

PROCEEDINGS FROM THE SEMINAR ON 7 NOVEMBER 2016
ON TRANSBORDER QUESTIONS AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE GRAND EST REGION AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

NEW DIMENSIONS, NEW OPPORTUNITIES?



Agenda

PROCEEDINGS FROM THE SEMINAR ON 7 NOVEMBER 2016
ON TRANSBORDER QUESTIONS AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Introduction

Roland RIES, Mayor of Strasbourg, President of the Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau

Robert HERRMANN, President of the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg, President of the Strasbourg-Mulhouse-Colmar metropolitan hub

Round table n°1 - What are the best development models for the transborder regions?

Catherine TRAUTMANN, former Minister, Vice-President of the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg

Dr. Katharina ERDMENGER, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, Germany

Didier HERBILLON, Mayor of Sedan

Jean-Paul DETAILLE, Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture and Tourism, in charge of the representation of the Greater Region of Wallonia

Contributor: **Frédéric BIERRY**, President of the Bas-Rhin Departmental Council

Round table n°2 - What are the tools for developing our transborder regions?

Stephan TOSCANI, Minister of Finances and European Affairs for the Sarre region

André ROSSINOT, President of the Greater Nancy Metropolitan area, President of the Sillon Lorrain Metropolitan hub, Vice-President of MOT (Transborder Operational Mission)

Dr. Manuel FRIESECKE, Director of Regio Basiliensis, Swiss partner for cooperation in Upper Rhine

Jean-Claude SINNER, Director of International and Transborder Relations, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructures for Luxembourg

Conclusions

Philippe RICHERT, former Minister, President of the Grand Est Region, President of the Regions of France Association

Jean ROTTNER, Mayor of Mulhouse, Vice-President of the Grand Est Region, President of FNAU

Jean-Christophe BAUDOIN, Director of regional strategies, General Commission for the Equality of Regions

Anne SANDER, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President of the Transborder Operational Mission

Changing perspective

Referring to the striking, permanent reality of transborder cooperation, **Roland RIES** recommends looking anew at what he calls *"the illegibility of its multiple structures in the light of the new scale represented by the Grand Est region: its size and diversity lead us together to look for the key elements that will give it a "distinct advantage", while making daily life easier for all citizens. But still more important, this new scale is a great opportunity to create a laboratory for the Europe of tomorrow"*.

The change in perimeter resulting from the union of Alsace, Champagne-Ardenne and Lorraine is a development that was also experienced by Baden-Wuerttemberg some sixty years ago, recalls **Robert HERRMANN**, who invites us to think differently. By joining together regions that have faced the upheavals of history and are rich in talent, the Grand Est has become the most European and most transborder region in France, with four countries neighbouring it, four cities that are the headquarters of major European institutions within a range of 150 km, 45% of French borders, and almost 30 joint cross-border institutions. With neighbouring regions enjoying the same advantages, the new transborder area represents a real core for Europe, with a role and actions that can help relaunch European practices and meet the new needs of the regional populations, providing we can plan ahead and act together.

To make their way towards this change in perspective, all players must develop new ways of looking at each other, and take a mutual interest in cultures and identities. Setting up a realistic orientation for the future will involve, for example, creating a network between the Grand Est's metropolitan areas, with centres of excellence, universities, cultural networks, and more widely, in the new transborder European regional area. To make coordination easier with the neighbouring regions, with the support of the French part, might we not imagine setting up a sphere similar to Atlantic Europe?

Participants questioned the way cooperation is carried out today. The contributions of practitioners on concrete subjects help to raise awareness about the ideas needed to map out the way forward and the pathways to be laid down to inspire transborder players. The debates and the different models put forward are a chance to see how we can go from relations of proximity to relations on the scale of the "Grand Est region and its neighbours".



Roland RIES
Mayor of Strasbourg,
President of the Eurodistrict
Strasbourg-Ortenau



Robert HERRMANN
President of the
Eurometropolis of Strasbourg
and of ADEUS

Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
PART ONE: UNDERSTANDING	
What are the best development models for the transborder regions?	5
Transborder metropolitan areas: an ordinary "centre-periphery" model?	5
Direct foreign investment, a powerful tool for development.	6
What is the role for transborder, national or European metropolitan centres in the greater transborder region?	7
Round table	9
PART TWO: ACTION	
What are the best tools for developing our transborder regions?	11
The river network in the Grand Est region and neighbouring areas - a transborder economic potential to be developed?	11
What tools could the university networks provide to give an economic structure to the Grand Est region?	13
Transborder economic networks: how effective are they?	14
Identities and cultural practices in the European transborder region as a bond or a brake on regional exchanges	15
Round table	16
CONCLUSIONS	18



Part one: understanding

What are the best development models for the transborder regions?

A round table to understand how the border provides new insights into the relations between the metropolitan centres and the periphery, how foreign investment brings about other transborder interactions than commuting, metropolitan outreach and, beyond that, transborder proximity.

→ KEY SPEAKERS

Catherine TRAUTMANN, former Minister, Vice-President of the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg

DR. Katharina ERDMENGER, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, Germany

Didier HERBILLON, Mayor of Sedan

Jean-Paul DETAILLE, Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture and Tourism, in charge of the representation of the Greater Region, Wallonia

Chaired by **Olivier DENERT**, General Secretary of the Transborder Operational Mission

→ THE EXPERTS

Nadine CATTAN, Research Director at the CNRS

Philippe CHOUKROUN, Director of Agence Attractivité Alsace

Frédéric DURAND, Researcher, LISER, Luxembourg



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: JEAN-PAUL DETAILLE, CATHERINE TRAUTMANN, KATHARINA ERDMENGER, OLIVIER DENERT, DIDIER HERBILLON, FRÉDÉRIC DURAND, PHILIPPE CHOUKROUN, NADINE CATTAN

THE EXPERTS' PERSPECTIVE

Transborder metropolitan areas: an ordinary "centre-periphery" model?



Frédéric DURAND
Researcher,
LISER,
Luxembourg

Analysing the way transborder metropolitan areas work results in the three models put forward by Frédéric DURAND, with a level of simplicity aiming to highlight transborder diversity, according to the profiles of the areas concerned:

* **Integration by polarisation** is manifested by the emergence of a centre with strong overall degree of attraction, where a large majority of transborder and international flows converge, such as Basel or Luxembourg. While this model is economically productive for the centre, it is less so on the transborder level, with a growth in internal disequilibrium;

* **Integration by specialisation** is characterised by multi-directional flows from either side of the border, resulting from differences in terms of law, prices and availability of real estate, such as between Malmö and Copenhagen, or even for Geneva in certain cases. The regions divide the urban roles between them in a more or less subtle way: housing, economy and transport;

* **In integration by osmosis**, the transborder flows are bi-directional and the attractiveness is shared between the metropolitan centre and the neighbouring regions, which are positioned in its wake. This is a complementary logic, such as in Lille-Courtrai-Roubaix or Aachen-Liège-Maastricht. Economic differences tend to diminish, development is better balanced in the area and the model tends towards the integration of the employment and real estate markets.

