

**LOCAL ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE  
CROSS-BORDER URBAN GOVERNANCE OF THE STRASBOURG-ORTENAU EGTC**



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## 1. SUMMARY

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### 1.1 Introduction: presentation of the project

The “EGTC” URBACT project (Expertising Governance for Transfrontier Conurbations) is a European working group co-financed by the URBACT II programme (2007-2013). This programme aims to encourage the sharing of experiences between European cities and to disseminate knowledge on sustainable urban development throughout Europe.

The project is led by Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT); it involves six cross-border conurbations in Europe: Lille Métropole for the Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai (F/BE), Basel for the Trinational Eurodistrict Basel (F/DE/CH), Esztergom for the Ister-Granum EGTC (HU/SK), Chaves for the conurbation Chaves-Verin (ES/PT), Slubice for the Frankfurt (Oder)-Slubice conurbation (DE/PL), and Strasbourg for the Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau (F/DE).



1. Paris - MOT • 2. Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai • 3. Eurocidade Chaves-Verin  
 4. Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau • 5. Frankfurt (Oder)/Slubice conurbation  
 6. Trinationaler Eurodistrict Basel • 7. Ister-Granum EGTC

The partners aimed to:

- **improve their governance models** by exchanging experiences, with the support of the Lead Expert,
- **capitalize best practices**, spread models of governance throughout Europe and,
- **promote cross-border agglomerations** at national and European levels.

The new opportunities provided by the **European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation**, the European instrument (EC Regulation 1082/2006), whose use is still under experimentation, constituted an interesting case study. The first two European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation in Europe were involved in the “EGTC” URBACT project and an EGTC was established during the project.

By “**cross-border governance**”, the project partners have agreed to deal with the following two major themes:

- How can public leaders and cross-border organizations frame and implement efficient policies (“**Leadership**” issues)?

The way a cross-border conurbation is managed on a technical, political, legal, as well as financial point of view. The main question resulting from this issue is the one of designing and implementing cross-border urban strategies and concrete projects by involving all relevant public stakeholders on both sides of border.

- How can the involvement of the civil society guarantee the legitimacy of cross-border agglomeration policies (“**Community**” issues)?

The way a cross-border conurbation earns its legitimacy to intervene above national borders, through the development of mobilizing projects aimed at citizens, through the development of services dedicated to the citizens, through the emergence of cross-border Medias which enable a dialogue with the inhabitants, and through the creation of participative democracy mechanisms. The main question related to this issue is the one of building efficient and legitimate partnerships able to address cross-border territorial cohesion issues.

In order to make sure that the URBACT projects lead to concrete and realistic outcomes, the URBACT II programme requires specific results from the URBACT project partners:

- Each partner realizes a **Local Action Plan**, which identifies the measures and actions which will be implemented in order to improve the running policies. It aims to provide pragmatic, precise solutions based on the results of the transnational exchanges. It is jointly produced with the Local Support Group (link) on the local level and with all the project partners on a transnational level.
- All URBACT project partners commit to establishing and leading an **URBACT Local Support Group** to make sure that exchanges have an impact on local practices and policies. This group assembles the main interested parties and local actors concerned by the project topic and the issues the partner is looking to resolve; the groups include local elected officials, representatives of various local administrative departments, representatives of residents/users, etc.

URBACT Local Support Groups contribute to implementing transnational activities (production/approval of case studies, for example) and producing the Local Action Plan that each partner has to produce as the result of participation in the URBACT II programme.

For more information: <http://urbact.eu>

## ***1.2. The Local Support Group and its involvement in the elaboration of the Local Action Plan***

### **- Composition of the Local Support Group**

At the outset of the project, the **Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict Monitoring Committee** was chosen to form the Local Support Group. The latter was then composed of representatives from the French State, the Alsace Region, the Bas-Rhin General Council and the Urban Community of Strasbourg on the French side. On the German side, the representatives were the German State, the Land of Baden-Württemberg, the District of Ortenau and five other major Ortenau municipalities.

This choice seemed appropriate at the time because it implied the **presence of representatives belonging to regional and national levels** and we thought that the recommendations made at the end of the project would have a greater chance of being implemented. This choice was endorsed by the Eurodistrict Council at its meeting on December 9, 2008.



However, a few weeks later and following the Monitoring Committee meeting of February 3, 2009, it appeared that the frequency of these group meetings (one per year) would be insufficient to support the project. **It was decided that the Eurodistrict Council would now constitute the Local Support Group.** To enable better observation, two Council members were designated as privileged interlocutors of the project. They are:

- Ms. Nawel RAFIK-ELMRINI, Deputy Mayor of Strasbourg in charge of European and International Affairs;

- Dr. Wolfgang G. MÜLLER, Mayor of Lahr / Black Forest region.

