

EGTC Monitoring Report 2010

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full term
AECT	Agrupamento Europeu de Cooperação Territorial
CBC	Cross-border cooperation
CEO	Central Executive Officer
COPIT	Cross-Border Standing Conference of Inter-municipal Organisations
DG	Directorate-General
EC	European Commission
EEIG	European Economic Interest Grouping
EGTC	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Funds
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
FLC	First Level Control (rather common technical term for financial control according to Reg. (EC) 1080/2006, Article 16)
GNP	Galicia – Norte Portugal
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat
MA	Managing Authority
OP	Operational Programme
SGEI	Services of General Economic Interest

Member States

Abbreviation	Full term
AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CY	Cyprus
CZ	Czech Republic
DE	Germany
DK	Denmark
EE	Estonia
ES	Spain
FI	Finland
FR	France
GR	Greece
HU	Hungary
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
UK	United Kingdom
RO	Romania
SE	Sweden
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia

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Introduction

The major points covered in the EGTC Monitoring Report 2010 can be summarised as follows:

- On the one hand, the existing EGTCs reveal an interesting and diverse picture. Monitoring their course of action, their achievements and the continuous accumulation of know-how during the operation phase might motivate other institutional actors to consider setting up an EGTC.
- On the other hand, four years after the introduction of the EGTC cooperation instrument and despite a constant increase, the actual number of EGTCs up and running is still small. Reasons for the reluctant use of this instrument might vary from the fact that the ETC programmes were already running when the EGTC came into force, language barriers owing to strong cultural divides in certain parts of Europe, lack of leadership and initiative, difficulties in perceiving the added value and the potential of this new approach, to cooperation and governance etc.
- However – as with the previous report - we can state that the number of established EGTCs has grown and a significant number of EGTCs is under preparation in some parts of Europe – these emerging EGTCs have been partly covered in this report.
- To some extent this study includes a needs assessment and suggestions for further actions of the EGTC Platform, recently created by the CoR. With the preceding study the CoR started regularly monitoring the activities related to EGTCs. With the setting up of the EGTC Platform, as well as regular monitoring reports, the basis for further targeted actions has been developed. The opinion of the CoR for the revision of Regulation (EC) 1082/2006¹ provides a critical appraisal of the success, the challenges and development perspectives for EGTCs – the opinion will give momentum to the discussion at European level. At the same time it is important to consider the next steps for targeted support to EGTC initiatives.

All main elements of the EGTC Monitoring Report 2010 have one thing in common: new insights and deepened knowledge could only be gained through direct contact with persons working in existing EGTCs, be it political representatives or management staff or representatives of the institutions performing the notification of EGTCs. Thus the study focus is on qualitative information gained in interviews with stakeholders and experts. For reasons of efficiency telephone interviews have been the preferred mode of communication.

¹ Own-initiative opinion of the Committee of the Regions on 'New perspectives for the revision of the EGTC Regulation', adopted on 27 February 2011. Ref. CDR 100/2010, rapporteur Mr Alberto Núñez Feijóo (ES/EPP), President of Galicia.

1. Executive Summary

The CoR has introduced a regular monitoring of the development of EGTCs as the European legal entity for cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation of public entities. Setting up the EGTC Platform, organising conferences and discussion meetings, publishing a comprehensive website, as well as regular monitoring reports, built the basis for developing further targeted actions. The opinion of the CoR on the revision of Regulation (EC) 1082/2006² provides a critical appraisal of the success, the challenges and development perspectives for EGTCs. The opinion will give momentum to the discussion at European level. At the same time it is important to consider the next steps for targeted support to EGTC initiatives.

The number of established EGTCs has increased and a significant number of EGTCs is under preparation in some parts of Europe. Looking at the map of the EU-27, the overall number of both established EGTCs and those in preparation amounts to roughly 30 groupings, and those already constituted gather more than 350 local and regional authorities representing 20 million Europeans. The number of EGTCs created and in process of creation still allows for closely monitoring the developments focusing on qualitative information. Through establishing direct contact with persons working in EGTCs as well as representatives of the notification authorities, new insight and in-depth knowledge could be gained.

Review on legal provisions and issues

In early 2011 national legal provisions have been adopted in almost all Member States – only in three countries with a strongly federal structure are parts of the legislation not yet in place. Partners from 11 Member States have decided to become part of an EGTC. A significant number of Member States have gained experience with the legal instrument of the EGTC. Yet, a significant number of Member States still do not have any practical experience with the application of national provisions.

For the first time, representatives of notification authorities and legal experts have also been included in the survey. For some of the EGTCs the notification procedure might have been experienced as a challenge though according to the experiences made in this study this does not refer to the majority of cases. It is important to see that the challenge is mutual. In fact, unprecedented legal implications based on the operation of EGTCs might arise and undergo a legal assessment. Authorities have to learn to understand their counterparts in the

² See footnote 1.

neighbouring country while in some cases, the documents presented from the EGTCs simply revealed a need for more concise contents.

One point has become quite clear on both sides: it is preferable for the notification procedure to run as a dialogue-oriented process. Simplification based on experience facilitates the establishment of a proper dialogue, which in turn is the key to a smooth and quick legal acknowledgement.

The major legal challenges which have been reported by the stakeholders of EGTCs are:

- Lengthy start-ups due to the lack of legal clarification. This issue can still be expected in the near future since most Member States do not yet have practical experience with the application of the national provisions.
- Staff recruitment is by far the dominant stumbling block during the start-up phase; secondment could be a solution - i.e. that staff are being employed by a different institution and seconded to the EGTC (which reimburses cost).
- Decision-making structures and their implications for enlargement and operative decisions: Firstly, in most cases the proportions or parity system for member representation within EGTC organs is rather rigid. This might become an impediment in case where enlargements to new members are intended and where decision-making might then turn into a rigid framework which does not allow for flexible approaches. Essential strategic points should therefore require unanimity in decision.

EGTCs which define themselves as open frameworks for cross-border initiatives might encounter unprecedented legal issues when implementing certain activities. This has for instance been the case in respect to health insurance in an exchange for apprentices.

Case Studies

The following table sets out the established EGTCs³:

Name of EGTC	Countries⁴	Major developments on the ground
Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai	<u>FR</u> , BE	The staff situation has been settled and the work on governance for the cross-border conurbation is continuing: work focus is on consolidating work routines, strategy-building and small pilot projects.
Ister-Granum	<u>HU</u> , SK	Based on a long history of cooperation (first Euroregion of the ‘New’ Member States), the EGTC aims to strengthen the economic and social cohesion in its 89 member-municipalities.

³ While it has been possible to interview a representative from most EGTCs, some cases are solely based on desk research.

⁴ The underlined country indicates the country where the legal seat of the EGTC is located.

Name of EGTC	Countries⁴	Major developments on the ground
Galicia - Norte de Portugal	<u>ES</u> , <u>PT</u>	Although established in 2008, the EGTC became operational in 2010. Galicia suffered significantly from the economic crisis and the EGTC, the executive arm of the Working Community, largely focused its activities on increasing socio-economic cohesion within its borders.
Amphictyony	<u>GR</u> , <u>CY</u> , <u>IT</u> , <u>FR</u>	The EGTC is a cooperation of 53 municipalities from Cyprus, Greece, Italy and France. The idea would be to one day enlarge the EGTC to include third countries such as Serbia, Turkey, Israel and Palestine.
UTTS ⁵	<u>SK</u> , <u>HU</u>	The EGTC was set up by local authorities from Hungary and Slovakia in January 2009 to promote economic and social cohesion between the territorial units.
Karst-Bodva	<u>HU</u> , <u>SK</u>	This – in geographical terms – rather small initiative in a natural heritage area is still on the way towards the operation phase. Although it is also actively seeking to recruit new members, the eligibility criteria seem very restrictive as several candidates were not accepted.
Duero-Douro	<u>ES</u> , <u>PT</u>	The EGTC with the highest number of members, characterised by intense ownership of the initiative by stakeholders. The EGTC is planning to expand to 17 new members. The number of staff has increased. The grouping has largely benefited from a long history of cooperation.
West-Vlaanderen /Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale EGTC	<u>FR</u> , <u>BE</u>	The EGTC has benefited from a long history of cooperation between the members. Socio-economic cohesion can be increased thanks to its multi-level governance character. One of the members is currently undergoing important structural changes affecting the EGTC's working.
Eurorégion Pyrénées-Méditerranée	<u>FR</u> , <u>ES</u>	The EGTC, consisting of 4 regional partners, was set up on the basis of a clear political need for cooperation. Interesting projects in the area of education, business and culture are currently undertaken. The role of the EGTC in regional and national politics is currently being discussed.

⁵ According to one of the representatives, the functioning of the EGTC has, however, been problematic and its future seems rather uncertain.

Name of EGTC	Countries⁴	Major developments on the ground
Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau	<u>FR</u> , DE	A large-scale civic participation project and a number of other projects have given momentum to the process and motivated the team. From a legal perspective a recent extension of partnership and questions related to employment have changed the working dynamics of the EGTC.
ZASNET	<u>PT</u> , ES	The grouping was established in early 2010: one of the first major steps has been a joint declaration in favour of a biosphere reserve in order to foster sustainable development in the joint territory.
Grande Région	<u>FR</u> , DE, BE, LU	The EGTC acting as managing authority (MA) for a multilateral cooperation programme is currently on the way to establishing new routines and rearranging the task division among the major programme actors (MA, Joint Technical Secretariat, Monitoring Committee).
Hospital de la Cerdanya	<u>ES</u> , FR	The hospital is under construction and will be opened in 2012; it is also becoming the nucleus for various initiatives on regional governance in the health sector.
Eurodistrict Saar Moselle	<u>FR</u> , DE	Based on 10 years of cooperation, the EGTC aims to further the development of a territory accommodating 600 000 inhabitants in the areas of tourism, health and transport. The aim is to achieve common governance and increase French-German cooperation.
Pons Danubii	<u>SK</u> , HU	Established in 2010 the cooperation of cities has appointed their director and is pro-actively seeking to consolidate its base with ETC-funded projects.
Abaúj-Abaújban EGTC	SK, <u>HU</u>	Based on previous and current ETC projects the grouping was established in mid-2010. Its operative body is a foundation, which is quite active in cross-border activities in various fields.
Bánát-Triplex Confinium Ltd.	<u>HU</u> , RO	Created in January 2011, grouping 74 municipalities. Implementation of competitiveness and development strategies in the field of agricultural innovation, renewable energy sources, infrastructure and education-training. Aiming to incorporate members from Serbia.

A few groupings are currently in the phase of constitution. The following examples represent groupings which include new and unprecedented functions of EGTCs:

- The Esch-Belval EGTC – as a coordinating institution for the reconversion of an old industrialised area of about 600ha at the border between France and Luxembourg;
- The International Marine Parc of Bouches du Bonifacio, between Corsica and Sardinia, aims to the joint management of a bi-national marine reserve located in an international strait;
- The project Interreg IVB NWE ‘Code 24’ foresees an EGTC to ensure the permanence of the cooperation. This project aims to coordinate the economic development and the spatial, transport and ecological planning along the trans-European railway axis (TEN-T) No 24 from Rotterdam to Genoa;
- The European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN), developed out of an existing exchange network on urban development issues including 15 Member States;
- ARCHIMED - based on the objective of building a network between European island regions of the Mediterranean basin. The founding members are the Balearic Islands, Cyprus and Sicily⁶.

Major findings

Now after about 3.5 years of actual EGTC development (the first one having been established in 2008) some geographical patterns can be highlighted.

The following **hot spots** in terms of EGTC development have been identified:

- Spain-France-Portugal – EGTCs for regional development in the border areas: the remarkable feature of these border areas is the long-standing history of cooperation as a major incentive. The continuous development process has been paired with strong similarities in language and culture and massive political backing based on treaties which led to various predecessors of EGTCs;
- Belgium-Luxembourg-France-Germany – policies for integrated conurbations: since the 1950s a continuous process of economic and civic integration could be observed; in this dense and highly integrated area a number of EGTCs has emerged since 2006 - Eurodistricts, a Eurometropole - meaning strategy-building, project development and implementation with a view to governance of cross-border territories or conurbations;
- Hungary-Slovakia – EGTC as a vehicle for local and regional development initiatives: in these parts the past year has produced quite active developments – in addition to the EGTC Ister-Granum new groupings have

⁶ Archimed was authorised by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic in March 2011, after the completion of this study.

emerged – all of the groupings share a strong dependency on funding from ETC projects;

- Mediterranean basin: the EGTC is an instrument to consolidate structures of loose co-operation promoting cultural exchange, political dialogue and advocacy of common interests at EU level.

The functions of established EGTCs can be classified as follows:

- Broad initiatives towards policy development, strategy building and actions that can be related to the Europe 2020 Strategy: the overwhelming majority of existing EGTCs are working on a broad range of themes. This type of EGTC takes an exploring and consolidating approach towards new ways of governance and cohesion. It is marked by establishing a new geographical entity and a policy debate between actors who did not meet regularly beforehand. They implicitly take on the challenge to overcome sheer local interests in favour of contributing towards a broader development strategy;
- Management of ETC programmes: one EGTC acts as Managing Authority for a multilateral CBC Programme (involving four Member States);
- Provision of public services: the EGTC 'Hospital de la Cerdanya' manages a hospital; to some extent this EGTC represents – as regards financial volume and impact – a particularly strong commitment towards joint action. The facility which will be opened in 2012 marks the end of a long and intense discussion process. The EGTC 'Duero-Douro' plans to pool municipal social services. The EGTC under creation 'Parc Marin International des Bouches du Bonifacio' will make possible the joint management of a cross-border natural park.

Currently also completely new and unprecedented approaches to EGTCs and their functions are being discussed. EGTCs could become a driving element in the future management of ETC network programmes such as INTERACT and ESPON in the period 2013+.

On the one hand EGTCs –as acknowledged legal entities- could strengthen the commitment of Member States towards such programme, while on the other hand, EGTCs could support new approaches to governance and financial management (thus overcoming current impediments in implementation).

Territorial cohesion and governance

Looking at the case studies that were elaborated for this paper, we observed three major points of how territorial cohesion and governance are tackled:

- Better cooperation between members and partners because EGTC brings with its solid structure all relevant partners together at one table;
- Better visibility of territorial cohesion because EGTC enables better visibility of territorial cooperation including more legal, political and economic power is given by this form of cooperation;

- Improvements created by the legal framework of an EGTC.

Options for an extended EGTC communication strategy

The EGTC communication strategy should rest on two main pillars of action:

- To launch and develop the EGTC Platform: the Platform should include not only the - up to around 30 - examples of EGTCs existing or in process of constitution, but a larger group of stakeholders such as supportive organisations, experts and other cross-border structures.
- To contribute to awareness-raising and broader interest in EGTCs: there are currently about 80 ETC cross-border cooperation programmes and about 15 ETC transnational cooperation programmes. These programmes cluster institutions as beneficiaries which have demonstrated an interest in new cooperation approaches – this could be considered as the potential market for EGTCs. The National Authorities should also be targeted.

Given the small number of existing EGTCs, the inherent challenge is to present the EGTC structure as an attractive instrument on the agenda of players, in particular when launching the considerations and negotiations for the next period 2014-2020. Two points which deserve particular interest in the process are:

- To strengthen links to the ETC network programmes (INTERACT, URBACT, Interreg IVB, ESPON): these programmes could provide valuable support to awareness-raising for EGTCs;
- To guide the debate on the role of EGTCs in ETC: Community funding will remain the key incentive for projects related to territorial cooperation. For a significant part of the existing EGTCs such financing is essential for consolidation. Given that DG Regio will issue a report on the implementation of the EGTC Regulation in 2011, and proposals to improve it, a clear position in favour of EGTCs can provide convincing arguments for its added value, and this will have an impact in the programming process for the next period (2014-2020).

With a view to further target a wider audience, the following set of – quite well-known - tools should be used:

- EGTC Platform website and common consultative platform: the website should act as the central repository of information, including 2.0 communication using a forum online and social networks. The input required for continuous updating should not be underestimated; as regards the intended consultative platform, it is evident that exchange on legal issues will be extremely interesting for stakeholder;
- links to as well as intensified cooperation with existing information hubs: in particular DG Regio, INTERACT, URBACT and Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT), Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), and other organisations of support;

- expert groups focusing on two fields of expertise: firstly governance, strategy and policy building knowledge and secondly interpretation of legal provisions. The expert groups however do require some clarification as regards the financing of experts since the specific requirements and administrative culture at national level still present a major challenge;
- targeted events, face-to-face contact and regular phone contact remain the key ingredients for successful networking. Even well-managed online platforms cannot replace regular venues for community building. Key target groups are stakeholders of EGTCs, notification authorities, as well as stakeholders and beneficiaries of ETC programmes;
- monitoring will remain a key issue to keep an overview on developments: the current periodicity of one year seems adequate for undertaking a valuable assessment of the developments on the ground. With the expected increase in the number of EGTCs, the method of reporting will have to change and could be adjusted in view of providing ready-made input for the website.

2. Review of legal provisions

State of play regarding the adoption of national provisions

24 Member States have fully adopted the EGTC legislation as of February 2011. The majority of Member States did so in 2008 and 2009.

Adoption of national provisions according to Regulation (EC) 1082/2006 until	Member States
08/2007 (EC deadline)	BG, HU, UK
08/2007 – 12/2007	GR, PT, RO
01/2008 – 12/2008	DK, EE, ES, FR, LT, PL, SK, SI
01/2009 – 12/2009	CY, CZ, FI, IE, IT, LV, LU, NL, SE
01/2011 – 12/2011	MT
Adoption of federal and/or regional provisions still pending	AT, BE, DE

For three Member States the national provisions have only been partially adopted:

- Germany: Germany is a federal country and does not foresee the adoption of federal legislation. The question of how public entities of the ‘Bund’ (federation) will participate in eventual EGTCs has not yet been decided.
- Austria: Austria is a federal country and foresees nine laws at Länder (regional) level; the national provisions have not yet been adopted and so far only five of the nine regions had adopted their law by the end of 2010⁷. The question of the federal legislation remains the same as for Germany.
- Belgium: While the rules have been adopted at federal level, in Flanders, the German-speaking Community and the Brussels Capital Region, the process is still ongoing at the levels of the Walloon Region and the French Community.

However, it is important to note that federal public bodies from Belgium and from the Walloon region take part in EGTCs.

Distribution of EGTCs across the Member States

In early 2011, public entities from 12 Member States had become part of an EGTC. A significant number of Member States have gained experience with the legal instrument EGTC. But yet the majority of Member States still do not have any practical experience with the application of national provisions. The follow-

⁷ The Land of Tirol, which is participating in an EGTC under preparation, was scheduled to adopt its legislation by the beginning of 2011.

ing table presents a ranking of the Member States according to the number of EGTCs established and having their seat in the respective country.

Table 1. Ranking of the Member States according to EGTCs established

Country	EGTCs established	Seat in country	Name of EGTCs
France	8	6	Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai West-Vlaanderen/Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale Eurorégion Pyrénées-Méditerranée Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau Grande Région Eurodistrict Saar-Moselle Amphictyony Hospital de la Cerdanya
Spain	6	3	Galicia-Norte de Portugal Eurorégion Pyrénées-Méditerranée Duero-Douro Hospital de la Cerdanya ZASNET Archimed
Belgium	3	0	Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai West-Vlaanderen/Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale Grande Région
Portugal	3	1	Galicia-Norte de Portugal Duero-Douro ZASNET
Hungary	6	4	Ister-Granum Karst Bodva UTTS Abaúj az Abaújban Pons Danubii Bánát-Triple Confinium
Slovakia	4	2	Ister-Granum Karst Bodva Pons Danubii UTTS
Germany	3	0	Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau Grande Region Eurodistrict Saar-Moselle
Greece	1	1	Amphictyony
Luxembourg	1	0	Grande Région

Italy	2	1	Archimed Amphictyony
Cyprus	2	0	Amphictyony Archimed
Romania	1	0	Bánát-Triplex Confinium

Experiences with notification procedures

The designation of the notification authorities in the national provisions reflects the differences in the administrative systems in the EU. In addition one can see quite different approaches in the subject of EGTCs. In some countries like Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Romania or Slovakia the competence is in the hands of the ministries which are in charge of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) in general, whereas in other countries such as Poland it is in the hands of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Ireland the Ministry of Finance is in charge, in Finland the National Board of Patents and Registration, i.e. following an approach which is more focused on the surveillance and registration of new legal entities. Countries with a decentralised administration system such as Germany or Austria show diverging approaches: in Germany various Ministries or other bodies are in charge of notification at Länder level, whereas in Austria for all regions it is the regional governor.

For some of the EGTCs the notification procedure may have been experienced as a challenge although according to the experiences found in this study this does not apply to the majority of cases.

Preferably the notification procedure is run as a dialogue-oriented process:

- On the one hand a lengthy control procedure ending the – often quite sophisticated – negotiation procedures between the partners will be a major disincentive for all partners involved;
- On the other hand one cannot expect that representatives of the notification authority will enter such a dialogue as long as the objectives, tasks and the envisaged structure of the EGTC are unclear. Thus the dialogue with the notification authority should only be started at a point during the constitution phase when key elements are in place.

Since we are speaking of a legal assessment the consistency, coherence and clarity of the documents is paramount for a smooth and successful notification. A few points which have been explicitly raised by legal experts during our interviews might help to understand the concerns of persons who perform the notification procedure:

- Not only is the constitution of an EGTC, its partnership-building, the negotiations etc. demanding and time-consuming, establishing cross-border contacts between the notification authorities is also a challenge for the representatives of notification authorities – it also necessitates the finding of a

common language and the development of mutual understanding and joint routines.

- National provisions are in some cases more or less a translation of the EU regulation with few national specifications; this does not reflect the actual challenges related to the EGTCs – an EGTC is open to many different activities which lead to unprecedented legal questions from a national perspective;
- In some cases contradictory clauses have been found in statutes or even different versions have been sent to notification experts in the participating countries – in such cases clarification is needed (of course such clauses or mistakes are often the result of a drafting process involving many partners; subsequent clarification in a large round of partners is also time-consuming);
- The goals, objectives and activities have to be defined sufficiently in order to be able to perform this type of legal assessment (however, since – in this case - the process was run as dialogue this did not turn into a problem and in the end it is certainly a benefit for the stakeholders of the EGTC to clarify the cornerstones of the joint venture in sufficient detail).

Positive experiences

- The experiences of West Vlaanderen/Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d’Opale underpin the added-value of a dialogue-oriented process: the involvement of the legal authority from the very beginning – and subsequent continuous and quick feedback - has led to a remarkably short period from the receipt of first ideas on the desk to the conclusion of the notification procedure: the job was done in about half a year.
- Valuable guidance about legal implications can be gained from those persons that have attended the initial development phase, the constitution phase and finally the notification procedure: in some countries (e.g. in Hungary) the representatives of the existing EGTCs act in a consultative role for other EGTCs at various stages of development.
- For obvious reasons it is a major advantage if the ministry in charge of the notification is also the leading authority for issues of regional, spatial development and ETC which is the case in Luxembourg. The person in charge of the notification procedure has a major role as facilitator and has so far in all cases been involved in the development of the EGTCs.
- In addition to experts in the subject matter of the EGTC, the legal expert from the consulate of the other Member States had also been invited and joined the comparatively small drafting group – thus several issues which might have become ‘stumbling blocks’ in the negotiation procedure could be eliminated; in general the statutes of this EGTC (Hospital de la Cerdanya) reveal a very diplomatic and pragmatic approach - many formulations point at the fact that in most cases a consensus-based approach is essential: e.g. under the section on law applicable it is explicitly mentioned that the legislation of the other country will be considered if required due to the subject under concern.

3. Review of EGTC activities

The following chapter consists of an in-depth description of the state-of-play and developments of 14 established EGTCs. Each case study will include a general overview (“key information”), followed by a section on the “developments on the ground” and finally a section on “key findings” which shall state the lessons learnt as a reference for other (or future) EGTCs, their “contribution to governance and territorial cohesion” and the “challenges” they faced.

