territories are often breathing spaces within urbanised spaces. Measures should be coordinated at cross-border level to ensure that their urbanisation is controlled and to monitor sprawl (rural urbanisation) of peripheral conurbations (located in some cases on the other side of the border).

Some rural and natural areas are also under strong pressure from tourism and the increasing development of facilities intended for tourists. Actions to accommodate tourism should be coordinated with a view to sustainable tourism, without compromising the fragile balance of such areas.

Recommendation 4: Encourage economic development and employment

Some cross-border rural and natural areas have incorporated economic development into their operation through actions intended to maintain activities and populations or to attract new ones.

The priorities of such development might include:

- diversification and upgrading of local economic sectors which could be the focus of centres of rural excellence
- development of innovative activities (for example by combining tourism and agriculture)
- the residential economy and tourism development (by labelling and joint communication at cross-border level)
- work on opening up the territory (accessibility by road and by public transport).

All of these priorities are intended to consolidate the social and cultural linkage of these territories.

Recommendation 5: Organise the governance of the cross-border territory project

Like urban territories, in certain cases cross-border rural areas consider drawing up a cross-border territory project, with joint governance and, if necessary, a suitable legal structure. To guide them in the emergence of this governance, their networking should be encouraged and appropriate operational assistance should be developed.

Recommendation 6: Obtain recognition of these territories as “linking” areas in the construction of Europe, so that they are taken into consideration to a greater extent in regional, national and Community strategies

Their number and their size give natural and rural areas a legitimate place in the European edifice, not only on the western borders but also as vector of peace in central and eastern Europe, on sometimes more conflictual borders (in the Balkans, for example). Overshadowed for a long time by urban cross-border cooperation, their cross-border programmes do not have an overall organisation, although certain categories of area (mainly protected natural areas) are beginning to organise themselves together. The actors of these territories should be networked at European level both politically and technically (sharing of good practices, technical transfers, etc.).

Workshop 4: maritime cooperation

"establishing local links"

Local maritime cross-border cooperation can be defined as a relationship between border maritime local institutions and authorities concerning joint activities. It includes a strong "territorial" dimension which distinguishes it from cooperation programmes covering larger maritime spaces.

There are many topics of cooperation: maritime links, enhancement of port and urban areas, economic development, tourism and cultural cooperation, protection of the marine environment, integrated management of coastal areas, etc.

The maritime space is both a natural barrier and a link, and this impacts cross-border cooperation at all levels. The two principal obstacles linked to the maritime element concern accessibility and the lack of cross-border culture. The development of cooperation is strongly linked to the existence of maritime links or of "fixed" links (bridges and tunnels) which form gateways to the territory and generate the movements and exchanges essential for the construction of a joint "territory".

In view of these specific factors:

- How can the management of local maritime cross-border projects be improved?
- How can consideration of such spaces at European community level be encouraged?
- How can recognition be obtained for local maritime cooperation as a necessity for integrating maritime regions into the European space, and how can it be sustained?
- What role is there for cross-border cooperation in the integrated management of coastal areas?
- What links are there with larger-scale cooperation?

Recommendations

LOCAL LEVEL

Recommendation 1: Develop observation and coordinate planning of the development of local maritime spaces

- Develop networked measures for observation and shared studies (environment, fishery resources, coastal habitats, climate change, transport and port activity, law of the sea, socioeconomic data, etc.); consider cooperation on this with national and European levels.
- Develop joint planning in an integrated sustainable development approach (identify and coordinate programmes; jointly plan the setting-up of Natura 2000 zones, corridors for transport of hazardous materials, etc.).

Recommendation 2: Boost cooperation projects on topics specific to local maritime spaces

- Joint networking of ports and port cities.
- Cooperation on maritime pollution control.
- Start with projects, the vision of the inhabitants: develop relations and the common culture, promote cooperation on education and training.

Recommendation 3: Organise the governance of maritime cross-border territories at the different relevant levels

- At local level: this approach can be appropriate for maritime spaces where there is a fixed link (Oresund), border coastlines and estuaries or a local basin (Corsica/Sardinia).
- At the level of maritime basins (Channel, Tyrrhenian sea, Adriatic, Caribbean, etc.), subject of experiments as part of the 2007-2013 cross-border cooperation programmes.

NATIONAL LEVEL

Recommendation 4: Include coastal local and regional authorities in the definition and management of policies which have an impact on their development (transport, maritime safety, environment, etc.)