#### - **Involvement in the elaboration of the Local Action Plan**

**The involvement of the Local Support Group was strong at the beginning of the project**, i.e. during the preparation of the application for nomination and during the launch conference held in Strasbourg in November 2008.

Subsequently, Local Support Group (LSG) involvement has slowed somewhat, but the elected members have indirectly participated in various phases of the development of the Local Action Plan (LAP). Members of the Eurodistrict Council and the LSG will have met six times during the project period: on the following dates 09.12.2008; 03.02.2009; 26.03.2009, 4.02.2010, 13.04.2010 and 6.05.2010.

### ***1.3. Expectations and achieved results***

#### - **Starting situation: expectations regarding the “EGTC-URBACT” project**

The objective of the participation of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict in this project was the **exchange of knowledge, methods, know-how and good practices** on how other partner cities manage their cross-border territories. At the outset of the project, the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict was in a period of deliberation on its future prospects, and its participation in the URBACT project on the governance of cross-border territories fitted perfectly in the adopted approach.

The second objective pursued by the Eurodistrict was to **achieve greater visibility across Europe**. This project offered us the opportunity to be part of a European network of cross-border conurbations, sharing similar concerns with the same challenges. Similarly, it gave us the opportunity to **formulate recommendations** with our partners against European decisions. The Eurodistrict also felt it was



important to be part of this network of deliberation on cross-border governance, to give more visibility to its actions and contribute to strengthening regional policies in the European Union.

Certainly, one of the major objectives of our participation in this project was to **stimulate reflection on the changes to be brought to the 2006 European Regulation on the EGTC**, to better adapt the latter to specific and future needs of cross-border territories.

#### - **Achieved results**

The meetings and discussions held with various partners throughout the project have, first of all, served to **deepen our deliberation on the tools and methods of cross-border governance options** for our territory and their respective advantages and disadvantages.

Secondly, the project section dedicated to involving the public in the **establishment of a genuine cross-border population catchment area** was an opportunity for us to make an inventory of our territory in this area. It has reinforced our proposed establishment of a consultation of the population at various levels, and several successful approaches in this area through urban project partners have enriched our deliberations. However, the obligation to examine our methods of cross-border cooperation management as well as the **exchange of information, know-how and good practices** with other partners is undoubtedly the most significant asset in the URBACT-EGTC project.

## **2. CONTENT OF THE LOCAL ACTION PLAN**

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### ***2.1. “Leadership issues”***

#### **a) Diagnosis of the starting situation**

Originally, the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict had **no legal status** and was **based on an agreement signed in 2005** between seven French and German partners.

This agreement stipulated that the three main objectives of the Eurodistrict were to **become a pilot region in Europe**, to **contribute to sustainable development** in the region by playing an important role within Europe and to **improve the daily lives of residents** in its territory.

At a political level, the composition of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict was based on the following elements:

- Two spokespeople: one French and one German,
- The Eurodistrict assembly or council comprising 14 members (mayors of the major cities of Ortenaukreis and Landrat on the German side, the Mayor of Strasbourg City, president



of the Urban Community and community and municipal councillors on the French side), holding a minimum of two meetings per year,

- The Eurodistrict Monitoring Committee including regional and national administrative levels of the two states, at least one meeting per year.

At a technical level, the organization was as follows:

- two secretariats:
  - o on the French side: International and European Service Relations technicians from the CUS (Strasbourg Urban Community),
  - o on the German side: Cross-Border Service Relations technicians from the Landratsamt Ortenaukreis and technicians in charge of cross-border relations in the main towns of Ortenaukreis,
  - o Technicians from both countries formed the expanded umbrella group that met every fortnight.
- Groups of bi-national experts in various Eurodistrict activity fields. It should be noted here that in the past mobilization of these experts working predominantly in the services of local French and German communities, has sometimes proven difficult since Eurodistrict files were added to their traditional work load.

**One of the main shortcomings of the original Eurodistrict governance lay in its dual structure** with two spokespersons, its two secretariats and the lack of visibility it brought to the population. Moreover, apart from a counsellor who worked exclusively on Eurodistrict Landratsamt files, other technicians assigned to the Eurodistrict also worked on other cross-border cases.

