

Interregional Council of the Chambers of Trades of the Greater Region (CICM)

BORDER	France-Germany, France-Luxembourg, France-Belgium
TERRITORY	Greater Region
DATE OF CREATION	1989
PARTNERS	CMA (Chambre de Métiers et de l'Artisanat – Chamber of Trade and Crafts) Moselle, CMA Meurthe-et-Moselle, CMA Meuse, CMA Vosges, Chambre régionale des Métiers et de l'Artisanat de Lorraine, Union des classes moyennes de Belgique (UCM), Chambre des Métiers du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, Handwerkskammer des Saarlandes, Handwerkskammer Trier, Handwerkskammer der Pfalz, Handwerkskammer Koblenz, Handwerkskammer Rheinhessen
OBJECTIVE	Joint representation of craft SMEs
MAIN ACTIVITY	Creation of networks of assistance-advice services and development of initiatives to harmonise framework conditions in the Greater Region



WHAT IS ITS REMIT?

The Interregional Council of the Chambers of Trades of the Greater Region (Conseil Interrégional des Chambres des Métiers de la Grande Région, CICM) was set up in 1989 and currently has twelve members (see table).

It provides joint representation for the some 170,000 craft enterprises in the Greater Region, their 700,000 employees and 50,000 apprentices.

Based in Luxembourg, with its general secretariat housed by the Luxembourg Chamber of Trades, the CICM is overseen by a committee made up of its Chairman, five Vice-Chairmen and the Secretary General.

THE CICM ACTS TO:

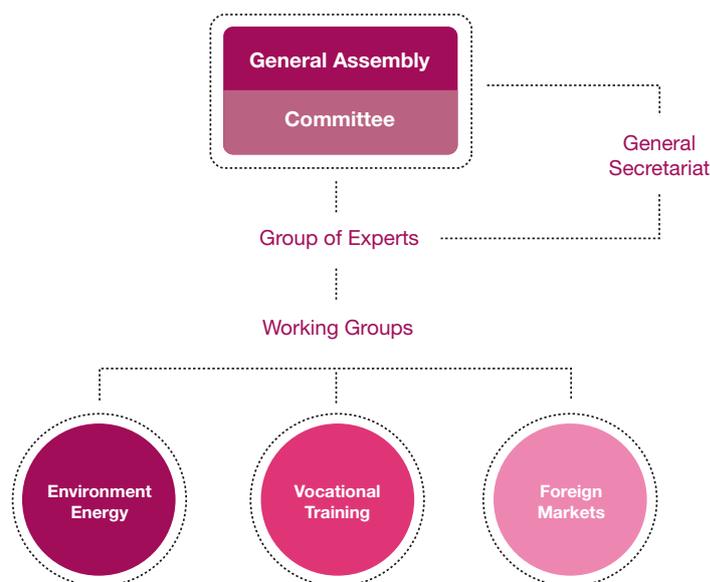
- represent the interests of trades and crafts in the Greater Region in relation to the regional, national and European authorities
- develop initiatives to harmonise framework conditions in the Greater Region
- create networks for assistance-advice services for trades and crafts in order to promote cross-border activities
- jointly work on solutions to existing problems and proposals aimed at improving the economic position of craft enterprises in the Greater Region
- step up exchanges of information and experience.



General Assembly of the CICM (Interregional Council of the Chambers of Trades) in June 2014

Three thematic working groups (environment/energy, vocational training and foreign markets) coordinate deliberations and enable the CICM to take positions on diverse subjects such as:

- policy regarding trades and crafts and SMEs in the Greater Region
- promotion of the image of trades and crafts
- the structural evolution and economic situation of trades and crafts
- relations with Greater Region institutions (Summit of the Greater Region, the Greater Region Economic and Social Council, etc.)
- European policies (internal market, Small Business Act, etc.)
- the integration of regional policies in the Greater Region.



Source: <http://www.cdm.lu/about-us/cicm>

WHAT ARE ITS ACTIVITIES?

Recently, the CICM has been active on three issues:

- **The environment/energy working group** formulated a position statement entitled “Transition énergétique: Pour une politique climatique et énergétique concertée en Grande Région” (“Energy transition: towards a coordinated climate and energy policy in the Greater Region”). This position statement and the CICM’s research into the action plans and policies on energy in the different parts of the Greater Region, including in the areas of energy efficiency and renewable energies, served as a basis for discussion for the Greater Region Economic and Social Committee (CESGR). On 20 May 2014, a joint event was held in Metz entitled “Energy transition and opportunities for SMEs and craft enterprises in the Greater Region”. The outcome of this event, which was taken up in the CICM’s position statement, was incorporated into the CESGR’s recommendations at the Greater Region’s 14th Summit in November 2014.
- **The analysis and monitoring of political and operational initiatives** with a view to instituting exchanges of good practices regarding cross-border apprenticeships in the Greater Region.
- **The removal of obstacles to the cross-border provision of services** has also been the subject of sustained work, notably in collaboration with the Economy and Sustainable Development working group of the Greater Region Economic and Social Council (CESGR), to make an inventory of barriers to the cross-border market and to draw up recommendations.

TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THIS GOOD PRACTICE BE ADOPTED IN OTHER CROSS-BORDER TERRITORIES?

CICM is a formal body that is fairly unique at the cross-border level in Europe. However, similar concerns to those addressed by the CICM can be observed along other borders: the development of cross-border vocational training, the adaptation of trades and crafts to new environmental regulations and the challenges of the transition to different sources of energy, and the possible distortion of competition in calls for tender from the construction sector, etc.

The legal statutes of the chambers of trades in the Greater Region vary from country to country; the same is true of the definition of craft trades (l’artisanat in French). In this regard, Belgium stands out from its neighbours in that there was no official definition of l’artisanat until February 2014 and this sector does not have its own representative chamber, with the UCM also acting for the interests of retailers and self-employed professionals. This has not however prevented the operational implementation of a network and of joint representation.

It should be noted that the Upper Rhine also has a network of chambers of trades (Handwerkskammer der Pfalz, Handwerkskammer Karlsruhe, Handwerkskammer Freiburg, Chambre des Métiers d’Alsace and Wirtschaftskammer Baselland) – TransInfoNet. Set up in 1996, this network carries out activities including advice regarding the provision of services in neighbouring countries, legal information, and assistance with administrative formalities and setting up in a neighbouring country (branch or subsidiary, business creation or acquisition, etc.).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.cdm.lu/about-us/cicm>

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