

EUROPEAN UNION



**Committee of the Regions**

# **EGTC Monitoring Report 2013 Towards the new Cohesion Policy**

## **Executive Summary**

**This executive summary was written by METIS GmbH (authors: Jürgen Pucher, Alexandra Frangenheim and Alice Radzyner).  
It does not represent the official views of the Committee of the Regions.**

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# Executive Summary

The Committee of the Regions regularly publishes a monitoring report on the development of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation – EGTC. By the end of 2013, 43 EGTCs were established in total, which include about 750 national, local and regional authorities from 20 different EU Member States.. Another 16 Groupings are currently in the pipeline.

## **Legal framework and national implementation**

The Regulation (EU) 1302/2013 amending the Regulation (EC) 1082/2006 on the EGTC was adopted on 17 December 2013 and will enter into force on 22 June 2014. These amendments will simplify procedures and enlarge the scope of entities eligible for the EGTC, providing the elements to make the functioning of the EGTCs easier in line with the suggestions made by the CoR. Other regulations on the new Cohesion policy open new perspectives for the EGTCs.

By the end of 2013, the situation has not changed in the existing Member States compared to 2012. The national provisions have been adopted in almost all EU Member States with the exception of the federal states of Austria, Belgium and Germany.

The accession of Croatia to the EU on 1st of July 2013 creates new perspectives for the establishment of new EGTCs and it therefore marked the start of a new phase in the development pathway of EGTCs. The local and regional authorities of Croatia are very active in EGTC projects such as the Central European Transport Corridor. The CoR has made significant effort to put EGTCs on the agenda throughout the country's pre-accession preparations.

Croatia implemented the EGTC Regulation by an Act that entered into force on 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2013.

## **Overview on the state of play of the EGTCs**

### *EGTCs constituted in 2013 or late 2012*

Between the end of 2012 and the end of 2013, eleven EGTCs have been created (six EGTCs were created in 2012). These new EGTCs are mostly in Central Europe and they generally aim at creating an institutional framework for existing projects or programmes and hence carry out their traditional functions.

**Table 1. New EGTCs included as case study**

#	Name	Countries	Specific features	Constitution
1	Via Carpatia EGTC	HU, SK	EGTC with 2 members NUTS 3 established in view of general cooperation.	31/05/2013
2	Parc Marin International des Bouches de Bonifacio	FR, IT	The EGTC was established to strengthen cross-border cooperation in the international maritime park.	11/03/2013
3	EGTC Tritia	CZ, PL, SK	The partnership between four regions aims to support social and economic cohesion within the area.	25/02/2013
4	EGTC Euroregione "Senza Confini"	AT, IT	This partnership between two member states pursues the general goal of cooperation among its 3 regions members to strengthen economic and social cohesion.	21/12/2012
5	EGTC Spoločný región limited	CZ, SK	The EGTC consists of 22 municipalities on the Slovakian and Czech border region. It aims to give institutional framework to the cross-border cooperation.	22/05/2013
6	GECT "Secrétariat du Sommet de la Grande Région"	BE, DE, FR, LU	This EGTC composed of 10 members aims to further strengthen the Grande Région as a common territory.	30/06/2013
7	EGTC TATRY Ltd.	PL, SK	EGTC with two regions aiming at more effective and efficient implementation of projects in the new CBC Programme PL-SK 2014-2020.	20/09/2013
8	EGTC Parc européen / Parco europeo Alpi Marittime - Mercantour	FR, IT	Facilitation and promotion of transfrontier cooperation on the territory of the two parks.	23/05/2013
9	EGTC Sajó-Rima / Slaná-Rimava	HU, SK	EGTC with 4 partners with the aim to cooperate in the fields of agriculture, industry, commerce and tourism.	03/04/2013

The two last EGTCs to be notified to the CoR are Torysa and Svinka, both between Hungary and the Slovak Republic, whose headquarters are respectively in Sársasadány (HU), and in Tolcsva (HU). They were registered on 9 October 2013 but due to the late notification to the CoR they are not part of this study.

### EGTCs constituted in 2012

Six EGTCs were established in the year of 2012. In 2013, these Groupings were still at an early stage of development. In particular, the role of the EGTC EUKN is remarkable, for its members are only national authorities. This may serve as tool for institutionalizing certain spheres of intergovernmental cooperation.

### EGTCs constituted before 2012

The large majority of the EGTCs that were established before 2012 has continued developing and implementing new projects.. This section analyses the situation in the EGTCs that were established before 2012 and provides detailed information on key indicators. It has not been possible to present any updated information on the 8 of these EGTCs.

### **The Groupings in a nutshell – Towards a new Cohesion Policy**

In quantitative terms, the development of EGTCs has gained momentum in 2013. The overarching objective of EGTCs is the establishment of partnerships for development. The 41 Groupings included in this report now represent in total about 750 institutions from all over the EU; the territories of the institutions involved currently count about 76 million inhabitants<sup>1</sup>. The composition of partnerships ranges from small local cooperation or regional-local cooperation to multi-level partnerships. About half of the partnerships can be characterised as predominantly local..

The EGTCs Bánát-Triplex Confinium and Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau have enlarged their partnership.

