



Jean-Claude Sinner

Government Advisor,
Ministry of the Interior
and Spatial Planning,
DATer, Grand-Duchy
of Luxembourg



How is cross-border governance developing on the borders of Luxembourg, in particular with Lorraine?

With regard to cross-border governance, three EGTCs are in preparation. The first, on which most progress has been made, will be tasked with management of the Interreg IVA "Greater Region" programme (the decision was made on both political and administrative grounds). It is the only known application of an EGTC for this type of mission. The second proposed EGTC concerns the Alzette/Belval site. There is a strong political will, and the founding documents (statutes) are being drafted. The members of this EGTC will be the State and four municipalities on the Luxembourg side and the prefecture, Lorraine regional council, two department councils and the community of municipalities Pays-Haut Val d'Alzette on the French side. It will have a strategic mission to develop relations with the aim of encouraging the emergence of joint projects in the cross-border conurbation around the site. Some issues still have to be settled, such as the distribution of votes between the stakeholders. Lastly, a third EGTC may be formed for the purpose of organising and structuring (with a budget, personnel, etc.) the institutionalised cooperation between the ten partners of the Greater Region summit: the Luxembourg state, the two bordering German *Länder*, the Walloon region, the French- and German-speaking communities of Belgium and, on the French side, the prefecture, the Lorraine region and the Meurthe-et-Moselle, Meuse and Moselle department councils.

Can you mention some projects backed within the Interreg IVA framework?

Several projects have already been approved. A cooperation between the universities of the three countries, for example, is intended to encourage integration of courses, recognition of diplomas and mobility of students and lecturers within the Greater Region. Other projects include the establishment of a network of nature parks, health cooperation and joint promotion of tourism in the Greater Region. There will also be cultural projects, following 2007 "Luxembourg European capital of culture".

Cross-border cooperation in Luxembourg

Located between Germany, Belgium and France, the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg has undertaken a profound transformation of its economy over the last twenty-five years, passing from a production sector based on steelmaking to development focused today on the service and financial sectors. Cross-border cooperation is a real development issue for this small country of 2586 sq. km and 486,000 inhabitants.

The northern and southern borders are very different. In the north, with Belgium and Germany, they are mainly rural, criss-crossed by protected natural spaces. To the south, with France, they are in contrast extensively industrialised and urbanised, especially in the western part, with the two cross-border conurbations of Longwy and Villerupt/Audun-le-Tiche/Alzette-Belval.

For the country as a whole, more than 140,000 workers cross the border each day, half from France, a quarter from Belgium and another quarter from Germany. On the French border these flows amount to more than 70,000 persons, drawn by the more attractive jobs and salaries in Luxembourg. These daily movements cause problems of transport and housing. The motorways are regularly saturated and the trains are overcrowded. Despite a very high-frequency service at peak hours, cross-border capacity is insufficient, but its expansion is hampered by major problems, related for example to parking at the French stations. The repercussions in terms of housing are also substantial and Luxembourg, which has high property prices and a high population density, is not able to persuade border workers to take up residence on its side of the border.

But cross-border cooperation on all of Luxembourg's borders is not limited to issues of worker flows and housing. Within the "Greater Region", a territory covering 65,401 sq. km with 11.351 million inhabitants, cooperation is



The Alzette/Belval site

multilateral, bringing together all the institutions involved: the German Saar and Rhineland-Palatinate *Länder*, the Lorraine region, the Walloon region, the French- and German-speaking communities of Belgium, and the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg. Each year the Greater Region 'summits' boost cooperation and give rise to joint resolutions and projects.

In the field, cooperation can also be bi- or trilateral. One of the flagship projects on the border with France is the conversion of a disused former steelmaking area on the Alzette/Belval site. This large-scale project, backed by the Grand-Duchy, has undertaken the construction of a 'new town' with cultural and commercial facilities (a supermarket, a cinema, etc.), two of the three faculties of the University of Luxembourg, a high school (under construction), and the establishment of administrative and economic activities. Eventually 50,000 housing units and the creation of 20,000 jobs are planned (2000 jobs have been created already). This project is an excellent development opportunity for the cross-border territory and, in order to involve the French local authorities in it and implement a joint development strategy, an EGTC is being formed.

Signature of a cross-border SMOT

On 8 January 2009 Jean-Pierre Masseret, president of the Lorraine region, Lucien Lux, minister of transport of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, and Bernard Niquet, Lorraine region prefect, presented a new cross-border mobility scheme (SMOT) intended to accommodate the increasing numbers of cross-border movements between Lorraine and Luxembourg.

The SMOT defines a programme of practical actions in preparation for the increased flows generated by cross-border movements. It proposes solutions which develop intermodality,

public transport and car-pooling.

One of the objectives is to gradually increase the share of alternative modes of transport to the individual car, such as public transport and car-pooling, to 15, 20 then 25% of all Lorraine-Luxembourg movements.

Other measures include increasing the capacity of the rail network, the construction of new railway stations and the introduction of new cross-border coach routes.



The contribution of EUROMOT to the green paper on territorial cohesion

The European territorial cohesion policy represents an opportunity not only to enhance the efficiency and coherence of community policies, but also to secure the harmonious development of European territory by valuing its diversity.

