



Memorial to Europe honouring the "Schengen" Agreement (Wikimedia Commons/Cayambe/Claude Meisch)



Imprint

Spokesman region

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The "Cross-Border Metropolitan Regions" Initiative

Cover picture: Passerelle des deux Rives between Kehl and Strasbourg (Stadt Kehl/Peter Heck)



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CROSS-BORDER METROPOLITAN REGIONS – A NEW SPATIAL CATEGORY!

Cross-border regions with potential for growth and innovation play a special role in the network of European urban and metropolitan regions. They help to strengthen European economic power and at the same time act as laboratories for European integration. Cross-border metropolitan regions are diverse and future-orientated habitats and economic and cultural spaces - they are “Europe in miniature”. The work of the initiative is intended to attract attention to the specific potentials available in these cross-border regions.



View from the three border point in Vaals in the direction of Aachen (Copyright Stadt Aachen/Andreas Herrmann)

FROM THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT OF SPATIAL PLANNING (MORO) TO THE IMEG

Since cooperation in the “Supra-regional partnerships in cross-border functional regions” demonstration project began, the aim of the project partnership was to develop a long-term network. The cross-border metropolitan regions initiative (Initiativkreis Metropolitane Grenzregionen, IMeG) was established on March 17, 2011 in Berlin as part of the demonstration project’s final event.

The interests of cross-border metropolitan regions can be represented more effectively in a joint venture. At the same time, the initiative wishes to provide stimuli to promote the cross-border regional development in terms of territorial cohesion.

The initiative does not consider itself to be a new cross-border institution, but rather aims to assist existing cooperation structures in the further development of territorial cooperation.

In order to ensure successful positioning and cooperation of cross-border metropolitan regions within Germany and Europe, the initiative aims to find further partners and to actively support the work of cross-border institutions and European networks.

IMEG OBJECTIVES

Internally, the initiative aims to boost the specific development opportunities of the cross-border regions as a “learning network“, and to clear obstacles in cross-border spatial planning. This requires:

- that overarching strategies aiming at functional integration and large-scale partnerships be combined with key projects; to this end cooperation structures and the regional governance are to be developed further
- that better use be made of European and national funding policies, that they be synchronised, and that an effort be made to achieve greater coordination between neighbouring states where cross-border spatial planning and development are concerned
- the concept of “strong cross-border regions as drivers of development” be further developed

These “internal” objectives are augmented by others oriented externally. Here the aim must lie in adopting a position in order to

- anchor strong cross-border regions as “motor” areas in spatial planning models and thus develop a coordinated policy of the federal and Länder governments for these cross-border regions
- position cross-border metropolitan regions within the European spatial development discourse
- connect the initiative to networks in Europe

MEMBERS

The foundation members of the initiative are the federal state of Saarland as part of the Greater Region¹, the Regio Aachen e.V. as part of the Euregio Maas-Rhein and the regional associations Mittlerer Oberrhein, Südlicher Oberrhein, Hochrhein-Bodensee and Bodensee-Oberschwaben from the Trinational Metropolitan Region Upper Rhine and the Lake Constance region.

The initiative is open to institutions from border regions with comparable spatial and functional structures. It addresses actors in regional planning in particular, thus pursuing a clearly territorial perspective. Here the focus is on the spatial planning policy and the regional development approach.

¹ Greater Region Saarland – Lorraine – Luxembourg – Rheinland-Pfalz – Région Wallone – Communauté Française de Belgique und Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft Belgiens



Unbounded sailing on Lake Constance (Harald Winkelhausen)