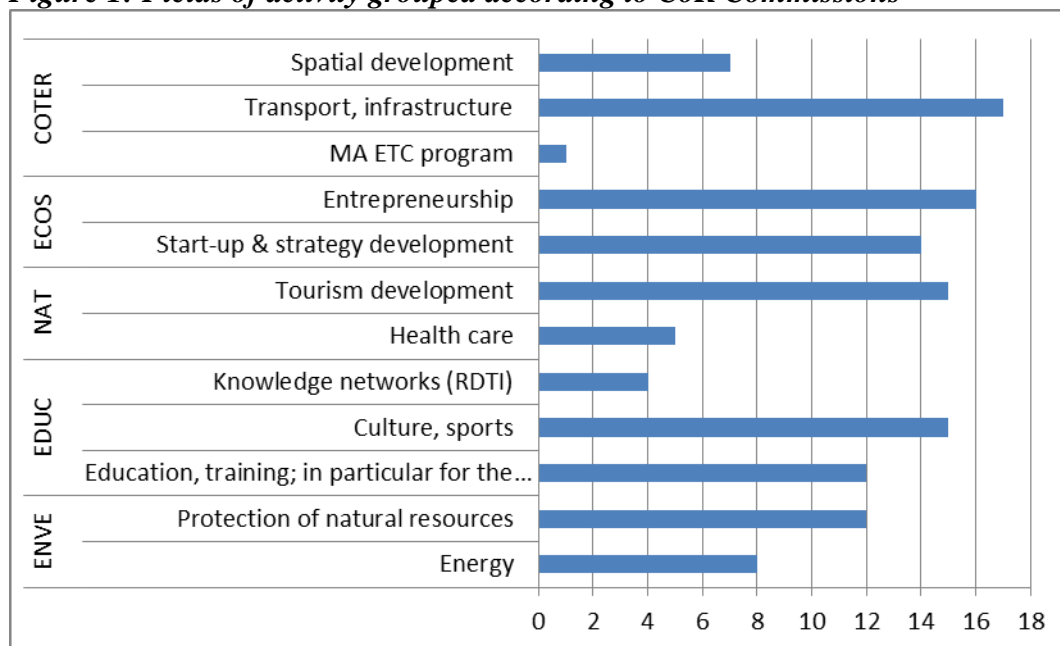
### Fields of activity

Looking at a broad brush picture, the EGTCs aim at performing a broad variety of activities. The Groupings work in the ETC framework covering a broad and diverse range of activities. Most of the EGTCs can be characterised as broad initiatives supporting joint actions of policy development and strategy building. This type of EGTC takes an exploring and consolidating approach towards new ways of governance and cohesion. A significant number of EGTCs does not predefine the themes of their cooperation. The following chart offers an overview of the major fields of interventions. The overwhelming majority of EGTCs addresses more than one topic.

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<sup>1</sup> The transnational urban policy network EUKN and the EGTC acting as MA of a multilateral CBC programme have not been considered in this aggregate number.

**Figure 1: Fields of activity grouped according to CoR Commissions**



Source: Metis GmbH, EGTC database

### The potential role of EGTCs in the framework of ESIF 2014-2020 (EU 2020)

The Europe2020 Strategy, as the overarching guidance document, is difficult to grasp due to its multi-faceted character. Thus, potential contributions of EGTCs to Europe2020 are outlined based on the seven so-called Flagship Initiatives. Major potentials can currently be identified in the Flagship Initiatives 'Resource Efficient Europe' (energy and waste management); 'Youth on the Move' and 'An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs' due to the need to counteract high unemployment especially among young people, and 'Innovation Union'.

### The perspective on the period 2014-2020

For the period of 2014 to 2020 a set of new instruments has been introduced in the new Cohesion Policy in order to strengthen the strategic dimension of ESIF.<sup>2</sup> The survey has revealed a significant interest for these instruments, in particular the instrument of Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI): 15 out of 21 responding EGTCs are interested in the ITI instrument. About half of the EGTCs are interested in Joint Action Plans (JAP) and Community-led Local Development (CLLD). However, several respondents have expressed the need for further Commission guidance since only pragmatic and efficient implementation agreements can be convincing arguments for the ETC programme management to support the development and elaboration of the latter instruments.

<sup>2</sup> The implementation of Joint Action Plan – stemming from experiences in ESF – should rely on strict result orientation based on highly standardised activities which can be handled as standard unit costs

## EGTC in phase of constitution

16 EGTCs are currently in the pipeline, three of which already have a legal personality. Two EGTCs have been founded with “out of the ordinary” objectives: The EGTC CODE 24 is a follow-up of an INTERREG IVB project aiming to develop the Corridor Development Rotterdam-Genoa, and the EGTC ‘Cities of Ceramics’ has been created to develop the transnational cooperation in the art and craft ceramic sector.

**Table 2. Overview of the EGTC in the pipeline (on 31 December 2013)**

#	Name	Status	Countries
1	Agglomération franco-luxembourgeoise ‘Alzette-Belval’	Pending notification to the CoR	France, Luxemburg
2	AEuCC - Cities of Ceramic <sup>3</sup>	Awaiting approval	Spain, France, Italy, Romania
3	Medgidia – Silistra	Awaiting approval	Bulgaria, Romania
4	Eurocidade Valença do Minho Tui	Awaiting approval	Portugal, Spain
5	CODE 24 – Corridor Development Rotterdam-Genoa	In preparation	The Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Italy
6	CETC - Central European Transport Corridor	In preparation	Sweden, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia
7	Europe - building common future	In preparation	Hungary, Romania
8	The Route of the Phocaceans	In Preparation	Italy, Greece, Spain, France, Malta
9	Eurodistrict TransOderana	In preparation	Germany, Poland
10	ESPON 2020 programme	In preparation	EU 28 + 4
11	Békés-Arad	Idea	Romania, Hungary
12	Pro Comitatu	Idea	Slovakia (n.a)
13	Donauhanse	Idea	Germany, Austria, Hungary, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine
14	Euregio Meuse-Rhine	Idea	Belgium, The Netherlands, Germany
15	Euroregion Corridor VIII	Idea	Italy, Albania, Greece, Macedonia, Bulgaria

<sup>3</sup> This grouping involves 98 cities in 4 countries. Geographical details are not available for these cities which is why its location in the map on the following page only gives a broad picture (located in the centre of the four countries)