Table 2. Established EGTCs which are included as case studies

Name of EGTC	Countries⁸	Specific features	Foundation
Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai	<u>FR</u> , BE	First EGTC implemented. This future “Laboratory of European Cohesion” includes 14 partners, 145 municipalities and 2 million inhabitants.	21.01.2008
Ister-Granum	<u>HU</u> , SK	Based on a long history of cooperation (first Euroregion of the ‘New’ Member States), the EGTC aims to strengthen the economic and social cohesion in its 89 member-municipalities.	11.09.2008
Galicia - Norte de Portugal	<u>ES</u> , PT	The EGTC became operational in March 2010. It consists of 2 regions and undertakes specific tasks in several policy areas as the executive arm of the GNP working community.	30.10.2008
Amphictyony	<u>GR</u> , CY, IT, FR	EGTC on the widest scale (Mediterranean basin), 53 member-municipalities. The ultimate aim is to one day enlarge the EGTC to third countries such as Serbia, Turkey, Israel and Palestine.	01.12.2008
Karst-Bodva	<u>HU</u> , SK	The EGTC is unique since it is based on a geographical unit: the nature protection region comprising the Gömör-Torna karst and the Bódva valley. The majority of Slovak applicants were not accepted as members of the EGTC.	11.02.2009
Duero-Douro	<u>ES</u> , PT	The EGTC with the highest number of members (local authorities),	07.03.2009

⁸ The underlined country indicates the country where the legal seat of the EGTC is located.

		characterised by intense ownership of the initiative by stakeholders.	
West-Vlaanderen/ Flandre- Dunkerque- Côte d'Opale EGTC	<u>FR</u> , BE	The EGTC is composed of members of different governmental levels and results from a long-held Franco-Belgian coastal conurbation. Remarkably quick and smooth establishment of the EGTC.	03.04.2009
Eurorégion Pyrénées- Méditerranée	<u>FR</u> , ES	The EGTC, consisting of 4 regional partners, was set up on the basis of a clear political need for cooperation. Interesting projects in the area of education, business and culture.	25.08.2009
Eurodistrict Strasbourg- Ortenau	<u>FR</u> , DE	An EGTC created with high-level political backing (national levels involved), focusing on the importance of Strasbourg as a seat of EU institutions and strengthening Franco-German cooperation even in the areas of education, culture and employment.	04.02.2010
Grande Ré- gion	<u>FR</u> , DE, BE, LU	First example of an EGTC which acts as Managing Authority for a multilateral cross-border cooperation programme.	April 2010
ZASNET	<u>PT</u> , ES	The EGTC is located on the longest geographical border with the longest and most stable history in Europe. The aim is to strengthen the cooperation between the regional/municipal authorities from the border region.	10.03.2010
Hospital de Cerdanya	<u>ES</u> , FR	The joint hospital between France and Spain will be operational in 2012. This cross-border healthcare infrastructure will serve a valley of 30 000 inhabitants.	May 2010
Eurodistrict Saar Moselle	<u>FR</u> , DE	Based on 10 years of cooperation, the EGTC aims to further the development of the cross-border territory accommodating 600 000 inhabitants in the areas of tourism, health and transport.	6.05.2010
Pons Danubii	<u>SK</u> , HU	The EGTC brings together 6 municipalities from the Slovak-Hungarian border-region, similarly to the Ister-Granum EGTC. The objective is to eliminate obstacles to cooperation	15.12.2010

		which are caused by national legislation.	
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Additionally short reviews on two more already established EGTCs have been added:

- Abaúj-Abaújban EGTC;
- UTTS.

The following EGTCs have not yet been formally established⁹:

- Archimed;
- Bánát-Triplex Confinium.

At the end of the section short reviews on EGTCs in the phase of constitution can be found.

The map on the following page provides an overview on the EGTCs which are established.

⁹ Both EGTCs were authorised after the completion of this study.

Map 1. Overview on established EGTCs in January 2011



1	Abaúj-Abaújban	Hungary and Slovakia
2	Amphictyony	Greece, Cyprus, Italy and France
3	Pons Danubii	Hungary and Slovakia
4	Cerdanya Cross-Border Hospital	Spain and France
5	Duero-Douro	Portugal and Spain
6	Eurodistrict Saar Moselle	France and Germany
7	Eurodistrict Strasbourg - Ortenau	France and Germany
8	Euroregion Pyrénées-Méditerranée	Spain and France
9	Galicia-Norte Portugal	Portugal and Spain
10	GECT- INTERREG - Programme Grande Région	France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg
11	Ister-Granum	Hungary and Slovakia
12	Karst-Bodva	Hungary and Slovakia
13	Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai	France and Belgium
14	West-Vlaanderen/Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale	Belgium and France
15	UTTS	Hungary and Slovakia
16	ZASNET	Portugal and Spain

3.1. EGTC Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai

3.1.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	Groupement européen de coopération territoriale Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai
Acronym	Eurométropole / Eurometropool
History and current status	<p>The EGTC was established in January 2008</p> <p>From 1991 on the Franco-Belgian metropolitan project was covered by the Cross-border Standing Conference of Intermunicipal Organisations (COPIT). In 2001, COPIT was structured into a voluntary association under French Law.</p> <p>2002: signature of a French-Belgian Treaty for the cross-border cooperation between local authorities.</p> <p>2005-2006: Working group composed of 12 members of the French and Belgian Parliaments (6+6), which resulted in June 2006 in the proposal to build up a cross-border governance with 14 members.</p> <p>July 2006: EGTC Regulation.</p> <p>28 November 2006: First meeting of the Comité Constitutif with elected representatives of the 14 members.</p> <p>19 March 2007: Common declaration for the setting up of the Lille Kortrijk Tournai Eurométropole.</p> <p>October 2007-January 2008: Official decisions of the 14 members to join the EGTC.</p> <p>22 January 2008: Creation of the legal body by the French Regional Prefect</p> <p>28 January 2008: First Assembly meeting: election of the Board, the President, the 3 Vice-Presidents, vote of budget for 2008, creation of the two first positions: Director and Assistant.</p> <p>In 2010 the EGTC finally announced a permanent director and the operational seat is located in Kortrijk, Belgium.</p>
Countries involved	FR, BE
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	<p>Operational Headquarters in Belgium: Agence de l'Eurométropole / Eurometropool Agentschap, Casinoplein 10, B-8500 Kortrijk</p> <p>Official Seat: Lille, 1, rue du Ballon – BP 745 – F 59034 Cedex</p>
Members per country, administrations	FR: French State, La Région Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Le Département du Nord, Lille Métropole Communauté urbaine (intermunicipal public entity including city of Lille and 84 mu-

involved	<p>municipalities).</p> <p>BE: Federal State, Flemish Region and Community, the Province of West-Flanders, Intercommunale Leiedal, Intercommunale wvi, Walloon Region, French Community of Belgium, Province of Hainaut, Intercommunal Development Agency Ideta, l'intercommunale IE.</p>
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	<p>Surface area: 3533.5 km² (France: 612 km², Wallonie: 1367.7 km², Flandre: 1553.8 km²).</p> <p>Inhabitants: 2.3 million (France: 1.1 million, Wallonia: 0.3 million, Flanders: 0.9).</p>
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	<p>The territory covers 145 municipalities.</p> <p>FR: Lille Métropole Communauté urbaine (LMCU) (87).</p> <p>BE-Wallonia: Three arrondissements (Mouscron, Tournai, Ath); communes de Lessines, Silly et Enghien.</p> <p>BE-Flanders: Four arrondissements (Kortrijk, Ieper, Roeselare, Tielt).</p>
Enlargement intents	<p>No enlargements of the territory and no further partners are planned for the near future. However, cities and municipalities which are not situated in the reference area and are either bordering or near may become “associate working members”.</p>
Duration of the EGTC	<p>Unlimited</p>
Objectives	<p>Promoting and supporting cross-border cooperation. Involving competent institutions, ensuring harmonisation, dialogue and favouring political discussion; producing cross-border coherence; facilitating, developing and carrying out projects according to the commonly prepared development strategy; improving the quality of life of the inhabitants of the French-Belgian reference area.</p> <p>In the near future a coherent strategy for the EGTC will be developed which will attach particular importance to the Europe 2020 objectives.</p>
Tasks	<p>Decision-making mechanisms of the EGTC:</p> <p>Firstly there are two main operating principles:</p> <p>Parity between France and Belgium; within Belgium parity between the French and Dutch-speaking regions;</p> <p>Application of French/Dutch bilingualism.</p> <p>There are four principle tasks:</p> <p>Ensuring inter-institutional dialogue and promoting political debate;</p> <p>Producing cross-border consistency throughout the entire territory;</p> <p>Facilitating, managing and realising projects;</p>

	Facilitating the daily life of citizens.
Budget	The budget amounts to €1.5m annum for a period of three years, 2008-2010, (i.e. a total of €4.5m). Financing is realised according to the principle of parity among partners – 50/50 split between FR and BE partners. The allocation within the two partners: France: LMCU 25%, Region 10%, Department 10%, State of France 5%; Belgium: Flanders 21.43%, Wallonia 21.43%, State of Belgium 7.14%.
Staff	Eight people
Law applicable and legal personality	Public law
Organs and their main competencies	Executive Management Committee with one president and three vice-presidents. The BUREAU, consisting of 32 members and the executive body of the EGTC. An Assembly with 84 members (elects the Bureau, the president, the 3 vice-presidents, annual budget and launches the recruitment of the technical team). Cross-Border Agency, which ensures the administrative and technical work of the Eurométropole). The agency is inter alia responsible for six permanent thematic working groups, which develop the specific tasks and strategic issues for the EGTC.
Languages	French and Dutch
URL	www.eurometropolis.eu
Further information	ira.keirsbilck@eurometropolis.eu http://portal.cor.europa.eu/egtc/en-US/Projects/already/Pages/LilleKortrijkTournai.aspx

3.1.2. *Development on the ground*

The EGTC as a working structure

The current management team of the Eurometropolis consists of eight persons. The team has a mixed nationality with members of each participating country. For the staff members, a profound knowledge of one of the languages of the Eurometropolis (FR/NL) and a good comprehension of the other language is required.

The official seat of the EGTC is located in Lille, France; whereas the operational services are based in Kortrijk. The principle of double-parity applies to the func-

tioning and composition of the organs, between the French and the Belgian sides, and parity between the Flemish and the Walloon sides within Belgium.

Finally, after two unsuccessful recruitment procedures the search for a **permanent director** came to an end in 2010. Mr **Stef Vande Meulebroucke** fulfilled the requested combination of broad managerial ability, leadership skills and sound command of both languages spoken. Before, a provisional management consisting of three directors had been in charge since the establishment of the Eurométropole in 2008.

The EGTC comprises 14 partners (see fact sheet) and all institutional levels are involved in this cross-border cooperation process. There has also been established a **conference of all the Mayors** of the municipalities on a regular basis. This pursues the goal to inform the municipalities of the work done in the EGTC and to involve them in the cross-border co-operation process.

The **Eurometropolis Forum** brings together 60 representatives comprising the fields of economy, social policy, education or cultural networks. This forum ensures relationships with civil society in the cross-border region.

At the political level the **Assembly** of the Eurométropole with its 84 members elects the Executive Management Committee with the president and three vice-presidents (Martine Aubry, Stefaan De Clerck, Rudy Demotte and Gilles Pargneaux). It also votes the annual budget and is responsible for recruitment issues. The Executive Management Committee, the Assembly and the Bureau (32 members) are based on the double parity system.

The technical work and follow-up is ensured by a **cross-border agency** (Agence de l'Eurométropole) – an administrative and technical tool – with the new director Stef Vande Meulebroucke as a general manager at the top. Within this framework six thematic working groups have been set up defining the strategic axes for the EGTC. The actions that result from the working groups are implemented by project groups.

Financing and managing the EGTC

There are no changes concerning the financing and budget procedures compared to the last EGTC report drawn up by Metis¹⁰. The above-mentioned principle of parity among the partners is also an issue for the budget procedure. The budget amounts to €1.5m annum for a period of three years, 2008-2010, (i.e. a total of €4.5m). The allocation within the two partners follows this structure:

- France: LMCU 25%, Region 10%, Department 10%, State of France 5%;
- Belgium: Flanders 21.43%, Wallonia 21.43%, State of Belgium 7.14%.

¹⁰ Metis 2010: EGTC Developments on the ground: added value and solutions to problems. Final Report, p. 17.

Current major activities

The six thematic work groups of the Eurometropole are working on the following six themes:

- Economic development, jobs, professional training, research;
- Cultural development and influence;
- Accessibility and mobility;
- Public services;
- Territorial strategy;
- Tourist development and attractiveness.

Last year the first major project was realised with a tourist map including all relevant information for the whole territory of the EGTC.

The other working groups are developing the following projects:

- Employment Forum (Forum Emploi de l'Eurométropole) in order to develop a cross-border labour market;
- Development of a platform for the four cross-border clusters (Agro-nutrition-health / Textile-innovative materials-design / Logistics / Image-ICT) enabling an exchange of knowledge & information, and joint project development;
- A model for more attractive pricing in public transport connecting the three major cities in the area and synthesis of the existing plans and guidance documents for transportation;
- Improved access to retirement homes for elderly citizens across the national borders;
- pooling the capacities and strengths of the universities and university colleges in the cross-border region, including the creation of a university cross-border degree in arts;
- The development of a virtual tourism information point, linked to the websites of the partners and to the official website of the Eurometropole
- The development of new cycle tracks to connect to European corridors like Eurovelo 5;
- Developing a comprehensive cross-sectoral strategy for the Eurometropole, taking into account the long term strategies developed at European level;
- Development of a European strategy for the Eurometropolis, describing the role of the EGTC in European (territorial cooperation) programmes.

Milestones ahead

- Following the objectives of the new Europe 2020 strategy the six thematic working groups will contribute to elaborate a coherent strategy for the Eurometropole (Eurometropolis 2030), linking up the different domains of cooperation and in line with the strategies of the 14 partners. This strategy will

serve as a basis for the positioning of the Eurometropolis in Interreg and other projects, and in external networks.

- A new website of the Eurometropolis Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai has recently been launched. (www.eurometropolis.eu).

3.1.3. Key findings

Lessons learnt

Although more EGTCs are arising in Europe, the instrument is not sufficiently known at the European level and by European institutions. In this respect, the EGTC platform which was set up in January 2011 can contribute to improving the communication on the EGTC tool and to promoting EGTCs as a vehicle for territorial cooperation.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

The EGTC Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai wants to be a “Laboratory of European Cohesion”. The 14 partners are building Europe “from the bottom up”, by effectively removing borders between countries and regions which together form a trans-border agglomeration. And they want to create a real transnational metropolis on a European and international scale.

“The Eurometropole defines itself as a territory with no strong borders. The public authorities which form part of the Eurometropolis for sure have their borders, but the Eurometropolis should go beyond that and think about what binds us” explains director Stef Vande Meulebroucke. And he continues: *“The major benefit of having an EGTC is to have a solid structure, a platform where all relevant partners are at one table – the municipalities with all the mayors, civil society etc”*.

Challenges

One of the major challenges for the Eurometropole is that under French law, there is no possibility to give private contracts to employees until now.

In the near future, especially in the next programming period, cooperation with the European Commission (EC) should be improved, and closer links should also be established with other relevant European institutions.

The negotiation procedure between the 14 partners within the Eurometropole also needs to be improved. At the moment some partner institutions do not have people dealing especially with EGTC concerns. There is a strong wish in the Agency for “trans-border teams” in every partner institution to facilitate cooperation, especially for the setting up of new projects.

The Europe 2020 Strategy and implementing its objectives into the work programme of the Eurometropole is also an important point, especially with regard to the next programming period.

Finally there exists a strong need for more visibility, information and analysis of EGTCs in general. Even in the EC many people outside DG Regio would not know much about EGTCs. The new EGTC platform launched by the Committee of the Regions could become a key tool to improve this.

3.2. Ister-Granum

3.2.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	(HU) Ister-Granum Korlátolt Felelisségő Európai Területi Együtmőködési Csoportosulás. (SK) Európske zoskupenie územnej spolupráce s ručným obmedzením Ister-Granum. (EN) Ister-Granum European Grouping for Territorial Co-operation Ltd.
Acronym	Ister-Granum
Function in ETC	Esztergom (HU) and Sturóvo (SK) functional area.
History and current status	The EGTC was established on 11.09.2008 and is now fully operational. The EGTC was born out of continuous cooperation around the rebuilding of the Esztergom-Párkány symbolic bridge. It evolved into a cooperation of 102 local authorities in the Euroregio Ister-Granum. Thanks to strong political support for this cooperation and the agreement on goals and interests among the members, the formulation of the EGTC could be realised very quickly and was based mainly on the approved development programme of the Euroregion. The only delay consisted in the time for adopting the national provisions especially in Slovakia.
Countries involved	Hungary and Slovakia
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	HU: 2500 Esztergom, Széchenyi tér 1
Members per country, administrations involved	The members of the Grouping are the local governments of the Hungarian and Slovakian municipalities located in the territory of the border region of the two countries, referred to in the Annex attached to the Statutes of the EGTC. At the time of its establishment, the EGTC had 49 Hungarian and 36 Slovak members. Currently, the EGTC numbers 89 members, and will soon expand to 90 members.
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	89 members, around 189 000 inhabitants.
Territory; ad-	The territory consists of the Hungarian-Slovak border region

ministrative; Aspects of mul- tilevel govern- ance	around Esztergom. Its territory is identical to the administrative territories of the 89 member local governments.
Enlargement intents	The EGTC currently numbers 89 members and will soon include another one. Since the former Euroregion was composed of 102 municipalities the goal is to reach the initial number of 102 members. This is however the uppermost number to be able to maintain such a compact cultural and economic area.
Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	Establishing and maintaining cooperation over the full range of regional development activities; Promoting and strengthening economic and social cohesion.
Tasks	Implementation of territorial cooperation projects co-financed by the European Union; Implementation of other specific actions and projects; Raising awareness of the competitive advantages of its operational territory; Influencing relevant decisions within the institutional framework of the EU.
Budget	Broadly speaking, 50% of operating costs are paid by the government, 50% are paid by members. The annual budget is thus composed of national payments and contributions from the members. It is only since late 2010 that the EGTC has received national funding. The contributions from members are defined according to their population and successfully absorbed EU funds. The amount of the fee is based on the number of permanent residents in each local government area. Initially, the existing financial resources of the former Euroregion were partially transferred to the EGTC. The annual budget is around 5 000 000 HUF (€18 400). The financial control and the approval of the budget are undertaken by the General Assembly. In future, the EGTC plans to finance payment gaps with its own businesses.
Staff	Four employees and external experts (project-dependent). The EGTC undertakes outsourcing as much as possible.
Law applicable and legal per- sonality	Public law (HU)

Organs and their main competencies	<p>General Assembly: main decision-making body; composed of the mayors from the member authorities.</p> <p>Most decisions are taken by simple majority, except for financial issues, questions on the participation in projects and the work plan, which require a 2/3 majority.</p> <p>The Senate (decision-making body).</p> <p>Financial Committee (3 persons).</p> <p>The EGTC moreover involves civil organizations (public associations, NGOs) through its "Civil Parliament", through which civil organisations strengthen Hungarian and Slovakian relations by identifying common interests, launching events and developing joint projects. The Civil Parliament operates the Service Network for NGOs of Ister-Granum EGTC and participates in the work of the Expert Board of Ister-Granum EGTC. The expert board brings together the executive council of the Civil Parliament (elected), the representatives of the three main employers of the region, the representatives of the chambers of trade and industry, and the thematic committees of the cross-border EGTC.</p> <p>The Civil Parliament was however less active in 2010 than in the past. The future role of the Civil Parliament in the EGTC is yet to be seen.</p>
Languages	Hungarian and Slovak
URL	http://www.istergranum.hu
Further information	office@istergranum.hu

3.2.2. *Development on the ground*

The EGTC as a working structure

The members of the EGTC have a long history of cooperation and in combination with strong political backing; there were no problems in creating the EGTC at municipal level.

For instance, the EGTC was integrated into cross-border programmes without any problems, which was a good starting point to launch projects.

The EGTC has now been operational for nearly three years and it has significantly strengthened the cooperation between the members and helped the development of the member territories. The evolution to a new legal entity helped in strengthening cross-border cooperation.

It is difficult to have 89 mayors working as one entity. But once the idea and concept behind creating the EGTC was made clear and the communication was improved, the EGTC proved to be a very effective structure.

The decision-making process is sometimes problematic due to the large number of members. In fact, it is difficult to urge all members to participate in the decision-making process but roughly 50% are always present at the Assembly meetings and in cases of serious issues the participation is quick and effective. The future solution would be to increase the power of the Senate.

Although the initial idea was to schedule two meetings a year, due to difficulty in coordinating and achieving a high participation rate for 89 members, the EGTC planned to develop the idea of an 'e- administration' by the end of the year 2010.

Moreover, the Civil Parliament was less active in 2010 and it was therefore very difficult to involve civil society in the work of the EGTC.

In terms of staff, the EGTC numbers four permanent employees and it uses outsourcing to employ external experts depending on the project.

Financing and managing the EGTC

Financially, the EGTC always faces challenges mainly in reimbursing the loans for pre-financing. Since late 2010, the EGTC has also been funded by the Hungarian government, in addition to contributions from members and projects. Essentially, 50% of operating costs are paid by the government, 50% are paid by members. The EGTC plans to set up businesses in the future in order to cover outstanding costs.

Current major activities

The following programmes are planned for the next five years (EU funding period):

- 1) Green Energy Programme
- 2) Preservation and utilisation of nature, the environment and culture:

The EGTC participated in the 'Valorisation of Heritage and Risk Prevention' Programme, a cultural programme with South East Europe.

- 3) Tourism

Under this priority, the EGTC is a partner in a project called 'Regional Tourism Destination Management Project' which is a unique project as such programmes for tourism exist in Hungary but not in Slovakia.

- 4) Development of infrastructure and SMEs
- 5) Rural future actions (modern agriculture activities)

In the summer of 2011, the European Rural Future Programme will be launched, for which the Ister-Granum EGTC will be a testing area.

The EGTC also participated in a Public Health project called 'Take a breath' (TAB).

The project of launching a trans-border hospital was however put on hold because the initial chosen hospital was located in Slovakia and not in a cross-border region, and because of competence problems in relation to insurance. Once these issues are solved, the joint hospital project could be launched in one to two years.

The Ister-Granum Solidarity Fund was established in June 2008 as a solution to the fact that while the city of Esztergom employed many commuters from neighbouring settlements, the tax from business activity remained in Esztergom and commuters could not participate in the cultural life of their residence. The Solidarity Fund supported several projects to solve issues related to commuting. The Fund however suffered significantly from the economic crisis, with investments and contributions from entrepreneurs having drastically diminished. The Fund is however still in place, and aims to support employment measures and cultural activities for commuters.

The EGTC also has horizontal priorities such as education, vocational training and lifelong learning.

Depending on the type of project, the EGTC forms strategic partnerships with relevant ministries, large companies (mainly for projects supporting economic development), and associations (mainly for cross-border cooperation).

Milestones ahead

- A General meeting was scheduled in February 2011 to discuss the overall concept of the EGTC.
- The EGTC will soon expand its borders to a new member. The ultimate goal is to reach the number of members of the former Euroregion of 102 municipalities.
- The EGTC will develop the idea of an e-government by the end of 2011 in order to facilitate communication and decision-making within the EGTC.
- The EGTC will possibly open another fund, in parallel to the Solidarity Fund, for other projects and functions either in 2011 or in 2012.
- The EGTC plans to set up businesses to finance projects such as the Solidarity Fund in addition to the contributions from members, projects, and the Hungarian government.
- Another major goal is to cooperate with other EGTCs especially in Slovakia and Hungary, but also throughout the EU in 2011.

3.2.3. *Key findings*

Lessons learnt

- The grouping benefited strongly from the fact that the members had cooperated in the past and could therefore be quickly established.
- Communication within the EGTC and with other governance levels and territorial groupings is key. Members have to fully understand the role, the objectives and the functioning of the EGTC in order to be operational and effective.
- The EGTC is strongly favourable to exchanging information and experiences with other EGTCs, as it already does with recently established EGTCs in Hungary and those in the process of establishment. Taking practical advice from groupings which have experienced similar challenges is very helpful to avoid traps and lengthy processes.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

The territory consists of the Hungarian-Slovak border region of Ister-Granum and brings together 89 local governments. This gives enormous potential to develop economic, political and cultural projects to achieve the objectives of the EGTC, mainly in terms of social and economic cohesion. The creation of the EGTC had a major value added for the cooperation between the members. In fact, it gave the cooperation structure a stronger and more solid legal and political status, also at national level, compared to a 'simple' Euroregion.

