

# Building More Resilient Cross-Border Regions project

Multi-level Governance and Co-developed Strategic Regional Development



# WHAT IS THE PROJECT ABOUT?

The OECD is working with five EU cross-border regions to undertake a collaborative, knowledge-sharing and dialogue-based process to enhance cross-border co-operation and co-development of policies and public services to achieve common development objectives.

The OECD project, which is funded and supported by the European Commission, centres upon three elements of multi-level governance: actors, ideas, and means.

- 1 Actors:** the public and non-governmental actors and institutions involved in cross-border co-operation mechanisms, and their engagement practices and mechanisms.
- 2 Ideas:** the development objectives and priorities of cross-border regions, and the extent to which these are reflected in integrated territorial strategies.
- 3 Means:** the available and necessary resources, such as funding and skills, in each cross-border region to reinforce their governance structures, improve public service delivery and ensure sustainable financing for cross-border investment.

## The five regions



### EGTC Eurometropolis Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai

The Eurometropolis Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai is a cross-border region between France and Belgium with a total population of 2.1 million residents. The region comprises 157 municipalities, including 95 in north-eastern France, 39 in the Belgian region of Flanders and 23 in the Belgian region of Wallonia. Eurometropolis Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai was the first European region to form a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). It brings together all national, regional and local-level governments in the region, as well as inter-municipal associations. Priorities for the region include improving cross-border co-operation on higher education and water management.



### EGTC Alzette Belval, Pôle Métropolitain Frontalier du Nord Lorrain and PRO-SUD

Three subnational entities are actively involved in supporting cross-border co-operation on the French-Luxembourg border: the EGTC Alzette Belval, Pôle Métropolitain Frontalier du Nord Lorrain and PRO-SUD. Collectively, 626 000 citizens on both side of the border reside within the territories of the three entities. Despite being separate bodies, and each having their own strategy and priorities, the three actors share a number of similar priorities. These include improving cross-border co-operation on mobility solutions, spatial planning, housing supply and labour market challenges.

# The five regions

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## EGTC Rio Minho

The Rio Minho cross-border region is located in the centre of the Galicia-North Portugal Euroregion. Spanning 3 312 km<sup>2</sup> and encompassing a population of 376 000, Rio Minho is the most densely populated transboundary area between Portugal and Spain. Five bridges link the cross-border area, and account for 47% of registered traffic volume between the two countries. The more than 13 000 daily crossings made by cross-border workers also attest to the region's close economic, social and cultural integration. Priorities for the region include improving cross-border access to healthcare.



## Euroregion Niemen Association and Alytus City Municipality

The “Euroregion Niemen” Association and Alytus City Municipality are the founding members of the EGTC Niemen-Nemunas, which was established in 2023 and will support Polish-Lithuanian cross-border co-operation. Prior to 2022, both actors had been involved in the Cross-border Union Euroregion NIEMEN-NEMUNAS-HEMAH, which supported co-operation between Belarus, Lithuania, Russia (Kaliningrad) and Poland. This co-operation was suspended by the Polish and Lithuanian counterparts in 2022, following the escalation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Priorities for the region include improving cross-border co-operation on healthcare, energy, social security and innovation.



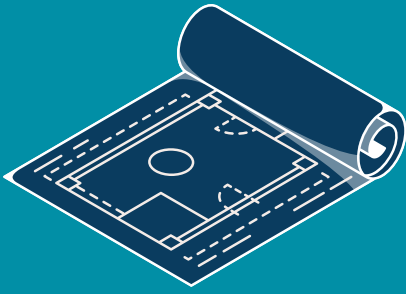
## Working Community of the Pyrenees

The Working Community of the Pyrenees (CTP) is a large, cross-border region that spans three countries in southern Europe. Covering a total of 254 776 km<sup>2</sup>, the region comprises the Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Occitanie regions in south-western France, the Principality of Andorra, and the Spanish autonomous communities of Catalonia, Aragon, Navarre and the Basque Country in north-eastern Spain. With a population of 23 492 434 inhabitants, the CTP accounts for approximately 5% of the total population of the European Union. A priority for the CTP is strengthening cross-border access to healthcare.

# WHAT ARE THE MAIN PROJECT COMPONENTS?

## 1

### Five blueprints



For each of the pilot regions, the OECD will develop a tailor-made blueprint, which will present an analysis of the situation of the cross-border region and provide an action plan and toolkit to improve its cross-border governance. The blueprints will take stock of each region's performance by considering the three dimensions of multi-level governance in cross-border areas: actors, ideas and means. A synthesis report will serve as a follow-up work to the blueprints, and include recommendations for action targeting all levels of government involved in managing cross-border relations.

## 2

### An analytical tool

The tool will present the main areas of attention for non-pilot cross-border regions willing to improve their cross-border governance, including multi-level governance and co-development approaches.



## 3

### Knowledge-sharing and dialogue events



The OECD will hold two knowledge-sharing events, which will gather the pilot regions to share their experiences in cross-border co-operation and co-development. They will be designed around specific topics or challenges arising from the individual pilots. In addition, the OECD will hold an international dialogue event on cross-border regional governance, which will support the sharing of good practices on multi-level governance and cross-border co-development among cross-border regions, experts and policy practitioners.

Findings, recommendations and lessons learned from the project will also be discussed at two events hosted by the OECD and the European Commission, including at the European Week of Regions and Cities Week 2024.

# WHAT DO WE EXPECT TO ACHIEVE?

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- Identify ways to foster an improved approach to cross-border governance, service delivery and investment.
- Support the pilot regions to identify mechanisms to encourage and facilitate more effective cross-border co-operation among all levels of government and across sectors;
- Provide recommendations to improve the sustainability of cross-border service delivery funding, investment and management.
- Develop an analytical tool that can help other cross-border regions in the EU and beyond improve their governance practices.
- Contribute to a culture of dialogue and peer-to-peer learning for effective cross-border policy and decision-making



## For more information of the project, please contact:

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## About the OECD

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation that works to build better policies for better lives. Together with governments, policy makers and citizens, the OECD provides a unique forum and knowledge hub for data and analysis, exchange of experiences, good-practice sharing, and advice on public policies and international standard-setting.

## About CFE

The OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE) provides comparative statistics, analysis and capacity building for local and national actors to work together to unleash the potential of entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises, promote inclusive and sustainable regions and cities, boost local job creation, and support sound tourism policies.



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