

↘ In a cross-border context, asymmetries in terms of competences among partners on either side of the border may pose a challenge for cooperation. Further, in a country like France, many decisions on major economic issues (e.g. taxes) are made centrally, even though the in-depth field knowledge is local. It is therefore important to **strengthen local-national**

information channels and multi-level governance.

EXAMPLES:

Several intergovernmental commissions (ICGs) are charged with facilitating the examination and resolution of border disputes in cross-border regions (French-German-Luxembourg, French-Luxembourg, French-German-Swiss and French-Swiss). The ICGs

formulate recommendations, for example contract amendments, for governments. They may call on experts, such as representatives of ministries or local authorities.

The French-Swiss and French-German dialogue on cross-border cooperation has a purpose similar to ICGs. It involves ministry

officials, decentralised government departments and regional authorities and addresses various cross-border issues, including taxes and the economy.



SUSTAINING THE PARTNERSHIP

Effective governance of cross-border economic development requires sustained strategic partnership. The objective is to commit to a long-term partnership and beyond that, develop contractual and structural relationships and earmark funds for the implementation of joint strategies. The challenge is to transcend the personal investment of technicians or elected representatives in order to commit to the structure as a whole and over the long term.

Sustaining the partnership does not mean keeping it unchanged for years. It may mean changing the governance structure, by adjusting the partners involved, or modifying the objectives pursued.



- Election calendars on both sides of the border and turnover in the persons involved make it difficult to establish continuous and sustainable cooperation. In this regard, the ability to **overcome differences in calendar** greatly influences the sustainability of the partnership.

- Sound **mutual knowledge of partners** (regarding territorial organisation, areas of competence, strategies and policies) guarantees sustainability. Almanacs, directories, and training help to disseminate and update this knowledge.

- In addition to strategic partnerships, which often bring together territorial authorities,

chambers of commerce and development agencies, it is useful to **create a network of experts** (belonging for example to clusters, research centres, business areas or civil society), to enrich strategic reflection with accurate and up-to-date information. This creates a precious link between the decision-making level and the field, and ensures the transmission and use of knowledge.

- A **multi-year contractual commitment** (e.g. cooperation agreement or cross-border structure) perpetuates the partnership by formalising core work areas and, potentially, financial support.

- **Evaluation of the impact of strategies and initiatives**

undertaken may encourage the long-term structuring of the partnership, and also its development to improve the policies implemented. It is important to define relevant indicators that may be measured across borders (GDP, unemployment rate, employment rate, new business start-ups, number of jobs, etc.).

- **Increasing the visibility of the partnership for citizens and businesses** can have a positive impact on buy-in to strategies and their implementation. This may be through communication on the impact of cooperation or testimonials on concrete projects.