Challenges

- The recently elected government in Hungary has had an impact on the EGTC mainly through the delay of a few processes, but there have not been any problems in terms of functioning with the national levels up until now.
- Financially, the EGTC faces persistent challenges, but the situation has improved since the EGTC started receiving funding from the Hungarian government in late 2010.
- The structure of the committees has to be improved.
- The 'Civil Parliament' has been less active in 2010 compared to previous years, and therefore the involvement of civil society has to be re-launched.
- Moreover, communication has to be improved within the EGTC (probably electronically through e-government), and externally, i.e. with administrative regions in Slovakia and Hungary.

3.3. Galicia – Norte de Portugal

3.3.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	Agrupamento Europeu de Cooperação Territorial (AECT: EGTC) Galicia - Norte de Portugal.
Acronym	GNP
Function in ETC	Executive branch of the Working Community.
History and current status	<p>The EGTC was officially established on 23.10.2008.</p> <p>Milestones:</p> <p>September 2008 – Signing of the Agreement.</p> <p>February 2010 – Inauguration of the Executive Bodies.</p> <p>March 2010 – Start of activities.</p> <p>Starting from March 2010:</p> <p>Concept of visibility: development of several institutional promotion meetings;</p> <p>Concept of operability: establishment of contacts between Galician and Portuguese institutions with the main goal of improving the cooperation within the grouping;</p> <p>Inspired by the strong model of Franco-Spanish cooperation in the Pyrenees, Galicia/ Norte de Portugal initially cooperated in the form of a working community based on the formal grounds provided by the Madrid Convention.</p> <p>The consequent stability and continuity of regional leadership allowed for further evolution and development of cooperation. This helped bridge the asymmetric situation of a decentralised administration in Spain and a rather centralised administration in Portugal. The cooperation even became a model for other territorial groupings.</p> <p>However, one of the main problems faced by the working community was the absence of an organ that could give institutional weight to the cooperation agreement. At first, the Coordination Committee had been set to take that role, but its lack of a legal personality and precision in the definition of its competences did not allow its realization. Hence, the decisive factor to found the EGTC was to create a new institution with a legal personality and its own budget, marking a turning point in inter-border relationships and triggering another predisposition in the inter-border cooperation process.</p> <p>The period between the administrative act to the start of the operational structures took around one year. In fact, the Territorial Cooperation Agreement was signed in September</p>

	2008, and the EGTC became operational in March 2010. This delay was due to an electoral process in the Autonomous Community of Galicia resulting in a change of government and a delay in inaugurating the EGTC.
Countries involved	Spain, Portugal
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	City of Vigo, Spain
Members per country, administrations involved	PT: Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional do Norte (CCDR-N) ES: Xunta de Galicia
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	Surface area: 51 000 km ² (Galicia: 29 575 km ² , Norte de Portugal: 21 284 km ²). Inhabitants: 6.4 million inhabitants (Galicia: 2 796 089 inhabitants; Norte de Portugal: 3 745 439 inhabitants).
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	The territory consists of two regions which present several similarities as well as differences in their socio-economic situation. The EGTC aims to support and further the development and the social, economic and institutional coherence of the regions. It is built on a principle of checks and balanced between partners: The headquarters are located in Spain; The director is from Portugal and the sub-director is from Spain; The EGTC operates in three official languages although due to the long common history people in the region speak a common language. The translation of all official material is not compulsory;
Enlargement intents	No perspective of enlargement at the moment.
Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	To promote cross-border relations in order to support the development of the regions; To promote economic development and competitiveness through supporting innovation and the exchange of knowledge; To further the attractiveness of the territory through improving basic transportation systems and accessibility, and through strengthening the link between economic growth

	<p>and sustainable development; To strengthen social, economic and institutional cohesion of the Euroregion; To establish more efficient instruments for programming; management and evaluation of cohesion policies.</p>
Tasks	<p>treating topics of common interest, providing an exchange of information, coordinating initiatives and finding opportunities realising work of public interest, common management of public services and public works joint management and set-up of Services of General Interest.</p>
Budget	<p>Annual budget financed by the members' own resources, EU funds, ERDF funds, and for some projects by the partners involved.</p> <p>When the EGTC was established, the initial contribution of both partners amounted to €100 000, as established by the convention.</p> <p>The EGTC financed programmes through ERDF support budget for CBC between Spain and Portugal. Several major investments had already been covered (e.g. four additional bridges over bordering rivers).</p> <p>The annual operational budget amounts to approx. €30 000 (in the first year including office equipment, in subsequent years the staff costs for the five persons).</p> <p>According to the statutes financial control is performed in accordance with Article 6 of Reg. 1082/2006 by the Directorate of the EGTC and subsequently presented at the Council meeting for approval.</p>
Staff	<p>technical support staff and administration (1 person), 4 representatives from each region constituting the assembly 1 Director, 1 Deputy Director, High Council, formed by the general coordinators of the Working Community of Galicia - North Portugal.</p>
Law applicable and legal personality	<p>Public law</p>
Organs and their main competencies	<p>Presidents: Mr Alberto Núñez Feijóo – Xunta de Galicia President; Dr Carlos Lage – CCDRN President.</p> <p>Board of Governors: Jesús Gamallo and Nuno Almeida.</p> <p>GNP Assembly, approved the annual work programme: Xunta de Galicia Representatives: Mr Norberto Urzal, Mr</p>

	<p>Jose Vásquez, Mr Francisco Seijo, Mr Jesús Gamallo. CCDR-N Representatives: Ms Teresa Lehman, Dr Nuno Almeida, Mr Paulo Gomes, Mr Rui Monteiro. Executive Members (appointed by the regional policy makers, the presidents of the region Galicia and CCDRN (PT): Director: Dr Elvira Vieira - develops the annual work programme, guided by the regional representatives and the strategic units of both partners; chairs the Assembly. Sub-Director: Mr Juan Lirón.</p>
Languages	Portuguese, Galician, Spanish
URL	http://www.galicia-nortept.org
Further information	info@galicia-nortept.org

3.3.2. *Development on the ground*

The EGTC as a working structure

Apart from the technical support staff and administration (one person), the staff consists of four bodies: an assembly made up of representatives of the Xunta de Galicia and the CCDR-N (four representatives from each region), a director representing the EGTC for a period of two years, a Deputy Director responsible for agency assistance and support to the Director and the other organs of the EGTC, and an EGTC High Council composed of the general coordinators of the Working Community of Galicia - North Portugal.

Staff are hired according to the laws of Galicia, where the headquarters of the EGTC are located. The employees do not have civil servant status. The Board hired senior managers and technicians in sectoral arrangement orders of Pontevedra.

The Assembly meets twice a year and the Board meets on a quarterly basis. Decisions are taken unanimously. All kinds of strategic decisions are usually taken on the advice of the Directorate of GNP, together with the EGTC Board. The directors are nominated by the CCDR-N and the Xunta de Galicia.

Decisions on projects are taken by consensus. The governing body is the Assembly, where the directors of the EGTC, even though assigned an important role, are not entitled to vote.

The EGTC faces problems in raising structural public investment. The regions are generally quite similar in terms of geography and demographics. The main differences are visible in economic and social terms. In economic terms, the wealth is mainly produced by the tertiary sector, but it is worth pointing out that

the Galician region still employs a significant portion of its resources in the primary sector, while the North of Portugal is still largely concentrated on the secondary sector. In terms of GDP, the regions are still below national averages, and well below European averages. The two regions still show a considerable difference between territorial NUTS III of the coast and inland, and this difference is especially evident in the territory of Northern Portugal, with NUTS III of the Grande Porto region amounting to a GDP per capita of around €15 300, while the region of Tâmega does not surpass €800. In social terms, the regions are also quite similar, except for the large differences in terms of human capital. Galicia is in need of further development in this area. Last year, Galicia moreover suffered significantly in terms of unemployment and the consequent social problems.

Financing and managing the EGTC

The annual budget allocated to the GNP EGTC is composed of own resources, EU funds - the ERDF and other funding sources that are related to the project. A number of smaller projects are funded with the resources of the EGTC. Others projects undertaken in partnerships are covered by the respective partners.

Initially, the funds from the Working Community were used. Then, the EGTC applied for the 2nd Call of POCTEP (Operational Programme for Cross-border Cooperation: Spain-Portugal 2007-2013), resulting in the funds that are in use since January 2011. This budget consists of funds from the capital and regions of the Community allocated to both regions. In 2010, the funds approved in the first convocation of POCTEP - Launch of EGTC were used. Since January 2011, these funds have been integrated into the regional funds, as well as funds from Brussels and the portion allocated to the second POCTEP EGTC programme.

According to the statutes financial control is undertaken in accordance with Article 6 of Reg. 1082/2006. An external auditor is designated by the Superior Council.

The annual budget review and verification of accounting reports is firstly performed by the Directorate of the GNP EGTC and subsequently presented at a meeting of the Council for approval. Normally this meeting is held at the end of the year, along with the presentation of the activity report for the current year and the action plan for the following year.

Financial control was last undertaken in February 2011 by the Xunta de Galicia examining the expenses of the EGTC.

Current major activities

The Convention requires regular reporting and annual business plans for the ensuing years and beyond. The EGTC aims to foresee changes and adapt to these changes in a flexible way as early as possible. The EGTC can be easily flexible in its activities due its modest number of staff.

The project preparation is elaborated by the Directorate of GNP EGTC in coordination with the CCDR-N and the Xunta de Galicia. The projects are assigned to companies that work specifically in thematic areas allocated, and coordinated and monitored in conjunction with the Directorate of GNP.

The underlying strategy is promoting regional and interregional cooperation, taking into account the goals of both regions.

Above all, the main priority was to continue the good work that had already been developed by the Working Community under the strategic plan set for the Euroregion for the period 2007-2013. Under the strategic plan, there are two strategic priorities considered to be of vital importance to the development and convergence of the Euroregion with regards the more developed regions of Europe.

The first axis, 'fostering competitiveness and promoting employment', was in particular prioritised in the context where both regional economies (mainly on the border) were significantly affected by the economic crisis. In the face of the destruction of wealth and employment, it was considered crucial to support and encourage projects promoting entrepreneurship, modernisation, efficiency, productivity and competitiveness of businesses. At this level the GNP EGTC works in partnership with local and central public authorities, universities and companies, to provide a further contribution to the reversal of the recession and increasing social cohesion. The goal is to increase investments, create more jobs and produce more added value.

Under the second priority axis of 'Environment, heritage and risk prevention' projects were developed in the areas of energy and tourism. The aim was to promote projects involving the use of alternative energy production to improve energy efficiency, making sustainable use of natural resources and leverage more effectively the resources in the Euroregion. In the area of tourism, joint efforts are undertaken to preserve the richness of the territory in terms of landscape, wildlife and nature.

The most prominent activities undertaken were the application for the 2nd POCTEP Call and ensuing projects, including inter alia:

- The creation of data bases of hotel establishments;

- The implementation of the system of economic and financial management for Public Administration (CPA);
- A study on interoperability among toll systems in Galicia-Portugal;
- Development of a survey on the perception that citizens have about the Euroregion Galicia-Northern Portugal;
- Identification and classification of CBC staff in Galicia and Northern Portugal;
- Study on Labour Mobility in the Euroregion Galicia-Northern Portugal: Recognition of Vocational Training titles;
- Study of the Sources of Financing for the GNP EGTC;
- Development of a strategic vision for communication and positioning of the GNP EGTC 2010-2013;
- Analysis and diagnosis of the Euroregion Galicia-Northern Portugal with a view to marketing the GNP EGTC;
- Finally, the budget reserved for advertising and public relations is attributable to funds received from the POCTEP. A company was hired specifically to address issues related to communication and dissemination of the GNP EGTC and its activities.

3.3.3. *Key findings*

Lessons learnt

The EGTC has largely benefited from the network established within the Working Community. The EGTC also had clear functions attributed in its role as executive arm of the Working Community, which resulted in its increasing stability and de facto establishment within the region.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

The EGTC executes the policies and guidelines of the Working Community through specific tasks. Its creation has been very beneficial for the region for instance due to the excellent relationship between the two NUTS II regions, which are overcoming successive hurdles to deepen the process of cross-border cooperation, mainly due to the lack of an independent regional power on the Portuguese side.

Moreover it benefits from the progressive projection given to regional development policies by the EU authorities, resulting in the progressive increase in budgetary allocations for regional cooperation and convergence.

Finally, it gains from the huge boost promoted by the Treaty of Valencia and the progressive formalisation and standardisation bodies that result from cooperation agreements in border areas.

The EGTC is perceived as an effective instrument to execute specific tasks. The structure of the EGTC and the tasks undertaken under its leadership gives an impetus for new initiatives in cross-border cooperation in the territory.

Challenges

The wage levels differ between Spain and Portugal and the EGTC offers limited contract duration (two-year contracts).

The regions moreover have suffered during the crisis and tasks mainly concentrate on mitigating the effects.

3.4. Amphictyony¹¹

3.4.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	AMPHICTYONY of Twinned Cities and Areas of the Mediterranean, European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.
Acronym	E.G.T.C AMPHICTYONY
Function in ETC	Cooperation of 53 municipalities from Cyprus, Greece, Italy and France.
History and current status	<p>The members cooperated before the EGTC was created for 17 years as a loose network of 93 local authorities from nine Mediterranean countries. The procedure for registering the EGTC took roughly a year with administrative procedures starting in January 2008 and the official registration of the EGTC having been finalized on 1 December 2008.</p> <p>The General Assembly, the Administrative Board and the Executive Committee are operational.</p> <p>The EGTC resulted from a Mediterranean network of twinned towns and regions, composed of 93 municipalities and nine countries. According to the Director, Mr Vassilis Xenos-Gavrielis, “when we strengthened our legal structure, we weakened in number”, since municipalities from Turkey, Albania, Serbia, Israel and Palestine were not allowed to be part of the founding members. The original goals and objectives of creating a Mediterranean network to strengthen not only economic but also cultural, linguistic, and social links could not be entirely pursued and the EGTC has to some extent lost in quality.</p>
Countries involved	Greece, Cyprus, Italy, France
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	GR: Athens 10558, Byronos 29, Plaka
Members per country, administrations involved	<p>The members of the EGTC are municipalities:</p> <p>42 from Greece; 7 from Cyprus; 3 from Italy; 1 from France.</p>
Key indicators (inhabitants,	The surface and number of inhabitants corresponds to the population and area of the 53 member-municipalities from

¹¹ Despite several attempts, no contact could be established with any representatives. The information is therefore solely based on desk research.

surface area)	Cyprus, Greece, Italy and France.
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	<p>The EGTC consists of Twinned Self-Government Organisations of the 1st and 2nd degree, Associations of a Self-Government nature as well as Regions of the countries in the Mediterranean and is organised as a civil company of a not-for-profit nature.</p> <p>The main challenge the EGTC faces in maintaining and developing its cultural, social and economic cooperation is in relation to the procedures for accepting-municipalities from third countries. The eligibility criteria would have to be reformed in order for the EGTC to integrate a gateway towards the Mediterranean area in a wide range of policy areas.</p>
Enlargement intents	The EGTC is open to enlargement especially towards pre-accession and third countries. The EGTC has already received requests from Albania, Serbia, Turkey, Israel and Palestine for participation.
Duration of the EGTC	The statute foresees a duration of 25 years with a possibility of extension.
Objectives	<p>Create and maintain an environment of peace, sustainable development, cohesion and security through a financially effective, socially fair, environmentally sustainable entity</p> <p>Promote freedom, democracy, justice, security and protection of the environment.</p> <p>Strengthening the participation of the citizen and the agencies of the local societies</p>
Tasks	<p>According to its Statute, the EGTC aims to undertake the following tasks:</p> <p>Promotion of cross-border, interstate and/or interregional cooperation;</p> <p>Realisation of programmes that are co-funded by the European Union (EU) through the ERDF, ESF, CF;</p> <p>Realization of actions of territorial co-operation with or without the EU's financial contribution;</p> <p>Exchange of information, experiences, promotion and practices among its members;</p> <p>Access to information and knowledge;</p> <p>Preservation, promotion and utilisation of the cultural identity for safeguarding intercultural dialogue.</p> <p>Moreover, the Board of Directors, in cooperation with the Municipality of Chios, organised a three-day conference on: 'Cultural Policy and Local Government' from 21.05.2010 to 23.05.2010. The conference was held in Greek and English and mainly explored suitable ways for local governments to</p>

	<p>develop a long-term Cultural Policy with the goal of sustainability. Several speakers from Greece, international speakers, as well as policy makers discussed the political, social and economic development of cultural life, the local economy and tourism.</p>
Budget	<p>The annual budget of the EGTC amounts to around €500 000.</p> <p>The financial control is carried out by the Greek Ministry of Internal Affairs.</p> <p>According to the Statute, the financial resources are composed of:</p> <p>The annual contribution of the members, the amount of which as well as the criteria for its estimation is determined by the General Assembly with its resolution following a feasibility study and a proposal by the Board of Directors;</p> <p>Grants provided by the state either by self-government agencies, the EU or by national and international organizations, ETC funding;</p> <p>Donations or property given by agencies or private citizens</p> <p>Exploitation of the real or movable property of the EGTC.</p>
Staff	<p>The EGTC does not have permanent staff.</p> <p>According to its Statute, the EGTC could employ persons according to the provisions of private law (based on the rules that govern the civil companies of a non-profit nature of the Greek Organisation of Local Self-Government.</p> <p>The EGTC can also enter into contracts of work or provision of services for special issues with third parties as well as through programme contracts for the execution of programmes and projects of territorial cooperation with local government agencies and agencies of the public sector.</p>
Law applicable and legal personality	Private
Organs and their main competencies	<p>Bodies of the EGTC:</p> <p>The General Assembly is the main decision-making body of the EGTC. It defines the main policies and approves the administrative and financial report of the Administrative Board, the annual budget and the entry of new members. The statutes can only be modified by a ¾ majority of the members of the General Assembly;</p> <p>The Board of Directors (13 members) is elected by the General Assembly and has the right to create sub-committees and working groups to complete its tasks;</p> <p>The President of the Board of Directors represents the</p>

	<p>EGTC, acts in the name of the EGTC towards third parties and signs all documents and warrants of payment. The Director manages all requests coming from the President;</p> <p>The Executive Committee is composed of three members elected in parallel with election of the Administrative Board for two years, controls the financial management of the EGTC at the end of the financial year and before the approval of the new budget by the General Assembly;</p> <p>The Audit Committee;</p> <p>The next EGTC working meeting will be held on 9 May 2011 (Europe Day) in Athens.</p>
Languages	English, French, Greek, Italian
URL	http://www.amphictyony.gr
Further information	amfiktio@otenet.gr

3.5. Karst Bodva

3.5.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	Limited Liability European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation KARST-BODVA.
Acronym	Karst-Bodva EGTC
Function in ETC	Management of a nature reserve between Hungary and Slovakia.
History and current status	The area of Gömör-Torna karst and the Bódva valley is a very valuable and unique geographical unit in Central Europe, with over 90 villages and national parks on both sides of the border. In 2001, their cooperation resulted in the creation of a Euroregion (Kars Euroregion) whose objective was to foster rural development in the area. In order to further strengthen the cooperation and increase the array of possibilities, the members finally decided to form an EGTC. Despite initial some political difficulties, the EGTC was registered on 11 February 2009 as a result of the political alliance of the mayors of the numerous municipalities in the territory.
Countries involved	Hungary and Slovakia
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	Hačava 47, 044 02 Turňa nad Bodvou (Slovakia)
Members per country, administrations involved	Initially, the EGTC was supposed to be composed of 19 Slovak and 2 Hungarian municipalities, but the membership of the micro-region Domica consisting of 18 Slovak municipalities was not accepted. The EGTC therefore has only 3 founding members: Hrušov (SK); Perkupa (HU); Varbóc (HU).
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	The territory targeted is the Slovak-Hungarian border area in National Park Slovak Karst (SK) and in the National Park Aggtelek (HU). Currently, the EGTC solely manages the territory and population of its three member municipalities.
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	The EGTC is solely composed of municipalities, although the Slovak micro-region Dominica consisting of 18 municipalities was not accepted as an eligible member by the notification authorities.

Enlargement intents	The plan is to cover the Slovakian and Hungarian border settlements on the historic Gömör-Tornai Karszt (including the two National Parks) and along the river Bódva. The EGTC is open to further enlargement and is in negotiations with possible new members. Non-member municipalities regularly attend meetings and are invited to take part in the preparation and realization of new projects.
Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	To support the cooperation and harmonious development through strengthening economic and social cohesion between cross border territories.
Tasks	develop and realise a common development programme based on a shared strategy integrating economic, social and environmental activities; support entrepreneurship, especially for SMEs in tourism, cultural development and cross-border business; joint protection of environmental and cultural values and prevention of environmental and technological risks; assist partnerships between communal and rural areas of cities and villages; improve local and regional infrastructure; joint infrastructure in the health service, culture, travel and tourism and education; use resources from Slovak, Hungarian governments and EU funds (ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Funds and Policy).
Budget	So far the EGTC has not managed to establish a stable budget, and does not currently have a budget line. Due to an internal agreement all members were initially obliged to contribute €500 within two years of registering the EGTC. The EGTC is now financed solely through member contributions.
Staff	The EGTC does not have any internal staff at the moment. The EGTC is considering hiring part-time employees in the future.
Law applicable and legal personality	Private
Organs and their main competencies	The EGTC has a President (SK) who represents the EGTC in public and is responsible for signing all official documents. The General Assembly is the main decision-making body. It is composed of one chairman from SK and two co-chairs

	from SK and HU. Decisions are taken by simple majority. In case of equal number of votes the vote of the President takes the final decision. The General Assembly is supervised by the Monitoring Committee.
Languages	Hungarian and Slovak
URL	Under discussion
Further information	+421 58 7884680

3.5.2. *Development on the ground*

The EGTC as a working structure

There has been a rather long tradition in cooperation between local actors in the Slovak-Hungarian cross-border area covering Bodva valley and the Gömör-Torna karst. The decision to establish EGTC KARST BODVA was primarily motivated by recognition of new opportunities for collaboration across the border that the new EU regulation offered. Some municipalities that were till 2009 actively working within the Euroregion with other stakeholders from the public sector took the initiative and established the EGTC.

The EGTC KARST BODVA was officially registered in February 2009, bringing together 19 Slovak and two Hungarian municipalities. However, the national notification authority did not accept the membership of micro-region Domica consisting of 18 Slovak municipalities. Therefore at this moment, the EGTC has only three founding members (Hrušov, Perkupa and Varbóc). It is one of the key tasks of the grouping to communicate individually with municipalities of the micro region in order to join the EGTC. This has been quite demanding and moreover was impeded by municipal elections in Slovakia in 2010 as well as a lack of resources at local level.

The decision-making system is in place. Decisions are taken by the General Assembly composed of a chairman and two co-chairs by simple majority which is considered an adequate approach given the current size of the grouping. However, enlarging the EGTC will require modification of the system. Various models of functioning from abroad are being considered, but the decision of which one to apply has not yet been taken.

Financing and managing the EGTC

EGTC KARST BODVA does not have any internal staff at its disposal. Instead, so far it has functioned on a voluntary basis and founding members invested their own resources in order to keep it running. The major challenge is fund raising: according to the statute of the EGTC the contribution of each member amounts to EUR 500. The three founding members are aware that the bigger the

size of the grouping and the more activities will require at least part-time staff to support the EGTC functioning.

There are two main sources of financing: own contribution of members of EGTC and ETC projects. In reality, the EGTC KARST BODVA so far has been financed from its own resources as no project has been approved and implemented yet. Hungarian government decided to financially support functioning EGTCs on its territory, which represents potentially a new source of funding. There is no separate budget line and actually no expenditure on the promotion of the EGTC. However, the members have started discussion on the official website.

Due to a very limited number of members, the management of the grouping has been smooth. The founding members are communicating with municipalities interested in joining the EGTC and providing technical support. Municipalities in the area not taking a part in the EGTC are regularly invited to take part in the preparation and implementation of new projects. A contract between the EGTC and non-members is signed in such a case.

Current major activities

In 2009 and 2010, the KARST BODVA prepared and submitted a number of applications, mainly for the Hungary-Slovakia cross-border cooperation programme. Since none of the submitted projects has been approved (yet), the main activity of the grouping is the development of new project ideas in line with their objectives and elaboration of applications.