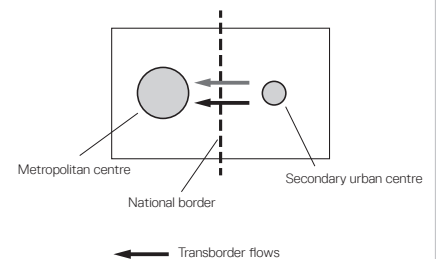
These three distinct models all, however, face similar issues:

- ➔ To grasp the opportunities on offer and gain in critical mass, to mobilise resources for large-scale facilities, such as the Euro Airport in Basel-Mulhouse, or to pool skills and know-how at the service of innovation, as in Lille-Courtrai;
- ➔ To promote social cohesion on the transborder level and seek to go towards a more coherent spatial development;
- ➔ To increase the resilience of regions: growing interdependence gives the regions concerned a shared destiny, with positive effects, it is true, but also vulnerabilities that can lead to destabilisation, with social tensions, clogged road networks and a withdrawal into local identities that weaken the system's dynamics.

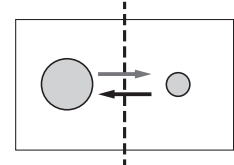
THREE DIFFERENT MODELS FOR TRANSBORDER INTEGRATION

source: LISER

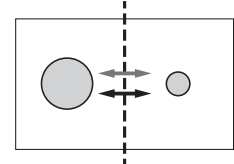
BY POLARISATION



BY SPECIALISATION



BY OSMOSIS



Direct foreign investment, a powerful tool for investment



Philippe CHOUKROUN
Director of Agence Attractivité Alsace

From 2006 to 2015, foreign companies opened facilities on 195 sites in Alsace, with 2,303 jobs announced when they arrived; they have since greatly developed, with far more jobs being created. For the past thirty years, Alsace has no longer attracted industry but rather distribution companies aiming to get a foothold on the French market or in the French-speaking area.

In 2010, 600 German companies were operating in Alsace: 260 in Lorraine and 80 in Champagne-Ardenne. They are happy with their situation in France, despite certain drawbacks; even though fiscal and social conditions in the country are not wholly attractive, these are not determining factors.

The advantages result from a dense network of experts in the Franco-German question, lawyers, chartered accountants, bankers, insurers, specialists in human resources, etc. who help companies develop.

The public sector is an opportunity for SMEs¹ to gain a foothold through partnerships, for example, with the Sarrebruck Chamber of Commerce or the Bade-Wurtemberg Crafts Guild. The region is widely recognised for its skills, the level of training and the high quality of its workforce.

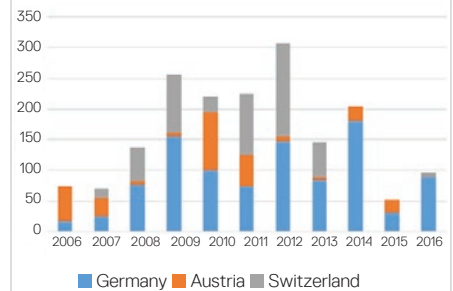
However, investments of a productive nature have been falling for the past twenty years, the competitiveness of labour costs has declined, the number of French employees who can speak German has decreased, despite the efforts made, and finally, future regulatory or legislative changes are hard to predict. This situation expresses France's contrasting image. But overall, in setting up businesses in Alsace, German companies, from a very wide range of sectors, enjoy the cultural proximity, the geographic proximity – 90% of them have their headquarters less than 100 km away –, a qualified labour force and the ease of breaking into French-speaking markets.

Possible ways forward are suggested by Philippe CHOUKROUN: language courses, transborder accessibility – especially for crossing the Rhine outside of Strasbourg – and the need to facilitate the arrival of more and more companies with strong added value.

¹. Small and medium-sized enterprises.

CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT LINKED TO DIRECT FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN ALSACE

source: Agence d'Attractivité Alsace



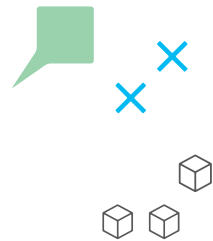
What is the role for transborder, national or European metropolitan centres within the greater transborder region?



Nadine CATTAN
Research Director
at the CNRS

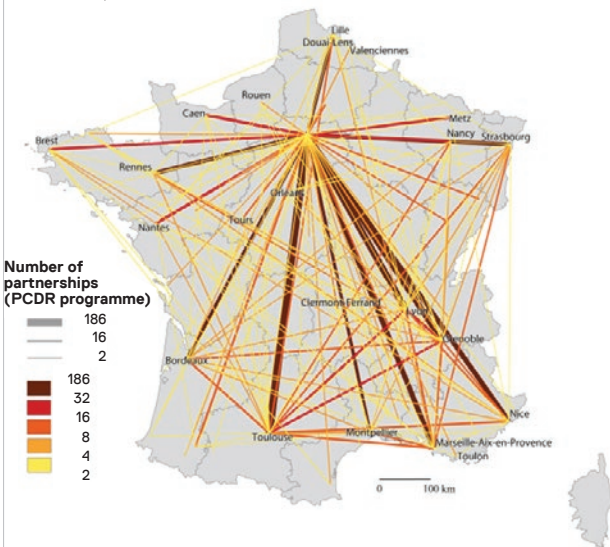
In a world dominated by exchanges, metropolitan centres and towns are too limited in size to grasp regional and transborder dynamics, while governance is still exercised over homogeneous regions. Governing non-neighbouring regional entities is one of the major issues in transborder areas. At a time of mobile regional developments, a relational approach in terms of interdependence and connections, and no longer simply a method of distribution and localisation, highlights the relevant links to be valued. This is how the debate about public policy should be set in combination with links and places, where the terms of corridor, gateway and door take on all their meaning.

