

Border Orientation Paper

France-Belgium



1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out key characteristics of the cross-border region between France and Belgium and outlines options and orientations for the programming of the next Interreg programme along that border. It is part of a series of similar papers prepared by DG REGIO for all EU land borders (and borders with Norway and Switzerland).

The objective of this paper is to serve as a basis for a constructive dialogue both within cross-border region and with the European Commission for the 2021-2027 Interreg cross-border cooperation programme France – Belgium.

The paper is based for a large part on objective information stemming from three studies commissioned by DG REGIO:

- “Border needs study” (“Collecting solid evidence to assess the needs to be addressed by Interreg cross-border cooperation programmes”) conducted in 2016;
- “Easing legal and administrative obstacles in EU border regions” conducted in 2015-16 and;
- “Comprehensive analysis of the existing cross-border transport connections and missing links on the internal EU borders” conducted in 2017-18.

In addition, many data sources available at European level were also used to describe certain aspects socio-economic and territorial development. A full list of information sources is provided in annex.

Cross-border cooperation is much broader than Interreg programmes. The objective is to facilitate cross-border cooperation by reducing remaining persisting obstacles to cross-border activities and linkages as outlined in the 2017 Communication on Boosting Growth and Cohesion in EU Border Regions. The instruments available are not only the funds (in particular Interreg and other European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) programmes which may invest in cooperation), but also European and national legal instruments (European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), regional agreements (e.g. in the Benelux and the Nordic countries), bi-lateral agreements, etc.) as well as a number of policies e.g. on labour mobility, transport, health, etc. The Interreg programmes should therefore not only aim to fund projects but should also seek to reduce cross-border obstacles. To do so, the legislative proposal on Interreg foresees that part of the budget is dedicated to cross-border governance (including capacity building and contribution to the macro-regional/sea-basin strategies).

That is why this paper goes beyond the traditional activities of Interreg programmes (funding projects) and also covers governance issues (reducing cross-border obstacles). On this, the roles of the programmes are: (a) to initiate the work on the obstacles (e.g. the members of the Monitoring Committee could contact the relevant public authorities and stakeholders); (b) to facilitate the work (by funding working groups as well as possible studies and pilot projects); and (c) to contribute to this work (providing input from the wide knowledge gained in past programming periods). Whilst the budget is limited, the impact can be important as the actions concerned will have a limited cost (meetings, studies, pilot projects, etc.) but structural effects.