EUROPEAN LEVEL

Recommendation 5: Encourage the development of a local maritime transport public service

- Increase short-distance transport between communities.
- Authorise public aid for maritime transport.
- Introduce a new Community instrument promoting short sea shipping.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that maritime cooperation needs are taken into account in Community policies

- In Europe's strategic vision: include these needs in the green paper "Towards a future maritime policy for the Union".
- In European legislation which has an impact on maritime spaces
- In the cohesion policy: reassess European territorial cooperation Objective 3 by incorporating the specific nature of maritime spaces; assess and if necessary amend the 150 km rule⁶.

⁶ The 2007-2013 operational programmes stipulate a maximum of 150 km between coastal territories (condition of eligibility of maritime cooperation projects under the cross-border strand).

Workshop 5: economic development

"for a win-win game"

Bringing the players together

European (2007-2013 cohesion policy) and national public policies on territorial development place the emphasis on the necessary territorialization of the Lisbon objectives. This requires strengthening of cooperation between territorial players and business, training and research players. Such cooperation must not be exclusively national: it should be developed within a European framework. Today the cross-border territory is the appropriate scale for speeding up the implementation of the Lisbon strategy.

Advantages and potential of cross-border territories

Salary, price and tax differentials and linguistic, administrative and cultural diversity are constraints or opportunities, depending from what angle they are considered. With regard to economic development, the public-sector players on either side of the border are taking part in a complex game of competition/cooperation, while businesses and households try to make optimum use of the specific territorial assets of these territories. Their advantages include the new agglomeration economies related to the opening of borders.

The workshop discussed the following questions:

- How can business zones be set up in urban and rural cross-border territories? What common infrastructure, business property, real estate development, etc., services must be provided?
- What are the cooperation projects in R&D/innovation, competitiveness clusters or similar types of approach?
- What is the role of ICTs in the competitiveness of cross-border territories?
- How is the logistics sector developing in cross-border territories?
- What financing for SMEs—cross-border venture capital?

Recommendations

LOCAL LEVEL

Recommendation 1: Develop the governance of cross-border economic development

- Encourage dialogue between the different actors concerned: economic actors, local authorities, universities and others concerned (e.g. chambers of commerce and industry, development agencies) on either side of the border for the design and implementation of cross-border projects.
- Set up cross-border development agencies.
- Develop cross-border competitiveness clusters and centres.
- Coordinate the cross-border development of research and universities.

Recommendation 2: Introduce specific instruments and tools/services for use by businesses

- Set up business platforms (network for cooperation, sharing of experience and good practices, business guidance) and provide online collaborative working tools.
- Promote the development of financial instruments and facilitators for businesses, such as cross-border risk capital funds.
- Promote the establishment of business parks such as cross-border economic zones with common facilities and services.

Recommendation 3: Incorporate economic development into balanced territorial development along borders

Incorporate an economic development project into a politically-backed territorial project and into a joint medium-term strategy backed by the actors concerned.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

Recommendation 4: Organise the coordination of legislations (taxes, training (equivalence of qualifications), etc.) between states, border by border and, if appropriate, set up experiments.

EUROPEAN LEVEL

Recommendation 5: Promote networking and capitalisation of experience of cross-border economic development at European level

- Develop technical assistance networks for cross-border economic development.
- Make the work conducted in this area accessible in order to spread the acquired experience to other cross-border territories.
- Make public- and private-sector actors aware of the added value of cooperation in economic development.

ALL LEVELS

Recommendation 6: Develop knowledge of and research on the economy of cross-border territories

- At local/regional levels, develop knowledge-sharing tools.
- At national/European levels, develop research (e.g. typology of territories).

Workshop 6: employment and training

"mobilizing competencies"

Mention is often made of the Lisbon strategy, which defines a reference framework for European strategy, but it is essential to remember that, within the European Union, the states have principal responsibility for employment policy.

The states define the measures that they consider most appropriate for the situation they have to deal with (long-term unemployment, youth employment, employment of women, etc.).

The effect of this is that border areas experience in full the distortions that may arise as a consequence of these national levels of responsibility. Although as a result they become places of friction between insufficiently-coordinated national policies, they also show significant growth in the free circulation of workers, a founding element in the construction of Europe. Considering the cross-border territory as an endogenous space for management of the labour market is far from becoming a reality.

Nevertheless, relevant experiments could be conducted in border areas, implementing practices adapted to the situations experienced, practices which could provide useful inspiration for European policy in terms of employment strategy.