To understand these places and links and better grasp metropolitan dynamics, Nadine CATTAN suggests that we should look at the urban system through a global approach and to combine the network city and the region city. This approach takes into account seven kinds of links to highlight regional systems: home-work mobilities providing structure, residential, leisure and study mobilities, scientific cooperation and economic links. It then appears that regions interplay with each other, and not against each other, including with regions that are further away. A conception based on proximity alone is outdated, since one must take into account the remote links set up between the metropolitan areas on three levels: the link between local urban systems instead of 350 urban areas and, at two other levels, the transversal connection between metropolitan areas, which shows the importance of the remote links set up between metropolitan areas, and the connecting links with Paris. All of these three levels of links are today an integral part of each region.



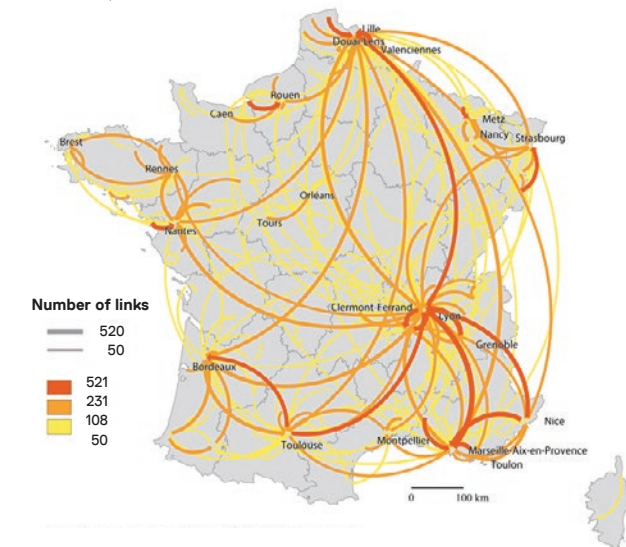
EUROPEAN SCIENTIFIC PARTNERSHIPS: MAIN FLOWS

source: CNRS, Nadine Cattan



AGENCY-HEAD OFFICE LINKS: MAIN FLOWS OUTSIDE OF PARIS

source: CNRS, Nadine Cattan



In this way, cities mobilise all kinds of resources beyond their environment from the national area, and to "sell" Strasbourg to investors also involves highlighting its links with resources in Lyon, Marseille, Bordeaux and Toulouse.

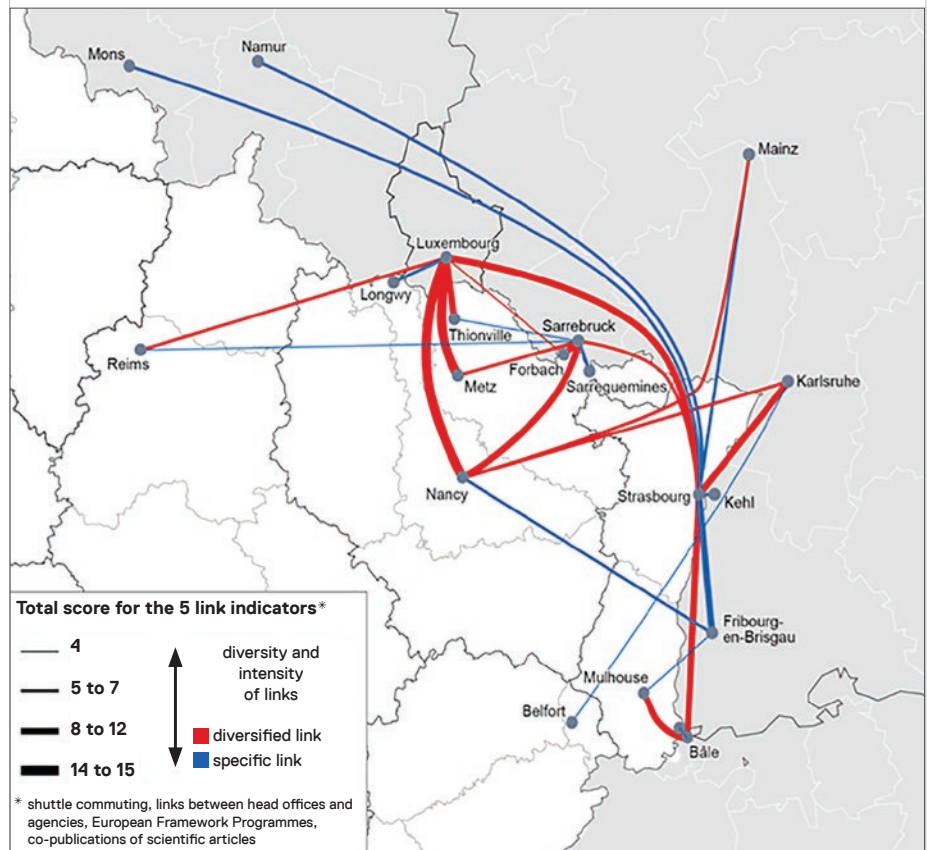
A study carried out in the Greater Region and the Upper Rhine area underlines a transborder system consisting not only of an employment area, but also systems shaped by a wide range of links: spheres of knowledge, economics, digital technology and culture.

The "gateway" is the idea put forward to give meaning to these urban systems that are deployed in the transborder area. From now on, the aim is to shift the usual focus of public policy around the principle of accumulation, and to turn towards the issues of connection and interdependence. By giving up the dual categories, such as dominant metropolitan areas / dependent peripheral areas, regional action will seek to take up the challenges of reciprocity and intermediation, complementarity and cooperation.

In this new paradigm for a regional interface, the question of governance is posed at different levels. This prompts us to think about new frameworks for action, including multi-level partnerships, which are at the heart of regional and transborder dynamics.

SUMMARY OF THE FIVE INDICATORS OF LINKS BETWEEN URBAN AREAS IN THE GRAND EST REGION AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

source: ADEUS-CNRS, N. Cattan - UMR Géographie-Cités CNRS 2014, map: L. Lizzi



ROUND TABLE

What are the best development models for transborder regions?

KEY SPEAKERS



Catherine TRAUTMANN

former Minister, Vice-President of the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg



Dr. Katharina ERDMENGER

Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, Germany



Didier HERBILLON

Mayor of Sedan



Jean-Paul DETAILLE

Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture and Tourism, in charge of the representation of the Greater Region of Wallonia

Does the Grand Est region result in a new scale that could have a bearing on transborder cooperation? For **Olivier DENERT**, we need to ask what should be kept from existing institutions, whether we need to work towards a global strategy, given the existing diversity, or if the aim is to play on both levels. Given the diverse metropolitan systems and contrasting power relations, studying opportunities in terms of economies of scale or pooling resources, of a critical size, regional marketing and infra-regional coordination all give food for thought.