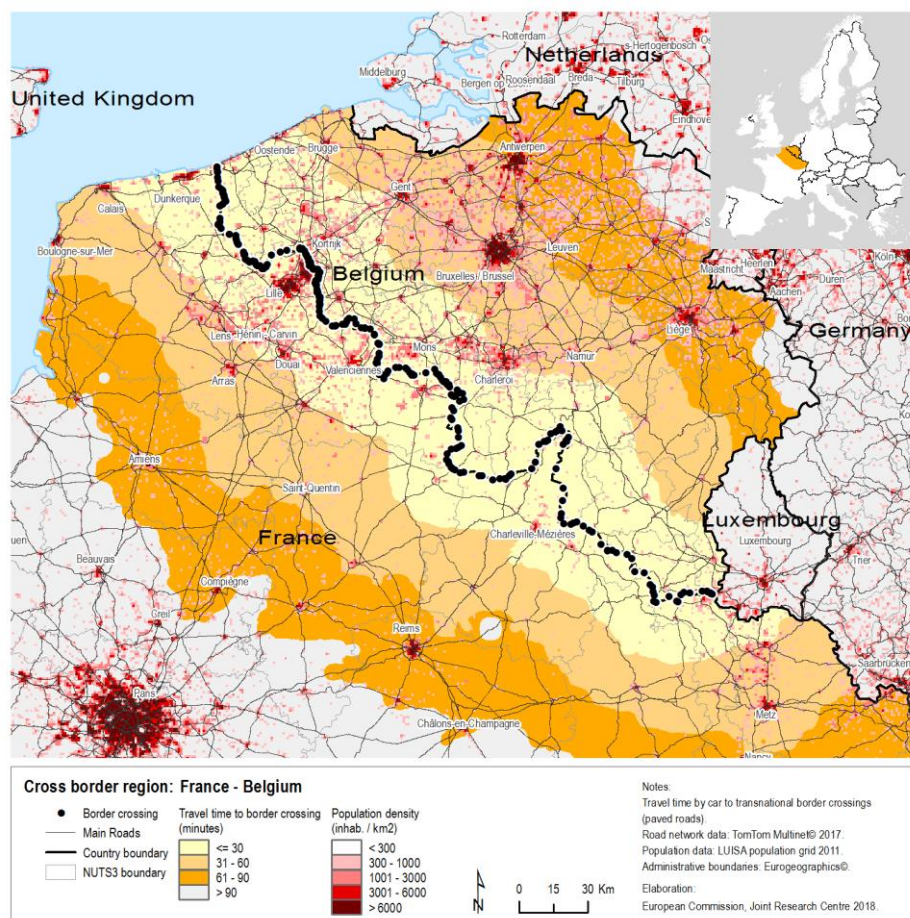
2. ANALYSIS OF THE BORDER AREA

- The border region between France and Belgium is approximately 620km long and is marked by significant territorial differences. There are vast rural areas in the South and larger agglomerations in the North.
- The population of the border regions is close to 11 million overall, with nearly 7 million on the French side and 4 million on the Belgian side. The Belgian side is divided into two regions: French-speaking Wallonia has just over 2 million citizens in the border region and Dutch-speaking Flanders nearly 2 million. The population density varies greatly between the different regions, the Northern part of the border region (on both sides) is characterised by high population density (the 2 Flemish provinces and Nord Pas-de-Calais have an average density 3 times above the EU average). The Southern part has a much lower density with Picardie, Luxembourg and Champagne-Ardenne all below the EU average.
- The Belgian border regions have had total population growth for the 2010-2016 period above the EU average. This is particularly true in Oost-Vlaanderen, Luxembourg and Namur where the growth was more than double the EU average rate of 1,6%. On the contrary, the French border regions have either seen a decline in population (e.g. Champagne-Ardenne) or a growth below the EU average.
- Both of the Flemish provinces are above the EU average for GDP per capita: Oost-Vlaanderen is at 11% above the EU average and West-Vlaanderen at 17%. All other border regions are below the EU average: Champagne-Ardenne at 85%, Nord Pas-de-Calais at 83%, Namur at 82%, Picardie at 79%, Hainaut at 77% and Luxembourg Province at 76%. There is a notable difference between the Belgian regions in Flanders and all other border regions on this indicator.
- The French-Belgian border has been involved in Interreg since its very beginning in 1991 and is now implementing its 5th programming period.
- The border is characterised by a long tradition of cross-border interaction and cooperation. Various agreements have been signed between the French and Belgian authorities. For instance, the 2002 Brussels Agreement sets out a specific legal framework for cross-border cooperation. Moreover, there is a series of agreements on various topics between the countries, such as for example health (2002) and border police cooperation (2001).
- Long-lasting cooperation also exists for the protection of natural areas in the border region. The natural cross border park of Hainaut is one of the oldest ones in Europe.
- The region is also characterised by the presence of two EGTCs in the Northern part of the border, the EGTC Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai and the EGTC Dunkirk-Flanders-Côte d'Opale. The Eurometropole was the very first EGTC to be created in the EU (2008).
- In the border region, two languages are used: French in Wallonia and France and Dutch in Flanders.

3. TERRITORIAL DIMENSION

- *Spatial planning and territorial tools*

1. The Franco-Belgian border region is characterised by very different territories as the map below illustrates. The population density is higher in the northern part of the border which is characterised by larger urban agglomerations situated close to the border at a distance of “30 minutes or less travel time”. It is also located in between Brussels to the North and Paris to the South. The Southern part of the border is characterised by the Ardennes, an area covered by forests and hill sites that is more scarcely populated. Moreover, several rivers, such as the Lys, Scheldt and Maas, cross the border region.



2. This illustrates that the cross-border region is not strictly limited to the administrative borders of the programme but has a flexible geography depending on the topic concerned. This is a functional area. For some topics, the solution can only be found if partners outside the programme area are involved (e.g. to have a good research project, you may need to involve a university which is in the capital of the country; to reduce the risks of floods project, you may need to reintroduce wetlands or dams upstream of a river but outside the programme area; to facilitate cross-border health care/ service you may have to develop a project with neighbouring regions and with national authorities; to establish cross-border rail links you may have to involve national train companies, ministries, etc. and to connect with other lines further away, etc.).

