



Container terminal South, Port du Rhin, Strasbourg-Ortenau

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Cross-border territories are therefore learning areas for businesses, like “local international markets” that are springboards for international trade.

ENCOURAGING CROSS-BORDER BUSINESS TAKEOVERS

Cross-border economic development may also occur through business transfers. Along several of France’s borders (particularly the borders with Germany and Switzerland), SMEs on both sides are wound up when their owners retire due to the lack of new entrepreneurs to take over the firm. **However, a potential successor may often be available on the other side of the border.**

Besides the importance of having cross-border data on available businesses, a crucial issue is the availability of technical and legal support to assist successors with the legal and financial procedures that are required in a different legal system.

- ▾ **There is significant potential along the French-German border,** where the demographic situation in the bordering German Länder leads to business owners often retiring without successors and, therefore, to the risk of mass closure of healthy businesses and large-scale loss of jobs. This underscores the importance of cross-border business takeovers.

Supporting business owners to manage their succession and search for replacements in the neighbouring country, and also identifying future entrepreneurs to take over and advising them on negotiating the transfer of the business are important challenges.

Business transfers require careful planning and in general, candidates, whether they are the owners or future buyers, are ill-prepared. In addition, there is an informal aspect of trust inherent to the sharing of competitive information. An alternative to traditional business transfer marketplaces, which does a better job of preserving confidentiality, must be found.

Several initiatives such as platforms, forums, seminars, B2B meetings, etc. have been launched along France’s borders aimed at identifying legal and administrative obstacles to these procedures and bringing together the relevant players and existing services for supporting business transfers on both sides of the border.