



Association of European  
Border Regions



Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2010

## Press release

**The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), the Cross-border Operational Mission (Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière, MOT) and the Euro-institute have formalized their partnership by signing several conventions of cooperation yesterday in Strasbourg at the Council of Europe:**

Following a strategic alliance signed between MOT and AEBR in November 2007, two cooperation conventions between MOT and the Euro-Institute and between AEBR and the Euro-Institute have been signed aside from the 18th Plenary Session of the Congress of local and regional authorities of the Council of Europe, by **Karl-Heinz Lambertz**, Minister-President of the German-speaking Community of Belgium, General Reporter on cross-border cooperation for the Congress of local and regional authorities and President of the AEBR, **Nawel Rafik-Elmrini**, Community Advisor (Urban Community of Strasbourg, CUS), Deputy-mayor of Strasbourg and Vice President of MOT and **Monica Jung**, Regional Advisor (Alsace) and President of the Euro-Institute.

There are many objectives to these conventions. **As underlined by Mr. Lambertz**, "Firstly it is a question of testifying at European level that in cross-border cooperation matters our three institutions complement each other and are unique". Indeed, these three institutions bring answers in terms of operational assistance as well as strategies of lobbying, exchange of experiences, and of training, advice or support.

**As noticed by Mrs. Rafik-Elmrini**, on the basis of the CUS experience within the EGTC URBACT project<sup>1</sup> led by MOT as well as of the relations of CUS with the Euro-institute for more than 15 years, these partnerships form "a reliable network of interlocutors, not only capable of meeting the needs of border areas' expectations in Europe, but also of being a support to the European authorities (Council of Europe and European Union)".

**Cross-border cooperation concerns nearly a third of the European population (27 member states) that lives in border areas.**

**Monique Jung has also explained** that "these conventions will also be used to supervise cooperation on a daily basis between our institutions". Several working fields have thus been identified, such as the exchange of information, the professionalization of the cross-border stakeholders, the realization of studies, and working in common on projects of publications.

Of course the three partners also promise to study any new possibility of working together according to the needs of the cross-border areas and the European level.

**It is therefore, for these partners, (...) a real progress toward more effectiveness at the service of the European Union, the national administrations, the cross-border areas and the citizen!**

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<sup>1</sup> The EGTC URBACT project ("Expertising Governance for Transfrontier Conurbations), part-financed by the European URBACT program, brings together six cross-border agglomerations in Europe. It aims at exchanging good practices and improving, for each partner agglomeration, its cross-border governance system. Further information: [www.urbact.eu/egtc](http://www.urbact.eu/egtc)

**What is MOT? - Cross-border Operational Mission – Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière**

MOT is an interdepartmental and associative structure which creation was initiated in 1997 by the Delegation for Territorial Planning and Regional Attractivity (DATAR, France). It builds a network bringing together all actors of cross-border cooperation (local authorities, companies, associations, cross-border organisations, States...). Its main role is to ease the realization of cross-border projects, to network the cross-border stakeholder and to promote the exchange of experiences. It also acts as an intermediary between local level, and national and European authorities.

<http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.eu>

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**What is the Euro-institute?**

The Euro-Institute is a Franco-German, binational and bicultural structure created in 1993 with the aim to support civil servants as well as actors of cross-border cooperation in every step of their common projects with neighbouring countries mainly in the Upper-Rhine region but also all over Europe.

Therefore we developed products and services adapted to specific needs:

Training sessions that contributes to develop cross-functional skills

Comparative seminars on actual topics

Training to increase European competences

Studies, evaluations or Counselling projects

Coaching in the field of intercultural communication and understanding as well as project management

Moderation of cross-border meetings or workshops

Desk research and assistance in finding the right partner for cooperation

[www.euroinstitut.org](http://www.euroinstitut.org)

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**What is AEBR? - Association of European Border Regions**

The Association of European Border Regions was founded on 17-18 July 1971 at the Anholt Castle, Westfalia (Germany), within the territory of the first EUREGIO, founded in 1958 between Germany and the Netherlands. More than one hundred border regional governments, euroregions, and other cross-border structures are members of the AEBR, with the following main objectives:

to highlight special problems, opportunities, responsibilities and activities of European border and cross-border regions;

to represent their common interests vis-à-vis national and international institutions;

to initiate, support and coordinate cooperation between them throughout Europe;

to promote exchanges of experience and information, with a view to identifying and coordinating common interests among the diverse range of cross-border problems and opportunities and coming up with possible solutions.

[www.aebr.eu](http://www.aebr.eu)

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