3. For some other topics, the solution is purely local, corresponding to an area much smaller than the programme (e.g. to have a cross-border tram line in an urban area which is on both sides of a border; to establish green infrastructures to preserve biodiversity along a river).
4. This shows that the problem-solving should be based on the functional areas rather than on the administrative scale defining the programme area (which is only used to define ERDF allocations). What matters is that the projects benefit the cross-border area. The location of the project or the location of the partners does not matter.
5. For this purpose it is important to support the development of territorial strategies to tackle in an integrated manner specific challenges of some geographical areas (depopulation, low density, ageing, decline of the economic activities, pressure of tourism, poverty, economies based on the same sectors such as tourism etc.) while building on their endogenous potential attracting residents and visitors. The territorial investments can be complemented by investments of other Cohesion policy programmes (mainly mainstream ERDF programmes depending on the needs and potential defined in the relevant territorial strategies).
6. The timely preparation of territorial strategies is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of any territorial approach.
7. This is a new approach in the post-2020 regulations and has three main benefits: (1) It enables the projects to be more effective as they can build on the experience of a wider range of relevant partners and as they can be located where the impact is bigger; (2) It clearly shows that Interreg is a policy tool supporting projects to improve the situation and not a mere funding tool for the benefit of local authorities sharing a budget; and (3) It avoids that programmes re-create new borders outside the programme geography.

- ***Tourism, natural and cultural heritage***

8. As mentioned above, historically this border has known a long tradition of exchanges and this has resulted in a rich and good cooperation in the field of tourism for natural and cultural heritage. In the previous and current Interreg programmes much has been done in this field. This is particularly relevant for the Ardennes region between France and Belgium where there are clear cross-border opportunities for tourism. At the Northern side of the border within both the EGTCs much has been done in the field of cultural heritage focussing on the longstanding shared history.
9. Tourism/natural and cultural heritage can be financed under this programme provided they are strategically framed and take into account the multi-level governance and stakeholder approach.

- ***Territorial tools***

10. Different territories and communities require differentiated and tailor-made policy mixes. It is important to reinforce the local and territorial dimension and the involvement of local actors which normally know better the real needs of the territories. The establishment of territorial instruments such as ITI in mainly urban areas or community-led local development in more rural parts of the cross-border region are highly recommended.
11. For this purpose it is important to support the development of territorial strategies to tackle in an integrated manner specific challenges facing some geographical areas (depopulation, low density, ageing, decline of economic activities, pressure of tourism, poverty, economies based on the same sectors such as tourism etc.) while building on their endogenous potential attracting residents and visitors. The territorial investments can be complemented by investments of other Cohesion policy programmes (mainly mainstream ERDF programmes depending on the needs and potential defined in the relevant territorial strategies).
12. The timely preparation of territorial strategies is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of any territorial approach.

ORIENTATIONS:

- *Invest further in common historical, natural and cultural heritage products and services, with a strong focus on creating employment for small companies and family businesses. Sustainable tourism trails or the development of quality labels for excellence in services could contribute to increasing the attractiveness of the region as a green tourism/cultural heritage destination.*
- *Explore the possibility of establishing **joint territorial instruments** adapted to the characteristics of the border region, especially with a view to tackling specific situations such as a joint urban centre (ITI) or a rural region (CLLD) facing similar challenges on both sides of the border.*