With a large number of links with neighbouring countries and a position on the major European, physical, innovative and intellectual flows, the new regional scale is a tremendous opportunity, according to **Catherine TRAUTMANN**. It is vital for building internal social cohesion in the new region, particularly in rural areas, and it must now be conceived in a more organic way, around a dual movement of densification and cooperation by osmosis for an expansion that benefits the entire region. On the transborder level, European territorial integration necessarily involves infrastructures guaranteeing connections. The example of cooperation undertaken between nine ports as a counterweight to Duisburg, and to negotiate with Rotterdam, or even Antwerp, shows the ideal position of the Grand Est region in these large-scale flows organised by European policy, guaranteeing durability in a global economy. However, resolving the transborder bottlenecks is vital, in cooperation with the German Länder. Scepticism towards Europe would decline if the transborder regions could prove even more effective in resolving regulatory and legal questions, such as the lack of connections in transport services, so that users can have easier access to transport on either side of the border.



Chair:

Olivier DENERT

General Secretary of the Transborder Operational Mission



The economy ignores borders and major companies have been successfully taken over in the region through *joint-ventures*¹ between medium-sized German companies and innovative, job-creating companies. The role of the university and research and development is boosted by the critical size resulting from the Grand Est region. Employment areas now transcend borders and it is at this level that social cohesion needs to be developed, in the same way as the job market, by taking into account the retroactive effects resulting from inequalities and malfunctions: regional segregations, withdrawal into local identities, difference levels in purchasing power, etc.

The operational dimension of the area goes beyond borders, points out **Katharina ERDMENGER**, and there can be multiple levels of cooperation. This is what is being tested in Wallonia, and for **Jean-Paul DETAILLE**, there is no contradiction between the need to develop a shared scheme and to take into account the different polarities and levels. The first added value is to provide a channel and interconnection between the various areas of influence. The Sillon Lorrain hub shares the same perspective, according to **Didier HERBILLON**, by conceiving, in a scope that is still to be determined, strategies for specialisation in each sub-regional area alongside its near neighbour.

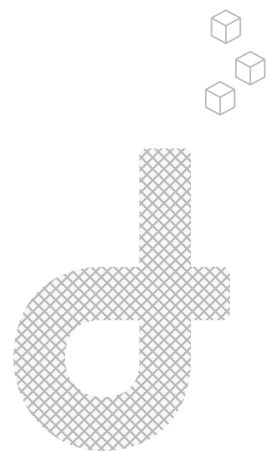
¹ An agreement signed between two or more companies that accept to work together with a precise goal and for a limited time.

In these interconnected systems, the metropolitan areas cannot be considered in opposition to or outside of rural regions, above all for rural regions that are not connected to the metropolitan core. Energy transition policy provides them with opportunities, with mass suppliers of wood, or agricultural or forestry transition, in a region with an international Industry and Agricultural-Resource centre. Increasing urban density means that services need to be redistributed all over the regions, with a transport provision that needs to be related to all services and employment.

The merger of the three regions will be a success if the Grand Est region can cooperate with its neighbours, taking support from its skills in cooperation and partnerships, and providing that internal connections are developed. The TGV high-speed train in Alsace was a benefit obtained after a prolonged combat and its prolongation across the Rhine should be approved by national decisions, helping to foster businesses providing key specialities.

The real borders for citizens are already the European ones. In the face of inequalities, the first answer is for people in rural areas and in districts with social problems to learn English. Why can't we extend the Erasmus programme to all young people, and not only to those in the university system, and promote mobility for class-exchange programmes?

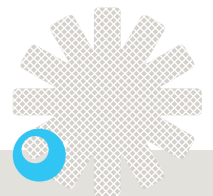
The complementarity between rural and metropolitan areas emerges as a powerful factor in pacified relations at all levels. Good governance between transborder players and the right kind of tools should help us overcome one-sided developments. The Grand Est region can live in a larger grouping with its neighbours and thus constitute a small-scale Europe at the meeting point of German-speaking Europe and Latin Europe. Reversing our outlook also involves seeing the Grand Est as the "Grand West" of Germany and Switzerland, unveiling a potential that we can make use of.



Part two: action

What are the best tools for developing our transborder regions?

Taking action in key areas, such as the economy and logistics, to change the scale and logic of development between regions, basing our approach on the key role of the universities –local, transborder and international–, using the network of players outside the institutions, basing ourselves on shared cultural resources.



→ KEY SPEAKERS

Stephan TOSCANI, Minister of Finances and European Affairs for the Sarre region

André ROSSINOT, President of the Greater Nancy Metropolitan area, President of the Sillon Lorrain Metropolitan hub, Vice-President of MOT

Dr. Manuel FRIESECKE, Director of Regio Basiliensis, Swiss partner for cooperation in the Upper Rhine

Jean-Claude SINNER, Director of International and Transborder Relations, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructures for Luxembourg

→ THE EXPERTS

Angeliki MONNIER, Professor at the University of Lorraine

Jean-Marc JELTSCH, Vice-President of the University of Strasbourg

Sébastien MEUNIER, Senior Project Manager, Basel area, Switzerland

Guy ROUAS, Director of Voies Navigables de France (VNF) Strasbourg



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: STEPHAN TOSCANI, ANDRÉ ROSSINOT, MANUEL FRIESECKE, JEAN-CLAUDE SINNER, ANNE PONS, GUY ROUAS, JEAN-MARC JELTSCH, SÉBASTIEN MEUNIER AND ANGELIKI MONNIER.

THE EXPERTS' PERSPECTIVE

Is the river network in the Grand Est and neighbouring regions a source of economic potential to be developed?



Guy ROUAS
Director of Voies
Navigables
de France
(VNF) Strasbourg

River transport companies, alongside local and state authorities, can together give a new lease of life to public policy in the Grand Est region: Guy ROUAS reminds us that the Mannheim Act of 1868, which made the Rhine free and open to boats, is still in force.

The dense river network in the Grand Est, with its large-gauge canals on the Rhine, Moselle and Meuse, and the Freycinet¹ network, running from east to west, is used by the major conurbations, and means that the ports of western France and of the Netherlands can be reached in a few days. The Grand Est region is a hub at the crossroads of three European river corridors: Rhine/Alps, Rhine/Danube and the North Sea/Mediterranean, and these networks will be greatly improved thanks to the European RTE-T programme².