Today there are already initiatives in cross-border living areas. The workshop highlighted three aspects of these issues faced on either side of borders:

- access to employment
- qualification of men and women
- the future of the only European partnership-based cross-border mechanism likely to contribute to this.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Facilitate direct access to employment

The emergence of a cross-border employment and living area necessitates greater flexibility in employment aid. To avoid duplication, such payments can be made only within the framework of predefined coordination rules:

- In order to guarantee greater flexibility in employment aid, it would seem judicious, on the basis of article 308 of the EC treaty, to adopt a coordination mechanism at EU level, such as the regulation EC 883/2004, on unemployment benefits.
- The principle of the competence of the state responsible for paying unemployment benefits must be adopted for aid to job-seekers. Regarding aid to businesses, the state where the registered office of the business is located must be declared competent, including when the recruited person resides in another country.
- The member states must incorporate the cross-border dimension in a consistent manner in the preparation of national measures such as employment aid.

Recommendation 2: Provide life-long training beyond borders

- Introduce the status of “cross-border continuing vocational training trainee” for adults in cross-border training.
- Encourage procedures for validation of experience acquired in training and in enterprise.

Recommendation 3: Facilitate worker mobility and encourage the development of businesses in cross-border living areas

- Ensure continuity of the Eures system at cross-border level by increasing its funding. Sufficient financial resources must be restored to the socioeconomic partners for them to continue to fulfil their missions properly.
- Restore to the local partners a decision-making role in the governance of Eures-T partnerships at the level of the different territories.
- Extend the system to all internal borders of the Union, principally between acceding countries, developing the opportunities for experience-sharing between existing Eures-T partnerships and new Eures partnerships being formed.

Workshop 7: health

"local access to healthcare"

Access to quality healthcare services is fundamental in people's lives and must be a local service. It is of particular importance in a cross-border territory.

However, in the area of public health cross-border territories are faced with substantial diversity of administrative and political systems, cultural approaches to health, and providers. Many obstacles (regulations, linguistic problems, etc.) remain even though, at another level, the framework agreements on health cooperation between governments are a major step forward.

The intensifying of relations at borders implies the implementation of joint actions in the health area in order to meet the needs of border populations while moving towards the notion of a "cross-border health community".

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Improvement of frameworks and instruments

LOCAL LEVEL

- Formalise cooperation by an agreement between all the stakeholders.
- Incorporate cross-border cooperation projects into establishment projects.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS (COMPETENT HEALTH AUTHORITIES IN MEMBER STATES)

- Adopt a legal basis for cross-border cooperation (agreements between healthcare providers and health insurance organisations; bilateral agreements; authorisations to set up pilot projects).
- Participate in the development of assessment tools and in the assessment of cross-border initiatives.
- Continue the opening-up of healthcare reimbursement between payment organisations in cross-border areas by means of framework and local agreements.
- Encourage the establishment of centres of excellence.

EUROPEAN LEVEL

- Continue to fund cross-border cooperation projects with Community funds (European territorial cooperation Objective 3).
- Provide clearer information about funding programmes, procedures for responding to calls for proposals and project selection; make experts available to help respond to calls for proposals.
- Try to limit the legal uncertainty felt by citizens: do not allow jurisprudence alone to define citizens' rights.

Recommendation 2: Assistance with project set-up and governance

LOCAL LEVEL

- Ensure the relevance and satisfactory completion of projects by conducting analysis of the real needs, cross-border added value, and available human, material and financial resources, by making sure that all political partners (in particular local political leaders) are fully involved in all phases, by taking account of other cross-border cooperation projects (past and present), and by defining or adapting assessment tools before project start-up.
- Reinforce the role of Euregios and similar cross-border structures.
- Experiment with new instruments such as the EGTC.

EUROPEAN LEVEL

- Develop an assessment procedure for cross-border cooperation projects which could be used by those involved (guidelines, methodological advice, indicators).

Recommendation 3: Information, sharing of good practices, networking

LOCAL LEVEL

- Encourage discussion with the committed partners on other cross-border cooperation topics.
- Develop language training in order to speak that of the partners.
- Communicate more with the population on European projects.

ALL LEVELS

- Promote sharing of experience and information; support cross-border cooperation by developing databases and networks facilitating partner identification; promote examples of good practice by establishing networks between actors.
- Organise conferences on health and the cross-border situation; establish an information centre on cross-border health activities; promote cross-border cooperation projects.