4. GROWTH, COMPETITIVENESS AND CONNECTIVITY

- *Innovation, Enterprises/entrepreneurship*

13. With regards with GDP per capita all regions with the exception of the two Flemish provinces are below the EU average. During the period 2010-2016 the two Belgian provinces in Flanders were the only regions to see an increase in GDP per capita in comparison to the EU average; in all other border regions there was a fall in GDP per capita relative to the EU average.
14. In terms of the overall size of the regional economies, based on total GDP, the largest absolute share of the border region is in Nord Pas-de-Calais, with 32% of total border region GDP, followed by Oost-Vlaanderen, Picardie, West-Vlaanderen, Champagne-Ardenne, Hainaut, Namur and Luxembourg. All border regions other than Hainaut and Champagne-Ardenne saw an increase in total GDP during the period 2009-15.
15. In respect of R&D relative to GDP Oost-Vlaanderen has a level of R&D intensity that is around 25% above the EU average. This is the only region in the France-Belgium border region that is above the EU average on this indicator. The next highest is also a Belgian region, Hainaut, followed by Picardie in France and then the Belgian regions of Namur and West-Vlaanderen. The other regions all have lower R&D intensity.
16. The indicator used to measure regional competitiveness (Regional Competitiveness Index' (RCI)), indicates that there are differences between the Belgian Flemish regions on the one hand and the French and Belgian Walloon regions on the other hand. The latter have negative rating of competitiveness. When it comes to innovation the Belgian regions do score better than the French regions and with the Flemish regions generally rated higher than the Walloon regions. All areas within the border region are assessed as having potential for the development of the Knowledge Economy (KE) with one region, Oost-Vlaanderen, assessed as already being a competitive, KE-related economy.
17. There are favourable conditions in the border region for supporting growth through innovation. All the regions are economically stable, have good regional infrastructure, above-average levels of technological readiness, and the regional market is substantial in size. However not all the regions perform well in terms of higher educational achievement, employment in science & technology, labour market efficiency, business sophistication and innovation.
18. The framework conditions and critical mass to support further innovation-based development are present in the border region, with the Flemish regions in particular being identified as currently leading in these areas. Overall, the cross-border region includes large numbers of urban centres and metropolitan areas acting as key drivers of regional economies, high population density, good technological readiness, a very large regional market and several areas with relatively high current levels of innovative activity (evidenced by, for example, high levels of patent applications). These are strengths on which further cross-border innovation can be built.

19. With regard to the share of Human Resources employed in science and technology, the four highest performers in the cross-border region are located in Belgium (Oost-Vlaanderen, West-Vlaanderen, Luxembourg and Namur), all of which are equal to, or above, the EU average. All the French regions are below the EU average, as is the Belgian region of Hainaut, with the regions of Champagne-Ardenne and Picardie having the lowest share.
 20. It should be noted that there is a mixed picture with regard to educational factors necessary to support growth and competitiveness. Several of the regions are rated relatively weak in terms of higher education and lifelong learning and educational achievement levels, with the general pattern being that Belgian border regions outperform the French border regions on these matters.
 21. By sectors, priority should be given to common areas in the regional Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) and more concretely to those that have particular relevance for the border area. In this respect, the overlaps vary from region to region. For instance, Flanders, Wallonia and Nord-Pas-de Calais include in their S3 creative economy and industries as well as (sustainable) chemistry. Wallonia, Nord Pas-de Calais, Picardie and Champagne-Ardenne focus all on health. While IT technologies are included for Wallonia, Nord-Pas de Calais and Picardie.
 22. Many ongoing Interreg programmes, such as the France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, have a priority axis on research/ innovation. This is often a successful axis which the partners appreciate and may be willing to continue in post-2020. However, in the case of research projects, this should be considered carefully as only projects that really benefit directly the border regions and that require cooperation should be funded (e.g. research on a subject which is specific to the France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, border area). These types of innovation projects could be financed under one of the other objectives, such as energy, environment and health. Research projects which do not have a direct impact on the France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen should not a priority, especially as they could be funded through Horizon Europe or mainstream ERDF and may be more efficient with partners located outside the area.
- ***Connectivity (transport and digitisation)***
23. The border region is characterised by a high level of daily crossings that highlight potential issues. The modal share of rail in all cross-border travel flows remains weak at the French-Belgian border. It seems that the problem is much more a commercial issue for the national train companies (SNCF and SNCB) and less linked to national regulatory provisions or to technical incompatibilities of rail systems. There are also big differences in transport links in the different parts of the border area. In the Northern part of the border, the Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai has been instrumental in promoting intermodal cross-border transport connections that include 13 bus lines connecting the area. While other areas are much less connected.
 24. There are still a number of problems which are partly of a technical nature and partly also linked to a lack of political coherence between the different structures involved in public transport in both countries causing hindrances for public transport across the French-Belgian border.