Building on this observation, during 2008 the Eurodistrict authorities initiated a **process of deliberation on the future of the cross-border city** of Strasbourg-Ortenau. Following the orientation seminar held on October 11, 2008 in Lahr, and in accordance with recommendations issued by the two experts appointed by the French and German governments, Mr. Cottin and Vetter, the Eurodistrict Council decided on December 3, 2008 to **create a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation** (EGTC).

For this type of structure, the German and French Eurodistrict partners hoped to **reduce legal and administrative obstacles** which hindered the realization of joint projects on both sides of the border and to strengthen cross-border cooperation in numerous fields.

Since 2006, the EGTC is a new European legal instrument offering many advantages in terms of cross-border cooperation. It is intended to **facilitate access to EU funds** and authorizes the participation of national states as members, an important feature when overcoming legal or administrative problems hindering cross-border projects at highest management level. Moreover, the EGTC is flexible enough to allow a widening of the scope of the Eurodistrict perimeter



and to **ensure good regional, national and European visibility** in the long term for initiatives undertaken by the communities on both banks of the Rhine.

**The following are the expected changes in governance:**

At a political level:

- Enhanced (at regional, national and European levels) cross-border cooperation legitimacy through the creation of a legal entity,
- Wider participation of local elected members on the EGTC Board (48 members against 14 in the previous system),
- Joint management of the EGTC budget,
- Common election of the EGTC President and Vice-President by the majority,
- Common election of office members by the majority.

At a technical level, the setting up of the Strasbourg-Ortenau EGTC **facilitates trade and labour exchange between local community members** of the EuroDistrict through:

- the merger of the two former Eurodistrict secretariats under the same roof with a General Secretary assisted by four staff members,
- a team of technicians working solely for the EGTC,
- creation of a position devoted to managing an INTERREG fund for micro-projects,
- the implementation of the General Secretariat in a location symbolic to cross-border cooperation, namely the city of Kehl (Baden-Württemberg) located on the border between France and Germany.

**b) Good practices developed during the URBACT project period**

The participation of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict in the URBACT project on the governance of cross-border territories has enabled it to **reflect deeply on the possible different legal status for its territory** and to benefit from the experience of other partners.

Through meetings and consultations with other project partners, it appeared that compared to other current forms of cooperation groupings, e.g. the Association or LGCC, **the EGTC was the most appropriate legal instrument to the expectations of elected members** for the following reason: it is the only instrument allowing the participation of national states, a particularly interesting feature on

the French side, where numerous skills are subject to the State's domain and where it can be very useful to have the latter at the outset as a member.

Moreover, the EGTC is a flexible tool that allows implementation of EU programs and provides excellent visibility of the Eurodistrict cross-border work to the latter.

To accompany the debate on the choice of legal status for our grouping, a **binational group of lawyers** was established at the end of 2008. In October 2008, following the seminar organized in Lahr on the future of the Eurodistrict, the choice was quickly focused on the EGTC, and lawyers from both countries met several times to draw up the constitutive convention and the statutes of the "Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict" EGTC.

The statutes include several highly innovative features:

- The decision that **the Eurodistrict should now speak with one voice with a single president**, elected by a majority for a period of two years. At this point it should be recalled that before the creation of the EGTC, there were two spokespersons (one German and one French) and that the German spokesperson changed each year;

The articles include several highly innovative features:

- Decisions are now taken by a **majority of votes cast**, regardless of the nationality of representatives;
- Council meetings are now public

For the organization of the operational structure, it was decided to merge the two secretariats and to site them at Kehl for efficiency and to bring staff together under one roof.

### **c) Solutions to be developed**

During the 18 months of the project, the Eurodistrict has grown enormously since it has moved from being a cooperation based on a simple agreement to create an innovative legal structure, namely an EGTC with its own budget.

**A structured governance of cross-border territories being at a developing stage throughout Europe, many challenges remain** in the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict.

One of the greatest assets of the URBACT-EGTC project has been the opportunity for various project partners to compare their situation, their points of view and experiences so as to identify the best practices to be implemented by one or the other.

Among the good practices identified among our partners, we will mention here:

#### **The Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai:**

The establishment in September 2009 of a “Development Forum” consisting of 60 members representing the vital forces of the cross-border town (businesses, unions, NGOs, etc...). This advisory committee is closely involved in decision making bodies and represents the civil society in the Eurometropole governance.

#### **The cross-border town of Frankfurt (Oder) / Slubice:**

Within this cross-border territory, it was necessary to use an outside consultant to assist in cross-border work. Being independent of any German or Polish administration, the expert captured situations in a neutral manner and could demonstrate a large degree of objectivity in their advice to local elected members.

