

↳ **The Southern Basque Country Conurbation** (Agglo Sud-Pays Basque) supports shared knowledge in the cross-border area and the siting of French and Spanish businesses on its territory in specially built business areas. The Conurbation also has a policy of teaching the Basque language, which is considered an asset for businesses (especially in the hotel and retail sectors) and a factor of economic integration. Bidosa Activa, the local development agency of the Bidasoa-Txingudi district, is an important partner of the Southern Basque Country Conurbation.

↳ **A number of French and Spanish chambers of commerce and industry (CCIs)** have established partnerships and carry out cross-border actions. However, it is important to recognise the major differences between the chambers of commerce on either side of the border, especially since the reform introduced in Spain two years ago. Thus, while in France CCIs have remained public bodies, in Spain, they have private status and membership is optional, which has had an impact on their budgets and the services they offer. The most developed cross-border partnership is between the Bayonne Pays Basque CCI and the Camara de Comercio in Guipuzkoa. In 2010, they created Bihartean⁷³, an EEIG, with the objective of supporting businesses in their cross-border projects and developing cross-border economic projects. At the other end of the border, the Perpignan and Pyrénées-Orientales CCI has partnerships with the Catalanian and Andorran chambers of commerce.

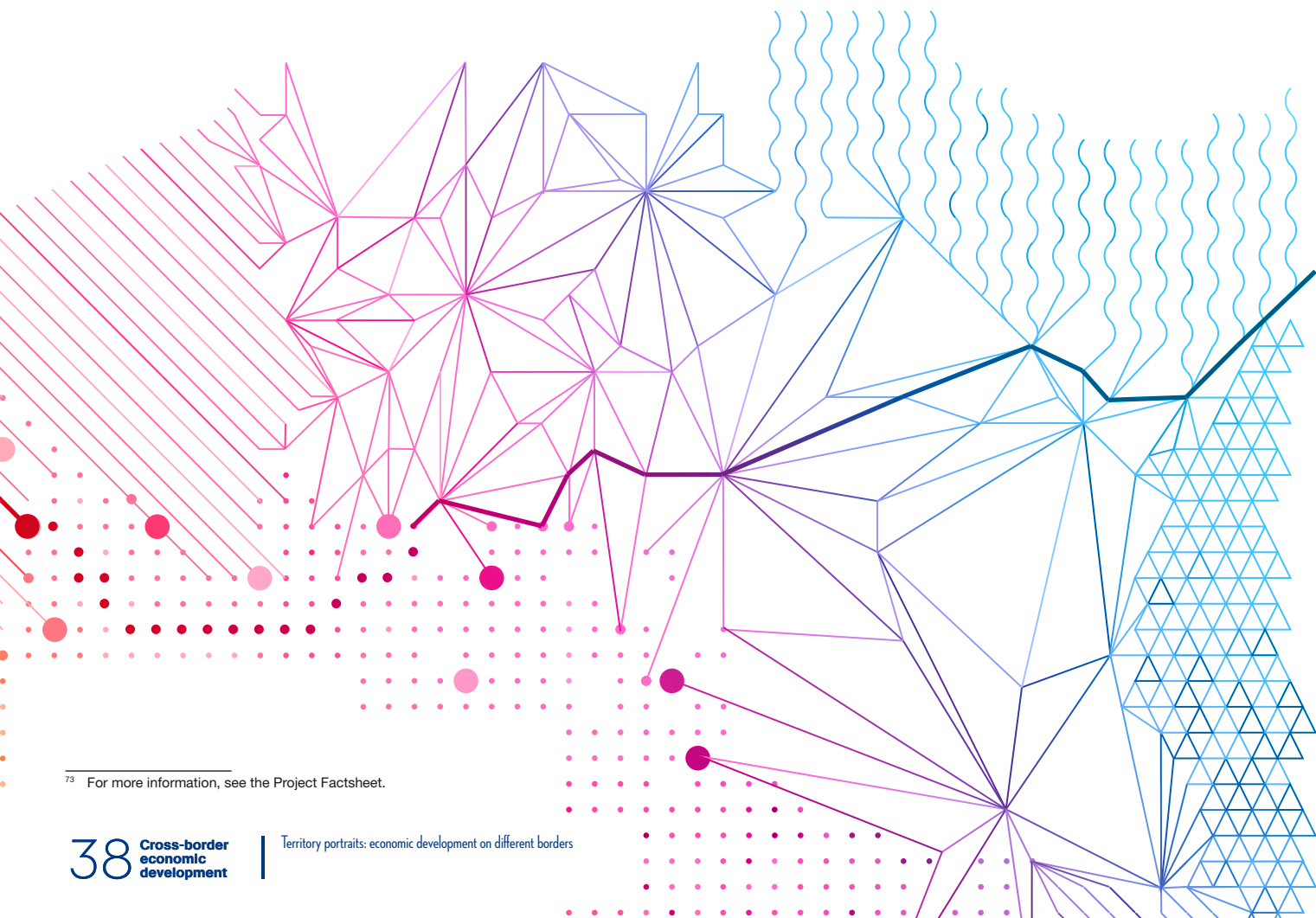
It should be noted that the Euroregions work with the consular chambers, on the one hand Aquitaine-Euskadi with Bihartean, and on the other, the Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion with several chambers of commerce (notably on inter-clustering). The chambers of commerce are also linked to local authorities; for example, on the French side, they manage the business incubators built by the conurbations.

Some CMAs (chambres de métiers et de l'artisanat – chambers of trades and crafts) are also active at the cross-border level, despite the fact that they have no equivalent in Spain. For example, the Pyrénées-Atlantiques CMA has partnerships with Ikaslan Guipuzkoa (the association of public training centres) and since 2008 has worked particularly on developing joint training programmes.

Finally, it should be noted that the coordination of economic activities at the Euroregional level and those at the local level is yet to be developed. The western part of the border is marked by a multiplicity of cooperative structures at different levels or covering different, overlapping areas, with greater clarity needed regarding their respective roles.

The 2007-2013 POCTEFA programme for cross-border cooperation has co-financed numerous projects in the fields of economic development and professional training.

Some local authorities have chosen to support the cross-border dimension of economic development.



⁷³ For more information, see the Project Factsheet.