All of these recommendations must contribute to the emergence of true cross-border health communities incorporated into cross-border territory projects.

Workshop 8: environment

"taking care of our common territory"

In 2001, the Gothenburg European Council meeting added an environmental strand to the Lisbon strategy, giving the European Union a sustainable development strategy.

The environment recognizes no borders; cross-border territories are now, or must become, spaces of responsibility for and joint management of environment and pooling of resources, in areas such as:

- pollution control (air, groundwater, watercourses and coasts, etc.),
- prevention and management of natural (flooding, etc.) and technological risks,
- waste management, etc.

Cross-border work on these issues enables a dialogue on the different environmental perceptions, thereby broadening the field of view of protagonists on either side of the border.

Natural spaces, urban spaces

This is true, of course, for specific spaces such as mountain ranges, marine or river basins and cross-border protected spaces. For example, cross-border rivers act as links, crossing points between territories on either side of borders. These spaces are a vector of cross-border cooperation which is not limited to the environmental aspect but which underlies the thinking on a territorial project.

The same is also true for cross-border urban spaces, as restated in the "thematic strategy for the urban environment" put forward by the European Commission.

The responsibility of territories, in particular cross-border ones, thus goes beyond topic-based aspects and includes a cross-functional dimension, that of sustainable territorial development. How can cross-border territories contribute, on their scale, to sustainable development through an integrated strategy (for example by means of local Agenda 21 plans)?

This workshop brought together protagonists that were diverse both by their nature and by the scale of their action on either side of borders. Emphasis was placed on the specific areas of water, drainage and waste. The objective was to discuss difficulties and successful experiments and consider cooperation methods that enable joint management of the cross-border environment.

Recommendations

LOCAL LEVEL

Recommendation 1: Towards joint management of the cross-border environment in the various sectors concerned

- Establish cross-border ownership for joint management of projects, sponsored by local authorities and local actors, with a legal structure (e.g. convention, structure such as the EGTC).
- Identify mechanisms for funding cross-border investments, and back them with regional, national and European co-funding (ERDF, Life +, etc.).

Recommendation 2: The environment, component of sustainable development of cross-border territories

Develop environmental governance of the different types of cross-border territory (urban, rural, basins, mountains, etc.) by developing:

- shared observation (e.g. GIS),
- information sharing between local authorities, for example with regard to regulatory and technical frameworks,
- coordination and planning at local cross-border level (cross-border agenda 21 programmes),
- involvement of elected representatives, awareness-raising and participation of citizens and businesses.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

Recommendation 3: Towards multi-level governance of the cross-border environment

- Support local authorities, particularly at the regional level, in the exercise of their competences regarding the cross-border environment.
- Organise coordination by border at the higher levels (regional, national) within the framework of bi-/multi-lateral agreements, with participation by local authorities.
- Coordinate, adapt and harmonise the national and regional legal and technical environmental legislations and regulations according to the needs of the cross-border territories.

EUROPEAN LEVEL

Recommendation 4: For European support for the cross-border environment, a factor of European integration

- Adapt the European framework (Community legislations and initiatives relating to the environment) to the specific cross-border situation (e.g. amend the water framework directive to provide for cross-border sub-basin plans).
- Develop methodologies and harmonise data (Inspire, etc.).
- Continue support for cross-border cooperation (cohesion policy).
- Facilitate the capitalisation and transfer of experience on the environment between cross-border territories.

Workshop 9: public transport

"encouraging day-to-day mobility"

The workshop covered mobility and public transport in cross-border territories from the viewpoint of daily movements across the border. It discussed the involvement of various actors and their coordination regarding cross-border mobility. All modes of cross-border public transport are concerned (urban and interurban, bus and coach, rail links, tram-train, tramway, river and maritime shuttles). Particular attention was paid to their intermodal linkage.

Mobility issues are at the heart of the functioning of cross-border territories: daily cross-border movements contribute to the construction of these living areas experienced every day by their inhabitants. A driver of development, cross-border public transport provides mobility for workers, schoolchildren and consumers and, on many borders, limits the saturation of road infrastructure, thus favouring sustainable development of the territory. Urban and interurban road and rail cross-border public transport is undeniably an important factor in the process of territorial and European integration and the concrete implementation of the freedom of movement provided by the treaty.

Recommendations

The organisation of cross-border public transport raises complex issues concerning different scales: multiple actors and operators, necessary coordination of competent authorities on either side of borders, consideration of these issues by the different levels concerned, application of Community regulations, and integration of transport into cross-border territory projects.