#### **The Chaves-Verin Eurocidade**

The strategic agenda developed in July 2008 with the assistance of outside experts, researchers and members of civil society, focuses particularly on aspects of sustainable economic development and development of European citizenship; to our eyes, it is an excellent tool for strategic planning in a cross-border town.

The idea of establishing a “free social zone” in which all the inhabitants of a cross-border territory have access to public services on both sides of the border - including health benefits - seemed particularly interesting and ambitious to us.

Once its structure has been established, the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict EGTC will still face many challenges, foremost being the **development of a real cross-border inter-community based on the principle of co-decision**. To do this, numerous steps are necessary and the political powers and administrations from both sides of the border should learn to speak with one voice - literally as well as figuratively.

#### d) Recommendations at regional, national and European levels

A **privileged link with regional and national authorities** is essential as some difficulties can only be overcome with the intervention of the latter, for example when obtaining exemptions from common law to implement certain innovative cross-border projects. Similarly, the obstacles faced by cross-border workers in the social and tax domain can ultimately only be resolved by **changes in national legislation and genuine experimental transfer of competence** of national authorities for the benefit of local communities.

The creation of a European legal instrument such as the EGTC, to facilitate local cross-border cooperation of communities equipped with very different administrative systems, is an excellent example of how the European Union may create European tools to bring solutions to local problems.

As pointed out in the Vetter-Cottin Report commissioned by the French and German governments on the future of the Eurodistrict, the ideal would be a **political support from both States and the European Union in the form of dedicated Eurodistrict spokespersons** in Berlin, Paris and Brussels. According to the recommendations from these two experts, these “facilitators” would be in constant contact with Eurodistrict officials and would take in charge the relaying of EGTC questions and requests directly to the national authorities or the Commission in Brussels.

Furthermore, it must not be forgotten to mention that if the **cross-border towns are taking advantage of EU legislation aimed at facilitating the implementation of cross-border projects**, the European Union will also be able to take advantage of the feedback concerning daily difficulties encountered in the domain and in which it may try to bring concrete solutions.

Tomorrow's Europe will be built from these experimental cross-border territories and in this context it is desirable that the European and national legislation gradually opens to the specificities of these territories.

## ***2.2. “Involvement of civil society in cross-border conurbations”***

### **1. Cross-border projects leading to a popular mobilization**

**How can public authorities consider and promote popular mobilization in cross-border conurbations?**

#### **Good Practices**

Currently, the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict organizes four annual sports events for the population of its territory. The solidarity run for school children and the European picnic and cycling festival have



become traditional in Strasbourg and the various services of the Urban Community of Strasbourg are responsible for their organization. In 2007, the Eurodistrict German partners were invited to participate in these events, and now, these events are managed across borders. The Eurodistrict hiking day was held for the first time in 2008 on the German side in Lahr. The idea for such an event came from the Eurodistrict and its organization is guaranteed by Eurodistrict technicians with the support of various sports departments in the municipal area.

#### **a) The solidarity run for school children aged six to eleven**

It takes place in **May, during the European month**. The idea is to bring French and German children together and have them **run for a good cause**. The children are supported by local authorities and the funds collected are donated to a hospital or an association for children with disabilities. In 2009, roughly 18,500 children took part in the run and raised approximately 6,000 € for a good cause. To motivate children to participate, prior information work must be carried out in schools on the bicultural aspect of the event, on the possibility of making new friends from a different culture and on the importance of helping children who are not as fortunate as themselves because of a disability or illness.

Over the years, the number of institutions participating in the run for solidarity has increased on the French side, while on the German side the situation has remained more or less stable, since the race has so far only been organized in the five largest cities in the Ortenau district. However, the idea is to have more and more schools participate in the future, mainly on the German side. It may also be difficult to convince children that the main purpose of the day is not just the physical performance, but also to meet other children from across the Rhine, and to run for children who are sick or disabled.

To **encourage exchanges between pupils of both countries** - and to offer children the opportunity of discovering another culture - games with bi-national teams and bilingual workshops are held throughout the day.

#### **b) The European picnic and the Eurodistrict cycling festival (these two events are generally carried out on the same day)**

In this case, the biggest challenge is firstly to mobilize citizens and secondly, to encourage them to get to know their foreign neighbours better. Generally, it takes several years for a sports event to become rooted in a region through word of mouth, and even in the absence of exact figures, it is certain that the event is becoming increasingly popular. People usually come with friends or family and stay with their own group.