It took a while for the EGTC, as a new formation (regional player) in cross-border cooperation, to gain certain recognition and trust from regional and national structures that also take a part in the selection of the projects. Since contacts and communication has been established, the relationships are of good quality. Representative(s) of the EGTC regularly take part in the inter-governmental meetings between Hungary and Slovakia. Moreover, they are members of a number of working groups on both sides of the border. Critical to the increasing size of the EGTC and cooperation with municipalities located in the area seems to be, following municipal elections in both countries, communication with mayors, particularly new mayors.

Milestones ahead

The overarching objective is to recruit new partners. In operative terms the EGTC plans to continue the development of new projects to fulfil its own objectives. Priority themes for 2011 are strengthened cooperation between national parks and their managements, and promotion of sustainable tourism in environmentally protected areas. The EGTC has established cooperation with Debrecen University, which could be involved in future projects as a technical supervisor

in the field of environment. An official website of the Grouping should be established.

There have been initial contacts between KARST BODVA and PONS DANUBII, which is the newly registered EGTC in Slovakia in the Hungarian-Slovak border region. The two EGTCs are considering the setting-up of a cooperation agreement.

3.5.3. *Key findings*

Lessons learnt

- Ex-ante clarification of the eligibility of the micro-region representing 18 municipalities would have most probably led to a different approach towards the constitution process.
- Smaller EGTCs, particularly those with limited number of local actors, need more time to be recognised by programme structures supporting territorial cooperation.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

- It is possible to support multilevel governance through cooperation with the higher administrative levels although they are not members of EGTC.
- Balance on the types of members (municipalities), territorial coverage, population seem to be important aspects to be considered.
- Joint management and sustainable use of natural heritage significantly contributes to territorial cohesion.

Challenges

- A major challenge is to increase the number of EGTC members in order to have higher visibility and recognition in the border region.

3.6. Duero-Douro

3.6.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	Agrupación Europea De Cooperación Territorial Duero – Douro.
Acronym	Duero-Douro
Function in ETC	Grouping of over 170 towns in Spain and Portugal.
History and current status	<p>The EGTC was officially established on 07/03/2009.</p> <p>Formation of a Working Community in the mid-1990s.</p> <p>July 2007: informative meetings.</p> <p>December 2007: informative assembly in Trabanca (attended by 150 Portuguese and Spanish mayors).</p> <p>February to April 2008: series of meetings with Spanish and Portuguese local representatives.</p> <p>April 2008: presentation of Convention and Statutes to the Spanish Ministry for Public Administration.</p> <p>May 2008: presentation of EGTC Conventions and Statutes to the Portuguese Institute for Funding of Regional Development.</p> <p>September 2008: meeting of the assembly in Mogadouro (PT) which was attended by about 150 local representatives from Spain and Portugal.</p>
Countries involved	Spain and Portugal
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	ES: Trabanca, (Salamanca), Plaza Egido s/n CP 37173
Members per country, administrations involved	<p>102 Spanish local entities.</p> <p>70 Portuguese local entities.</p> <p>2 associations of municipalities.</p> <p>1 intermunicipal body governed by public law.</p>
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	<p>Population: 103 435 inhabitants in total with 50 554 inhabitants in Spain and 52 881 inhabitants in Portugal.</p> <p>Surface: 8785 km².</p>
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	<p>The following territories are part of the EGTC:</p> <p>Province of Salamanca;</p> <p>Province of Zamora;</p> <p>NUTS 3 Tras os Montes;</p> <p>NUTS 3 Douro;</p> <p>NUTS 3 Deira Interio Monte.</p>

Enlargement intents	17 members have applied for membership.
Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	<p>The overarching objectives, as defined in the Statute, are to: Facilitate and promote cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation; Reinforce social and economic cohesion.</p> <p>More specifically the topics extend over a broad number of subjects: Equal opportunities; Economic and Local Development; Public Transport; New Technologies, especially ICT; Environment and sustainable development; Education, Training and Employment; Health, Social Services; Tourism, Culture and Cultural Heritage; Sports, leisure time; Agriculture and Stockbreeding; Local administration, transport, telecommunications; RDTI.</p>
Tasks	<p>The EGTC aims to develop, coordinate, manage and implement EU-funded ETC projects (ERDF and ESF, Cohesion Fund). It should develop actions and strategies strengthening territorial and social cohesion. In conjunction with this task the following tasks are being highlighted in the documents: Undertake and manage contracts and agreements; Undertake specific territorial cooperation programmes and actions; Create and manage social services and infrastructures; Promote research, innovation and development; Study the current state and development priority actions in infrastructure and health services.</p>
Budget	The initial contribution consisted of €1000 from each of the approximately 170 members. The annual contribution for subsequent years also amounts to €1000 per member.
Staff	The number of employees has increased significantly.
Law applicable and legal personality	Public

Organs and their main competencies	<p>The General Assembly (composed of the President, the Vice-President, the Territorial Coordinator, the Director, the Secretariat, and a representative from each member of the EGTC).</p> <p>The President of the Assembly and of the EGTC.</p> <p>The Vice-President of the Assembly and of the EGTC.</p> <p>The Coordination Council (composed of the Presidents of the Sectoral Councils, the EGTC President and Vice-President, the Territorial Coordinator and the Director). There are 6 sectoral councils (8 members each with 50% from Spain and 50% from Portugal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal Opportunities and Economic Development; Research, Innovation and Development; Local Development and New Technologies; Education, Training and Employment; Environment, Sustainable Development, Agriculture; Health, Social Services and Social Policy; Tourism, Culture and Cultural Heritage, Sports, Leisure; Local Administration, Transport and Telecommunications; <p>The President of the Coordination Council;</p> <p>The Sector Councils;</p> <p>The Territorial Coordinator;</p> <p>The Director;</p> <p>The Secretariat, composed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service staff; Administrative and financial staff. <p>The Assembly meets at least once a year; the President may call extraordinary meetings. The Assembly sets the general course of action of the EGTC and approves the work programme as well as the projects, elects the Director, and authorises the constitution of the Sectoral Councils.</p> <p>The Coordination Council supports the elaboration of work programmes, approves and supervises the implementation of programmes of the EGTC and approves the staffing and services rendered by the EGTC Technical Secretariat which forms the technical staff of the EGTC.</p>
Languages	Spanish and Portuguese
URL	http://www.duero-douro.com/
Further information	duero-douro@duero-douro.com

3.6.2. *Development on the ground*

The EGTC as a working structure

The General Assembly and the EGTC President and Vice-President are subject to a rotation system of office of three years between a member from Spain and a member from Portugal.

Decisions in the Assembly are taken by consensus. The EGTC is functional thanks to the active participation of the EGTC members in the Sector Councils. The executive role is taken by the Director and the Territorial Coordinator. They decide on daily activities and priorities. The work is undertaken efficiently and effectively, and is regularly monitored by the Sector Councils.

The number of employees has increased significantly, but difficulties related to recruitment on both sides of the border have been detrimental to employing new staff.

Financing and managing the EGTC

The annual contribution amounts to €1000 per member, similar to the initial contribution. The objective is to increase the annual budget in the future and therefore the annual membership contribution may be increased as well.

Current major activities

The major activities of the EGTC are:

- The Global Project for Education and Youth ('Proyecto global de Educación y Juventud')
- The Self-Prevention project, which has received a lot of public attention (<http://www.self-prevention.com/index.php?lang=es>)
- The environmental project 'Frontera Natural'.

Milestones ahead

The EGTC has received 17 applications for membership. All candidates have already been approved by the members and will soon be able to join the EGTC. The inclusion of these members is, however, currently being delayed by the Portuguese government, which has not replied to the request 12 months after notification.

The primary objective for the period starting in 2013 is to be a managing authority of a territorial cooperation programme for the EGTC area. This will ensure that the relevant regional actors define their future, in terms of designing a comprehensive approach for cohesion.

3.6.3. *Key findings*

Lessons learnt

The EGTC has largely benefited from its former activities and cooperation as a Working Community established in the 1990s. Moreover, the EGTC has largely benefited from having focused on building its profile by launching public debates and citizen initiatives across the area, for the citizens to have a say on various policy areas.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

The advantage of the EGTC is the holistic perspective of having the opportunity to work together with all stakeholders in the territory. In this way, the members can strengthen territorial cohesion by developing common social and economic actions.

Challenges

The challenge is to ensure sustainable and stable funding in the future, in order to be able to undertake projects which have a lasting and sustainable effect. The EGTC should be able to ensure stable funding which should not solely result from programmes and projects.

Another challenge has been, and still is, the fact that EGTCs are not always legally recognised at regional or national levels. Moreover, the representatives of the EGTC feel as if the Joint Technical Secretariat of programmes such as Inter-reg do not recognise EGTCs as key regional players and important instruments.

3.7. West Vlaanderen / Flandre – Dunkerque - Côte d'Opale

3.7.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	West Vlaanderen / Flandre – Dunkerque - Côte d'Opale.
Function in ETC	Strategy building, project planning and implementation in a cross-border region.
History and current status	<p>On 12 September 2008 the first agreement on the convention and the statute was formulated. On 25 March 2009 the convention and statute were approved and the EGTC became operational on 3 April 2009.</p> <p>The grouping of the region of Flanders (Vlaanderen) and Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale is based on a long history of cooperation. Initially an informal Platform created in 2004, the cooperation launched several cross-border projects in the 1980s within the framework of INTERREG I. The stakeholders then decided to intensify their cooperation at the end of INTERREG II. The consultations which started in 2000 resulted in the establishment of a cross-border platform in 2004 and the formulation of a Common Strategy Charter on sustainability, which was approved by all local authorities of the cross-border area. Supported by strong political backing, in September 2006 a legal framework for cooperation was started. The following year saw the launch of technical preparation including several experts and the <i>Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT)</i>.</p>
Countries involved	Belgium, France
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	Dunkirk (Pertuis de la Marine), France
Members per country, administrations involved	<p>The EGTC numbers 13 members in total:</p> <p>8 members in France: The French State, The Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region, Dunkirk Urban Community, the Departments of Nord and Pas-de-Calais, the "Pays" Moulins and Coeur de Flandre, The Urban Planning Agency Flanders Dunkirk (AGUR);</p> <p>5 members from Belgium: The Federal Belgian State, the Flemish Region, The Province of West-Flanders, the Intercommunality of West-Flanders (WVI), Resoc Westhoek (non-profit organisation).</p>

Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	Population: 2 000 000 inhabitants. Surface area: 7000 km ² .
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	The EGTC is composed of various types of members with differing competences. In fact, it brings together the national /federal government with regions, provinces, communities as well as organisations/agencies. The multilevel character of the EGTC allows for a realisation of projects at different policy levels aiming at achieving strong cohesion between the communities and regions in the area. All governments involved participate directly (local, provincial, departmental, regional and other levels). The EGTC is based on the principle of parity between Belgium and France in relation to representation in its political organs and financial distribution.
Enlargement intents	The possibility of enlargement was discussed at the last meeting in late 2010. An enlargement is under consideration but is not foreseeable in the near future.
Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	The objective of the EGTC is to promote and support efficient and coherent trans-border cooperation within its territory. Ensure coordination and promote networking between all members of the EGTC and relevant institutions. Promote the harmonisation of territorial policies. Define joint strategies and action programmes. Define and implement common projects. Set up various initiatives with a view to developing cross-border cooperation between the stakeholder in the area.
Tasks	Design and implementation of joint projects and actions in areas such as culture, economy, local trade, health (establishment of a cross-border PET scan), employment and transport (introducing, for example, a cross-border public transport card). Represent the territory vis-à-vis third parties.
Budget	The annual budget of the EGTC is approved by the General Assembly by unanimity. The budget was set up for the daily management of the EGTC: it amounted to €260000 in 2009 and to €300 000 in 2010. There is parity (50% French, 50% Belgian) in the contribution. In each country the contribution is shared according to fixed proportions between all members.

	The resources are composed of member contributions; European/national/regional/other grants; and proceeds of loans. The financial control is carried out by the French administration.
Staff	2-3 employees currently (secretariat and administration).
Law applicable and legal personality	French public law
Organs and their main competencies	<p>In all organs the principle of parity (50% FR-50% BE) is respected.</p> <p>The EGTC is composed of:</p> <p>The <u>General Assembly</u>, the EGTC's decision-making body, composed of 28 members and the Director (appointed by the President upon approval by the Board). The Assembly approves the budget, the annual work plan, decides on the amount of member contributions, takes financial decisions, elects the President, the Vice-President and the Board, adopts and modifies the rules of procedure, and decides on the admission of members, the representation of the EGTC in external bodies;</p> <p>The <u>Board</u>, composed of 18 members, approves the decisions of the Director, prepares the annual budget, the work plan, the financial accounts and the annual report;</p> <p>The <u>President and the Vice-President</u> (Co-Presidents, one Belgian, one French) are in the Assembly, take decisions on the expenses, sign staff recruitment documents, present the budget, the work plan, financial accounts and the annual report to the Assembly, sign the conventions and contracts, officially represent the grouping. France and Belgium have to alternate their roles as President and Vice-President.;</p> <p>The <u>Director</u> is responsible for the coordination of activities, represents the EGTC and acts in all roles which are not part of the Assembly's, the Board's or the Co-Presidents' responsibilities. The Director can undertake activities delegated by the President.</p>
Languages	French, Dutch
URL	A website will be launched in June 2011.
Further information	Sigrid.verhaeghe@west-vlaanderen.be k.defruyt@wvi.be

3.7.2. *Development on the ground*

The EGTC as a working structure

The EGTC mainly provides a platform for its members to cooperate and plan common projects. The EGTC provides a working programme and a budget to realise various projects. The decision-making procedure runs smoothly. All decisions are reached by consensus. The General Assembly has to have at least two sessions per year (April/December) mainly to approve the annual budget and the work plan. Thanks to the strong political will for cooperation and the long-standing history of the Grouping, there are no problems in the decision-making process. The EGTC has an annual programme for six years with concrete actions and measures with a corresponding budget line.

Nevertheless, there is a lack of communication between the different bodies of the EGTC.

Currently there are only two to three employees (secretariat and administration). Since there is a large amount of administrative, legal and financial work in the secretariat, the EGTC lacks support and staff to support concrete actions and projects.

Financing and managing the EGTC

The annual budget of the EGTC is approved by the General Assembly by unanimity. There is parity (50% French, 50% Belgian) in the contribution. A small budget is created for the daily management of the EGTC. The projects are financed by the members and realised by individual working groups of the EGTC. Practical issues related to hiring staff which are due to inconsistencies between national laws still persist.

Current major activities

In 2011, the main focus will be on economic monitoring. Although there have been difficulties in undertaking economic monitoring in the past, one of the key priorities of the EGTC is now to analyse the key economic figures of the members in order to have more detailed knowledge about their economic, social and political situation as a basis for future projects. Moreover, the EGTC plans to launch a technical seminar which will be a platform for exchange between entrepreneurs and firms.

The members of the EGTC also carry out common projects consisting of the exchange and joint reflection about healthcare, employment (labour mobility and training) spatial planning, water and environment in the border region.

In relation to spatial planning, AGUR, WVI and the Province of West-Vlaanderen carried out an Interreg project to set up a cross-border Geographical

Information System, developing a standard mapping system linked to a database about industrial estates and socio-economic data (www.gogis.eu). Also, a cross-border socio-economic profile of the region was published.

In the area of mobility and transport, a cross-border map of public transport in Flandre and West-Vlaanderen in four languages was published.

The EGTC also undertook Interreg projects to improve tourism management, further the sustainable management of the rural character of the region, as well as projects promoting cultural contacts between the border regions (“4x4”, “Vis-à-vis/buren”).

Milestones ahead

The EGTC plans to adopt a long-term economic and regional marketing strategy to turn towards other regions. Moreover, the members plan to publish a guide of cross-border economic actors and draw up an economic state of affairs of the region and analyse the economic position of the region within North West Europe.

In addition to furthering the existing common health institutions in the border regions, the policy-makers are planning to consider working on the 'under-medicalisation' and medical social care in the border region, focusing mainly on the elderly, people with disabilities, etc.

In the area of spatial planning, the aim is to expand the GOGIS project and to raise awareness about the relevant bodies and structures in place. In order to improve mobility and transport between the regions a cross-border link for cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians will also be implemented.

Cultural contacts will henceforth be supported and members are considering the publication of a guide with cultural stakeholders.

Finally, an official website is expected to be launched in June 2011.

3.7.3. Key findings

Lessons learnt

The reason why the notification and creation process of the EGTC went so smoothly and quickly is that the competent authorities were part of the process. Therefore there was constant feedback on the statutes and the establishment of the EGTC was achieved sooner than expected.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

The EGTC gives members a stronger legal and political framework of cooperation, especially compared with previous structures of cooperation between the 13 members. According to a representative of the EGTC, the change of structure was “a revolution rather than an evolution”.

The members of the EGTC formerly cooperated in the form of a platform. When the possibility of creating an EGTC arose, the members quickly agreed that it would be an ideal structure for their cooperation. In fact, it provided a platform for exchanging information and strengthened the previous network with the same partners.

Another advantage is that small communities for instance in Flanders get a completely different statute and more say in decision-making within the EGTC than at national level. The EGTC gives small entities at regional or local level the opportunity to substantially proliferate themselves.

Challenges

While the legal notification procedure leading to the creation of the EGTC was remarkably short, the EGTC is facing legal problems at present. In fact, one of its French members (Pays Coeur de Flandre) has recently decided to become a 'syndicat mixte' by March 2011. This causes major problems for the whole EGTC. In fact, according to Article 4 of Regulation (EC) 1082/2006, the grouping will have to go through the whole procedure of establishment again. The EGTC is currently seeking a simpler solution, but if no legal alternative can be found, it will take up to an additional year to officially relaunch the EGTC.

Additionally, in the initial phases of the EGTC, the secretariat was understaffed and it was not able to support the EGTC in operational terms because it was overloaded with legal and financial work.

3.8. Eurorégion Pyrénées-Méditerranée

3.8.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	Eurorégion Pyrénées-Méditerranée EGTC.
Function in ETC	Realise and manage territorial cooperation projects and actions.
History and current status	<p>The EGTC was built on a strong political will for strengthening the cooperation between the constitutive regions of Midi-Pyrénées, Languedoc-Rousillon and the Autonomous Communities of Catalunya and the Balearic Islands, based on the long-standing history of cooperation as a Euroregion since 2004.</p> <p>The establishment of the EGTC however took two years despite historical ties and an already-existing structure. This was due to the fact that the EGTC would be the first structure of its kind and France had not yet adopted the necessary national provisions. According to a representative of the EGTC, the process was similar to 'setting-up a new business' since it involved taking decisions on common goals of cooperation, identifying the nature, the objective and added value of the EGTC and finally defining their mission and statute. Another challenge was the withdrawal of Aragon from the EGTC, for domestic political reasons.</p> <p>The EGTC was eventually established in August 2009.</p>
Countries involved	Spain, France
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	Toulouse (France), Regional Council of Midi-Pyrénées and a representative office in Brussels.
Members per country, administrations involved	Regional authority Midi-Pyrénées; Regional authority Languedoc-Roussillon; Autonomous Community of Catalunya; Autonomous Community of the Illes Balears.
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	Number of inhabitants: 13 million
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	<p>2 French border regions, 2 Spanish autonomous communities.</p> <p>The EGTC has achieved a lot since its creation as a Euroregion in 2004, and the development of common projects shows the good functioning of transnational</p>

	<p>cooperation between the regions and autonomous communities.</p> <p>The projects consist of running common activities in different policy areas (e.g. education, business, tourism and culture) which shows the strong level of cooperation built between the Spanish and French members of the EGTC and the partners involved (public administration, associations etc).</p>
Enlargement intents	The EGTC is not planning to include additional members for the moment, but such a political decision would be discussed in the General Assembly.
Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	The objective of the EGTC is to realise and manage territorial cooperation projects and actions, with a view towards sustainable development, approved by its members within their competencies.
Tasks	<p>Mission statement according to Statutes:</p> <p>Launch and implement programmes, projects and actions in the area of interregional economic activities, innovation (technological, research, training and culture mainly in form of language-training), tourism, environment, accessibility (improving common transportation and telecommunication);</p> <p>Strengthen and improve the economic, judicial and administrative cooperation;</p> <p>Provide technical support;</p> <p>Manage national and community funds;</p> <p>Participate in projects of territorial cooperation of interest for all members and going beyond the territorial borders of the EGTC;</p> <p>Propose, initiate, develop and manage common services, projects and actions to strengthen economic and social cohesion of the territory;</p> <p>The projects will be inscribed mainly but not solely in the framework of cooperation of the EU;</p> <p>The EGTC facilitates and structures the cooperation between its members, identifies possible projects and partners when necessary, prepares and presents the dossiers to the members and institutions, organs and entities responsible for funding mainly from the EU, and executes the projects;</p> <p>The EGTC can also participate in territorial cooperation projects of the Working Community of the Pyrénées and EURIMED.</p>
Budget	Total: around €800 000 - €1m.

	<p>Operational: around €700 000.</p> <p>The operational budget is shared between regions proportionally to population size.</p> <p>The budget covers the managements costs, the costs related to the projects.</p> <p>It consists of voluntary contributions, EU funds and funds from national or other territorial entities.</p> <p>Our aim is to implement projects which are relevant to EU programmes such as Interreg programmes, Life, Lifelong Learning or Da Vinci in order to be even more relevant at a higher EU level and fit into the framework of EU funding opportunities.</p>
Staff	<p>8 employees: 4 in Toulouse; 3 in Barcelona; 1 in Brussels.</p> <p>The statute foresees 10-12 employees within the annual budget framework.</p>
Law applicable and legal personality	<p>French public law applicable.</p> <p>In case of disputes which cannot be settled in the joint legal framework, the parties can engage in negotiations mainly through the mediation by a third parties not involved in that dispute, or a third neutral party which should aim at settling the issue as to come to a common solution.</p> <p>If the disputes cannot be settled through a negotiated solution, the parties involved will answer to French administrative courts.</p>
Organs and their main competencies	<p>General Assembly: political decisions, decides on budget, prepares work plan. Rotating presidency (18 months).</p> <p>Coordination group: prepares Assembly meetings, presents annual report, finding agreement among the participating regions, identifies new projects and promotes them to EU institutions.</p> <p>Secretariat-General: main operative body. It coordinates actions between members, is responsible for communication between them, and appoints project leaders.</p> <p>EGTC Director.</p>
Languages	French, Spanish, Catalan
URL	www.euroregio.eu
Further information	info@euroregio.eu

3.8.2. *Development on the ground*

The EGTC as a working structure

The decision-making structure remained the same. The General Assembly takes all political, financial and planning decisions. The Secretariat-General is the main operative body. It coordinates actions between members, is responsible for communication between them and appoints project leaders. The coordination group, responsible for preparing meetings and identifying projects can now be fully operational and meets less frequently than in the initial phases of the EGTC.

The decision-making process runs smoothly as members try to agree on a compromise whenever through discussions about projects and challenges.

The EGTC numbers eight employees, with four in Toulouse, three in Barcelona and one person in Brussels. The statute and the budget do not foresee more than 10 to 12 permanent employees.

The EGTC does not cooperate with the local level.

Financing and managing the EGTC

The annual budget covers the EGTC management costs and costs related to the projects implemented. The financial control is undertaken according to modalities under French law.

The budget is composed of voluntary members' contributions, funds from the EU, Member States or other territorial entities.

The operational budget is shared between the four regions for the functioning of the EGTC. The amount is proportional to the size of population.

Regarding the project-related budget, the EGTC aims to launch and implement programmes which would fit the ideas and objectives of larger programmes at EU scale (e.g. Interreg, Life, transnational Mediterranean Programme). This way the EGTC hopes to be eligible for EU funding.

The total annual budget lies between €800 000 and € million. The operational budget amounts to around €700 000.

Current major activities

The following programmes are currently the main projects of the EGTC:

Eurocampus: In this project, the aim is to launch a website in the near future. The website will provide students from the Spanish and French regions and autonomous communities of the EGTC with practical information on life in the

region. Within the framework of this programme, students from universities of either region are given the opportunity to study in another region/ autonomous community of the EGTC. The programme will give students the opportunity to undertake a double Master's degree of four years between the University of Toulouse and the University of Barcelona. Moreover, language courses will be started in order to facilitate student mobility. Consequently, through this programme, a French student for instance will be able to learn Catalan and easily complete a part of his/her studies in Barcelona.