Recommendation 1: Towards better knowledge of travel patterns within cross-border territories

Promote the publicising of statistical information, "institutionalise" cross-border statistical observation by integration of cross-border-related data in the work of statistical monitoring bodies, networking of national statistics offices and establishment of local cross-border monitoring bodies.

Recommendation 2: Towards a cross-border dialogue on local cross-border transport

- Promote information exchange between planners, technicians, politicians, organising authorities and operators on either side of borders by networking, organisation of topical groups and circulation of relevant documents (legislation, planning documents, etc.).
- Encourage the establishment of cross-border entities or commissions on transport issues in order to encourage coordination of initiatives and development of joint projects. To this end, the signing of protocols between the stakeholder partners is desirable in order to move towards a comprehensive mobility policy.

Recommendation 3: Towards a cross-border governance structure - From coordination to integration

- Institutionalise the partnership between the organising authorities on either side of borders in order to enable assessment and definition of needs and organisation and assessment of services.

- Promote partnership between organising authorities and operators at all levels: strategic, planning and technical.
- To accomplish this, encourage the establishment of joint cross-border structures which are the most integrated form for management of a cross-border transport network or route (such as LGCCs (local grouping for cross-border cooperation), EGTCs (European grouping of territorial cooperation)). These cross-border organising authorities will have the same prerogatives as any organising authority: establishment and organisation of the service, operator selection (in the absence of a legal monopoly), definition of service quality and fares, and monitoring of the service.

Recommendation 4: Towards recognition of cross-border transport at European and national levels

Promote political and legal recognition of cross-border public transport issues in order to provide users with safe, efficient and high-quality transport services:

- Authorise cabotage for cross-border public transport⁷: operators must be able to organise and serve cross-border territories in a coherent way on either side of the borders. In particular, the measures taken on the French-Swiss border should be applied on all borders⁸.
- Encourage the states, when they apply regulation 12/98/EC, to consult the competent local authorities on either side of borders, in order to assess the relevance of new routes with regard to the cross-border network as a whole.

Recommendation 5: Towards the identification of funding sources

- Acquire a critical financial mass in order to support cross-border local transport initiatives.
- Make use of Community funds from programmes under the three objectives⁹ of the European 2007-2013 cohesion policy, along with the opportunities offered by European funds dedicated to the Trans-European Network- Transport¹⁰ of the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport (European Commission) and by European Investment Bank loans.

These instruments could be used: to improve availability of information to users on the multimodal provision of public transport (establishment of cross-border information centres, for example); to set joint fares on cross-border routes; to develop the use of vehicles with a genuine cross-border identity; and to implement joint awareness-raising and information campaigns aimed at the populations concerned.

⁷ Refer to EC regulation 12/98 on cabotage.

⁸ An additional clause to the 1951 France-Switzerland agreement authorises cabotage for cross-border passenger transport routes.

⁹ "Convergence", "Regional competitiveness and employment" and "European territorial cooperation".

¹⁰ Community transport infrastructure development programme.

Workshop 10: culture and territorial integration

"richness from diversity"

Heritage, architecture, museums, visual arts, books and reading, live shows, cinema and audiovisual productions, media, archives... Cross-border cultural cooperation features a broad diversity of projects. The protagonists are overcoming the barriers of language and culture and the populations are gradually drawing on this new territorial capital, capital in terms of work, resources and leisure. More generally, cultural activity can promote the cross-border territory and provide a basis for economic or territorial development projects. This substantially enhances the reputation of these territories, particularly in terms of tourism. Cultural diversity, the capacity to manage it and the multiple solutions that it offers are rich resources to be promoted and used.

The workshop demonstrated that cross-border cultural cooperation is a determining factor in the identification of inhabitants with cross-border territories and is a genuine development challenge. In this context:

- Is Europe falling back on national or regional identities or is it moving towards economic and social integration?
- Can cross-border territories be considered as spaces emblematic of a new European citizenship? Can they encourage the emergence of local European cultures, nourished by the richness and the cross-fertilization of regional and national cultures?

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Consider cross-border cultural development in a cross-cutting perspective

The development of cross-border cooperation requires that local authorities and professionals consider culture in a cross-cutting perspective, linked with the economic, social and environmental development of cross-border territories.