1. Small-gauge canals.

2. Transnational European transport network.

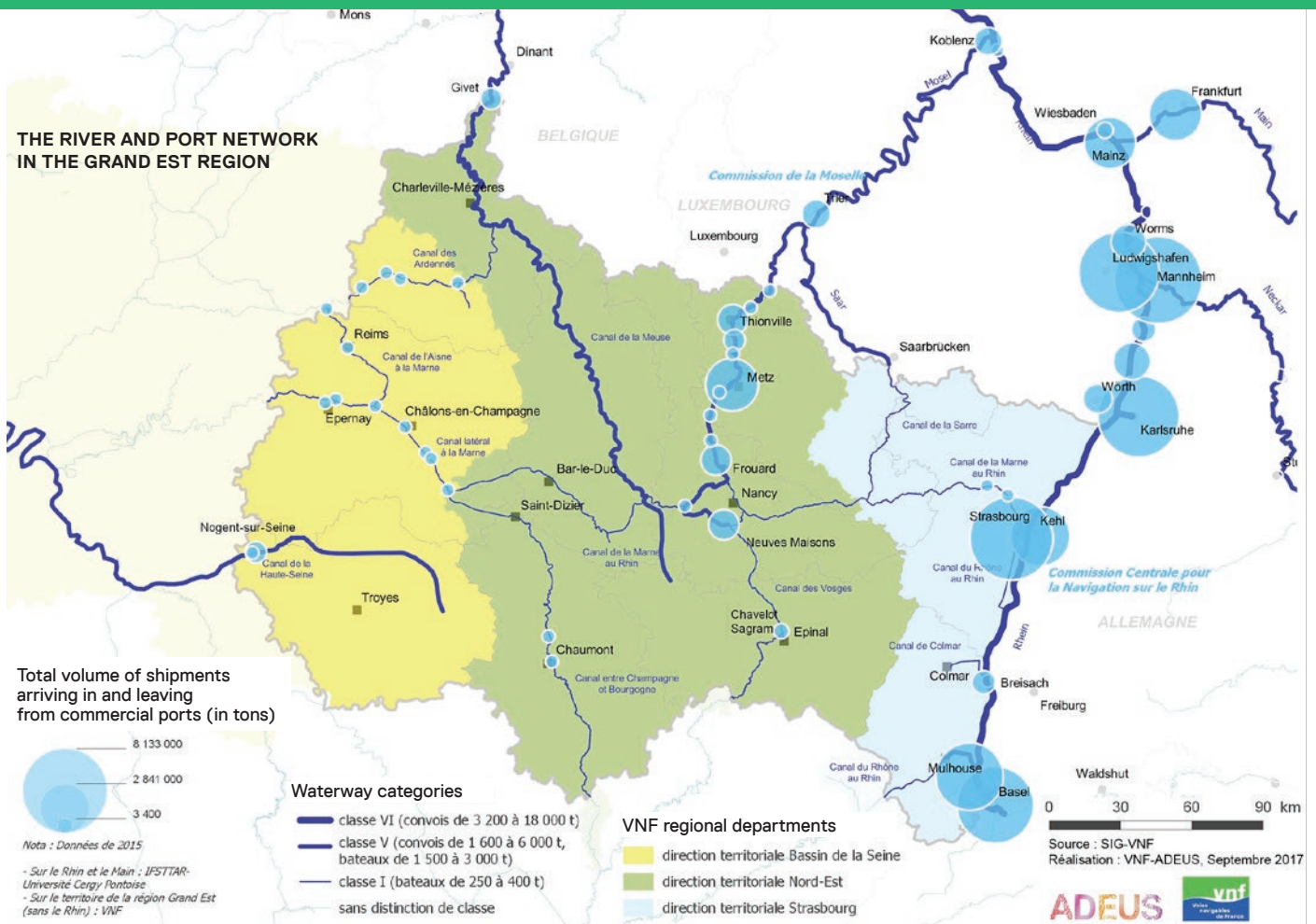
Three-mode port platforms are the key to competitiveness, while inland ports play a major role in the European corridors. The move towards railway and water transport calls for an adaptation in the platform capacities. Management by local authorities and the new private port operators will lead to optimised management in the sector of real estate and the river sector. With new public-private firms with a single operator, private operators will provide specific skills in operational management of the port areas. These new tools of governance should be enriched so that interconnected management can be set up on a larger scale between the different platforms in order to prevent sterile competition. So the region needs to rethink cooperation in favour of a dynamic, global and coherent management of all the port spaces.

River tourism is booming and must be combined with a complementary tourism offer, on the water (fishing, water sports) and on the land ("véloroutes"³, heritage, sports facilities, etc.). Large-scale interconnected projects are possible. So transborder actions to maintain the canal locks on the Sarre canal result in a provision for tourists that still need to be publicised, and from which neighbouring regions will benefit.

3. Cycling trail covering medium to long distances, without interruption (including through cities), and adapted to bikes.



THE GRAND EST REGION AND ITS NEIGHBOURS: NEW DIMENSIONS, NEW OPPORTUNITIES?



Commissions for navigation, for quality or protection against flooding have a very important impact, for example, as the source for the European Water Framework Directive and the Flooding Directive. Opening them up to non-state players, including the Grand Est region and/or transborder institutions, would help practices to develop that are closer to the real situation on the ground. For example, managing transport without managing the quality of environments is now impossible and calls for coherent links between public policies.



What tools could be provided by the university networks in forging the economic structure of the Grand Est region?



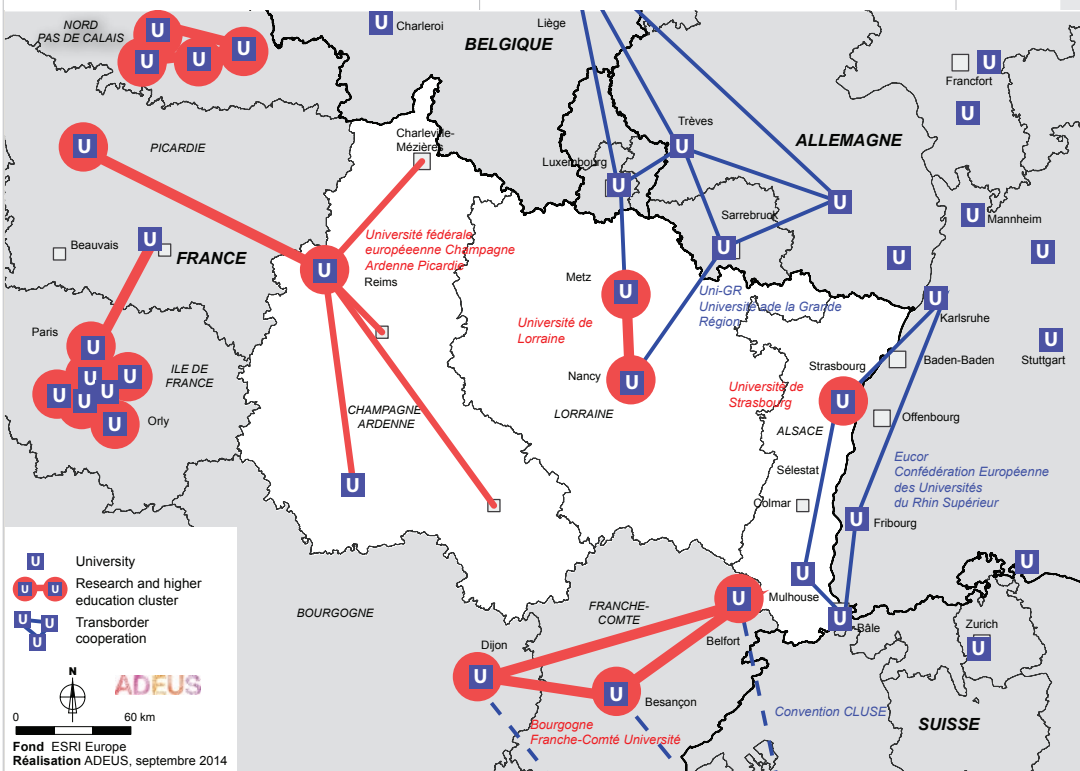
Jean-Marc JELTSCH
Vice-President of the University of Strasbourg