Of the 11 concrete actions undertaken under the Eurocampus programme, 2-3 actions receive a fixed share of the budget.

The aim is to make Eurocampus projects as EU-relevant as possible in order to integrate them into a larger EU-wide programme such as Leonardo Da Vinci or the Lifelong Learning Programme.

CreaMed: With a financing share of €1.4 million, the CreaMed project takes up the biggest share of the project-related budget. The programme aims to facilitate the exchange between business incubators (young entrepreneurs) from each member entity of the EGTC. The programme will start as a two-year project and was due to be launched on 1 April.

The goal is networking, exchanging experience and finding complementarities between participants, at regional level and finally at European level.

The **future tourism centre** is another project of the EGTC, which aims to present the tourist attractions of all four regions on the internet.

Moreover, EGTC members undertake **common cultural projects**. There are nine cultural projects at Euroregion level which always involve partners from at least three of the four regions. The aim is to strengthen the cooperation of cultural operators of the 4 regions and realise interesting projects (music, theatre, shows).

Other projects are undertaken in the field of research, innovation and sustainable development.

The partners involved in the projects are public authorities, official cultural bodies or associations and non-profit organisations.

The EGTC does not undertake any short-term projects and believes that long-term projects allow the achievement of the overall long-term objectives of the EGTC. All projects are run under overarching, long-term themes. Several projects become long-term structural changes if they prove to be successful. Euro-

campus, CreaMED, Research & Development, and cultural projects are long-term cohesion projects which have to have long-term perspectives.

Milestones ahead

Currently, there is a lot of discussion at political level concerning the reforms for the period between 2013 and 2020. As a cooperation body, the Euroregion has been in existence since 2004 and deals with a territory of 13 million inhabitants. Since 2004, the EGTC has developed considerably (and became an official EGTC in 2009). Therefore the discussions concern future developments and the possible future role of the EGTC in decision-making. The goal would be to achieve an increasingly more privileged position reflected in the budgetary volume, the management, the level of cooperation, and the kind of programme operation.

3.8.3. Key findings

Lessons learnt

The main challenge to overcome is in defining the role, nature, and objectives of the EGTC. These must be defined on the common objectives and interests of the members involved.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

Setting up an EGTC has brought major advantages to the cooperation structure. Compared to the former Euroregion, the cooperation has more legal, political and economic power as an EGTC. Since the creation of the EGTC, the Euroregion Pyrénées-Méditerranée is properly recognised at national and EU level, has a financial budget and employees thanks to its convention and statute which gives it a perspective of a stable structure with long-term perspectives.

The EGTC strongly welcomes the common Platform for EGTCs to exchange experiences, information and good practice.

Challenges

Despite the developments and the overall success of the EGTCs, some general challenges persist:

- Regarding the regulatory framework, harmonisation has not yet been achieved. Member States have different legislative systems and different perceptions of the nature and role of EGTCs;
- Moreover, regulation at EU level should facilitate day-to-day administrative and legislative problems. In fact, the Euroregion EGTC has encountered several problems in terms of employment law as the staff is composed of both employees recruited under Spanish law and employees recruited under French law. Concretely, the problems arise between trade unions and in terms of accountability.

Another issue concerns the differences in eligibility of certain regions for certain programmes. The Euroregion faced such problems when the Balearic Islands were not eligible for the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme and cultural projects were not eligible under Interreg IIIB SUDOE, for which all members were eligible.

Finally, the EGTC faces problems in national or EU negotiations since its members i.e. regions and autonomous communities, do not have the same competences and power as national authorities.

3.9. Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau

3.9.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau. Europäischer Verbund für territoriale Zusammenarbeit "Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau". Groupement Européen de Coopération Territoriale "Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau".
Acronym	Strasbourg-Ortenau
Function in ETC	Strategy building, planning and implementing projects in a cross-border territory.
History and current status	The EGTC was created on 4 February 2010. The actors at regional and local level have received significant backing from policy makers for establishing the EGTC. The history dates back to 2003 when the German Chancellor and the French President signed the resolution establishing the Eurodistrict. From then on, the road to establishing the EGTC was remarkably straight. In 2010, the EGTC mainly set up its administration and financial instruments and is now operational. The main change consists of the fact that the French State has become a Board member while previously attending in the capacity of an observer. The German State still has the status of observer.
Countries involved	Germany, France
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	Strasbourg, France (operative unit in Kehl, Germany)
Members per country, administrations involved	Communauté Urbaine de Strasbourg; Stadt Offenburg, Landkreis Ortenau, Stadt Lahr, Stadt Kehl, Stadt Achern, Stadt Oberkirch.
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	Inhabitants: 868 014. Surface: 2176 km ² . Communities: 79.
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	Communauté Urbaine de Strasbourg. Landkreis Ortenau.
Enlargement	The territory of the EGTC on the German side is 6 times

intents	larger than the French territory, yet, the size of population is balanced. On the French side, increasingly more communities want to become members of the EGTC. Their admission has yet to be decided. It would involve many changes at decision-making level, since the seats will have to be redistributed as to maintain a 50/50 balance between German and French members.
Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	<p>According to the Statute and Convention of the EGTC, the Eurodistrict's primary goal is to support, encourage and decide upon trans-border cooperation, by taking care of common interests.</p> <p>Generate added value for the citizens in the area.</p> <p>Create the foundations for an innovative Eurodistrict with the vision to strengthen and develop a cross-border grouping of municipalities which is governed by the principle of joint decision-making.</p> <p>Strengthen and promote the European dimension of Strasbourg as the seat of European institutions.</p>
Tasks	<p>The Eurodistrict aims to undertake cross-border projects in the common areas of competence. Projects should be undertaken to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support sustainable development and a harmonised spatial development; improve the day-to-day lives of citizens by removing barriers and obstacles; support and encourage bilingualism in the territory of the Eurodistrict; support the development of a cross-border cultural space, strengthen the attractiveness of the territory; strengthen cooperation with European institutions and organisations; develop a joint infrastructure and the common use of existing services; support citizen initiatives; initiate and support cross-border projects which do not fall within the competences of any member or simply of single members but which fall under the common objectives of the Eurodistrict; apply for national or EU co-financing; support and facilitate the creation of cross-border economic, social and institutional networks; participate in cooperation beyond the territory of the Euro-

	<p>district to strengthen economic and social cohesion and support the sustainable development of the Rhineland-Palatinate;</p> <p>exchange information;</p> <p>represent the Eurodistrict in national, European, and international bodies;</p> <p>strengthen the European character of the territory (with Strasbourg as the democratic seat of the EU).</p>
Budget	The annual budget amounts to €850 000. Annual contributions are shared equally between French and German members. The membership fee is based on the number of inhabitants and amounts to €1 per inhabitant.
Staff	The EGTC currently counts four permanent employees and one temporary employee responsible for a specific project. The EGTC now has a General Secretary.
Law applicable and legal personality	Public
Organs and their main competencies	<p>The <u>Council</u> (Rat, conseil) takes all key decisions, approves the work programme, and makes decisions on the budget and staff. It is composed of the President, 24 members from France and Germany respectively. Decisions are taken by simple majority.</p> <p>The <u>President</u> (Director) is elected for a period of 2 years and France and Germany take turns in proposing a candidate. He prepares the budget and submits the work plan and the budget to the Council (can conclude contracts up to €25 000), staff, and represents the EGTC.</p> <p>The <u>Vice-President</u>.</p> <p>The <u>Board</u> (le bureau, der Vorstand) is composed of the President and 8-12 members (equal number of French and German members). The Board proposes the work plan and the budget, decides on activities, prepares council meetings, establishes expert groups and conclude contracts ranging between €25 000 and €50 000. Decisions are taken by simple majority.</p> <p>The <u>General Secretariat</u> supports the president and is responsible for Public Relations.</p>
Languages	German, French
URL	http://www.eurodistrict.eu
Further information	eurodistrict@strasbourg.eu

3.9.2. *Development on the ground*

The EGTC as a working structure

The main change consists of the fact that since late November 2010, the French State has been part of the Board. This development marks a change compared to the initial statute which states that State representatives could solely be 'observers'. The German State accepted this amendment, though it still has the status of observer. There have not been any meetings yet since this amendment.

The decision-making procedure and structure (Council, Board, Secretariat-General, the President and Vice-President) runs smoothly in general. The main issues which arise during the meetings relate to decision as to which projects shall receive subventions. Only when deciding upon the selection of projects is a certain national division between the participants sometimes visible.

The EGTC at present numbers four permanent employees and one temporary employee responsible for the main project of the EGTC. The EGTC now has a General Secretary.

The EGTC however faces problems regarding employment law. The aim would be to offer employees the choice to be employed either in France or in Germany, through a change in the statute. In fact, both French and German employees who have been residing in the either state of which they are not nationals should be able to decide under which laws they would like to be employed. The proposed amendments of the statutes are now being subject to scrutiny from legal experts.

Financing and managing the EGTC

The annual budget amounts to €850 000. Staff hiring occurs on a five-year basis. In addition to covering staff costs, the budget finances a number of activities. However, one of the objectives of the EGTC consists in the acquisition of additional funds through large-scale projects such as the FEDER micro-projects.

The provisions for the functioning of the EGTC reveal a system of checks and balances between the organs of the EGTC. As in all such institutions the success depends on the mutual trust between all players, i.e.

- The operative nucleus which is the Secretariat-General, the President, the Board and
- The Council which acts as the 'supervisory board' for the EGTC.

Current major activities

The main current projects focus on the citizens of the Eurodistrict. In autumn 2010 the Eurodistrict launched an interactive online platform through which citizens had the possibility, for four weeks, to suggest projects and ideas for future developments in the Eurodistrict. The project represented a considerable

investment but the results are promising: due to intense public relations in regional media and press participation it was quite successful. Participants suggested ideas for projects related to the media (e.g. a bilingual newspaper), language courses, infrastructure, culture, enlargement, etc. The ideas will be assessed and will provide a basis for a roadmap for future projects. The platform can still be accessed at: <http://www.mon-eurodistrict.eu/>. Even though the consultation phase is now over, the interactive platform will remain a tool for communication between the General Secretariat and the citizens of the Eurodistrict. Furthermore, the Eurodistrict has introduced cross-border exchange for apprentices. Apprentices were able to benefit from an international programme of education and qualification by completing the theoretical part of the apprenticeship in their country of origin and the practical part in a training centre in the other country (France or Germany). The objective is to strengthen apprentices' language capacities and thereby increase their job prospects.

In 2010 the EGTC was still in the start-up phase and a lot of time was dedicated to setting up the administrative and financial structures.

Any projects undertaken were mainly financed through subventions, but in future the EGTC plans to finance its own projects.

The EGTC cooperates with the public sector (e.g. Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière in Paris, Kompetenzzentrum für grenzüberschreitende und europäische Fragen in Kehl, the Regional Council in Germany, etc), as well as the private sector (e.g. civic organisations), depending on the projects.

The EGTC is also in permanent contact with other EGTCs (e.g. Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai) and other Eurodistricts (e.g. Trinational Eurodistrict Basel). The Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau for instance participated in the URBACT Project of transborder governance which ended in May 2010.

Milestones ahead

The new Secretary-General will be in charge of the development of the projects. The EGTC has several priority projects but due to persisting challenges, the EGTC is not fully operational yet. A general communication plan still needs to be put in place.

The online interactive platform should support partnership-building for projects implemented by the EGTC.

Several projects funded from ETC have been undertaken since June 2010 in the Eurodistrict area, but these were mostly managed and implemented by the cities of Strasbourg and Kehl. In future, the EGTC plans to take an active role in the management of micro-project funds.

3.9.3. *Key findings*

Lessons learnt

The Eurodistrict members have a long common political, economic and cultural history which provides a strong ground for the activities launched in those various policy areas. However, the EGTC underwent a long administrative process of establishment, and recently (in late 2010) had to go through important changes in the decision-making structure. Additionally the discussions on legal issues related to employment have been an impediment for a quick start of operations.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

Before the creation of the EGTC, the Eurodistrict did not have a proper legal statute or budget. Moreover, the Eurodistrict used to have two secretariats while it now has one common secretariat with the EGTC, where the operational work can be undertaken under one common roof. The EGTC is therefore definitely an added value mainly in legal terms, and it allows the efficient furthering of territorial cohesion.

Challenges

The EGTC faced challenges in the initial phases mainly in the lengthy process of setting up the administration. Moreover, the employees face a constant problem with regards equal treatment. The solution would be for the statute to include a provision on hiring staff which would allow employees to choose between being employed in Germany or in France. The provision on equal treatment would assure an equal number of French and German employees.

Moreover, differences in national and regional competences hamper the smooth functioning of projects in areas which are still handled differently across EU Member States, such as health, employment and social inclusion. For instance, in the apprenticeship exchange programme, where apprentices should complete the theoretical part of the apprenticeship in their country of origin and the practical part in the other country, practical questions related to insurance have been an obstacle to the implementation. Similar challenges are expected to arise for health-related projects.

Finally, challenges are expected with respect to enlargement. The territory of the EGTC on the German side is six times larger than the French territory, yet, the size of population is balanced. On the French side, increasingly more communities want to become members of the EGTC. Their admission has yet to be decided. It would involve many changes at decision-making level, since the seats will have to be redistributed so as to maintain a 50/50 balance between German and French members.

3.10. Grande Région

3.10.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	GECT-INTERREG "Programme Grande Région".
Function in ETC	Managing Authority (MA) for a multilateral cooperation programme (initially four cross-border programmes have been merged). The INTERREG IV A Programme in the Greater Region aims at intensifying cross-border cooperation. This goal is to be achieved by means of local and regional projects between partners from the various areas in the Greater Region.
History and current status	The EGTC was created in April 2010 with the aim of strengthening cross-border cooperation between the members. The procedure of establishment was rather lengthy due to differences of competencies between national and regional members (for instance in France) and due to priority shifts in the crisis (mainly in Luxembourg).
Countries involved	France, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium.
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	Metz (France)
Members per country, administrations involved	LU: Grand Duchy of Luxembourg; DE : Länder governments of Saarland and Rheinland-Pfalz; FR : French State represented by the Préfet of the Region, the Regional Council of Lorraine, the local authorities of Moselle, Meurthe-et-Moselle and Meuse; BE : the Regional Government of Wallonia, the French Community and the German-speaking Community.
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	Population: 11.2 million inhabitants (3% of the total EU-15 population). Surface: 65 401 km ² .
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	The Grande Région is marked by differing socio-economic structures: urban, industrial and rural areas. The diversity is an asset for the establishment of longer-term economic and cultural cooperation. With its diverse multilevel members (national, regional and local authorities), the Grande Region is truly an example of multilevel cooperation which aims at strengthening and improving the economy, the environment (quality of life, increase attractiveness and protect the environment), the

	employment situation, the exchange of knowledge, the utilisation of cultural resources and social cohesion. Some challenges remain in relation to the differences of competences between members.
Enlargement intents	The EGTC could only be expanded in case of any membership changes of the Interreg programme.
Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	The major objective is the smooth and efficient management of the cross-border ETC programme for the Greater Region.
Tasks	The objective according to the convention is to manage the Transnational ETC Interreg IV A- Operational Programme for the Grande Region 2007-2013. The EGTC undertakes all tasks of a Managing Authority for an ETC programme according to Regulations (EC) 1083/2006 and 1080/2006.
Budget	The total volume of the programme amounts to around €200 million, of which 50% is covered by the ERDF. The EGTC is financed from Technical Assistance funds of the programme. The budget for staff amounts to between €500 000 and €650 000. The First Level Control is under the responsibility of the respective national state. The EGTC is subject to the same control routines as any other Technical Assistance project.
Staff	Currently there are 2 permanent employees, but the number is soon to be increased to 3 employees. 6 persons work in the Joint Technical Secretariat (Luxembourg), organised as an association. In addition, 6 persons are paid from Technical Assistance to support project generation in the participating regions.
Law applicable and legal personality	Public law (France); Préfecture de la région Lorraine, Metz, France.
Organs and their main competencies	General Assembly. Administrative Council (day-to-day business of the EGTC). Joint Technical Secretariat.
Languages	French, German
URL	http://www.interreg-4agr.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=345
Further information	melanie.charlotte@lorraine.pref.gouv.fr jean-claude.sinner@mat.etat.lu

3.10.2. *Development on the ground*

The EGTC as a working structure

The number of staff will soon increase from two to three employees. Six people are currently paid from technical assistance to support project generation in the participating regions.

The structure consists of a General Assembly, an Administrative Council (day-to-day business of the EGTC) and a Joint Technical Secretariat. Decisions are taken by unanimity.

Yet, the role of the EGTC as a Managing Authority is not entirely clear. In its role as a Managing Authority, the Grande Region has to develop a clear-cut profile with a view to the task division in programme management. The 11 partners of the INTERREG Programme are represented in the General Assembly of the EGTC.

Financing and managing the EGTC

The EGTC is financed from the Technical Assistance of the programme. The Technical Assistance of the programme amounts to €212 million of which the ERDF covers 50% and national contributions another 50%.

Estimates for the staff (once the final staff numbers are in place) of the EGTC range between € 500 000 and € 650 000 (again, 50% are covered by the ERDF and 50% from national contributions).

The First Level control is under the responsibility of the respective national state.

The public accountant, according to the convention, is appointed by the Prefect of the Region of Lorraine, on proposal by the General Treasurer of Lorraine.

Current major activities

The programme involves a wide variety of small-scale projects and local projects at Greater Region level, undertaken within three main areas:

Priority	Objective	Share of Funds (%)
Economy	enhance and promote the competitiveness and innovation of the interregional economy, as well as to protect and strengthen the labour market.	46.3
Space	Improve the quality of life, increase the attractiveness of the individual areas and protect the environment.	26.9

People	Increase the exchange and dissemination of knowledge, utilize cultural resources and strengthen social cohesion.	26.8
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Milestones ahead

Being a relatively recent EGTC, the priority is to define the role of the EGTC as a Managing Authority of the Interreg programme and to establish a clear division of tasks to implement and monitor the programme.

3.10.3. Key findings

Lessons learnt

- The Greater Region EGTC was the first to act as a Managing Authority for a multilateral programme on cross-border cooperation. The relationship between the General Assembly of the EGTC and the Monitoring Authority is not yet entirely clear and it will take its time to come from parallel efforts to an optimisation of efficiency.
- It is of major importance to define the role of the EGTC in the implementation and monitoring of the programme in advance.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

- The members of the EGTC have been working together for several years. The idea behind setting up an EGTC was to start a cross-border cooperation programme involving four Member States.
- The multilevel nature of the EGTC has major advantages as to coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the Interreg programme and projects. In fact, the territory's dense infrastructure, interlinked rural and urban areas offer a good platform for cooperation along the priorities of the programme.

Challenges

- The role of the EGTC as a Managing Authority is not entirely clear. The division of tasks between the General Assembly of the EGTC and the Monitoring Authority has yet to be clarified. It will be interesting to see how the political cooperation between the secretariats of the Interreg programmes will continue.
- Another challenge concerns employment of staff. The administrative and legal procedure should be facilitated and clarified as to accommodate public regulations of all members. The Greater Region faced problems in this respect given that the seat of the EGTC is in France but salaries are much higher in Luxembourg.
- The differences in competences of the EGTC members (national, regional, local) may at the same time present challenges in decision-making.

3.11. ZASNET¹²

3.11.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	Agrupamento Europeu de Cooperação Territorial — ZASNET, AECT.
Acronym	ZASNET
Function in ETC	Intermediate authorities from Spain and Northern Portugal.
History and current status	<p>The border shared between Spain and Portugal is the oldest and most stable border in Europe. Based on the importance of CBC in the territory, the Bragança-Zamora Working Community was created in September 2000. It served as a platform for cooperation and networking which strengthened and increased the relation between the members. Several activities were undertaken by the Working Community such as studies on infrastructure and market research.</p> <p>Based on the positive experience of their cooperation, the members decided to upgrade the structure through creating the ZASNET EGTC.</p> <p>The convention and the statute of the EGTC were officially approved on 10 March 2010.</p>
Countries involved	Spain, Portugal.
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	Rua Engenheiro José Beça, at 46, 5300-034 Bragança, PORTUGAL.
Members per country, administrations involved	<p>Associação de Municípios da Terra Fria do Nordeste Transmontano (PT);</p> <p>Associação de Municípios da Terra Quente Transmontana (PT);</p> <p>Associação Municípios do Douro Superior (PT);</p> <p>Diputación Provincial de Zamora (ES);</p> <p>Diputación Provincial de Salamanca (ES);</p> <p>Ayuntamiento de Zamora (ES).</p>
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	<p>Surface: 29 907 km².</p> <p>Population: 681 153 inhabitants.</p>
Territory; administrative; Aspects of mul-	<p>The EGTC is composed of:</p> <p><u>In Portugal:</u></p> <p>Regions of Trás -os -Montes and Douro Superior;</p>

¹² Despite several attempts, no contact could be established with any representatives. The information is therefore solely based on desk research.

tilevel govern- ance	<p>Association of Municipalities of Terra Fria do Nordeste Transmontano which includes the municipalities of Bragança, Miranda do Douro, Mogadouro, Vimioso e Vinhais;</p> <p>Association of Municipalities of Terra Quente Transmontana, which includes the municipalities of Alfândega da Fé, Carrazeda de Ansiães, Macedo de Cavaleiros, Mirandela e Vila Flor;</p> <p>Association of municipalities of Douro Superior which includes the municipalities Freixo de Espada à Cinta, Torre de Moncorvo and Vila Nova de Foz Côa;</p> <p><u>In Spain:</u></p> <p>Provinces of Salamanca and Zamora including the city of Zamora;</p> <p>The EGTC is therefore an example of multilevel governance since it assembles municipalities, regional authorities and provinces.</p>
Enlargement intents	Not known.
Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	<p>The EGTC intends to promote cross-border relations between the members of the EGTC in the fields of the environment, culture, tourism, infrastructure and economic development. It aims to implement joint projects of cooperation, promote the territory abroad and generate synergies to invert the negative demographic tendencies of the area.</p>
Tasks	<p>According to the Statute, the EGTC aims to:</p> <p>Promote cross-border relations between the members in the areas of environment, tourism, culture and business development;</p> <p>Support local policy development;</p> <p>Collaborate with the Bragança-Zamora Working Community, the Douro Superior - Salamanca Community of Territorial Cooperation as well as other territorial entities of regional and local cooperation projects;</p> <p>Promote the territory of the EGTC;</p> <p>Improve the everyday life of the citizens of the territory, attract new residents to the area and reverse the negative demographic trends.</p> <p>Activities shall be undertaken with or without the financial support from the Spanish and Portuguese governments and EU funds. In the funding period of 2007-2013, the EGTC will be involved in the development of inter-regional pro-</p>

	<p>jects in the area of Northern Portugal – Castilla y León mainly in the area of economic development, tourism, health etc.</p> <p>In February 2010, ZASNET signed a declaration on a Biosphere Reserve for the entire border area aiming to receive EU funds within the framework of the Interreg programme. The objective is to preserve the environment and the sustainable development of the territory.</p>
Budget	<p>The budget, according to the Statute, is composed of:</p> <p>The initial member contribution of € 40 000;</p> <p>The annual obligatory membership fee of € 40 000 which will cover the operational/ management costs for the whole year;</p> <p>EU Funds (ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Funds);</p> <p>other grants and subsidies;</p> <p>any other income legally conform to the Statute;</p> <p>The annual budget amounts to around € 240000 in total. It is approved by the General Assembly.</p>
Staff	<p>According to the Statute, staff shall be balanced in terms of nationalities.</p> <p>Moreover, employees' salaries, rights and obligations will be identical, regardless of their nationality, and subject to national employment law.</p>
Law applicable and legal personality	<p>Public law (PT).</p>
Organs and their main competencies	<p>The General Assembly is composed of one representative from each member for a period of two years (except in the case of membership termination), chaired by the President of the Assembly (voted by majority rule, subject to a system of rotation between Spain and Portugal) and a Vice-President. It takes decisions on all major issues such as:</p> <p>Electing the President, the Vice-President, the Director, and the Audit;</p> <p>Setting the annual membership fee, approving the annual work plans and budgets;</p> <p>Approving the amendments and revision of the work plan and the budget;</p> <p>Decisions on the admission of new members;</p> <p>Decisions on changes in duties and roles as defined in the Statute;</p> <p>Decisions on staff hiring and legal and financial arrangements.</p> <p>The General assembly shall meet at least four times a year.</p>

	<p>Regular sessions with the President shall be organised and shall last for a minimum period of 7 days.</p> <p><u>The President</u> shall chair all meetings and decide upon the agenda of the meetings, authorise payments issued from the EGTC budget, reject the Opinion of the Assembly if it does not conform to the statutory obligations.</p> <p><u>The Director</u> represents the EGTC. He is elected and supervised by the General Assembly. His main duties consist of: Preparing and submitting proposals for all major documents related to the management of the EGTC; Supporting the General Assembly; Promoting and coordinating the activities of the EGTC; Managing, directing and monitoring all activities undertaken by the EGTC;</p> <p><u>The Audit</u>, the financial body of the EGTC, is composed of the President and two members, and is responsible for: Periodically checking the accounts; Presenting the financial accounts to the General Assembly for verification; Advising on the annual report and budget.</p>
Languages	Portuguese, Spanish
URL	None
Further information	Rosario.almazan@zamoradipu.es

3.12. Hospital de Cerdanya

3.12.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	AECT Hospital de Cerdanya / AECT Hospital de Cerdana / GECT Hôpital de Cerdagne.
Acronym	AECT / GECT HC
Function in ETC	Operation of a joint hospital.
History and current status	<p>Construction works of the facility have been completed, now the equipment will be purchased and installed. The hospital should start to operate in 2012. The EGTC will operate the hospital and is thus in charge of the staff.</p> <p>The statutes were signed on 26 April 2010 (by the President of Catalonia and the French Minister of Health).</p> <p>This marks the end of a development process which started in 2003. Some milestones of the process are:</p> <p>In 2005 a declaration marked the start of the development process for the joint hospital;</p> <p>In July 2006 a joint foundation was established and the fact that EGTC as a new legal vehicle had a legal base in the EC Regulation gave considerable momentum to the process;</p> <p>In 2008 a framework agreement on Spanish-French cross-border cooperation in the health sectors was signed (also encouraging the joint use of facilities and aiming at easy access to services for the inhabitants of the border areas);</p> <p>In 2008 the Catalan Government approved the budget to start building.</p>
Countries involved	Spain (Catalunia), France.
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	Puigcerdà (Spain, Catalonia) – seat of the hospital.
Members per country, administrations involved	<p>Catalan Government;</p> <p>French Government;</p> <p>Regional Health Agency for Languedoc-Rousillon [Agence régionale de santé de Languedoc-Rousillon (ARS Languedoc-Rousillon)];</p> <p>French National Health Insurance Caisse Nationale de l'assurance de travailleurs salariés (CNAMTS).</p>
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	The hospital will serve a cross-border catchment area in a valley with about 30 000 inhabitants (thereof 17 000 on the Spanish side and 13 000 on the French side).