Recommendation 2: Base this development on integrated cross-border cultural strategies and practices

Such a perspective requires that local authorities define and implement structured, comprehensive and incentive cultural strategies and policies, linked with local cross-border development policies.

Recommendation 3: Introduce additional incentive guidance measures for professionals

These strategies and policies should encourage the introduction of guidance measures for cultural operators, ensuring the presence of additional operators and providing these operators with autonomy in their cooperation approach.

This guidance could include:

- local networking of actors,
- appropriate training courses,
- incentive measures for cooperation,
- and financial support measures (supplementing existing measures such as the Interreg 4A European cross-border cooperation programme).

Recommendation 4: Encourage the emergence of local governance procedures for cross-border cultural cooperation

In order to encourage the development of cross-border spaces considered as joint living and development spaces, it appears essential that these cross-border cultural strategies and policies be:

- agreed with all the actors concerned in the territory,
- linked or applied jointly between the different levels of local authorities involved in the territory,
- capable of driving a collective, shared and structuring approach in the territory, by the definition of a joint action framework.

This necessitates the development of local governance procedures facilitating joint political and strategic reflection as a consultation including:

- the different public authority levels (municipalities, inter-municipal districts, departments/counties, regions),
- the different sectors concerned within these authorities (culture, spatial planning, etc.),
- all the political, technical and professional actors of these territories.

Such governance procedures, forming part of a territorial management approach, could be based on the emergence of lean structures such as cooperation platforms, the missions of which might include promotion, initiation of proposals, coordination and knowledge acquisition.

Recommendation 5: Develop local, national and European expertise on the issue of culture and cross-border territories

In parallel, it is important to have knowledge of the practices, needs and good experiences of cross-border cultural cooperation and to have specific expertise on culture and cross-border territories (particularly in little-explored areas such as the link between culture and economy).

It thus appears necessary to encourage:

- monitoring and assessment of practices and needs and the development of dedicated expertise in each territory,
- the circulation of this expertise in local, national and European networks of exchange and dissemination. At local level the governance platforms could provide this link. In parallel, particular attention must be paid to the transfer of expertise to the new member states.

Recommendation 6: Ensure uniform recognition of the place of culture in the territorial policies of the EU, particularly in its cross-border strand

Lastly, the development of cross-border cultural cooperation necessitates working at European, national and local levels on ensuring that culture is taken into account in the territorial policies of the EU. This involves working to have culture taken into account:

- in the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies,
- in the strategic objectives of the territorial policies of the EU (including the cohesion policy and its cooperation objective and the cross-border strand of the neighbourhood policy),
- in the operational programmes, including cross-border operational programmes (with particular attention to the needs in terms of guidance, engineering and promotion).

Workshop 11: legal instruments of cooperation "structuring projects"

Institutions in action

Faced with "border effects" (growth of movements, situation of competition, etc.) and with the distortions and opportunities that they generate, cross-border cooperation protagonists have developed joint strategies and policies transposed into concrete approaches: operational projects intended for the population, cross-border territory governance structures, etc.

For each border its structures

To implement these projects, the partners on either side of borders must establish formal arrangements for their approach and ensure its continuity by making use of a set of legal instruments, varying between borders: from a simple agreement to an integrated structure, derived from national law, international law or, a recent development, European community law (European grouping for territorial cooperation).

What are the instruments for?

Going beyond the legal dimension (securing cross-border relations), do these instruments meet the needs and ambitions of cross-border project partners, particularly in terms of organization of governance? Do they meet the needs of the inhabitants of cross-border territories in terms of integrated public services (transport, training, health, culture, etc.)? Do they encourage the harmonization of national laws, or at least of the conceptions of public action on either side of borders? What can be expected from the European level (EGTC, regulations on services of general interest)?

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Support and guide the development of legal instruments for cross-border cooperation

- Promote the capitalisation of experience by setting up databases identifying good practices¹¹ and networking cooperation actors, in particular those involved in the establishment of EGTCs.
- Develop technical assistance with the operational and financial arrangements for cross-border projects on European borders¹² (implementation of individual projects and governance of territory projects).

¹¹ Refer to the EGTC expert group of the Committee of the Regions: <http://cor.europa.eu/en/activities/egtc.htm>

¹² Calling upon the know-how acquired by the MOT network, for example, and on EUROMOT.