A university is itself a network, and one that is sometimes geographically dispersed. The challenge is now to set up a network of networks, to work in a more coordinated, cooperative way, including by opening up towards Frankfurt, to the Swiss universities or to the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region. They need to reconcile emulation and competition between the members.

Contributing to economic development and to transborder cooperation, taking part in the European area of higher education and research and in international cooperation are the aims set for universities. Jean-Marc JELTSCH considers that the Grand Est region has sound networks, with competences shared over the region and existing cooperating structures.

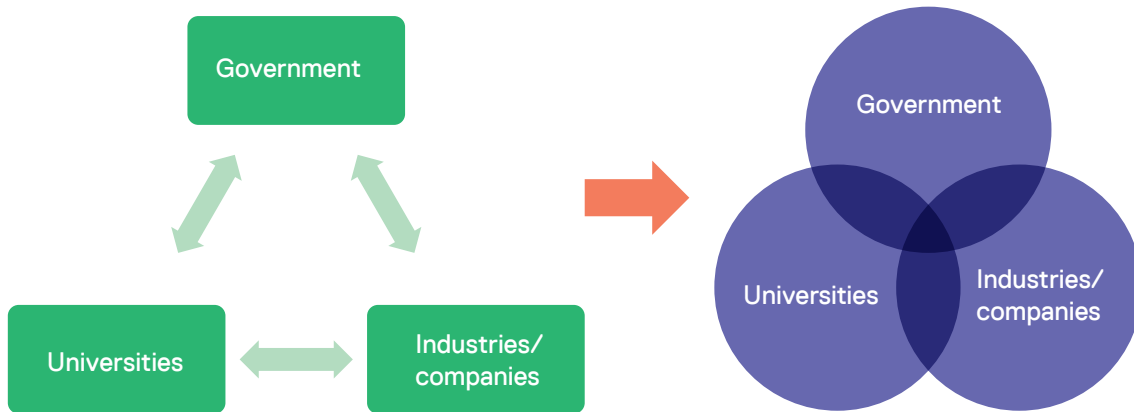
Universities represent a strong potential for transborder cooperation. 220,000 people live in the regions, with needs in terms of transport, restaurants, accommodation and leisure. Universities help to shape urban spaces, to the international prestige of the region, to provoking debate among citizens, to skills, and so to the overall attractiveness of the region. A very large number of players are acting on a range of

NETWORK OF COOPERATION AND RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION CENTRE



**FOR DECISION-MAKING, FUNCTIONAL AND OPERATIONAL EFFICACY:
APPLY THE TRIPLE HELIX MODEL**

Source: Henry ETZKOWITZ and Loet LEYDESDORFF, 1996. "Emergence of a Triple Helix of University-Industry-Government Relations", Science and Public Policy 23: 279-286.



perimeters and can commit themselves to transborder cooperation, including labels or operators interfacing with the economic world, such as the Carnot Institutes or centres of excellence.

Making skills more attractive involves "dual jobs", which could be discussed with the local authorities to attract families to a region with high-quality living conditions, and which will also help increase awareness of the region.

Cooperation is involved in a large number of action areas. We might mention the satisfaction of transport needs, the pooling of reception spaces for activities with other partners: universities are not closed spaces, and reciprocally,

they can rent premises outside their walls. Optimising international market research operations with the networks, covering the entire spectrum of training, by including professional training, are also aims that can be pursued in partnerships.

The triple helix model of relations between the university, industry and government in the wide sense, developed since 1995 by Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff, should inspire our action and in particular the necessity of centrally shared zones, in fact hybrid zones, which can be fruitful in terms of development.

The transborder economic networks: how effective are they?



**Sébastien
MEUNIER**

Senior Project
Manager, Basel
area, Switzerland

The Basel region depends on the work of 70,000 people living near the Swiss border. A large number of companies also work across borders each day, as, for example, in the sector of carmaking for German manufacturers. Clusters have operated in a transborder way, and one of them later became an association (TRION). Very large groups on either side of the border are carrying out projects and facing up to cultural and financing issues to create and help them function. Creating a transborder project is indeed more difficult when the potential is greater: critical mass, pooled skills, shared themes such as digitisation.

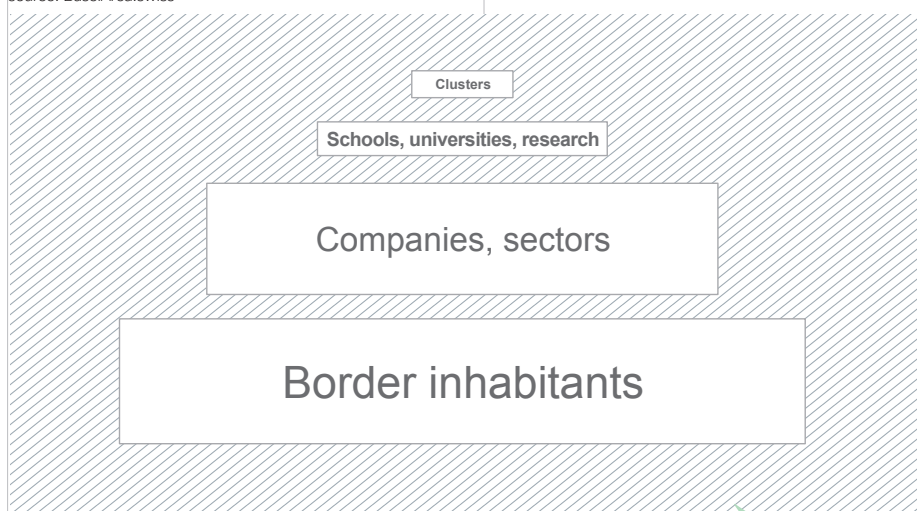
Creating trust by taking the time to get to know each other, with participants who respect each other's ways of working, rejecting competition between partners (except for promoting projects), setting up a network of networks with partners who can mobilise companies - these are some of the ways forward proposed by Sébastien MEUNIER to make a success of transborder cooperation. An overall strategy is vital for all transborder regions, so that they will all go in the same direction with a principle of subsidiarity, as well as highlighting the value of transborder cooperation.