<p>Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance</p>	<p>The hospital will serve the territories of Cerdanya in Spain as well as Cerdagne and Capcir in France.</p> <p>The EGTC is an example of the successful cooperation between national, regional and local levels: it is the first example which bridges the differences in the national health systems between Spain and France.</p> <p>The Catalan and French governments (represented by the Ministries of Health in each country) and the French regional health agency developed the detailed project. The municipality where the hospital has its seat (Puigcerdà) cooperated in various ways.</p> <p>Local level is also represented in the Advisory Board of the EGTC.</p>
<p>Enlargement intents</p>	<p>Since the EGTC operates a health facility for a catchment area predefined by natural boundaries, territorial enlargement of the EGTC is not an issue; changes in membership might occur due to changes in health systems.</p>
<p>Duration of the EGTC</p>	<p>Unlimited</p>
<p>Objectives</p>	<p>The key objectives of the EGTC are focused on the facility and comprise the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> construction of the facility; start of the operating phase; ongoing management; <p>Moreover the EGTC will also support the development of joint projects in regional health management.</p>
<p>Tasks</p>	<p>During the phase of construction and start-up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitation of all necessary actions to ensure the construction, in particular the cooperation with public administrations involved; safeguard the interest of users with publicity based on a communication plan; <p>Elaboration of plan for financing of construction works and subsequent equipment, operational budget and a provisional operation plan.</p> <p>In the operation phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of services related to the hospital; Support to health prevention programmes; Promotion of education and research for health. <p>In addition the EGTC will strengthen regional governance in the health system: it initiates a joint territorial health project which is subject to a convention attached to the convention for the hospital.</p> <p>In order to meet these tasks the EGTC has far-reaching</p>

	competencies such as acquisition and possession of land and real estates, concluding service contracts, issuing employment contracts etc.
Budget	The investment volume for the facility amounts to about € 50 million (thereof € 31 million for the construction and the remaining funds for equipment). According to preliminary estimates the annual budget for the operation of the hospital will amount to € 15.5million.
Staff	Currently under negotiation; the EGTC will act as the employer for the staff of the hospital.
Law applicable and legal personality	Established under Spanish law; common legal provisions (following the Convention and the Statutes) will prevail; in case of disputes which cannot be settled in the joint legal framework, Spanish law will be applied. Citizens from both countries have the explicit right to file their complaints against the members of the EGTC (which is important given the fact that it is a health facility and national standards in procedures have to be safeguarded). The Catalan Government (Intervention General) is in charge of financial control and audit. If the case is that the EGTC receives funds from EU programmes then the respective control procedures according to the programme will be applied. Procurement and employment is subject to Spanish and Catalan legislation respectively. It is important to note that reimbursement for the treatment of French citizens is the subject of a separate technical agreement between the EGTC and the French Health Insurance. An expert group should develop over the next five years a viable solution in case the winding-up of the EGTC is required. It is explicitly anchored in the Statutes that the winding-up of the EGTC should not disrupt the provision of health services - ad-hoc decisions by the partners have to be taken accordingly.
Organs and their main competencies	Management Board (le conseil d'administration). The Executive Board (le bureau executif) is working on behalf of the Management Board and constitutes the executive arm for the management of the facility. Director acting as <i>CEO</i> . President on rotating terms acting as <i>ambassador</i> . Advisory Board (le conseil consultatif).
Languages	All official documents will be available in French, Catalan and Spanish. The staff of the hospital is supposed to have

	basic knowledge of all three languages.
URL	http://www.hcerdanya.eu/
Further information	D. Toni Dedeu: tdedeu@gencat.cat

3.12.2. *Development on the ground*

Establishing the EGTC

The overarching challenge was to negotiate the joint financing and operation of joint health facility between two countries with significant differences in the health care system. Funding for investment came from the ETC cross border co-operation programme FR-ES-Andorra. The funding split for investment as well as subsequent operation is 60/40 between the Spanish and the French sides.

Clarification of some issues is quite important in order to make the hospital an attractive facility for French citizens:

- Clinical records will be trilingual; terminology is mostly in Latin; texts will be translated automatically;
- Newborn babies of French mothers will receive both nationalities; however, the recognition procedure in France is quite challenging;
- Death certificates for French citizens issued by the hospital also have to undergo a quite challenging procedure to be recognised;
- Direct road access from the French side to the hospital (150 metres from the border to France) should also be established; as for any establishment of border-crossing points this has to follow an administrative procedure and requires several legal steps;
- A small issue is the fact that ambulance cars in Spain have yellow emergency lights whereas in France lights of such cars are blue – this has to be anchored in agreements with the local and regional police forces.

The Statutes were signed on 26 April 2010. The drafting process started in February 2009. Numerous meetings took place. The almost final document was presented in December 2009. The fine tuning of the document took about three months. Most discussions related to interpretation issues since – despite the fact that Catalan serves as common language – a trilingual document with precise terminology poses a considerable challenge.

The drafting of statutes was done in a very pragmatic way (considering the challenge of developing the basis for the joint management of a health facility with an investment volume of about € 50 million and an expected annual operation budget amounting to € 15 million). A small group of people started working on the document. The group consisted of six persons including the representatives of the key members as well as legal and governance experts.

Establishing structures and organising the decision-making process

The first meeting of the Executive Board (as the most important operational committee) took place on 15 December 2010 (before the signing of the Statutes).

Membership in all organs follows a 60/40 split between Spanish and French members, (this is also the proportion of inhabitants in the catchment area and thus the basis for the split of costs for construction and maintenance).

For the operation of the facility the Management Board (le conseil d'administration) and the Executive Board (le bureau executif) are in a crucial position. The Executive Board can be seen as the executive arm of the Management board: it elaborates the key documents – in particular the budget, recruitment plans, it executes financial management and contracts the employees. All proposed key documents have to be approved by the Management Board.

But it is interesting to see that this EGTC comprises also a wider dimension related to governance for health services in the cross-border region. In the statutes a project promoting health services in the border area has been anchored as a broader initiative developed between the Spanish and French regional health authorities, i.e. CatSalut and ARS Languedoc-Rousillon. The so-called Advisory Board (le conseil consultatif) is in charge of developing the project. It is intended to be part-financed from the ETC programme though one has to state that commitment of funds in the programme is quite advanced.

Financing and managing of the EGTC

The investment volume for the facility amounts to about € 50 million (of which € 31 million is for construction and the remaining funds for equipment). The investment has been funded from the ETC programme France-Andorra-Spain. For a start-up phase of five years the French side will take over 40% of the annual cost of the facility. After evaluation of this five-year period a new financing model – based on the actual cost of treatments for French citizens - might be negotiated.

The EGTC will also act as employer of staff. According to preliminary estimates the annual budget for the operation of the hospital will amount to € 15.5 mn. The plans for staffing and recruitment are currently subject to negotiation between the partners. A joint project by two universities (Girona in ES and Perpignan in FR) is aimed at developing a training plan for the staff. All staff should have at least a basic knowledge in the three languages spoken in the region.

Starting the operations

The hospital is expected to be opened in 2012. It will consist of 71 beds, four operating rooms, one birth delivery unit, two intensive care units and other equipment such as computed tomography.

One major point is that the hospital has become a focal point for further development of cooperation in health care at the regional level: in the event that certain treatments cannot be offered in this hospital cooperation agreements with other hospitals in France and Spain have been set up; thus the nucleus of a regional network has been established. A major initiative aims at developing an emergency plan for the cross-border region Pyrenées-Mediterranée; this should establish deepened cooperation in health services, in particular with regard to ambulance services and hospitals but also as regards the use of rescue helicopters.

Currently a communication plan to encourage the French population in the region to use the new facility is under preparation.

3.12.3. Key findings

Lessons learnt

- EGTC is a suitable legal instrument to set up the management of a joint facility providing health services;
- The set-up of the structure, i.e. its organs and the procedures has to follow the purpose of the EGTC (which is in this case clear-cut).

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

- The new legal tool of the EGTC allowed the establishment of a management body which is tackling multilevel governance; thus it supports the bridging of administrative differences between France and Spain (Catalunia);
- Health services which are open to citizens from two Member States on equal terms have to be considered as a particularly visible contribution to territorial cohesion;
- The hospital has a broader function - it is a nucleus and showcase for wider cooperation in the health sector in the border area: this health cooperation project is anchored in the mission statement and also mentioned as a project in the Statutes.

Challenges

- A major challenge ahead is if the use of the facility by French citizens will meet the expectations of all partners.

3.13. Eurodistrict Saar Moselle¹³

3.13.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	GECT " Eurodistrict Saarmoselle". EVTZ " Eurodistrikt Saarmoselle".
Function in ETC	Development of a cross-border area.
History and current status	6 May 2010: Creation of the EGTC. 2009: Statutory decisions taken by the members and beginning of notification process. 2005-2008: Development of a future vision for the Saar-Moselle region and preparation for creating the EGTC. 2004: Signing of a common declaration for creating the Eurodistrict Saarbrücken-Moselle Est with over 600 political representatives of the cross-border agglomeration. 2003: In the context of the 40 th anniversary of the Élysée Treaty, common proclamation of the German and French governments in favour of creating the Eurodistrict. 1997: Grouping of the communities and community associations of the cross-border region through the 'Zukunft Saar-Moselle Avenir' association aiming to structure and develop the cross-border cooperation.
Countries involved	France, Germany.
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	Seat of the Communauté d'agglomération Sarreguemines Confluences, 99 rue du Maréchal Foch, BP 80805, F-57200 Sarregemines (France). The operational office is in Saarbrücken (Germany).
Members per country, administrations involved	The EGTC is composed of 8 members. <u>In Germany</u> : The Regionalverband Saarbrücken, which includes: The city of Saarbrücken; The city of Friedrichsthal; The Großrosseln municipality; The Heusweiler municipality; The Kleinblittersdorf municipality; The city of Püttlingen; The Quierschied municipality; The Riegelsberg municipality; The city of Sulzbach;

¹³ Despite several attempts, no contact could be established with any representatives. The information is therefore solely based on desk research.

	<p>The city of Völklingen;</p> <p><u>In France</u>, the members are:</p> <p>Communauté d'agglomération Forbach Porte de France;</p> <p>Communauté d'agglomération Sarreguemines Confluences;</p> <p>Communauté de communes du Pays Naborien;</p> <p>Communauté de communes de Freyming-Merlebach;</p> <p>Communauté de communes du District urbain de Faulquemont;</p> <p>Communauté de communes du Warndt;</p> <p>Communauté de commune de l'Albe et des lacs.</p>
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	<p>Population: 600 000 inhabitants.</p> <p>5 potential partners with around 400 000 inhabitants.</p> <p>The surface corresponds to the territory of the Saar Moselle Region.</p>
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	<p>The EGTC is composed of 8 regional or community associations which are themselves composed of municipalities. The multilevel character of cooperation is important to the overall goals of the EGTC. The political support towards strengthening French-German relations and cooperation make the multilevel government aspect key in this EGTC.</p>
Duration of the EGTC	<p>Unlimited</p>
Objectives	<p>According to the Convention, the EGTC aims to ensure the sustainable development of the cross-border region through supporting, furthering and coordinating the cross-border cooperation between the communities and the community associations in two priority areas:</p> <p>Support the development of the Eurodistrict territory;</p> <p>Initiate, monitor and implement inter-communal cooperation projects developed in the area and relevant for the citizens of Saar Moselle.</p>
Tasks	<p>The tasks, as defined in the convention, are the following:</p> <p>Undertake cross-border projects in the common policy areas</p> <p>Support the EGTC members in the implementation of cross-border projects;</p> <p>Support and further cross-border networks which contribute to the realisation of the goals of the EGTC.</p> <p>The EGTC promotes the interests of the Eurodistrict Saar-Moselle before of regional, national and European institutions.</p> <p>To collect and disseminate information on the cooperation projects of the members in the territory of the EGTC.</p> <p>The EGTC aims to produce synergies between the territories</p>

	<p>and make the area more attractive for entrepreneurs and qualified labour force. The aim is to guarantee growth, employment and quality of living to the inhabitants.</p> <p>The EGTC aims not only to develop common projects but also to achieve common governance of the cross-border area and increase the French-German cooperation. Projects are undertaken mainly in the area of spatial planning, infrastructure, energy and environment, economy and employment, tourism and culture.</p> <p>SaarMoselle undertakes several projects in the area of tourism, funded by the Interreg program and the Metropolitan project. For instance, it created a museum pass called “Ticket“ that gives people the possibility to enjoy reductions in museums in the cross-border area.</p> <p>Other examples include the online leisure and culture guide for the cross-border region, the cross-border annual cycling event "Vélo vis-à-vis" as well as a route planner through industrial areas called the "Route of Fire" ("Route des Feuers" / “Route du Feu”). The “Warndt weekend” takes place at the beginning of June and is organised by the partners from the German-French region of Warndt. The projects aim to bring the citizens from the cross-border together.</p> <p>Moreover, the EGTC focuses its activities on education and bilingualism. A French-German law licence has been developed at the University of Sarreguemines with the support of other partner-universities. Third-year students from Saarbrücken or Metz can undertake a Franco-German law programme in Sarreguemines and vice versa. Furthermore, a project is currently in preparation which aims at furthering bilingualism in institutions for young children. In the health sector, a first study is currently being undertaken with the view of creating a cross-border emergency management system.</p> <p>The goal of the Energy Region Warndt-Rosseltal project is to support the innovation of renewable energy-systems. The development of a biogas plant (Biogasanlage) is part of the project. Several partners of the EGTC are involved in the project.</p>
Budget	<p>The EGTC is financed through:</p> <p>The annual member contribution as established by the Assembly. The amount of the annual member contribution is proportional to the number of inhabitants of the members. The membership fee amounts to EUR 0.80/ inhabitant. As</p>

	<p>such the contributions are spread as follows: 55.79% for the Regionalverband Saarbrücken; 13.39% for the Communauté d’agglomération de Fortbach Porte de France; 8.71% for the Communauté d’agglomération Sarreguemines Confluences; 6.90% for the Communauté de communes du Pays Naborien; 5.80% for the Communauté de communes de Freyding-Merlebach; 4.04% for the Communauté de communes du District urbain de Faulquemont; 3.06% for the Communauté de communes du Warndt; 2.31% for the Communauté de commune de l’Albe et des lacs. Public, local, regional, national and European subventions: French government; Lorraine region (in the framework of the Metropolitan project under the project State-Region contract 2007-2013); Applications for funds through the INTERREG IV A program. Donations Any other contributions permitted by the laws applied for the EGTC. The first level control is undertaken by an independent external audit.</p>
Staff	The EGTC can hire staff or hire external staff in accordance with French law.
Law applicable and legal personality	Public law (FR)
Organs and their main competencies	<p>The bodies of the EGTC are: The Assembly, constituted by representatives of the members (50% French representatives, 50% German representatives, amounting 62 seats in total). The Assembly meets at least twice a year; Discusses the development and the common future perspectives of the EGTC; Decides upon the annual work plan; decides upon the agenda for the next Assembly meeting; Decides on the financial member contribution; Takes final decisions on the budget; Elects the President and the Vice-President and the other members of the Assembly;</p>

	<p>Decides on any other important developments of the EGTC (members, major contracts, etc).</p> <p>The Board is the executive branch of the EGTC. It is composed of the President, the Vice-President and 6 members from each, French and German representatives (These 12 members are elected by the Assembly for a period of 2 years). The Board meets at least 4 times a year when summoned by the President. Decisions are taken by simple majority.</p> <p>Prepares the Assembly meetings.</p> <p>Prepares a proposal , in agreement with the EGTC members, of the annual budget.</p> <p>Approves contracts amounting to between EUR 10 000 and 90 000.</p> <p>Decides on staff employment.</p> <p>A President and a Vice-President who are part of the Board. They are elected among the representatives of the members in the Assembly. They are elected for a period of 2 years. The presidency is subject to a system of rotation between France and Germany every 2 years. The role of the President (with the assistance of the Vice-President) is to:</p> <p>Chair the Assembly;</p> <p>Summon the representatives of the members to Assembly meetings;</p> <p>Sign the minutes of the meetings;</p> <p>Decide upon the agenda of the meetings;</p> <p>Summon Board meetings;</p> <p>Decide on the revenue of the EGTC;</p> <p>Nominate the Director;</p> <p>Present the budget, the work programme and the annual report to the Assembly;</p> <p>Officially represent the EGTC.</p>
Languages	French and German
URL	http://www.saarmoselle.org/
Further information	Tel.: +49 681 506 6161

3.14. EGTC PONS DANUBII

3.14.1. Key facts

Name of the EGTC	Pons Danubii European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Ltd.
Acronym	PONS DANUBII EGTC
Function in ETC	Strengthening economic and social cohesion in the region.
History and current status	The EGTC was officially registered on 15.12.2010. Despite the EGTC Ister-Granum being located in proximity of the Pons Danubii grouping, the establishment of the EGTC was initiated by the Mayor of Tata city in order to promote their interests more effectively. The representatives of Komárno, Hurbanovo, Kollárovo (SK), Komárom, Kisbér and Tata (HU) have been preparing the establishment of the EGTC for approximately 2 years.
Countries involved	Slovakia, Hungary.
Seat of the EGTC (and operational units)	City of Komárno (Námestie generála Klapku 1 Komárno 945 01 Slovak Republic).
Members per country, administrations involved	The <u>Slovak</u> cities of Komárno, Hurbanovo and Kolárovo. The <u>Hungarian</u> cities of Komárom, Tata and Kisbér.
Key indicators (inhabitants, surface area)	All towns are located in the Slovak-Hungarian cross-border region. The total number of inhabitants is approximately 250 000.
Territory; administrative; Aspects of multilevel governance	All members of the EGTC are municipalities (cities), the number of inhabitants on each side of the border is balanced. PONS DANUBII was specifically established for cities in the territory to serve as common platform for planning and implementation of development activities. Only a limited number of cities from the region would be considered for possible enlargement.
Enlargement intents	Founding members share the idea that in order to keep the EGTC functional, it should have a limited number of members. There is room for the inclusion of two to three additional members. Representatives of two cities that are not part of the EGTC participated at the first General Assembly meeting and one of them had already expressed an intention to apply for membership.

Duration of the EGTC	Unlimited
Objectives	The EGTC set the following objectives: Strengthen cross-border cohesion on the whole territory; Implementation of projects aimed at strategic development; Improvement of everyday life of inhabitants.
Tasks	<p>The main task of the EGTC according to its Statute is “to implement programmes and projects of territorial cooperation with the financial contribution from the European Union or without it”.</p> <p>Other tasks focus on the identification, promotion and implementation of territorial cooperation programmes, projects in the traditional areas of regional development such as transport, economy, tourism, energy (with a focus on renewable sources of energy), culture, environment and human resource development.</p> <p>In order to strengthen regional visibility cooperation of public institutions including exchanges of persons and international internships is an important issue. Events and projects related to sports, health and civil protection of inhabitants.</p> <p>Moreover the Statutes emphasise the development, promotion and implementation of programmes, projects and common events of territorial cooperation in the following areas (in line with Regulation No 1080/2006):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support of entrepreneurship, particularly support to SMEs, tourism, culture and cross-border trade; support and improvement of protection and management of natural and cultural assets (resources) as well as prevention of natural and technical risks; support interconnection between urban and rural areas; improved interconnectivity and accessibility throughout all layers of infrastructure.
Budget	Each member contributes €500. Additionally, on an annual basis cities pay a membership fee of 0.5 EUR (150 HU Ft.) per inhabitant with permanent residence. It is primarily used for the operational purposes.
Staff	Currently the EGTC employs one person – the Director.
Law applicable and legal personality	<p>Interpretation and exercising the Statute is done under the legislation of the country in which the EGTC is registered, i.e. Slovak Republic.</p> <p>EGTC is a specific form of a legal person governed by commercial law.</p>

<p>Organs and their main competencies</p>	<p>The main bodies of the EGTC according to the Statutes are the General Assembly, Director, Supervisory Board and finally the Secretariat (which has not yet been installed). The <u>General Assembly</u> (Zhromaždenie) meets at least twice a year and has the exclusive right to approve: Convention and Statute, and their modification, winding-up of the EGTC; All documents related to financial issues such as budget, long-term and annual activity plan, annual balance of accounts and annual report on activities, use of the profit and loss payment, membership fees, etc.; Elect the Director and setting terms of his/her employment, and also for the staff of the Secretariat; Elect and withdraw members of Supervisory Board, as well as chair and deputy chair of the Assembly. <u>The Chair of the Assembly</u> (Predseda): Calls, organizes and steers meetings of the Assembly; Represents the Assembly at the internal meetings of the grouping and towards external bodies and organizations; Takes care of proper financial administration of funds provided by the members of the grouping, controls expenditure and approves financial operations; Approves proposals of conceptual, strategy contracts with third parties before the signature of the Director; Verifies the implementation of decisions, work of deputy chair and the Director; Suggests a candidate for the position of Director. The <u>Director</u> (Riaditeľ) acts as statutory head and takes decisions on those matters that are not explicitly in the hands of the Assembly and its chair. The Director is an employee of the EGTC. Details of responsibilities of the function are more specifically defined in the employment contract. The general role of the Director is to safeguard the effective functioning of the Grouping on a longer-term basis. <u>Supervisory Board</u> (Dozorná rada) is a control body of the grouping responsible for: Examination of the annual balance of accounts, annual report on activities and submission of its opinion to the Assembly; Performing control of accounting and administration of other documents; Drawing the attention of the Assembly to identified deficiencies and presents proposals for its removal.</p>
<p>Languages</p>	<p>Working languages are Slovak, Hungarian and English.</p>

URL	Not available.
Further information	Mr Zoltán Bárá, Director of PONS DANUBII EGTC, tel.: + 421 905 828 898 E-mail address: zoltan.bara@gmail.com

3.14.2. *Development on the ground*

Establishing the EGTC

Although in this particular part of the Slovak-Hungarian border there already exists one of the first EGTCs in the European Union (Ister-Granum), representatives of six border cities felt the need for a new grouping in order to promote their interests more effectively. The establishment of the grouping is also a reaction to the rather fragmented cooperation efforts between the cities in the cross-border area and the resulting lack of coordinated development initiatives. The overall aim is to provide a common platform for cities located in the border region to cooperate in the planning and implementation of regional development activities having impact on the wider territory. To some extent, the EGTC is considered as an instrument to eliminate obstacles to cooperation resulting from different legislation in Slovakia and Hungary, including mechanisms for financing local authorities.