The French and German guided cycling trips have met great success and we believe they offer a good opportunity to interact with foreigners while in a pleasant environment. In the past, all circuits were reserved very quickly and requests for participation even had to be declined, we hope to be able to employ more bilingual guides and offer a greater number of circuits in the future.

### **c) The Eurodistrict hiking day**

It always takes place in autumn, alternatively on the German or French side of the Eurodistrict. The main challenge for the hiking day is to motivate the “ordinary citizen” to walk with their fellow citizens. To end the day, we hold a celebration rally embellished with a musical program, an enlargement of this part of the event could potentially be used to attract a wider audience.

The event is mainly organized by groups of walkers on both sides of the border. Mobilization among associations is good, but it is difficult to motivate the large-scale population, especially young adults. Guided tours in both languages have been very successful and the offer could be extended to other destinations.

### **d) The cross-border employment Forum**

For the first time in June 2009, the EuroDistrict had an exhibition booth at the Offenburg job fair, with the aim of promoting learning in a bilingual and bicultural context. The fair is known throughout Southern Germany. In 2009, some 250 exhibitors attracted over 20,000 visitors, mostly high school students gleaning information on training, local training offers, jobs and potential employers.

Attendance at the Eurodistrict booth has remained modest, more appeal should be brought to the event in the future, for example by inviting young adults to come and speak about their training and their experiences in a bicultural context.

## **Solutions to be developed**

**Communication concerning these events could be improved** (flyers, posters in the streets and advertisements in newspapers). To do this, a larger budget would be required and **funding from the European Union should be considered**.

The organization of such events in a bicultural context takes time and involves many people over several weeks. A **strengthening of bilingual staff** dedicated to organizing border events would greatly improve the possibilities in this context. Several organizations are already contributing to the organization of these outdoor events, but it would be desirable to have **greater civil society involvement** in the future.

Currently, all our events are sport orientated; it would be good for the Eurodistrict to **organize at least one cultural event** in the future such as a manifestation or music, film, literary or theatrical festival. Culture taken in the broadest sense allows people to feel like they belong to their territory and develops a sense of **belonging to a community, the latter being essential to the** emergence of a “Eurodistrict citizen” identity.

So as to encourage citizens to develop projects, the Eurodistrict plans to **apply for micro-project funds** from the EU (INTERREG IV A program). These funds would be dedicated to carrying out small projects for the civil society and community life.

## 2. Cross-border media and virtual communities

**To what extent can media be used to improve visibility and create a common identity in cross-border towns?**

### Good Practices

Nowadays, it is essential to **be present on the internet and to use new technologies for communication**. The Eurodistrict has redesigned its website ([www.eurodistrict.eu](http://www.eurodistrict.eu)) in spring 2009. This was necessary, because the previous site had not been designed by professionals and lacked interactivity and appeal.

The Eurodistrict board decided to devote 20,000 Euros from its budget to projects for the new site. The new website is much more appealing and offers several interactive accessories. For example, the interactive map of the different swimming pools in the region is a major success.

In addition, the Eurodistrict is currently **developing an Internet platform for e-democracy** with an agency that specializes in **organizing extensive consultations** with the population. This platform will be launched when the new European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation has an operational structure. The idea is to allow people to give their opinion on what they expect from the Eurodistrict through online dialogue. The main phase of the dialogue will last four weeks and the results of the consultation will be taken into account in the development of the future European grouping’s action plan. The main challenge is to motivate people to participate in the platform and the various forums and chat groups.

For the dialogue to work, it is very important that the citizens realize that their suggestions are important and will be taken into account in future projects. To generate interest in this subject, the Eurodistrict has prepared a multi-level communication plan before the launch of the platform.

A **new online newspaper** ("Journal des deux Rives") has recently been created through private initiative; it covers the Upper Rhine region between Basel and Karlsruhe, and reports on the Eurodistricts of this region as well as on European issues. This newspaper is funded through advertising revenue and several sponsors. It demonstrates the commitment to cross-border work that emanates from certain very active groups in our territory.

### **Solutions to be developed**

In the first place, **cross-border coverage of events by existing Media** is encouraged and supported. The latter is currently too uncertain and limited to familiarize people with the Eurodistrict territory. Furthermore, the **creation of one or more new Medias** covering the Eurodistrict territory seems necessary. In fact, there is currently no newspaper, radio or television program specifically dedicated to this region. The creation of such a medium would imply a **substantial financial commitment**, but would be of extreme importance to the birth of a Eurodistrict identity within the population. To make an overall assessment of the current media situation in the cross-border region and to encourage exchanges among professionals, a forum dedicated to cross-border Medias will be held under the auspices of the Eurodistrict in Offenbourg in May 2010.