Pragmatism won out, for example, in organising the small group of experts from the Upper Rhine focusing on support for innovation: a very small group at the centre guarantees efficacy, while taking into account the frustrations of those who felt excluded, and a circle of participants wishing to interact, who must be bilingual network leaders.

The new level of organisation opens up new doors in the field of innovation, with new competences, and for Basel, an access to Luxembourg and Belgium. Basel is looking for cooperation in a global way and seeks to develop cooperation pragmatically.

CROSS-BORDER ECONOMIC COOPERATION: THE CURRENT SITUATION

source: BaselArea.swiss



Cultural identities and practices in the European transborder region as a bond or a brake on regional exchanges



**Angeliki
MONNIER**
Professor at the
University of
Lorraine

Angeliki MONNIER seeks to theorise collective identity in a communications framework at the Mediations Research Centre, while having extensive personal transborder experience herself.

The feeling of collective belonging is subjective, and experienced differently by individuals. This subjectivity is constructed and activated by and through communication, in particular in two areas of socialisation: the family and the school. While identity is constructed, it is not, however, fictive. It takes its strength, in particular, from history, geography, the language.

A multiple sense of belonging is possible, providing that it is learned, which is easier to achieve in childhood. The sense of belonging is then available and can be activated. These are parallel processes, which are not necessarily mutually compatible, and may involve contradictions.

These processes are relatively stable, since it is indeed difficult to learn our history anew, even if it is not impossible. These are, therefore, processes in negotiation, or even in competition, because they depend on outside factors, such as economic competition. Is regional identity stronger than national identity, is transborder identity stronger than national identity? These questions are often posed in relation to the nation state.



WHILE THE COLLECTIVE IDENTITY IS "CONSTRUCTED", **IT IS NOT "INVENTED"**.
IT IS BASED ON **EXISTING ELEMENTS** (HISTORY, CLIMATE, LANGUAGE, ORGANISATION OF PUBLIC SPACES, ETC.).



Constructing identities depends on a large number of factors, including the motivation and sociological profiles of the people concerned. It is difficult to make statements in absolute terms about the outcome of a process of constructing a collective identity. Two examples illustrate these remarks:

The Museum PASS Card is a success, but needs to be seen in a precise context: it concerns individuals who are interested in culture, who are open, who like travelling, discovering new things, exploring the experience of the other. What's more, the card provides a highly explicit utilitarian gain. However, no study has measured its impact in terms of contributing to a collective identity.

Luxembourg and the Greater Region were the European Capital of Culture in 2007, with a series of events organised in the Greater Region. Surveys carried out on public reaction showed that most of the participants were local residents. The public were impressed by the events, and often made a link with local history, but seldom saw the transborder aspect that the organisers wished to highlight.

Cultural practices can be bonds in favour of identity, providing that there is the political will, and even more, a political consensus, which is vital, and educational means are also needed to reach all sectors of the public.

Identities are constructed over the long term, because social representations cannot be changed overnight.



ROUND TABLE

What are the best tools for developing our transborder regions?

KEY SPEAKERS



Stephan TOSCANI
Minister of Finances and European Affairs for the Sarre region



André ROSSINOT
President of the Greater Nancy Metropolitan area, President of the Sillon Lorrain Metropolitan hub, Vice-President of MOT



Dr. Manuel FRIESECKE
Director of Regio Basiliensis, Swiss partner for cooperation in the Upper Rhine



Jean-Claude SINNER
Director of International and Transborder Relations, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructures for Luxembourg

Frédéric BIERRY points out that the primary requirement is to take a broader view, and consider the Grand Est region as the "Grand West" of Germany and Switzerland, and to complete cooperation in governance by cooperation in projects. Proximity is, for the President of the Department, an essential aspect to be maintained in transborder relations. It seems to him vital not to lose sight of concrete actions on road and cycling infrastructures, child protection or the issues of bilingualism, for example. Beyond this, and so that the potential for transborder development can become a reality for individual citizens, we need to carry out, at our own levels and with the Region, lobbying activities with State authorities so that legislation develops and takes into account transborder realities.

For **Anne PONS**, the aim of the debate is to collect, in reaction to the first contributions, the viewpoints of our elected officials and neighbours. How can this new perspective help to develop our way of thinking and acting?

What can we do, while basing ourselves on our own roles, to imagine ways forward which we can each take up separately or together? What will be the first step to help this change in perspective to emerge?

The merger of the three regions is already having an impact on our neighbours: since Philippe RICHERT is now a unique interlocutor on the French side at a regional level, **Stephan TOSCANI** explains how the Sarre region has taken the initiative of setting up a conference of the three Länder neighbouring the new Grand Est region (Sarre, Rhineland-Palatinate, Bade-Wurtemberg) so that they too can speak with a single voice. This underlines the importance of this Franco-German border region. In Sarre, there is a determination to become the first bilingual German region in a generation, and to make French a lingua franca, following the model of Luxembourg and Alsace.



Participants:
Frédéric BIERRY
President of Departmental Council for Bas-Rhin



Chair:
Anne PONS
Managing Director of ADEUS





The idea of a new European Arch could be an answer to the disappointment of people unhappy with regulatory difficulties. **André ROSSINOT** advocates a cross-border alliance between the Grand Est region, Belgium, Luxembourg, Sarre and Bade-Wurtemberg. It is a chance to relaunch a political vision of Europe on the Grand Est level: the European Arch will help us think about governance, themes and processes, and the participants could see for themselves that Basel and Luxembourg have opened up. New working methods between local authorities or their sub-structures will lead this European Arch.