The establishment of the EGTC was initiated by the Mayor of Tata. The representatives of six cities had been preparing the establishment of the EGTC for approximately two years. During this period, the members of the EGTC successfully agreed all cornerstones of the future EGTC. Appointing and employing the director significantly supported the preparation of the notification procedure. From the very beginning, it was agreed that the EGTC should be balanced in terms of the number of partners and the population living in the cities. There is a consensus between founding members that the size of the EGTC should remain limited in order to remain flexible and functional.

The actual registration of the new EGTC took place in the Slovak Republic since the procedures seemed to be more specified. As a matter of fact, the founding members were requested to provide more specific information on the objectives of the grouping. EGTC PONS DANUBII was officially registered on 15 December 2010.

Establishing structures and organising the decision-making process

The General Assembly is the highest body of the EGTC composed of representatives of all members. The chair, officially representing the EGTC, is elected by the Assembly as well as the co-chair for a period of four years. Strategic decisions are taken only by the General Assembly, in most cases by simple majority, but for some decisions approval of all members is necessary (e.g. modification of the Agreement and Statutes, modification of the EGTC, appointment and re-

placement of the Director, appointment and replacement of members of the Supervisory Board).

According to the Statutes, the General Assembly should meet a minimum of twice a year. Preparation and establishment of the EGTC however required more intensive cooperation and communication (5-6 meetings of the Assembly per year). The partners agreed that in the first round the Chair will be from Slovakia and the Co-Chair from Hungary.

The Chair is in charge of supervision of EGTC performance and regularly informs the Assembly. The key person at the operational level is the director, nominated by the Chair and appointed by the Assembly. The director is responsible for the day-to-day coordination of EGTC objectives and tasks, management of individual activities, human resources management and communication with external environment at operational level.

Financing and managing of the EGTC

The EGTC adopted its own system for financing the activities of EGTC. A member of the grouping contributes € 0.5 for each permanent resident living on its territory. Taking into account the overall population of six cities (approx. 250,000 inhabitants) the PONS DANUBII has been able to generate sufficient resources to provide operational stability. Financial contribution to the EGTC stimulates active participation and involvement of partners. On the other hand it increases the expectations of members, due to the fact that all cross-border activities of cities are going to be promoted exclusively under the umbrella of the PONS DANUBII.

ETC programmes, particularly the Hungarian-Slovak cross-border cooperation programme represent a crucial source of funding of joint operations. Although only established in December 2010, the EGTC has drawn up four applications to be submitted in the spring call for proposals. Additional funding might be available as the Hungarian government is introducing a scheme to support EGTCs.

The Director is in charge of the management. Currently two persons on internship act as support. The plan for 2011 is to employ one additional person. In a mid-term perspective, the EGTC should have up to five persons (financed from ETC projects).

Starting the operations

The registration of the EGTC was followed by the first General Assembly meeting that took place in January 2011.

At operational level, four projects for the upcoming call for proposals in the Hungarian-Slovak ETC cross-border cooperation programme have been pre-

pared, including a joint development plan of the territory and promotion and marketing of the area. The city of Komárno decided to host the official seat of the EGTC PONS DANUBII and in the coming weeks should get the premises ready.

3.14.3. Key findings

Lessons learnt

- EGTC represents an appropriate instrument for bringing together (integrating) rather fragmented cooperation structures and adding a new dimension and new perspectives to cooperation;
- The establishment and especially the functioning of EGTC requires sufficient time and active involvement of all members.

Contributions to governance and territorial cohesion

- EGTC activities can possibly have strong contribution to territorial cohesion as it is one of the specific objectives of the grouping to establish a platform for joint planning and development of the given area.

Challenges

- To define the common vision (development plan) for the territory and its practical implementation.

3.15. Abaúj-Abaújban EGTC

The EGTC Abaúj - Abaújban EGTC Ltd. was officially registered at the Budapest Metropolitan Court on 11 June 2010, bringing together 16 local municipalities from Hungary and Slovakia¹⁴. The members have already been cooperating through the *Partnership for Development of Abaúj Abaújban* Programme launched on the night of the Schengen border opening on 21.12.2007. The EGTC aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion, further economic and social development of the region and support businesses (mainly SMEs) and an ethical attitude to entrepreneurship. The EGTC organises common events related to twinning cities, tourism, culture, communication as well as support to the SMEs. The EGTC's operative body is the VITEA Foundation, which helped increase the number of CBC programmes in the area. For instance, in 2010, the EGTC undertook a project called 'The Key to Success' (with the support of € 1.8 million) which aims to support the development of businesses (mainly SMEs) between cross-border territories. Many events and festivals were organised, mainly with the aim to promote tourism, sports and cultures (maps, information, and a tourist train). A project named 'hiking without borders', co-financed by the EU to the amount of € 148 570.96, was in place for the period between 11.1.2009 and 28.02.2011.

3.16. Ung-Tisza-Túr-Sajó (UTTS)

The EGTC UTTS (Ung-Tisza-Túr-Sajó) was set up by local authorities from Hungary (cities of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Szabolcs-Szarmár-Bereg, Hajdú-Bihar) and Slovakia (city of Prešov) in April 2010 to promote economic and social cohesion between the territorial units.

Since then the grouping has however not been working properly, with no Assembly meetings having taken place. The problems faced by the EGTC are probably due to the fact that the Slovak partner had not cooperated with the Hungarian members in the past. Consequently, the establishment of the EGTC including the decision-making procedures, the functioning and the overall common goals and positions were not sufficiently prepared.

In relation to financing, none of the members has paid the established initial membership fee of €4000 and the EGTC became fully dependent on EU funding and the approval of cross-border cooperation projects.

The members had intended to submit a joint application for a CBC programme on renewable energy; yet, when one of the EGTC members submitted an

¹⁴ The members include the Hungarian municipalities of Alsólánc, Debrő, Komaróc, Nagyida, Perény, Reste, Szeszta, Arka, and the Slovak municipalities of Boldogkőújfalu, Boldogkőváralja, Fony, Hejce, Hernádcéce.

individual application which was successful, the overall interest for joint activities was spoiled. These events have brought the fragile cooperation operation to a halt, together with replacement of the director and change of seat. For spring 2011 joint stock-taking and decision on future activities was intended.

The map on the following page shows the long list of EGTC projects which have been made known to the CoR or which have turned up during this study exercise.

3.17. EGTCs in development

This section includes brief reviews of EGTCs in the phase of constitution. The map at the end of the section reveals a high number of EGTC projects in mutual development stages. A serious assessment of the development stages for each individual example would exceed the scope of this report. In some cases it is quite evident that there is still a long way to go (such as the projects with participation of Austrian regions where not even the legal framework is in place in 2011), in some cases quick starts can be expected. Here we would like to show a couple of examples which

- on the one hand point to a new diversity in the functions and new approaches to governance;
- on the other hand had been included already in the previous report as EGTC projects which are quite far advanced.

3.17.1. European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN)¹⁵

The European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) is an urban policy network which currently represents 15 Member States.¹⁶ The key objective of EUKN is to enhance the exchange of knowledge and expertise about urban development throughout Europe, bridging urban policy, research and practice. The main capacities of the EUKN have been clustered into several dossiers. The approach is understood as a demand-driven learning platform. Examples of the current work focus are:

- Sustainable urban mobility;
- Housing;
- Crime prevention;
- Integration of ethnic minorities and migrants;
- Demographic change.

¹⁵ Please note that this text has been sent to the representative of the EGTC in establishment and feedback is pending – the text might still be subject to revision.

¹⁶ Including the Member States: NL, DE, LU, CY, BE, CZ, DK, FR, HU, PT, RO, ES, SE, UK.

At the informal ministerial conference on urban policy 'Cities Empower Europe' on 30 November 2004, the EU Ministers for urban policy agreed to develop a pilot project for a European urban knowledge exchange network - EUKN. The EUKN pilot project took place under the auspices of the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations with the voluntary participation of other Member States and the support of URBACT.¹⁷

Transformation into an EGTC is on the way

In the past two years the members started discussing the option of transforming the EUKN into an EGTC. The EGTC could help to strengthen the foundation of the network and support its consolidation on a longer-term basis. The fact that EUKN will become an acknowledged legal entity will make it easier to participate in, for example, URBACT activities or interregional cooperation programmes.

The current operative structure of the EUKN lends itself to a smooth transformation into an EGTC:

- the current Steering Group including representatives of the national ministries or administration which is in charge of urban development will become the Assembly of the EGTC;
- The National Focal Points in the 15 participating Member States which are hosted by ministries, universities or other bodies (depending on the national structures and competencies) will remain;
- the EUKN secretariat which is based in the Nicis Institute in The Hague, Netherlands with a permanent staff of five persons will become the secretariat of the EGTC; for pragmatic reasons the Nicis Institute will act as employer and support the staff of the EGTC; the seat of the EGTC will be in the Netherlands;
- The Netherlands act currently as Managing Authority of the network – in the future the EGTC Presidency will be on a rotating basis.

The convention and statutes have been drafted and are currently at the stage of final approval by the 15 members. It is expected that the EGTC EUKN will be founded in the coming months.

3.17.2. Esch-Belval

Esch-Belval is a development zone stretching over the border between France and Luxembourg (a total area of 640 ha, of which 500 ha is in Luxembourg). The former industrial area is supposed to host a mix of functions such as residential areas, office, space and a science park. The first master plan for the re-conversion of the area was drawn up in 1999. In 2004 the governments of France and Luxembourg signed a convention for the cross-border development

¹⁷ Quote from the EUKN website (www.eukn.org).

of the area. First steps such as locating new parts of the university in one of the development zones have been started. Until now a joint committee has had a supervisory function in the process.

Since a continuous approach to site development is needed and the coordination between numerous administrations and private players involved in the development process is quite demanding this function will be transferred to an EGTC (which will thus not act as developer but as a coordination body to ensure the harmonisation of a broad range of envisaged development activities).

3.17.3. *Archimed*¹⁸

The initiative to set up the EGTC ARCHIMED (Arcipelago Mediterraneo) is based on the objective of building a network between European island regions of the Mediterranean basin. The association EURIMED¹⁹ was a predecessor, however with limited operational elements. Consequently, the EGTC ARCHIMED aims to form a cooperation structure that goes beyond carrying out single projects, setting up a stable structure for cooperation in particular with a view to the new programming period 2013-2020.

The process to set up the EGTC ARCHIMED is at its final phase at the time of writing (February 2011), although it is neither formally approved nor operational. The process of setting up the EGTC has so far lasted about two years. In July 2009 the draft conventions and statutes were set up. The Conference on "The EGTC and the Macro-Regions" in Taormina in November 2010 was a further milestone as national participants from the EU Commission, the Parliament and the CoR discussed their practical experiences.

The draft convention and statutes produced before this conference had been sent to the national competent authorities and a series of meetings took place in Rome with the interested national administrations. The consultation phase at the

¹⁸ Authorised by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic in March 2011.

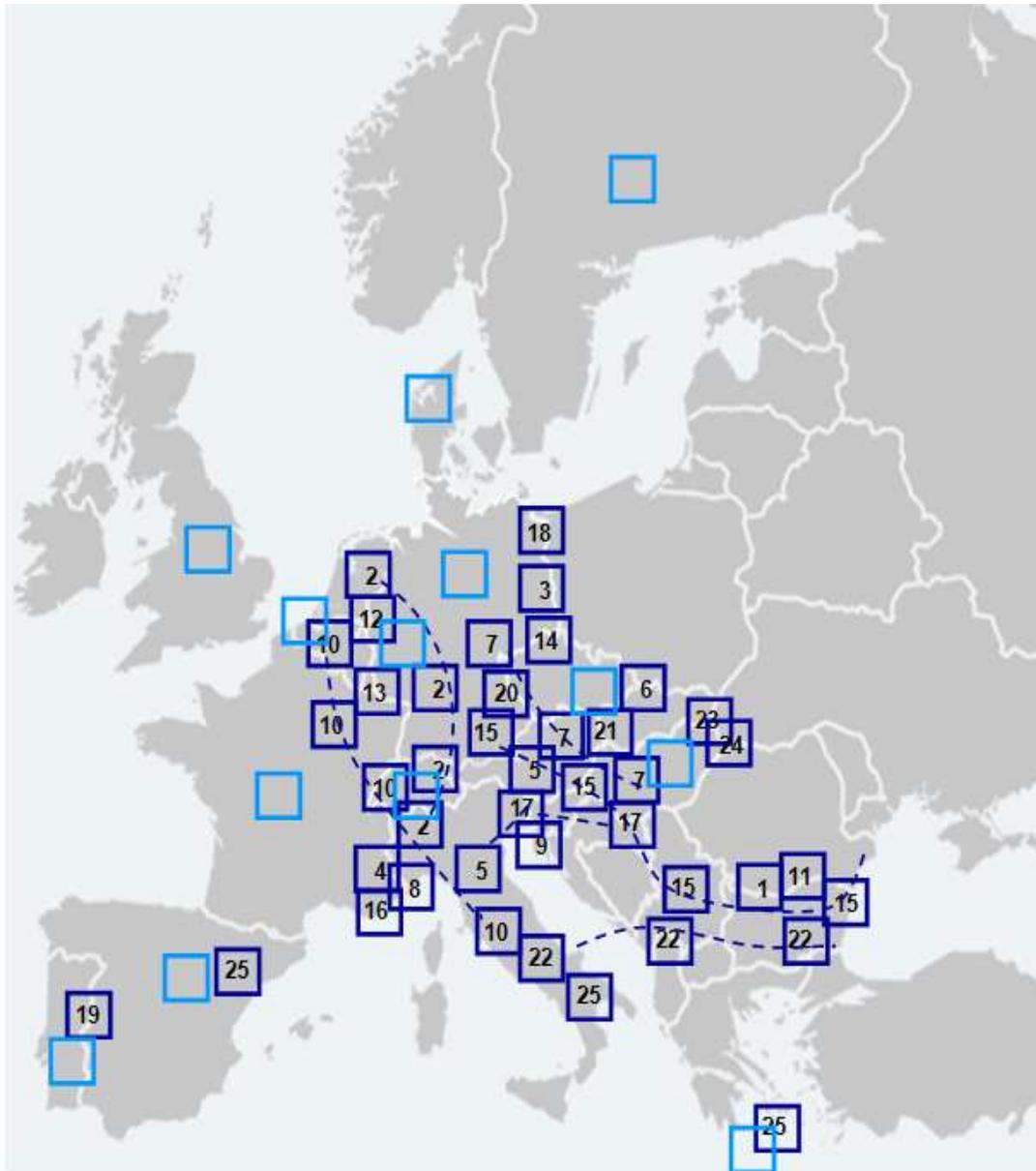
¹⁹ The EURIMED – Mediterranean Islands Working Community is made up of the regions of the Balearics, Corsica, Crete, Sardinia and Sicily. Undoubtedly, these islands not only possess a shared nature as geographic enclaves as well as historical heritage, but also, beyond this shared history, it has been more current shared concerns and needs that in 2004 spurred these islands to forge a network of collaboration and cooperation. The unique nature of this network lies in its strategic transnational alliance, bringing together several territories from different European countries but which require establishing a project of effective cooperation regarding their specific shared interests and needs within the European territory. The EURIMED Working Community network was set up with the purpose of forming a transnational pressure group in Europe, based on shared priorities and needs, in order to strengthen their bargaining power for proposals and demands submitted to the European institutions, which otherwise would not have the same projection. The EURIMED will be established in 2008 as a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), a regional cooperation scheme on a European community scale which seeks to overcome common obstacles of territories belonging to different European countries. In this 1st International Forum on Insularity in the Mediterranean the main focus areas will be four especially sensitive issues for island territories: agriculture and industry, tourism, transportation and communications and global change". (Source: <http://www.actescbe.eu/que-es-forum08.php?idiWeb=3>)

Italian Ministry of Economy lasted 4-5 months. Besides minor comments, the proposed conventions and statutes were accepted. During the consultation procedure it became evident that the EGTC instrument is still little known in the Italian context. ARCHIMED is the first EGTC to have its official seat in Italy and thus the first with practical experience in applying national provisions.

Article 8 of the Draft Convention and Statutes defines the official bodies of the EGTC (Assembly, President, Director, Technical Secretariat, Certifying Body), the priority areas (insularity, sustainable development, social, economic and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural development, fisheries, tourism, transport infrastructure, research and innovation), the official languages (Spanish, Italian, English, French), financing as well the annual and multi-annual work plans (for 3 years).

The EGTC is embedded in the hosting organisation Sicily Region and therefore does not intend to employ staff on its own. However, Sicily places administrative and technical staff at the disposal of the EGTC. The main topics to be developed are any issues related to insularity of the partner regions. The idea is that each partner provides know-how in the form of regional excellence pools (e.g. Crete has a centre of excellence in development and innovation in Heraklion) which may take the lead in different cooperation topics (e.g. in the form of project proposals for cooperation). Although the Balearic Islands, Cyprus and Sicily are the founding members according to the draft Statutes and Conventions, the aim is to also involve Malta, Crete and Corsica in the future.

Map 2. EGTCs under preparation in January 2011



-  EGTC in preparation
-  European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN)

1	Medgidia – Silistra	Romania, Bulgaria
2	Code 24	Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Italy
3	Ostbahn (Eastern Railway)	Germany, Poland
4	Parc Marin International Bouches de Bonifacio	France, Italy
5	EUROREGIONE TIROLO-ALTO ADIGE-TRENTINO	Italy, Austria
6	TRITIA	Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland
7	Ulm-Vienna- Budapest	Germany, Hungary, Austria
8	Euroregion Alps-Mediterranean	Italy, France
9	"Territorio dei Comuni: Comune di Gorizia (I), Mestina Obcina NOVA GORICA(SLO) e Obcina ŠEMPETER-VRTOJBA (SLO)"	Italy, Slovenia
10	Euranest	Belgium, France, Italy, Switzerland.
11	Bulgaria-Romania EGTC on common navigation on the Danube	Romania, Bulgaria
12	Euregio Meuse-Rhine EGTC	Netherlands, Belgium, Germany
13	Agglomération franco-luxembourgeoise 'Alzette-Belval'	France, Luxembourg
14	Euroregion Neiße-Nisa-Nysa	Germany, Poland, Czech Republic
15	Donauhanse	Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania
16	National Park Area Alpi Marittime / Mercantour	France, Italy
17	Alpen-Adria	Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia
18	Eurodistrict Oderland Nad Odrze	Germany, Poland
19	Eurocidade Chaves-Verin	Portugal, Spain
20	Europaregion Donau – Moldau	Germany, Czech Republic
22	Euroregion Corridor VIII	Italy, Bulgaria
23	Ung-Tisza-Túr-Sajó (UTTS)	Hungary, Slovakia , Romania, Ukraine
24	Ung-Tisza-Túr (UTT)	Hungary, Slovakia , Romania, Ukraine

25	ArchiMed	Italy, Spain, Cyprus
26	European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN)	Netherlands, Germany, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, UK

4. Synthesis and Findings

4.1. EGTC territories – context, geography and coverage

Spain-France-Portugal – regional development in the border areas

The remarkable feature of these border areas is the long-standing history of cooperation as a major incentive. This is paired with strong similarities in language and culture. Between Spain and France it is interesting to see that the development had massive support from the national level and the major cornerstones for cooperation have fuelled the debate on EGTCs which led to the EC Regulation in 2006:

- the Treaty of Bayonne (Traité de Bayonne-Tratado de Bayona) concluded in 1995 – paved the road towards cross-border structures since the Treaty was designed exclusively for cross-border cooperation between the local levels: it proposed to use legal forms either under French law e.g Groupements d'Intérêt Public (GIP), Sociétés d'économie mixtelocales (SEML) or under Spanish law (Consortio à vocation transfrontalière) or to use the – at that time available – European private legal form (EEIG) as the vehicle for cooperation;
- for example, based on this contract the ETC programme France-Spain-Andorra is currently managed by a consortium: it is noteworthy that in reality this consortium has all the major elements in place which form the cornerstones of an EGTC (assembly, rotating presidency, secretariat etc.); in legal terms the consortium is based on Spanish law its predecessor was a cross-border association under French law; the stakeholders have started to consider transforming the consortium into an EGTC (Treaty foresaw these legal forms and also one for private entities).

In these parts of the EU the EGTC as a legal instrument has to be considered rather as the final step in a process of continuous development of cross-border initiatives: some of the joint structures which have existed before 2007 reveal all the important features of an EGTC thus enabling a comparatively quick transformation of the previous structure into an EGTC.

Belgium-Luxembourg-France-Germany – policies for integrated conurbations

To some extent one could consider this area as the symbolic 'heartland' of the European Union. It was in these landlocked and war-ridden parts of Europe that the idea of the European Union turned into one of the most successful peace projects of the previous century. Since the 1950s a continuous process of economic and civic integration has been started, a process of urbanisation and for the most part successful conversion from industries to service industries took place.

It is exactly in this dense and highly integrated area that a number of EGTCs have emerged since 2006. Eurodistricts, a Eurometropole, this means strategy-building, project development and implementation with a view to governance of cross-border territories which share the need for integrated infrastructures and attractive surroundings in order to strike the balance between economic competitiveness and sustainable development.

Hungary-Slovakia – EGTC as a vehicle for local and regional development initiatives

In these parts the last year has shown quite vivid developments – in addition to the EGTC Ister-Granum new groupings have emerged. These developments are remarkable given the economically difficult situation of local entities in both countries: building new or maintaining and upgrading existing infrastructure is the key issue for local stakeholders in the border area between Slovakia and Hungary. Compared to other parts the consolidation of the EGTCs is certainly more difficult in these parts of the EU.

This points also to the major challenge for these EGTCs: their existence and consolidation is bound to the success in the acquisition of ETC projects. Project-based financing which demonstrates results of the cooperation will be essential to maintain the interest of local stakeholders in the new joint vehicle.

It has also been reported that Hungary is about to introduce a support scheme for EGTCs: still one should not expect that this financial incentive will safeguard the operation of EGTCs on a longer-term basis without additional financing resources (going also beyond the membership fees which have to be kept quite limited due to the financial constraints of municipalities).

Ties between old and new Member States

Another interesting feature in the ‘geography of EGTCs’ is that up to now no EGTC between old and new Member States has been established. Here one has to note that – in particular when looking at Germany and Austria –in comparing the competencies and capacities of regions, the differences between these two old states and their neighbouring new Member States are still considerable. Another big issue in these parts of Europe remains the language issue. The Second World War and post-war developments have eradicated the widespread multilingual culture in the border areas. In contrast to the situation along the former Iron Curtain many of the current successful examples reveal that several languages are being spoken in parallel or that one common language exists.

Stakeholders of current ETC programmes between old and new Member States report various problems such as fluctuation of staff and strong impact of politics, diverging views as regards the character of projects, difficulties in materialising progress in multilevel governance, financial constraints of public applicants to

pre-finance their partner budgets etc. All these layers of day-to-day problems might occur in other programmes as well but in these parts of Europe it is often paired with language barriers and aspects of a cultural divide when it comes to the public sector. These might hamper clear-cut decisions towards the implicit longer-term commitment when setting up an EGTC.

4.2. Functions of EGTCs

4.2.1. *Functions of established EGTCs*

In a broad-brush picture the functions of EGTCs focus on three points:

- Broad initiatives towards policy development, strategy building and actions: the overwhelming majority of existing EGTCs are working on a broad range of themes;
- Management of ETC programmes: one EGTC acts as Managing Authority for a multilateral CBC Programme (involving four Member States);
- Provision of public services: one EGTC manages a hospital.

