

Cross-border economic governance

Cross-border economic development spans the actions of a multitude of different public, semi-public and private players – collective and individual entities operating at the national, cross-border and international level. These include businesses, competitiveness clusters, employer organisations, research centres, universities, territorial authorities, chambers of commerce and industry and development agencies and vary widely in terms of their functions, interests, operating methods, etc. The interaction between them also varies, notably on account of the administrative and territorial arrangements of the different countries, which are themselves fluid as a result of reforms (transfers of competences, establishment/merger/disbanding of entities, etc.).

The asymmetry that exists between states that are organised centrally (such as France) and those with federal structures (such as Germany, Belgium and Switzerland) in terms of competences and decision-making – as well as cultural differences more generally (administrative, legal and technical cultures, etc.) – requires players to get to know one another and identify the competent entities that they consider key to the implementation of cross-border economic development actions.

In other words, players need to identify their counterparts in the neighbouring economic system. This initial mapping of players and functions, which is combined with a process of getting to know each other's practices and methods, is thus a precursor to the establishment of any cross-border economic partnership and a continuous learning process in the presence of institutional and territorial reforms. The operational recommendations set out in the guide to economic development partnerships address this issue.

Cooperation is a process; it is a decision that corresponds to an evolving construction, first at national and then at cross-border level.

IDENTIFYING RELEVANT PLAYERS

Cooperation between economic players is not necessarily natural behaviour – especially in the presence of a border. The absence of harmonised cross-border statistics and the lack of understanding of the economic development ecosystems on the other side of the border constitute a major obstacle to cooperation.



InnovARC project, in the French-Swiss Jura Arc