25. The cross-border transport study carried out by the Commission identified four missing rail links as having most potential benefit for the cross-border region.
- The Dunkerque (FR) – De Panne (BE) route (Nord Pas-de-Calais - West-Vlaanderen) has been classified as having ‘elements missing’. It is assessed as having medium importance for the border region. It is also stated that the connection is assessed as ‘rather positive’ by relevant stakeholders. The connection could be an additional link along the French – Belgian coast.
 - The Valenciennes (FR) – Mons (BE) route (Nord Pas-de-Calais - Hainaut) and is classified as being ‘entirely missing – dismantled’ at present. It is assessed as having medium importance for the border region and perceived as ‘rather positive’ by relevant stakeholders. This could be an additional link south of the Eurometropole where no rail connection exists today with passenger services between France and Belgium.
 - The Charleville-Mézières (FR) – Givet (FR) - Dinant (BE) route (Champagne-Ardenne – Namur) is classified as being ‘entirely missing – dismantled’ at present. It is assessed as having medium importance for the border region. The connection could improve the TEN-T connectivity between the North Sea and Mediterranean, and would be an additional link south of Lille area where no rail connection exists today with passenger services between France and Belgium.
 - Maubeuge (FR) – Charleroi (BE) route (Nord Pas-de-Calais - Hainaut) is classified as being ‘freight only’ at present. It is assessed as having low importance for the border region, whilst being of medium importance at the national level.
26. Moreover, in addition to improvements needed in public transport infrastructure, there seems to be a lack of common ticketing system. If a system exists, information and access to passengers is missing, particularly on the Belgian side. The obstacle is assessed as having a high negative impact on the quality of life of citizens in the urbanised cross-border area. For instance, short distance cross-border travellers in the area of Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai are not yet fully benefitting from the advantageous rail ticket prices that are available under the “Trampoline” formula, which offers attractive rail fares for one-day or week-end cross-border journeys as well as for weekly / monthly subscriptions. On the one hand, it is little known by the public and also not widely promoted (i.e. visibility only on the websites of the Regional Council Nord-Pas-de-Calais/TER, the SNCB and Eurometropolis). On the other hand, it is also characterized by a limited accessibility on the Belgian side (i.e. availability only at the counters of the SNCB railway stations in Tournai, Kortrijk and Mouscron).
27. The French national rail operator SNCF applies higher fares for short cross-border rail trips to Belgium if compared to the fares applied on domestic routes. On the Belgian side, short distance rail trips to the French border area are considered a "domestic route" and a domestic fare is applied.
28. Another difficulty for developing a cross-border transport strategy is the lack of knowledge about cross-border mobility patterns by public transport (i.e. measurement of travel flow destinations & origins; actual use of different pricing packages, breakdown by type of ticket etc.). Existing studies focus on the triangle Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai where the flows are the most important. A second important problem is that operators consider statistics on the use of transportation (by mode and type of ticket) as commercial data which they refuse to disseminate.

29. Density of motorways in the region (measuring the length of motorways relative to the area and population size) is substantially above the EU average in all the border regions on both sides of the border. In general, the highest density of motorways is in the Belgian regions, with all Belgian border regions, apart from Namur, being above the levels of their neighbouring French regions.
30. In terms of digitisation and e-government, only national level information is available for almost all indicators. Therefore, it is not possible to make any informed observations with regard to the situation at the regional level in the border region.
31. At national level, France is broadly in line with the EU average in terms of digitisation, whilst Belgium is assessed as performing better. Both countries score above the EU average on the availability of digital-based services. In Belgium the use of online channels of users of government services could be increased, thus improving the provision of digital public services to businesses. In France, the usage of government IT services could be increased particularly in eHealth.

