

# Strategic workforce planning (SWP) for the ports of Strasbourg and Kehl

BORDER	France-Germany
TERRITORY	Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict
DATE	2012
PARTNERS	Strasbourg Jobs and Training Centre (Maison de l'Emploi et de la Formation de Strasbourg), Strasbourg Conurbation Development and Town Planning Agency (Agence de développement et d'urbanisme de l'agglomération strasbourgeoise, ADEUS)
OBJECTIVE	Assessment of changes in an economic sector and anticipation of their impact on professions, activities and human resources requirements
MAIN ACTIVITY	Drawing up in a partnership-based and coordinated manner an action plan to respond to changes in the territory





Port area on the Rhine and Strasbourg in the background

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**WHAT IS THE CONTEXT?**

**The port areas of the Upper Rhine are going through changes linked to the Rhine’s position in Europe’s river network, to the river’s interconnections with other transport infrastructures and to changes affecting industrial activities as a whole.**

Economic issues relating to attractiveness and regional development are directly impacting them and pose questions about Strasbourg and Kehl’s ports regarding functions, potentialities and complementarities.

This particularly concerns the businesses and sectors present in these port areas. The industrial services sector (including logistics – trade and distribution of goods, but also “urban” logistics) has thus strongly expanded over the past few years, and tertiary activities have grown more owing to a less favourable economic climate and lower investment in industry. Moreover, there has been an overall change in the types and levels of skills demanded by port industries (the skills levels required have risen due to qualitative improvements in know-how and production), as well as an ageing of the labour force, which has highlighted the need for training.

All in all, over 550 firms, with nearly 13,300 employees, are located in the Strasbourg and Kehl port area, mainly in the industrial, transport/logistics, energy and waste management sectors.

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**HOW HAS THE CROSS-BORDER TERRITORIAL SWP EXERCISE BEEN IMPLEMENTED?**

In order to better assess the repercussions of these changes on the professions, activities and human resources requirements in the ports of Strasbourg and Kehl, and to have long-term visibility in this regard, an SWP exercise was launched by the Strasbourg Jobs and Training Centre (Maison de l’Emploi et de la Formation de Strasbourg) and the Strasbourg Conurbation Development and Town Planning Agency (ADEUS) in 2012.





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"Port du Rhin", Strasbourg-Kehl port area

Unlike traditional SWP exercises carried out by companies, this SWP is territorial in scope and therefore incorporates the combined issues concerning companies and professional sectors (human resources), employees (career paths) and territories (economic changes). As a result, it constitutes a process carried out in partnership by the territory's economic and employment players: institutions of local government, consular chambers, social partners, companies, public employment services and training bodies, etc. **But it is also a cross-border process, which is a reflection of the emergence of shared economic issues on both sides of the Rhine and the inclusion of the economic fabric and employment area of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict in the current exercise.**

### THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CROSS-BORDER SWP REFLECT THIS MULTIPLICITY OF ISSUES AND STAKEHOLDERS:

- to provide an overview of the cross-border territory in terms of jobs and skills, both at the present time and over the short, medium and long term
- to help companies to have greater awareness of their own development issues
- to pool the jobs and skills of sister companies
- to anticipate skills needs so as to better orient training paths
- to draw up in a partnership-based and coordinated manner an action plan to respond to the changes in the territory.

In order to arrive at this action plan, the exercise's final objective, which will be developed with companies, a process composed of several stages has been carried out, whose deliverables are available on the website of the Strasbourg Jobs and Training Centre:

- benchmarking of experiences of port area/multi-sector/territorial/cross-border SWP exercises in France and Europe
- interviews with around 30 "head of network" players, both institutional and private, in the ports of Strasbourg and Kehl, conducted by the ADEUS around seven key questions condensed into the form of seven factsheet-tools ("What are the main issues for the future of the ports?"; "Changes in the sectors present in the ports"; "How are firms expecting their sectors to change?"; "Medium- and long-term skills needs"; "What will the professions of the future be?"; "Professions under threat?"; "What are the training priorities to meet current and future needs?")
- a presentation of the economic fabric and professions of the port area, including a mapping of the firms, jobs and professions in the port of Strasbourg, as well as a forward-looking presentation of professions up to 2020
- a discussion among institutional players that took place on 25 November 2013 in Kehl in the form of three roundtables on issues relating to jobs in the port areas of Strasbourg and Kehl.

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## WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES FOR ACTION AND OBJECTIVES OVER THE SHORT TERM?

### THE INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH THE INSTITUTIONAL PLAYERS HAVE MADE IT POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE FOUR PRIORITY AREAS FOR ACTION IN THE PORTS OF STRASBOURG AND KEHL:

- managing the impact of deindustrialisation in terms of jobs (stepping up support for job-seekers who are unemployed as a result of restructuring)
- optimising the existing training infrastructure (focusing technical training on mastering tools, strengthening linguistic competence, recognition of qualifications, etc.)
- promoting technical career paths (mainly in France, by fostering apprenticeships)
- supporting retraining (through the strengthening of in-service training and short training courses).

In addition, the cross-border SWP exercise is linked to short-term schemes aimed at young people. One of these is the project called REVE (Rapprochement Entre Voisins pour l'Emploi – Bringing Neighbours Closer Together for Jobs) run by the Strasbourg Jobs and Training Centre. In 2013, it organised a series of visits to German firms based in the port of Kehl that needed new staff and were offering apprenticeships in the professions where they had staff shortages.

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

The Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict is not the only cross-border territory with a shared economic sector on both sides of the border: Saarland and Lorraine both have a specialisation in the automotive sector, the French and Spanish Basque Country in agri-food, the French-Belgian border region in the textile industry, etc. Depending on the degree of complementarity between the economic fabrics on either side of the border and the common outlook for change in the sector, a similar exercise might prove to be beneficial in order to better anticipate future needs and work out a coordinated response.

It is also interesting to note that the territorial SWP exercise combines the issues concerning economic activity (companies) and those concerning jobs/training (employees). As a result, it constitutes a structuring process of economic development that is helping to jointly develop the different sectors, professions and the range of available training.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.maisonemploi-strasbourg.org/la-demarche-de-gpec-des-ports>

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