With the opening of the debate on the Green Paper on territorial cohesion, the Commission has chosen to mobilise and value the wealth of experiences from different actors in Europe. MOT and EUROMOT have contributed to this reflection on the basis of their concrete experience in terms of cross-border cooperation. This contribution pleads in favour of the development of integrated territories on European borders which constitute powerful means of managing imbalances, the integration of European territory and

the pacification of Europe's external borders. So, to encourage the development of "cross-border territory projects" and the organisation to this end of "multi-level" local governance, EUROMOT recommends practical measures. Here are a few extracts from its contribution:

Is there a role for the EU in promoting territorial cohesion? How could such a role be defined against the background of the principle of subsidiarity?

The European Union can promote territorial cohesion and at the same time respect the principle of subsidiarity:

- by setting as one of the priorities of this policy a strong support to be provided to the development of cross-border projects, integration factor and factor for the social and economic cohesion of Europe
- by facilitating the convergence and coordination of local, regional, national and European policies towards these local territories through European programmes
- by reinforcing the "territorial structuring" axe of the cross-border strand of the European territorial cooperation objective (dedicated global envelope) to privilege financially the common strategies of territorial integration
- by favouring the formation of EGTCs on European borders, namely those dedicated to the implementation of action programmes to benefit local populations and to facilitate their networking
- by giving a integration premium for cross-border territories under the form of a global subsidy in accordance with criteria to be defined upstream in relation to the degree of integration of actions
- by supporting the MOT/EUROMOT type of networks which may contribute with operational technical assistance to cross-border territorial projects, favour the setting-up and networking of the EGTC [...], organise training programmes [...] or develop a strategy for European technical assistance to cooperation projects.

Is there a need for new forms of territorial cooperation?

It would be particularly interesting to develop specific tools which may respond to the European issue of cross-border agglomerations (and other local cross-border areas) by:

- taking into account the need of observation and knowledge of cross-border territories at a local level,
- making cross-border agglomerations places where national and community policies converge within the framework of European strategic approaches,
- forming networks of cross-border agglomerations at the European level.

It would be pertinent to establish, border by border, a right to experimentation of adapted innovative solutions in order to develop the dynamics and creativity of territorial cooperation, more precisely its application on cross-border territories.

How can coordination between territorial and sectoral policies be improved?

It is necessary to optimise, deepen and extend the scope of analysis of cross-border socio-economic potentials to be able to develop well-founded strategies. Within this framework, territorial references should constitute the basis of all sectoral intervention, which implies integrated concepts on the development of each territory. This may be strengthened by way of integration premiums.

A better coordination of sectoral directorates of the European Commission and the definition of cross-cutting territorial policies could broadly facilitate this necessary junction of territorial and sectoral policies.

Proceedings

The proceedings of the European conference "Cross-border territories: day-to-day Europe" (Lille, 8 and 9 November 2007) are published in German. www.espaces-transfrontaliers.eu

Seminar

The first thematic seminar of the "EGTC" URBACT project will be held on 12 March in Chaves (Portugal) on the subject: "Cross-border conurbations: empowering internal governance". www.urbact.eu/egtc

France/Germany

The French secretary of state for European Affairs, Bruno Lemaire, and his German counterpart, minister Günter Glöser, met on 3 February to discuss the future of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict. On this occasion Bruno Lemaire declared that "most European construction must take the form of shared cooperation actions, practical actions that change the lives of our fellow citizens. [...] In the areas of transport, health, police, justice, the citizens expect solutions to their problems."

Free circulation

On 8 February 2009, by a wide margin, the Swiss approved the renewal of the agreements on free circulation of workers with the EU and their extension to Bulgaria and Rumania. Since 2002 these agreements have enabled 200,000 European Union citizens to work in Switzerland.

Press review

■ **Emergencies - Cross-border emergency services facilitated**, L'Alsace, 11 February

"Significant progress for the emergency services in the Alsace-Baden-Württemberg-Rhineland-Palatinate cross-border area: agreements signed yesterday break down procedural and legal barriers..."

■ **Tram - News from the East**, L'Alsace, 13 February

"The extension of the tramway system towards Port du Rhin and Kehl will dominate the CUS council meeting today..."

■ **Elected representatives from neighbouring France form a CEVA support committee**, Tribune de Genève, 31 January

"Never before had such a fine group of elected representatives gathered to support a project. Yesterday at the inauguration of the Pro-CEVA France committee there were some ten of them around the table, without counting those in the audience, meeting in the marriage hall of Annemasse town hall. The union thus sealed goes beyond political and geographical borders..."

■ **First conference of European regions bordering Switzerland**, Le Progrès, 2 February

"The European regions bordering Switzerland [...] and the 26 Swiss cantons and the representatives of the Swiss Confederation, are invited on 6 February to the first Conference of European regions bordering Switzerland, at the regional council building, Besançon..."

■ **Relations between Monaco and France in question**, Nice Matin, 10 February

"The committee responsible for local cross-border cooperation issues between Monaco and France, set up by the French-Monacan Cooperation committee on 31 January 2005, has met for the third time [...] to discuss topics of common interest between Monaco and France..."