ORIENTATIONS:

- *Support research activities provided they show direct benefits to the cross-border area or address topics directly relevant to the area taking into considerations areas of common interest in the respective smart specialisation strategies.*
- *Promote cross-border networking, (industry-led) cluster development and cooperation for the deployment of joint cross-border innovative projects particularly taking most out of experience of the Flemish regions in innovation generating spill-over to the remaining regions in the border area.*
- *Encourage the cooperation of enterprises with a special focus on finding complementarities, exchanging knowledge and joining forces in selling their products (through networking and clustering).*
- *Support the potential for new enterprises arising from research and innovation (spin-offs, start-ups, scaling-up, clusters, innovation hubs, etc.).*
- *Facilitate the internationalisation of SMEs, especially to have cross-border suppliers and customers. This could be done through cross-border business advisory support.*
- *Improve the interoperability of public authorities' e-systems, with the aim to facilitate the delivery of cross border public services that meet the needs of individuals and businesses.*
- *Support measures to facilitate the planning, coordination, management and implementation (including better information on joint cross border ticketing) of public transport cross-border services. Hard investments could focus on the development of the routes identified in the missing links and other studies as having most potential and as being of highest importance to the regional economies in the border regions.*
- *Support measures to promote existing e-solutions among border stakeholders and among public authorities most concerned by cross border data exchanges.*

5. GREENER, LOW CARBON ECONOMY

Main policy areas:

- *Energy transition and climate adaptation*

32. In the border region there is potential in renewable energy particularly for wind, (onshore and offshore), solar and biomass (mainly in southern areas biomass energy from wood resources). In the coastal areas, (West Vlaanderen and Nord Pas-de-Calais) offshore wind can be a feasible option to generate renewable energy. However, the regulatory prescribed distances between wind power facilities and the homes of inhabitants are not the same in France and Belgium. This can cause localised cross-border problems or tensions in case of a border- close installation of wind turbines. Residents living on the other side of the border can in fact be more closely located to such installations (and exposed to their effects) if compared to what would have been allowed in their respective domestic context.
33. Investment costs in energy are relatively low in both France and Belgium, in comparison with EU averages. The figure is 5.7% in France and 5-6% in Belgium compared with levels of 3.5% to 7% in the most developed capital markets of the EU. This means that the region has a favourable economic environment for investment in renewable energy.
34. There are a number of cross-border rivers that provide a clear basis for shared/common approaches to dealing with water bodies. In terms of the status of water bodies, to the extent that NUTS 1 data is relevant at the regional level, it would seem that a reasonable number of water bodies may have less than good ecological status. The regions in the France – Belgium border region have been assessed as having low- to medium environmental sensitivity to climate change, with specific risks identified in respect of potential flooding.

- *Circular economy*

35. Although data for recycling and waste management is only available at national level, it is important to note that France puts a slightly lower share of waste into landfill than the EU28 average, whilst Belgium has a much lower share of landfill, at only 3%, this being one of the lowest rates in the EU (EU28 average = 25%). The generation of waste per capita, excluding major mineral wastes, is very high in Belgium whereas in France it is slightly lower than the EU average. France recycles a slightly lower share of municipal waste (41,7%) than the EU average (45,8%) while Belgium is slightly above the EU average (53,5).
36. In terms of recycling of e-waste¹, both countries are slightly below the EU average. In terms of resource productivity (value generated from waste), both countries (France EUR 2.91 per kg and Belgium EUR 3.04 per Kg) achieve more value than the European average (the EU28 average is EUR 2.04 per kg).

¹ E-waste are discarded electronic appliances such as mobile phones, computers, and televisions, Oxford dictionary <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/e-waste>.

37. More specifically for the border region, the domestic legislations of France and Belgium transposing the European Waste Directive are insufficiently harmonised (i.e. product definition, traffic conditions, etc.), which leads to multiple practical difficulties for a cross-border transportation, recovery and treatment of waste. They affect both the traditional disposal modes (i.e. energy and organic recovery) as well more innovative modes linked to the circular economy (i.e. including the treatment of heavy metals). (1) They limit cross-border transportation possibilities of manure and its recycling in biogas stations, as some of this waste is considered fatal and thus non-recoverable. (2) They create problems for an aggregation of storage and treatment sites, due to the fact that accepted products do not always correspond to actual aggregations. (3) They hinder an exploitation of shared opportunities to increase the efficiency of existing but costly local equipment and facilities through cross-border actions. (4) They hinder local job-creation in the field of waste recovery or recycling (esp. in Wallonia this is an important driver of growth for SMEs), also with respect to a treatment of heavy metals (currently exported to Asia) and of hazardous waste. In the last periods of cooperation programme much has already been done addressing waste management and the circular economy but it would be advisable to continue the investment in this.