Policy and strategy building, actions to support new ways of governance

Depending on the regional context and the size of the territory the approaches vary to a considerable extent but one common feature of the examples is the broad range of topics addressed in the statutes. The assembly or the work groups enter a debate on projects and initiatives in various fields. Definition of comprehensive cross-sector strategies – based on mapping - is often an essential initial element. At the same time this type of EGTC has to develop actions which strengthen the visibility in the short term and lead to rather immediate results which keep the momentum in the process.

This is the type of EGTC with an exploring and consolidating approach to new ways of governance and cohesion. It is marked by establishing a new geographic, policy debate between actors which did not meet regularly before, with an implicit challenge to overcome mere local interests in favour of a larger development initiative.

A major project initiative on this type of EGTC has been launched under URBACT.²⁰ The appraisal of project results highlights the key elements of the new tool and approach for cross-border governance:

- EGTC as a tool with the aim of structuring the dialogue and decision-making process;

²⁰ The EGTC URBACT project – led by the MoT -was run by six transfrontier conurbations: Trinational Euro-district Basel, Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau, Frankfurt/Oder and Slubice, Esztergom (as part of Ister-Granum) and Chaves for the Eurocidade Chaves-Verin; Lille-metropole (as part of the Eurométropole).

- To set up a team dedicated to the cross-border agglomeration, with skills adapted to its needs;
- To develop financial solidarity mechanisms at cross-border level to support cross-border projects;
- To formalise the involvement of civil society in the decision-making process.

The resulting handbook²¹ contains a map of altogether 60 cross-border conurbations of various sizes, from divided cities such as Komárom/Komárno (HU/SK) or Gmünd/České Velenice (AT/CZ) to neighbouring capital cities like Tallinn and Helsinki (EE/FI) or Bratislava and Vienna (SK/AT). And indeed all these cities could actively develop their profile as ‘places of experimentation of European policies’ and ‘laboratories for a European Citizenship’. The handbook is clearly recommended since it establishes a road map from initial mapping exercises over Local Action Plans to experiences with decision-making in existing EGTCs.

Management of ETC programmes

Currently just one example for this type of EGTC exists. According to statements by representatives, the EGTC is still in a pilot phase as regards the task division along the programme management structures [Managing Authority, Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS), regional bodies or support structures, Monitoring Committee (MC)]. One clear lesson for other EGTCs in the phase of constitution is that the role of the EGTC has to be discussed in full detail: e.g. the duplication of structures between the Programme Monitoring Committee and the EGTC is neither desirable nor efficient and competition between the EGTC and the JTS will not improve the quality of submitted projects.

On the other hand, it is evident that such an EGTC is a major advantage e.g. when entering the programming for the new ETC programme in the period 2014-2020. The EGTC has established support structures, formats and rules of procedure to furnish the joint programming process.

Provision of public services

Currently there is just one example for this type of EGTC – it is a shared health facility. To some extent this type represents – as regards financial volume and impact – a particularly strong commitment towards joint action. The second striking fact about this example is that it demonstrates cooperation in one of the heavy investment areas of most European countries: the sustainable financing of health care and health insurance: cross-border cooperation and shared services is one option for more cost efficiency thereby maintaining high service levels.

²¹ Expertising Governance for Transfrontier Conurbations – Handbook on the Governance of Cross-Border Conurbations, May 2010.

However, the range of options in the sphere of public services (including SGEI) is enormous: operating public transport, waste management, management of protected areas etc. But it is also clear that in all these fields in-depth discussion of national legal provisions related to the subject matter stand at the very beginning: immediate success cannot be expected but the reward of spearheading into new approaches to governance.

The table on the following page outlines the major issues and challenges related to these functions.

Table 3. Functions of EGTCs and challenges related to these functions

Function	Key issues	EGTCs	Challenges related to the function
Policy and strategy building, actions to support new ways of governance	<p>Definition of territories (e.g. functional regions, cross-border conurbations);</p> <p>scope of action (rather broad framework versus focused approach – clear tendency towards broad portfolio).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai; ▪ Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau; ▪ Eurodistrict Saar-Moselle; ▪ Duero-Douro; ▪ Galicia – Norte Portugal; ▪ Eurorégion Pyrénées-Méditerranée; ▪ Karst-Bodva; ▪ Ister-Granum. 	<p>Start-up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Starting the implementation process – the high number of partners often leads to long start-up periods; ▪ Striking the balance between visible actions in the short term and larger policy-making projects for a mid-term perspective; ▪ Overcoming local and sector interests at least partly and develop a set of cross-border projects. <p>Operation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing projects and implementing projects with a limited number of staff; ▪ There is a certain risk that after the initial momentum during the constitution phase and after first lengthy decision-making procedures the energy of stakeholders evaporates. In such cases new approaches to facilitation of the process have to be found. New ideas might come from joint study tours and on-site visits. It might also be helpful to define already during the constitution phase a set of concrete actions and operational targets in order to avoid such difficult transition periods; ▪ For EGTCs in new Member States budgets depend in most cases on the successful participation in ETC programmes (in particular the local level as members do not have financial resources to recruit staff without project funds).

Function	Key issues	EGTCs	Challenges related to the function
Managing of ETC programmes	Clear-cut definition and task division with a view to the programme partners and function according to Reg (EC) 1080/2006 and 1083/2006.	Grande Région	<p>Start-up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Political influence versus operative function as MA and JTS; political backing has significant advantages when it comes to project generation across borders but for operative units rotating leadership and political intervention in day-to-day business might impede efficient work; ▪ Demarcation line between competencies of MC and EGTC; risk of double work.
Service provision, facility management	Developing a viable solution in order to bridge the differences in the legal context for service provision.	Hospital de la Cerdanya	<p>Start-up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on the key issues which have to be sorted out in the initial stage in particular ensuring the budget on a longer-term basis; ▪ Pro-active approach needed in order to safeguard balanced use of the facility.

4.2.2. *New functions of EGTCs*

Currently completely new and unprecedented approaches to EGTCs and their functions are being discussed. EGTCs could become a driving element in the future management of ETC network programmes such as INTERACT and ESPON in the period 2013+.

On the one hand, EGTCs as an acknowledged legal entity could strengthen the commitment of Member States to such programmes and on the other hand, EGTCs could support new approaches to governance and financial management (thus overcoming current impediments in implementation).

4.3. Contributions to territorial cohesion and governance

This chapter summarises the EGTC contributions regarding the improvement of cohesion issues and the aspect of governance within the groupings of territorial cooperation. Looking at the case studies elaborated for this paper we observed three major points of how territorial cohesion and governance are tackled:

- Better cooperation between members and partners;
- Better visibility of territorial cohesion enabled by EGTC;
- Improvements by the legal framework of EGTC;

In the following we present certain examples to underpin these issues.

EGTC brings together partners at one table

One major benefit of having an EGTC is the solid structure guaranteed by this form of cooperation. All relevant partners – mayors, communities, the civil society – are coming together at one table following the overarching objective of establishing a transnational cooperation on a European or international scale. The partners are building Europe “from the bottom up” and an EGTC could finally be a “Laboratory of European Cohesion”.

Working together with all the stakeholders within an EGTC territory also enables a holistic perspective to strengthening territorial cohesion by developing common social and economic actions. Some groupings of territorial cooperation comprise dozens of partners of all political levels. This fact contains enormous potential to develop economic, political, social or cultural projects to achieve cohesion objectives in the EU. EGTC activities can make a strong contribution to territorial cohesion as it is one of the objectives to specifically establish a platform for joint planning and development of the given area.

Multilevel governance is not only observed within an EGTC and its partners of all levels, it is also possible through cooperation with the higher administrative levels although they are not members of an EGTC.

Finally, important aspects are given by the certain types of members, the territorial coverage and the population of the EGTC.

EGTC enables better visibility of territorial cooperation

Setting up an EGTC instead of previous cooperation forms could bring major advantages to the cooperation structure. More legal, political and economic power is given by an EGTC. It has been observed that there can be very much improved visibility of the same region at national and EU level after the creation of the EGTC. There is a financial budget and employees thanks to its convention and statute which gives it a perspective of a stable structure with long-term perspectives accompanied by improved recognition at Member State and EU level. The “Hospital de Cerdanya” serves as a best practice example for a contribution to improve visibility. The EGTC has allowed the establishing of multilevel governance between France and Spain (Catalunia) and has helped to reduce administrative differences. This shows health services as a particularly visible contribution to territorial cohesion and it could be the showcase for a wider cooperation in the health sector in this certain border area. The mission statement comprises this specific objective and it is also mentioned as a project in the statutes of the EGTC.

EGTC creates improvement by legal issues

The officials and representatives of the EGTC “West Vlaanderen/Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d’Opale” described the change of structure within the ETC as “a revolution rather than an evolution”. Before setting up the EGTC there is no proper legal statute or a budget. The EGTC gives members a stronger legal and political framework of cooperation, especially compared with previous structures of cooperation between all partners. Furthermore, the operational work has not always been under one common roof: two or even more secretariats have been in use for example in certain ETCs. It is therefore definitely an added value mainly in legal terms, and it allows more efficient furthering of territorial cohesion. The cooperation structure as a basis has a stronger and more solid legal and political status compared to, for example, a “simple” Euroregion. Another advantage is that small communities within an EGTC get another statute and more say in decision-making within the EGTC than at national level.

4.4. Legal issues encountered

In this section the major issues mentioned by representatives of EGTCs and notification authorities are summarised and highlighted.

Legal issues	Details, lessons learnt
<i>Preparation phase</i>	
Lengthy start-up procedure since national provisions have not been in place or authorities lacked experience with it	<u>Awareness-raising and exchange:</u> In the coming years, in many countries, EGTCs in the process of constitution might encounter such challenges since up to now only 12 out of 27 Member States have actual first-hand experience, i.e. in these countries EGTCs have their seat or partners from these countries have joined an EGTC; Awareness-raising for EGTCs (such as the initiatives taken by the CoR) as well as other incentives for the setting up of EGTCs in the ETC funding period 2013+ might help to broaden the geographical coverage.
<u>Initial partnership not accepted</u> in the process of notification	In one case a micro-region (an association of municipalities) had not been accepted but the individual municipalities had to become members of the EGTC. This indicates that the legal acceptance of partners should be clarified at the very start of the constitution process.
<i>Start-up phase</i>	
<u>Differences between competencies of partners</u> (in particular when partners from countries with a rather centralised structure (such as FR) set up an EGTC with partners from federal countries (such as Germany or Spain in the case of Catalonia)	<u>Strive for diplomacy and constructive dialogue:</u> Clarification of competencies at the start-up phase; Inclusion of further partners (which often provide additional political backing and thus strengthen the visibility of the EGTC).
<i>Entering the operation phase</i>	
<u>Structures</u> (membership and organs) and	<u>Ex-ante clarification of the impact of enlargement on decision-making:</u>

<p><u>enlargement</u></p>	<p>The mostly quite rigid proportions or parity as regards membership in the organs of the EGTC might become an impediment in case of intended enlargement. EGTCs which are open to include further municipalities might encounter difficulties to ensure representation of the new members (which is of course a key interest in joining an EGTC).</p> <p>Thus the enlargement option and its implications for the structures should be subject to intense debate during the setting up phase.</p>
<p>Recruitment and employment issues</p>	<p><u>Case by case solutions have to be found</u> since the nature of challenges differs.</p> <p>Institutions which are ranked as public in France may not hire persons on unlimited contracts who have not been in public service before.</p> <p>Requirements for top positions in EGTCs may be very demanding and have to be combined with language command in at least two languages – thus searching for staff might become a lengthy procedure, and the initiative might lose momentum.</p> <p>Wage levels and social benefits differ between countries thus the attractiveness of jobs in the EGTC differs for citizens depending on their nationality.</p> <p>One example of an EGTC (Eurodistrict Strasbourg) is now investigating if the EGTC could introduce a flexible approach, i.e. that the staff might choose the conditions of the employment contract.</p> <p>Another solution has been labelled as <i>secondment</i>: the initial employer remains and ‘lends’ the employee to the EGTC and gets the cost reimbursed. This model is being applied in various cases throughout Europe: quite often public bodies use employers which have private legal status due to the higher flexibility in staff issues (e.g. in the case of JTS for ETC programmes).</p>
<p><i>Operation phase</i></p>	
<p>Decision-making</p>	<p><u>From control to trust in the competence of new structures:</u></p> <p>Unanimity for all decisions might turn into a rigid framework which does not allow for flexible approaches. Representatives of EGTCs have claimed that it should be carefully considered. Not all, but only essential strategic points should require unanimity in decision.</p> <p>It is evident that in the initial phase exercising joint</p>

	<p>and mutual control is a key point shaping the structures for decision-making. But – after a certain period of operation - on the way to consolidation of an EGTC the stakeholders should trust in the work of the EGTC and allow for more freedom: given the adequate set of incentives more operative freedom will be repaid with better quality of results.</p>
<p>Change of the legal nature of one partner</p>	<p>In the case of West-Vlaanderen/Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale one of French members, the Pays Coeur de Flandre was due to change its legal nature from an association to a syndicat mixte by the end of March 2011. According to Regulation 1082/2006, Article 4 (6), any change to the convention or statutes has to be approved by the Member States, i.e. the EGTC partners might have to reiterate the complete legal procedure of establishment again. This might take 6 to 12 months.</p>
<p>Problems related to national legislation in project work</p>	<p><u>Political backing to overcome obstacles</u> stemming from national perceptions and practices: For EGTCs which see themselves as open frameworks for cross-border initiatives unprecedented legal issues might be encountered: in one case questions related to social and health insurance turned into an obstacle to the project which aimed at an exchange of apprentices between two countries. Authorities on one side of the border had a distinct opinion on that point which might have shattered the initiative at the very start. It is evident that such issues exercise a strong pressure on EGTCs which are – at the end of the day - built on the foundation of diplomacy and consensus. In such cases a strong political representation in the EGTC is a major help to define new and – partly - innovative administrative solutions.</p>

5. Networking, Exchange and Consultation

5.1. Cornerstones of a strategy

5.1.1. *Review on the state of play – the market for EGTCs*

The CoR is in a favourable position to become a hub for the exchange on EGTCs. EGTCs are an issue of multilevel governance and regions and local entities have played a key role in the setting up of EGTCs.

The discussion of the revision of the EGTC regulation in 2011 is an important milestone and it will give momentum to the discussion process. However, when looking across the map of EU there may be up to 30 examples which either exist or find themselves in the midst of constitution that represent a small group of stakeholders. In addition to this, there are all the national authorities, and an important number of experts and researchers. The stakeholder group of existing or near-to-existing EGTCs is composed of political representatives, technical and management staff, legal experts etc. It is the small but existing market place to exchange and share information on legal issues, work routines, methods of facilitation and awareness-raising etc.

One has to see the fact that across the EU there are over 80 ETC cross-border cooperation programmes and over 15 ETC transnational cooperation programmes. These programmes cluster institutions as beneficiaries which have demonstrated an interest in new cooperation approaches – the programme management and the beneficiaries of these programmes could be considered as the potential market for EGTCs.

5.1.2. *Strategic directions*

The strategy for exchange and networking or even better the communication strategy should rest on two main pillars of action:

- To attract the interest of stakeholders of existing EGTCs;
- To contribute to awareness-raising and broader interest in EGTCs.

Attract the interest of stakeholders of existing EGTCs

The survey among existing EGTCs as well as EGTCs being close to constitution did not lead to a clear-cut specific interest in exchange. However the overwhelming majority of persons contacted underpinned an interest to get in touch with other EGTCs to share experiences.

- One could imagine that the existing EGTCs would now be interested to share experiences after the initial year(s) of operation where new questions and issues have come up (see also section 4.4).

- One can also expect that this group will quite actively follow the debate on the revision of the EC Regulation – this could also be an incentive to set up rather targeted events combining these two points; one can also expect valuable contributions to the debate from these practitioners having first-hand experience.
- Many persons have expressed a clear interest in having access to an updated registry of contacts on the CoR website (experience with the EGTC monitoring reports has shown that one of the most difficult points is in some cases the identification of the contact persons).
- Some representatives of notification authorities have expressed an interest in sharing experiences with colleagues from other Member States (not only the world of EGTCs is diverse and rich but also the wide range of either predictable or unprecedented legal implications of EGTCs which have to be tackled by the notification authorities) – one point is evident: dialogue is the key to smooth and efficient management of the notification procedure: the CoR should establish its role as a platform for dialogue: an event for notification authorities related to the revision of Regulation (EC) 1082/2006 could be a starter.

Contribute to awareness-raising and broader interest in EGTCs (2013+)

Given the small number of existing EGTCs the inherent challenge is to post EGTC as an attractive instrument on the agenda of players in particular when launching the considerations and negotiations for the next period 2014-2020. In early 2012 the programming processes and the debates on funds for ETC and the future management of programmes will start and will culminate in late 2012 and early 2013. EGTCs have to come up on the mind map of players at an early stage since even if there is not much known about EGTCs it is a widespread perception that development and constitution of an EGTC is quite demanding. Thus posting EGTCs on the agenda of ETC stakeholders will require a broad set of supportive actions. Two points which deserve particular interest in the process are:

- The links to the ETC network programmes (INTERACT, URBACT, Interreg IVB);
- The debate on the role of EGTCs in ETC.

Liase with INTERACT, URBACT, Interreg IV B

The ETC network programmes – in particular INTERACT and URBACT could provide valuable support to awareness-raising for EGTCs. It is the main role of INTERACT to provide services to ETC programmes and URBACT has delivered an important input to the EGTC debate with its handbook on ideas for governance of cross-border conurbations.

- One option could be to develop the pilot of a roadshow on EGTCs for the management and partners of ETC programmes (regions, MA, JTS) – it could contain an overview on the existing examples and options for functions;

however it is evident that – in order to attract the attention of programme stakeholders – well-founded inputs to the discussion on the role of EGTCs in ETC programmes are needed.

- The urban dimension of EGTCs is a promising issue which can be used to raise the interest and to avoid the perception as a mere legal vehicle but to understand it as a governance tool; the issue of cross-border conurbations - be it parted cities or be it twin cities in close proximity of borders - touches a lot of Member States and could be made popular in the community: e.g. with a short film on the issue (due to URBACT but also previous projects in transnational programmes, information on the phenomenon has been gathered already).

Critical appraisal of EGTCs and their potential role in ETC programmes in the period 2013+

It seems that an open debate on the role of EGTCs in ETC programmes could be helpful to clarify some cornerstones and key arguments for the use of EGTCs in the forthcoming programme period. One point is evident from all interviews with EGTC stakeholders: EU Funding will remain the key incentive for projects related to territorial cooperation. For a significant part of the existing EGTCs project-based financing is the major factor for consolidation.

This issue should be actively addressed in a policy debate with DG Regio. The position of DG Regio and the opinion presented is very important. If DG Regio takes a clear position in favour of EGTCs and its representatives can provide convincing arguments for it, this will have an impact in the coming programming process. But it is important to see that programme practitioners will only react in case of clear added value which is underpinned with factual evidence. EGTCs going for ETC projects will have to count on their strength to know best the regional needs and will have to accept that this has to be translated into first-rate projects. It is evident that some overarching rules will always apply in ETC programmes: same conditions for all applicants and the quality of project applications should be the decisive factor for selection and approval.

A quite detailed internal discussion with DG Regio will be needed to outline the potentialities of EGTCs in the management of ETC programmes. For many programme practitioners the list of arguments in favour of it is as long as the list of possible challenges and risks.

5.2. Tools – The EGTC Platform

The EGTC communication strategy will be based on the EGTC Platform, launched in January 2011, and rest on several pillars:

- website and common consultative platform;
- link to existing information hubs;

- expert groups;
- targeted events;
- monitoring.

One point is evident – in order to launch any successful initiative considerable input will be needed. This refers mainly to human resources. All steps - from the organisation of events to the regular update of the website – require continuous work on the issue. Thus a precondition for the successful implementation of the strategy is an assessment of the capacities available.

5.2.1. *Website and common consultative platform*

The CoR website should be considered as the central repository of information. As already foreseen it should provide key information such as national provisions, conventions and statutes of EGTCs, publications such as the Handbook developed by the URBACT project and a selection of outputs or guidance documents from existing EGTCs which might interest other groupings. With the support of experts - i.e. mainly EGTC practitioners and legal experts - a couple of supportive materials for the start-up phase could be developed. In particular guidance or a checklist for major points to be considered in the phase of constitution:

- legal acceptance of partners;
- options for structures;
- employment issue (including examples for solutions);
- approaches to decision-making.

Given that the outcomes and results of events and consultative meetings will be documented and used this could become a Guidebook on EGTCs as a living document.

From the interviews it is quite clear that – as regards the intended consultative platform – legal issues will be most interesting. However – in order to be understood by a broader public – legal issues need to be interpreted and sometimes have to be translated into a common language.

A broad contact database is a precondition to make the platform and website better known – the existing database of CoR should be enlarged with the support of information hubs on EGTCs and – more generally speaking - on ETC programmes.

Newsletters including quick feedback loops and other standard approaches could be used to support building an EGTC community.

5.2.2. *Link to existing information hubs*

Several interviewees have mentioned the capacity and valuable support from the MOT²² (Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière) which is quite active in the field of EGTCs. Other entities are the CESCO, Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives²³, recently created, or the Association of European Border Regions²⁴, with more than 50 years of experience. Associations like the Assembly of European Regions, the Council of Municipalities and Regions of Europe and Eurocities are working on the EGTC. Thus consultative meetings with these entities should be held in order to complement the knowledge within CoR.

DG Regio, INTERACT and URBACT should also be consulted. For reasons of efficiency it would be good to go for one or two high-level group meetings bringing together the persons from these information hubs and investigate on the intended steps and possible synergies.

5.2.3. *Expert Groups*

EGTCs are built on two fields of expertise:

- governance, strategy and policy building;
- knowledge and interpretation of legal provisions.

It surely will be a major asset to establish a group of experts in these two major fields of expertise. The experts could support the mentoring of EGTCs in the phase of constitution. However – acting as experts travelling across Europe to support various EGTC projects will pose the question of funding of such activities. Stakeholders of existing EGTCs and notifications authorities – as the most precious information source due to their first hand experience – have time constraints and will not be able to attend numerous events.

Thus in particular the setting up of expert groups requires a more detailed discussion as regards the scope of services offered. Of course the availability of legal expertise would be quite attractive but language command and differences in legal and administrative systems across the EU could limit the outreach of such an approach.

²² <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org>

²³ <http://www.cesci-net.eu>

²⁴ <http://www.aebr.eu>

5.2.4. *Targeted events*

Events, eventual face-to-face contacts and regular phone contacts are still the key ingredients for successful networking. Even well-managed online platforms cannot replace regular venues in community building. First ideas for targeted events could be:

- Event on the implications of the revision of the EGTC Regulation for existing EGTCs plus a workshop on sharing experiences of the first year(s) of operation;
- Event addressing the representatives of notification authorities (possibly together with stakeholders for EGTCs);
- One option could be a roadshow on EGTCs for the management and partners of ETC programmes (regions, MA, JTS) (see section 5.1.2);
- Of course the Open Days in Brussels offer a broad variety of options to support networking among EGTC stakeholders and the EU institutions;
- An inter-institutional conference on EGTCs would be very positive, once the European Commission has adopted its proposals to revise the Regulation.

It will also be important to coordinate future events closely with national EGTC experts. Currently several events on EGTCs have been held or are intended to be held (e.g. in the Czech Republic and Hungary).

5.2.5. *Monitoring*

Last but not least monitoring will remain a key issue. The current periodicity of one year seems adequate in order to perform an assessment of the developments on the ground. Shorter intervals will not bring about better results. However, the format of the reports – in particular the review on the developments on the ground could be reconsidered. With the expected growing number of EGTCs, reporting will have to switch to the style of short news (though the underlying basis should be thorough and well documented interviews – the fact that summaries of the interviews have been sent to the interviewees helps to establish mutual trust and acceptance of the exercise).

The fact sheets generated could feed into short portraits of each EGTC and short sections on major success stories as well as on milestones ahead would provide sufficient insight for the readers.

Annex 1: Contact list for EGTCs

Name of EGTC	Contact person	Position	Contact
ZASNET	Rosario Almazán	Diputación de Zamora	E-mail: rosario.almazan@zamoradipu.es Tel: +34 980559300
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