We might imagine permanent relations being opened up with ambassadors from neighbouring countries, more and more important relations being organised with the Grand Est region. Transborder policy must become part of local authorities' policy so that we no longer think in an individual way, but can build a shared policy within the greater transborder region.

For **Jean-Claude SINNER**, transnational cooperation needs to complete transborder cooperation, with a bilateral approach needing to be pursued on concrete projects on such questions as ports and regional corridors. Multilateral cooperation between eleven parties will help collectively define a few major principles and major aims in terms of communication towards citizens, to help develop a sense of belonging.

Manuel FRIESECKE is convinced of the importance of seeking out complementary features and of banking on what already exists, with a variable geometry for a real added transborder value. The need for networked management of networks emerges on this new level, while a large number of sites for cooperation have been confirmed, from the smallest scale to the European Arch, and concerning efficient forms of governance.

The potential for this transborder ambition is shown by the large number of examples in support of it: river transport is one of the highly concrete objects of cooperation to be highlighted, including a geostrategic pact with the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region, since there are missing links in the European river network in both regions. So that citizens can see this space as an opportunity, the following elements could be set up: a Franco-German bank, sports events, tournaments, open data, making information accessible about public transport, a map used by students to get around the transborder region, transborder river classes between two neighbouring regions on the River Moselle, on the Rhine, etc.

The Rhine-Meuse Water Agency could associate with representatives from other countries so that a wider vision of water management and biodiversity can be developed. Shared problems concerning the water table must be managed in a logical and scientific way, with umbrella organisations to make a link with the higher authorities.

Robert HERRMANN confirms this ambition by maintaining the right to experimentation in certain sectors, launching a process that would support a practical idea of Europe as it is experienced by citizens. The aim is to go beyond legal and regulatory aspects, to make sure that regional areas do not suffer from greater tension than other areas.



Conclusions

For the major new European region, Grand Est, while pragmatism leads us to continue transborder cooperation along the lines that have worked well in the past, **Philippe RICHERT** invites regions such as Ardennes to work with Wallonia, Vosges with the Baden region, and even Aube or Haute-Marne with Germany, basing themselves, particularly for the last two regions, on the economic links between parent companies and subsidiaries. Why not extend the system of bilingual classes to Moselle and even further afield? The idea of experimentation has already been accepted on a national level in France.

We should not ignore the difficulties: while the supply of jobs from Luxembourg is a chance for Moselle, the unilaterally declared logistics zone will lead to difficulties on motorways that are already clogged on the French side. Although vocational Franco-German block-release training has been set up to plug the labour gap, a supply of workers has arrived in German companies from southern and eastern Europe. The French project in favour of Franco-Swiss training has not been taken up, given how easy it is for Swiss companies to recruit. Reality is stronger than the willingness to cooperate.

But the fact that the merger of three regions has led to cooperation between the three Länder shows the importance of this new situation and the opportunities it opens up, for example in the field of research and innovation. National support and the freedom to work will be vital.

The success of transborder cooperation is based on the relative strengths that each participant can bring into play. So, for **Jean ROTTNER**, universities and top schools are the basis for very strong ties, while the export capacity of the region is a very important tool.

In a context where the economic situation penalises the French side, we should give up all coyness and modesty and launch a 360-degree debate with our neighbours inside and outside the country, create more and more economic and cultural partnerships, undertake operational transborder strategies, and set up ambitious regional marketing - an agency for transborder economic development - ambassadors with business managers in the neighbouring countries, a financial centre between Paris and Frankfurt... The Grand Est region is not outside the patent-application map, between such European behemoths as Île-de-France, Baden-Wurtemberg, Bavaria and Hamburg, but has everything to gain with its position in the European corridors, which are an opportunity to network with Paris, Lyon, Marseille... The FNAU could contribute to this 360-degree analysis, particularly by producing maps that open up perspectives going beyond administrative limits.

According to **Jean-Christophe BAUDOIN**, the alliance between regions, from the transborder viewpoint, requires us to think about connections between regions, whether metropolitan or rural. The interdependence of regions goes beyond borders, and transborder



Philippe RICHERT
President of the Grand Est Region,
President of the Regions of France
Association





Jean ROTTNER

Mayor of Mulhouse,
Vice-President of the Grand Est
region, in charge of promoting regional
competitiveness and digital technology,
President of FNAU



**Jean-Christophe
BAUDOIN**

Director of regional strategies,
General Commission for the Equality
of Regions



Anne SANDER

Member of the European
Parliament



areas must be considered as areas of co-development. The regional reform and the change in level have an impact on rethinking the transborder strategy, with the idea of a network of networks. The players are led to work together, especially through the development of SRADDET¹ and SRDEII², the first of which should include a transborder dimension. The state will confirm its presence by helping regions to overcome the obstacles coming up against cross-border cooperation.

For Anne SANDER the "transplant" of European areas has still not taken hold, as is shown by Brexit or the referendum votes in Switzerland. European MPs are aware of the impact of European legislation on transborder areas. For future European funding, the challenge is to maintain or even increase Interreg³ credits and to simplify procedures. An analysis of maps is an interesting way forward. Without waiting for fiscal or social harmonisation, which is a very distant aim, the obstacles to cooperation of an administrative, legal or linguistic nature, which can already be seen, lead us to identify three bridging measures: the efficacy of funding, the improvement of the legislative framework and the development of bodies promoting dialogue. Brexit will lead to the European Union's centre of gravity moving back to its historic heart, particularly in terms of decision-making. The Grand Est region has a role to play and a wide range of opportunities to take up.

1. Regional outline for the adaptation, sustainable development and equality of regions.

2. Regional outline for economic development, innovation and internationalisation.

3. Programmes helping to finance shared and transborder projects, thanks to the support of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).



L'Agence
de Développement
et d'Urbanisme
de l'Agglomération
Strasbourgeoise

Publication director: **Anne Pons**, Managing Director of ADEUS

Project team: **Cathie Allmendinger**, **David Marx**, (project managers), **Sylvie Blaison**, **Fabienne Commessie**, **Emmanuel Duguet**, **Christel Estragnat**, **Jean Isenmann**, **Estelle Meyer**, **Sophie Monnin**, **Pierre Reibel**, **Maryline Roussette**, **Janine Ruf**

With the participation of: **Olivier Denert**, MOT and **Bernadette Guillon-Benoîte**, ALGOÉ

PTP 2016 - Project N°: **1.5.2.2** - Photos: **Jean Isenmann**

Layout: **Sophie Monnin**

© ADEUS - August 2017 - N° Issn: 2112-4167

Publications and news focusing on urban planning can be found on the ADEUS website www.adeus.org