- ***Risk management***

38. During the previous periods, the programme has implemented projects relative to risk prevention and emergency services in the border areas. Nonetheless, there are a number of sites along the border that have been identified as having potentially significant flood risks. For the coastal area there is some risk associated with potential coastal flooding, although the trends in sea levels and tides do not suggest a high risk in comparison with other coastal areas in the EU. There is insufficient knowledge about emergency monitoring systems and about the implementation of emergency plans on either side of the border. “Area-external” emergency plans, which organize the action of domestic emergency and intervention services for specific cases (i.e. accidents relating to classified facilities, transportation of hazardous materials, transport pipelines and transport infrastructure) all require specific approaches and therefore lead to risk management methods in crisis situations which are specific to each country. Although coordination exists between emergency call centers on both sides of the border, the gathering and exchange of operational information on how emergency services manage man-made or natural disasters on either side of the border is lacking information circuits and remain formed within each state.

- ***Natural areas and biodiversity***

39. This border region has been identified as being amongst the top EU border regions in terms of the index of natural and protected areas being one of the few EU border region that has more than three hundred Natura 2000 areas. Many Natura 2000 sites and several transboundary sites have established cross-border collaboration (including the Hainaut cross-border nature park). There are also several nationally designated areas of protection and of natural importance, including protected landscapes and managed resource protected areas. Moreover, there are several ‘ramsar’ sites (internationally important wetland) within the border regions. The Border Needs Study assessed that there is high potential for benefits to be gained from shared management of natural resources, this being based on both the large number of Natura 2000 sites in the border region and the

fact that in a large number of cases these sites are situated in close proximity to the border.

40. The Commission adopted an EU strategy on green infrastructure in 2013 to enhance economic benefits by attracting greater investment in Europe's natural capital. Green infrastructures² are strategically planned networks of natural and semi-natural areas with environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services. They incorporate green spaces (or blue if aquatic ecosystems are concerned) and other physical features in terrestrial (including coastal) and marine areas. In certain sectors, in particular climate change mitigation and adaptation, green infrastructure approaches can offer complementary or more sustainable alternatives than those provided through conventional civil engineering. As Green Infrastructures do not know borders and as they require a good planning with many stakeholders, they should be supported through Interreg programmes where appropriate (e.g. cross-border flood plains to prevent flood risks). In the southern areas of the border, between Luxembourg/Namur and Champagne-Ardenne, it has been assessed that there is some potential for Green Infrastructure, cross-border networks and some potential to deliver cross-border ecosystem services because of the existing natural and protected areas include many important cross-border sites and trans-border natural areas.

ORIENTATIONS:

- *Establish joint projects on renewable energies and resource efficiency. This could include the analysis of the territory and placement of wind turbines and how this can be done without causing inconveniences to the population living in the border area.*
- *Support smart energy systems in the cross-border context, including smart electricity distribution grids, related demand-side measures, and storage solutions – linked to demand and supply planning, also in rural areas in a cross-border context where joint investments can reduce costs.*
- *Support joint actions to improve recycling rates and promoting transition to a circular economy, including capacity-building for stakeholders, awareness raising campaigns to promote sustainable consumption practices and behaviour.*
- *Further develop joint planning and information exchange for risk prevention and harmonise risk prevention definitions.*
- *Promote cross-border climate change prevention measures, such as actions to improve the knowledge base, preparation and implementation of disaster risk management strategies, (such as droughts, flood, biodiversity loss), awareness-raising campaigns, protection and prevention infrastructure, management of land, forests and rivers (incl. hydro-morphological changes in line with River Basin Management Plans) etc. with a focus on ecosystem-based approaches, in a cross-border context.*
- *Promote common and/or joint approaches to the management of the nature protection areas along the border along with adequate reinforcement of knowledge, data availability and communication with stakeholders to improve management of Natura 2000 sites and species protection regimes. This could include support for the development of joint protocols to allow for effective co-ordination between*

² Green infrastructure, <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/>

regional/local agencies or institutions engaged in shared management of natural resources, shared or complementary delivery of services, development or maintenance of green infrastructure networks, improved cross border information exchange and awareness-raising, and/or policy development relevant to these issues.