## **3. Participatory democracy in cross-border towns**

**What are the levels of participatory democracy that can be promoted at a cross-border level?**

### **Good Practices**

Clearly, a cross-border town can only exist if its residents are heard and taken into account in the decision making process. One of the biggest challenges is to **engage the civil society in development planning** and to show that their opinion is an important consideration in the choice of public authorities.

That is why the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict does not only want to consult people through an online dialogue, but also through **genuine discussion forums** in various areas. The first round table of this kind will take place on health issues in early summer 2010. It will be organized with an association of citizens who deals with problems faced by cross-border workers.



### **Solutions to be developed**

In terms of consulting the population, the “Future Conference” held over two days in June 2009 by the cross-border town of Frankfurt / Slubice (DE/PL) bringing together some 200 participants, seemed to us an excellent practice. Indeed, it helped generate interest in cross-border issues and the local authorities decided to organize a public debate of this kind once a year. For the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict, the **establishment of an advisory board representing the interests of the civil society and giving regular advice on cross-border governance** seems necessary in order to ensure that the new Eurodistrict is also built from the bottom to the top.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.eurodistrict.eu/fr/>

### 3. THE ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME

<b>CHALLENGE 1: Determination and implementation of the legal structure best suited to our CB co-operation group</b>						
<b>Type of action</b>	<b>Partnership with the project leader</b>	<b>Description of the action</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>	<b>Short, medium and long-term calendar</b>	<b>Sources of funding with amount</b>	<b>Recommendations at Regional, National and European levels</b>
<b>Action 1:</b>  Determine the legal structure best suited to our needs and territory	Providing extensive information on the EGTC by the MOT throughout the project	Inventory and comparison of existing legal instruments in the field of CB cooperation  Seminar October 11th, 2008 with the help of an outside consultant (Kehl, Euro-Institute)	Identification of the legal form best suited to our needs	4 months between the establishment of the bi-national panel of lawyers and the decision to establish an EGTC	The work was carried out by a group of lawyers coming from ED members  Call for an external partner for the seminar discussion of 11.10.2008  Estimated cost: 2,400 €	Organization of seminars on various legal possibilities of cooperation in the use of players in cross-border co-operation and publication of literature on the subject
<b>Action 2:</b>  Setting up of the EGTC	Providing extensive information on the EGTC by the MOT throughout the project	Drafting of the constitutive convention and the statutes  Adoption of statutes by the deliberative assemblies of the future members  Request permission for creation of the EGTC from the states and authorization thereof.	Creation of the "Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict " EGTC	Decision of creation of an EGTC: 3.12.2008  Constitutive session of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict EGTC on 4.02.2010		Improved feedback on the progress of application requests from the states for the establishment of an EGTC