Recommendation 2: Offer an adequate legal “toolbox” to actors: towards adaptation and coordination of domestic law on cross-border matters

- Recommend to legislators that they adapt the domestic legal framework to cross-border cooperation, border by border: adapt the legal environment to the realities of cross-border territories, including through the promotion of innovative legal solutions¹³; allow participation by foreign local authorities in instruments or bodies already defined in domestic law¹⁴; shorten the times taken for the administrative authorisation and formation of cross-border structures; in compliance with a principle of reciprocity: these initiatives, taken on one side of the border, must be followed by similar measures on the other side of the border¹⁵.
- Promote the signing of bilateral or multilateral agreements, the establishment of joint committees, intergovernmental conferences, etc., to facilitate discussion on obtaining consistency of the domestic legislations on either side of borders.
- Ensure that the domestic law of the 27 European Union member states is made compatible with the EGTC regulation as quickly as possible.
- Ensure the ratification of the Madrid framework agreement and its supplementary protocol, and monitor the effective application of this agreement and bilateral state agreements on cross-border cooperation in domestic law.

Recommendation 3: Offer an adequate legal “toolbox” to actors: facilitate access of third countries to the EGTC

- Ask the Community legislator to amend the EGTC regulation to authorise the establishment of EGTCs between a single EU member state and a third country, allowing the EGTC to be used for bilateral operational projects¹⁶.
- Ask the legislator to allow the most favourable possible interpretation of the EGTC regulation so that a third country may participate in an EGTC when only one of the member states providing members of the EGTC has signed an agreement with that third country¹⁷.

¹³ E.g. the right of experimentation under French law.

¹⁴ Within the framework of the 1995 Bayonne treaty (between France and Spain), the Spanish authorities permit French local authorities to be members of consorcios.

¹⁵ France has adopted in its national law a measure enabling the establishment of European districts under French law (on the LGCC model) on all French borders. However, unless the neighbouring states adopt regulations allowing local authorities to be members of a European district, this initiative cannot achieve the expected result.

¹⁶ Article 3 paragraph 16 of regulation 1082/2006: “An EGTC shall be made up of members located on the territory of at least two Member States.”

¹⁷ Article 3 paragraph 16 of regulation 1082/2006: Entities from third countries can participate in an EGTC “[...] where the legislation of a third country or agreements between Member States and third countries so allow.”

Workshop 12: training in cross-border professions

"more skills for cooperation"

Cross-border cooperation has been developing throughout Europe for some twenty years. The pioneers trained themselves on the job, improvising solutions as and when problems arose.

Times have changed. The challenges of cooperation, its context, its methods have become more demanding and more complex. The need for a more professional approach by all cross-border actors is no longer in doubt. This implies a more precise definition of professional activities and rigorous development of training tools.

That was the objective of the Interform project (European network on training and research on cross-border practices, led by the MOT as part of the European Interact programme).

Cross-border cooperation is still an emerging and evolving practice. There is therefore no corpus of soundly-based knowledge nor stabilized technical content on which to base professional training. In this context, transmission of knowledge cannot be separated from its production, in other words research activities. The partnership between practitioners, teachers and researchers is essential if tomorrow's cross-border project leadership is to be based on competent and recognized professionals.

The work was to make use of the contents and methods produced through the networking of training and research specialists in this field. In particular, the aim was to identify ideas for the future and define the strategic priorities of this training for the 2007-2013 period.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Conduct further work on the analysis of professions in the cross-border context and develop a qualification scheme.

Recommendation 2

- Promote the establishment and development of training and consultancy bodies such as "Euro Institutes".
- These structures must be based on a cross-border and inter-institutional partnership (public authorities, universities, chambers of commerce, etc.).
- Their networking will enable the development of training courses focusing on the specific or common needs of cross-border territories.

Recommendation 3

Introduce a European "EUROMOT" label certifying the quality of cross-border training courses, and compile a regularly updated directory of such courses.

Recommendation 4

Compile and validate a soundly-based corpus of knowledge and techniques, in particular by capitalisation of the results of the Interform programme.

Recommendation 5

Mobilise this knowledge to benefit the competitiveness strategies of cross-border territories, in particular by setting up a "think-tank".

Acknowledgements

For each workshop a leader¹⁸, specialist in the topic covered, co-moderated the work and the meetings of the working group, in liaison with the MOT. Overall coordination was by Jean Peyrony, MOT development director, Hans-Günther Clev, director-general of the Rhineland-Palatinate development agency (Germany) and Michel Casteigts, associate professor at the University of Pau and the Pays de l'Adour (France).

