

The Budapest Platform

EUROPEAN PLATFORM OF SUPPORT STRUCTURES
FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Minutes of the technical meeting

Brussels, 11 October 2011

Presents:

Ms. Gisela FERREIRA, Strategic cooperation unit, Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional Norte (PT)

Tim LEEUWESTEIN, dep. head of Unit, Europe and Local & Regional Government, Ministry of Home Affairs and Kingdom relations (NL)

Auke VAN DER GOOT, Senior adviser, Europe and Local & Regional Government, Ministry of Home Affairs and Kingdom relations (NL)

M. Jozsef BENEDEK, Chairman, CESCO (HU)

M. Rudolf BAUER, Vice-chairman, CESCO (HU)

M. Gyula OCSKAY, Secretary General, CESCO (HU)

M. Jean PEYRONY, Director General, MOT (FR)

M. Jean RUBIÓ, Policy officer, MOT (FR)

Ms. Sophie VALETTE, Policy officer, MOT (FR)

1. Introduction:

Policy context:

Publication of draft regulation for Cohesion Policy 2014 – 2020: Consequences for territorial cooperation

- EGTC regulation, specific regulation on territorial cooperation
- Each national contract has to be coordinated border by border
- More attention paid to “local development”, “integrated territorial investments”, also in the CB context, with possible role for EGTC
- The Budapest Platform justifies its role: need to discuss strategy of cooperation at national level, linking with the other levels.

Comments of the different members:

NL: For 95% of the cross-border cooperation, the responsibility belongs to the regional governments. There are many differences of competences between the States. There is a need to find a global situation where the national policy and legislation is adapted to the cross-border needs. In the Netherlands, we try to be more focused in order to adapt the national will to the regulation policies.



“EU without borders” is the aim. The CBC becomes more and more important for the EU, and the Member states have to adapt. In the NL, several ministries are involved to deal with cross-border matters (transport, health, employment...) in a win-win situation but it is difficult.

The EGTC is not the only instrument.

Concerning the new regulation, it is important to find good practices within Interreg. The results of the former projects are not always sustainable. There is a need to find long term approach to have tangibles results, and more commitment of national level.

On the 3-4 November 2011, a meeting of DG in charge of territorial and urban affairs will be held in Warsaw about territorial approach of the programs (including ESPON,URBACT, INTERACT...), it is important to communicate right now.

PT: In Portugal, there are no administrative regions. The CCDRN depends on 3 Ministries (economy, local administration and planning/environment). This entity is tasked with coordinating and promoting, in the Portuguese North Region, governmental policies. Created under the Valencia Treaty signed in 2002 by the Portuguese and Spanish Governments, the Bilateral Commission for Cross-border Cooperation, constituted by regions and ministries of both States, is in charge to deal with “public context costs” created by the border, in issues like health or communication. It takes long time to find agreements. The scheme is very complicated but the goal is to manage the different levels of competences. Concerning the new regulation, CBC territories are specific and need to be more taken into account. The strategic dimension is hard to achieve but needed. All the possibilities of the EGTC have not been exploited yet. On the PT/ES border, 3 EGTC’s are already set up, it is a good argument to catch the attention of national authorities.

HU: We have to change the financial mechanism. Within the CBC programs, the propositions have to be elaborated in common by the border states.

The Budapest Platform could write a handbook to explain a new method to implement the programs along the borders. If we want to benefit the local stake holders, we have to give them some guide lines. Since 1991, on the SK/HU border for example 200 million Euros have been spent with not enough concrete result. We have to elaborate the strategies first and then the projects. We have to help the local stakeholders to get ready.

The handbook could be divided in 2 parts: on document for the European level; one document for the local and national authorities.

FR: they are links with the French government. For example, a project proposed by MOT and financed by the National Technical Assistance Program “Europ’Act” (funded by ERDF), the French state wants to improve the coherence of strategies at different levels and across the border, and the cross-border governance.

The aim is to have a message for the European commission before end of 2012. The handbook should contain a short message: “We want to facilitate the implementation of the cross-border strategies and programs”.



2. Preparation of the seminar at the Benelux office

Date: 21 November 2011 (meanwhile the date has to be postponed)

Venue: Benelux Office, Regenschapstraat 39, 1000 Brussel

Title of the seminar: "The role of European states in supporting cross-border cooperation"

Working language: English

Agenda:

- Morning session: technical meeting
- Afternoon session: meeting open to high level representatives of EU institutions (MEPs, senior official DG REGIO, ...)

Public attending: 30 people maximum

Aim of the seminar:

2 main aims:

- React to the draft regulation
- Inform the EU Member states about the Budapest Platform and its ideas.

The interest of the Budapest Platform is concrete action: influence the decision-making process and influence the future cohesion policy (regulations 2014/2020; preparation of National Contracts and Operational Programs). One of the aims of the meeting is to influence the negotiation on regulations based on the draft documents proposed by the European Commission.

It is not advisable to invite all the member-states if we want to have concrete results of the meeting.

Speakers:

European Commission: DG REGIO	Dirk AHNER, Regional Policy Directorate-General
European Parliament : MEPs	FR: Marie-Thérèse SANCHEZ-SCHMID HU : <i>to be defined</i> PT : <i>to be defined</i> NL: <i>to be defined</i>
Committee of the Regions	<i>to be defined</i>
EU-Member states	France: Patrick CREZE (DATAR) or J-L FRES (DATAR) The Netherlands: Director General Ministry of Home Affairs Portugal: <i>to be defined</i> Hungary: <i>to be defined</i> Italy: Rosella RUSCA, Department of



	Development and Economic Cohesion, Ministry of Economic Development) Austria: ÖROK (<i>to be defined</i>) Germany: <i>to be defined</i> Luxemburg: <i>to be defined</i>
The Budapest Platform members	CESCI MOT NL Ministry of Home Affairs CCDRN
Benelux	

3. Coordination of the handbook drafting

It has been decided that the CESCO will coordinate the handbook drafting.

4. Communication

- Validation of the logo: the logo proposed by MOT is validated as a working version.

- Website:

The cost of the domain www.budapestplatform.eu +storage is about 30 EUR per year.

The website will contain a short description of the Budapest Platform, a description of the 4 members (+links to their websites). It may also contain official documents.

5. Any Other Business

For the moment, there is no candidate structure to join the Budapest Platform.