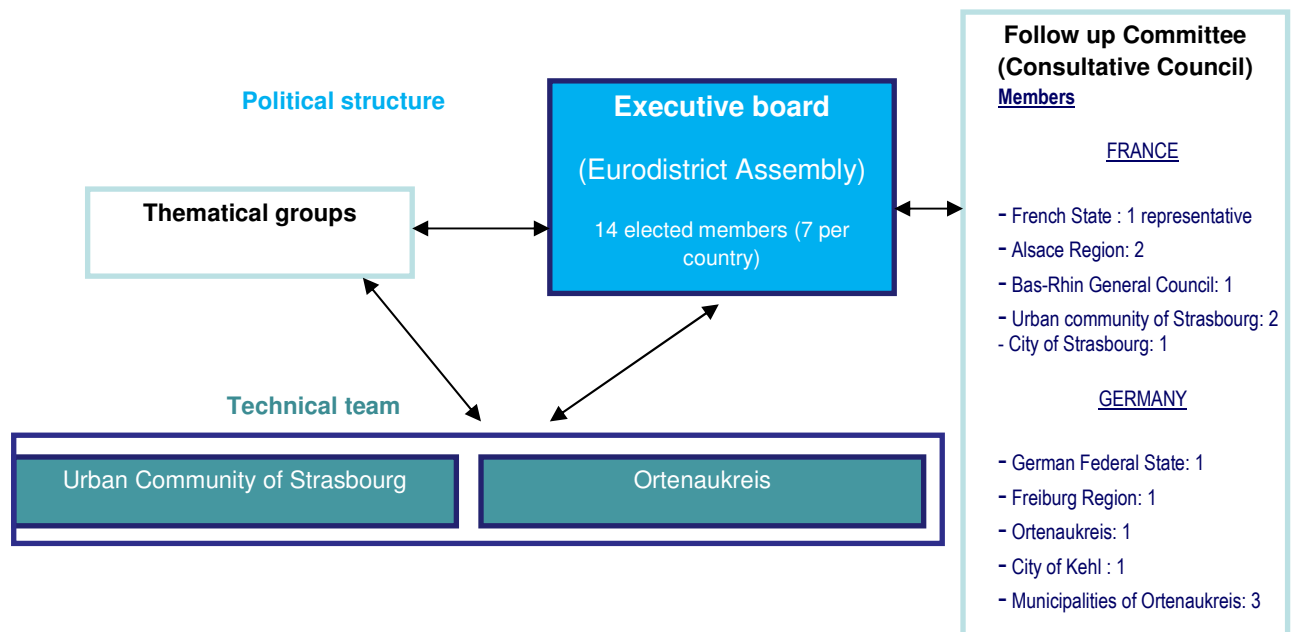
<b>CHALLENGE 2: Setting up extensive population consultation on the future of the Eurodistrict</b>						
<b>Type of action</b>	<b>Partnership with the project leader</b>	<b>Description of action</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>	<b>Short, medium and long-term calendar</b>	<b>Sources of funding with amount</b>	<b>Recommendations at Regional, National and European levels</b>
<b>Action 1:</b> Establishment of cyber counselling for the EuroDistrict population		Development of a cyber-population internet platform consultation on the future of the Eurodistrict (debates, surveys and online voting)	Larger implication of the population in the future ED	Parallel launching with the installation of the future Secretariat General of the EGTC in Kehl	Budget Eurodistrict. Amount: 43,200 €. Excl. tax	
<b>Action 2:</b> Ongoing citizen consultation		Implementation of various measures of public consultation: roundtables, workshops and conferences	Identification of the population with the territory	At the end of the online consultation  Should lead to a permanent process of citizen consultation	Estimated budget not yet established.	

## 4. THE CROSS-BORDER GOVERNANCE ORGANIZATION SCHEME

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(see the governance scheme elaborated by MOT and validated by each cross-border conurbation presented at the thematic seminar in Chaves, 12 March)

### Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau



## 5. NETWORK AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

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### *5.1. Contacts with Regional, National and European administrations*

In general, the EGTC-URBACT project is intended to be highlighted whenever the topics of local cross-border governance, metropolitan development and citizen participation are addressed.

With regard to the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict, this step has seen a very practical translation during exchanges with the Alsatian regional authorities, in Baden-Württemberg and even Switzerland in the north-western part of the Trinational Metropolitan Region, which foresees the carrying out of citizen workshops in the Upper Rhine territories during the year 2010.

In the context of the **common development potential represented by the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine**, the four existing Eurodistricts have a special role to play as they represent the local level and they constitute the basic fabric of cross-border cooperation.

The presence in Strasbourg of the European institutions working for democracy, fundamental rights and citizens' rights can also give a special resonance to this project. Therefore on October 15, 2009 the City of Strasbourg held a round table in cooperation with the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA), attached to the Council of Europe, on the theme of local governance in the cross-border regions during which the work conducted under the EGTC-URBACT project was highlighted.

The project was also discussed at a seminar organized by the Directorate General for Regional Policy and officially approved for territorial cooperation in the context of contributions made in response to the Green Book on the future of the cohesion policy. This seminar was held in Brussels on September 25, 2009 and brought together Member State technical representatives, experts from the European Commission and a selection of cross-border regions whose contributions to the Green Book were considered very relevant. The approach notably benefited from strong support from the Cross-border Operational Mission (MOT) as well as from EUROMOT.

The Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict, initiator of such one contribution, had been associated with a small delegation from the Upper Rhine French-German-Swiss area, which had drafted a comprehensive document pointing to the issues of this territory in terms of multilevel governance - levels and priorities post 2013.

More recently, the EGTC-URBACT project has been identified among useful documentary sources in positioning the large member towns in the EUROCITIES network, concerning **revision of the 1082/2006 Regulation** of the Parliament and the Council of July 5, 2006 relating to the European

Grouping of Territorial Cooperation. Scheduled for mid-2011, this reform will require a considerable prior awareness campaign and mobilization of national and EU authorities on the basis of identifying the bottlenecks and improvement of concrete situations.

The conclusions of the EGTC-URBACT project have arrived at the right moment to use its influence and be part of the first steps planned by the networks of large towns and European cities, including Strasbourg.

