



“Cross-border territories: Day-to-day Europe”



EUROPEAN CONFERENCE
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Sum up of workshops and recommendations



Summary of the 12 workshops

❖ Workshop preparation process

Each of the 12 workshops of the conference was prepared by a working group, meeting three times on average. 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” 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 workshop contributions will make up a white paper, which will be sent to national governments and Community institutions. This presentation sums up the work done by the workshops and will be the subject of the second panel discussion.

❖ Major results of the 12 workshops

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

This work shows that 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.

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 spaces.

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.

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 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.

“Sectoral” policies and projects also contribute to the integration of cross-border territories and thus to the **integration of the territory of Europe** and to its sustainable development, 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**) and European recognition of cross-border urban public transport, through the authorisation of cross-border cabotage (amendment of regulation 12/98) (**public transport workshop**).

Lastly, a border, as a line of contact between the populations of two or three states sharing a community of language or culture, or on the contrary between populations with different languages and cultures, makes the cross-border territory a place for learning a European citizenship promoting unity in diversity (**culture workshop**).

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

- monitoring and information tools¹
- (Euro-)regional, national and European planning and development strategies²
- funding programmes³
- national and Community legislations⁴ (**legal workshop**),

and capitalise and transfer good practices (workshop on **research and training on cross-border cooperation practices**).

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

¹ ESPON, urban audit, etc.

² Strategic monitoring of the 2007-2013 cohesion policy, draft white paper on territorial cohesion (due Spring 2008), Territorial Agenda action programme which must be approved during the Portuguese presidency (Azores, November 2007)
(for example, encourage the formation of cross-border metropolitan areas)

³ For example, the 2007-2013 cohesion programmes must be used: the Objective 1 and 2 programmes must fund coordinated cross-border investment; the Objective 3 programmes must fund the supplementary technical or organisational costs related to the cross-border dimension, which will generate added value in the long term.

⁴ By:

- organising their coordination border by border and by amending them if necessary, working with the local and regional authorities
- enabling the authorities that wish to do so to participate in cross-border intermunicipal structures, in particular EGTCs, which requires achieving compatibility between the domestic law of the 27 member states, facilitating access by third countries to EGTCs and ensuring the ratification of the Madrid Outline Convention and its additional protocol.

Cross-cutting reading – identified needs and objectives

Organising and developing cross-border territories

- ❖ Develop governance models for cross-border territories.
- ❖ Develop technical assistance for the structuring of cooperation.
- ❖ Support the implementation of cross-border projects (setup, running, monitoring, assessment).

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.
- ❖ Coordinate national policies in sectors where their differences cause difficulties in cross-border territories; failing this, fund extra costs related to the need to work with different standards, techniques and frameworks in cross-border territories.
- ❖ Open up systems for access by third countries neighbouring the EU.

Capitalisation

- ❖ Support sharing of good practices and promote knowledge and information on cross-border territories.
- ❖ Store acquired experience and train in and on cross-border matters.

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
Ensure that specific cross-border needs are taken into account in regional, national and European 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 a more **public interest** character.

Consequences for political action

The work done by the workshops shows high demand for support in the public interest areas, **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)** and for overcoming **barriers between actors** at each level.

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 instrument meeting the demand for project support; projects are obliged to rely on 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 how can the demands of cross-border territories be met?**