For this reason, the MOT is specially grateful to Hans-Günther Clev, Michel Casteigts, the workshop leaders and all the participants in these working groups for their participation and their contributing investigations.

These "Recommendations for cross-border cooperation" are the result of the collective work led by the Mission opérationnelle transfrontalière throughout 2007 under the direction of Jacques Houbart and the chairmanship of Pierre Mauroy.

¹⁸ *The full list is given in the conference proceedings.*

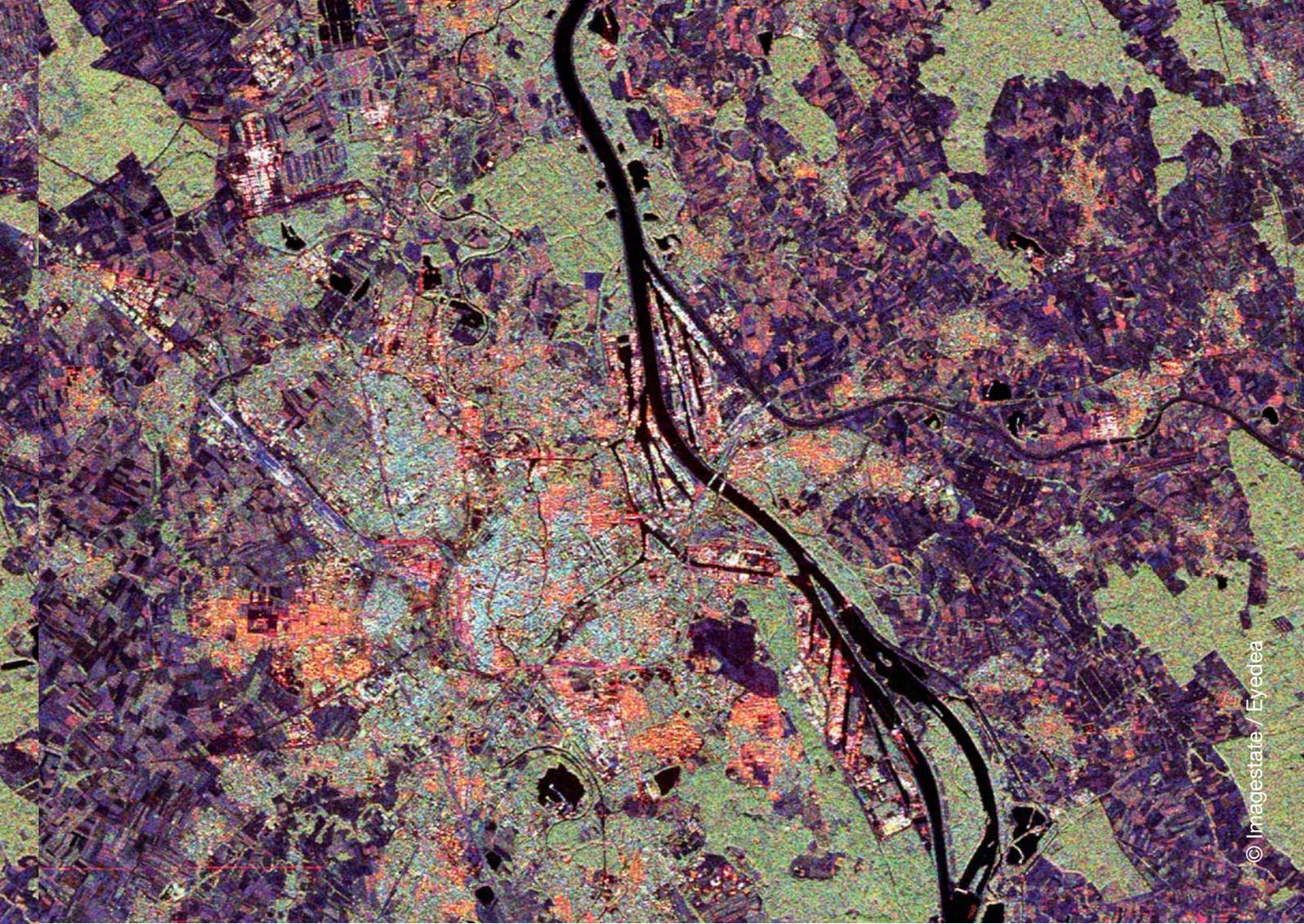
Manifesto for cross-border cooperation in Europe
"Cross-border territories: Day-to-day Europe"
European conference, 8 and 9 November 2007, Lille, France

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