## ***5.2. Contacts with other CB conurbations***

Contacts have been established between the seven project partners after the first preparatory meeting held in Lille in July 2008. Exchanges increased over the following months when the partners met regularly at the various thematic seminars and work meetings that marked the project during 18 months.

The people assigned to the EGTC-URBACT project in the various cross-border conurbations created relationships of trust, and did not hesitate to directly exchange information on their respective territory and on the various good practices implemented. The Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict has contacted Lille Metropole several times, on how the latter has integrated the “conditions of recruitment, employment, remuneration and social protection of workers” in the statutes of its EGTC.

## ***5.3. Description of activities and documents: interviews, conferences, press releases, etc***

The project has been the subject of a **regular local communication** since the adoption of the project by the competent authorities. We can widely distinguish two types of public relations, whether it is an institutional step (maintained LSG meetings) or event-driven (Eurodistrict public events).

### **a) Institutional communication:**

- Eurodistrict council dated December 9, 2008 (Lahr): press invitation and following articles (a selection): DNA from 09.12.08 “Un cadre juridique dans la corbeille de noces”, l’Alsace dated

09.12.08 "Eurodistrict et grand stade", 20 minutes dated 10.12.08 "Imaginer les contours de Starsbourg en 2025".

- Eurodistrict council dated March 26, 2009 (Strasbourg): press invitation and following articles (a selection): Badische Zeitung from 27.03.2009: "Eurodistrikt startet mit 850 000 Euro", ParisBerlin from March-April 2009 "La longue marche de l'Eurodistrict: un défi ambitieux enfin relancé".

Added to this list should be communication supports established during the seminar project launch held on November 19, 2008 at the European Parliament in Strasbourg. Several articles in the local French and German press quoted: Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace dated 20/11/2008, Badische Zeitung, 28/11/2008, Mittelbadische Presse dated 20/11/2008).

An on site press conference was also held.

#### **b) Event driven communication:**

- Bicycle day and European pic-nic: Kehler Zeitung dated 13/05/09 "Am Sonntag dritter Eurodistrikt-Fahrradtag", Badische Zeitung dated 14.05. 09 "Radeln, Europa und Geselligkeit", Mittelbadische Presse dated 18.05.09 "Keine Grenzen beim Radeln oder Picknicken", DNA dated 18.05.09 "L'Europe fête l'Eurodistrict"
- Solidarity run: DNA dated 30/06/2009, "32,000 km courus pour des enfants handicapés", Mittelbadische Presse dated 16.05.09, "300 Grundschüler laufen für einen guten Zweck", Acher- und Bühlher Bote dated 16/05/09, "Schüler laufen für einen guten Zweck" DNA dated 20.05.09 "Courir pour une bonne cause".
- Rhine Festival: DNA dated 11/09/09, "La fête chacun de son côté"
- Hiking day: DNA dated 1/09/2009, "Cinq circuits autour de la Robertsau".

## 6. PERSPECTIVES

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The Local Action Plan will be a preferred medium for **deliberation on the modes of governance** of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict, and for **public awareness** of the importance of cross-border cooperation in the pilot region. More specifically, the good practices gathered from project partners, will feed into a useful **future framework for the involvement of civil society** in the Eurodistrict, whose success will depend greatly on requisition by citizens of the global approach, its ambition and its initiatives.

Furthermore, the Local Support Group established under the framework of this project will remain the linchpin of this process, since it is the production of the former Eurodistrict council; become the newly created Strasbourg-Ortenau EGTC office. Its **strategic dimension, representativeness and its leadership role** will be all the stronger.

At its initiative, **the Local Action Plan could be disseminated into the political bodies** of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict who would find it a relevant source of good practice and comparative experience in cross-border towns where issues of governance and community are keenly asserted.

The initiated process of the Eurodistrict territory project and the objective of **moving from a logic of cooperation to a logic of co-decision** brings high expectations. The Local Action Plan will therefore fulfil its vocation as a **“tool box” to inspire and to formalize concrete approaches to citizen involvement and metropolitan governance**, and to respond to the challenges of cross-border conurbation development at a European dimension which constitutes its centre.

The expected developments from the Eurodistrict, on both the geographical plan with enlargement of the French side, and in terms of governance with the abandonment of the unanimity rule in favour of the majority for the Council's deliberations, already reflect the **willingness to adapt continuously according to the priorities defined jointly by French and German partners**.

Other dates such as the announced revision of the 2006 Regulation on the EGTC and the preparation of the next community programming period will also give the Eurodistrict the opportunity to express itself and assert its expertise at all levels of cooperation and decision.