- *Identify the potential for Green infrastructures in the French-Belgian border region and organise the planning with the relevant stakeholders on each side of the border.*

6. EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, HEALTH AND INCLUSION

- ***Employment***

41. In terms of the unemployment rates, there are differences within the border region: with low unemployment rates in the Flemish regions of Oost-Vlaanderen and West-Vlaanderen. Namur and Luxembourg also have unemployment rates below the EU average while all French border regions and the Belgian region of Hainaut have unemployment rates well above the EU average.
42. In terms of changes in unemployment rates, over the period 2006-2016 all of the Belgian border regions and the region of Picardie in France have seen a fall in unemployment rates, with the greatest fall being in the Belgian region of Hainaut. Champagne-Ardenne and Nord Pas-de-Calais both had a slight increase in unemployment rates during this period.
43. Long-term unemployment rates vary between the regions, with the Belgian regions in Flanders having by far the lowest rates, at around 1%, far below the EU average of 3.9%. Long-term unemployment rates are also below the EU average in two of the Belgian regions in Wallonia (Hainaut and Namur). Long-term unemployment in Luxembourg (BE) and in all the French regions are higher than the EU average, with Nord Pas-de-Calais having the highest rate at just under 7%.
44. In terms of labour market productivity (measured by GVA per person employed), all regions on both sides of the border, with one exception, have productivity levels above the EU average. The highest rates of labour productivity are in the Belgian regions in Flanders, with Oost-Vlaanderen at 25% above the EU average and West-Vlaanderen at 19% above the EU average. All the Belgian regions in Wallonia and the French regions of Picardie and Nord Pas-de-Calais have productivity levels up to 9% above the EU average. Champagne-Ardenne is the only region below the EU average, although it is only 1% below the average and as such is very close on this indicator to its neighbouring regions in France.
45. There are also notable differences between the Flanders regions and the other regions (in both Wallonia and in France) in respect of RCI ratings of 'labour market efficiency'. The two Flanders regions score 82 and 83, substantially above the EU average of 60. All other border regions are rated far lower. The region of Namur in Belgium is rated at 67, just above the EU average, whilst the region of Luxembourg and the regions of Champagne-

Ardenne and Picardie are both rated equal to the EU average. The region of Nord Pas-de-Calais at 51 and the region of Hainaut at 47 are both rated well below the EU average.

46. In the border regions manufacturing³ takes up large part of the employment rate (20,8%) mainly for the manufacturing of food products. Manufacturing is of main importance for Champagne-Ardenne, Picardie and West-Vlaanderen.
47. The French-Belgian border region has a strong potential for cross-border labour mobility. It has many dimensions: recognition of skills/ qualifications/ diplomas, social security, pensions, taxations, transport, schools/ kindergarten, etc. To facilitate this multi-faceted policy, several borders have established 'offices' that help workers and enterprises in this regard. In French -Belgian border region these 'information services' for border commuters are missing.
48. Although on either side of the border there are support systems for searching for employment in the respective domestic contexts, wider cross-border coordination and cooperation between actors who are operating these domestic employment search systems is lacking. There is a lack of a more ambitious cross-border employment policy at the border, which better supports job seekers and facilitates cross-border job placements. Most initiatives for a coordinated information management on job vacancies and on cross-border assistance for placement of job seekers are only focussing on the smaller triangle Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai. However, also the employment areas of West-Vlaanderen, Valenciennes and Maubeuge are the starting point for major cross-border commuter flows to Belgium.
49. The rights to receive unemployment benefits are attached to a job seeker's country of residence, which creates difficulties for job seekers on both sides of the border who want to follow further training in the neighbouring country. The rights of job seekers to receive unemployment allowances are generally attached to their status in their respective country of residence (disabled, intermittent, etc.). As soon as job seekers cross the border, their status is no longer recognized and the right to unemployment allowances can rarely be retained in their country of residence. Furthermore, also training organizations existing on one side of the border are not formally recognised on the other side of the border. The obstacle is assessed as having a high negative impact on cross-border labour market integration. The territorial definition of rights to unemployment benefits and the lacking cross-border recognition of training organizations prevents job seekers from benefiting from training across the border. This strongly limits the possibilities of the concerned job seekers for a return to employment or for job conversion.

- ***Education***

50. On 'basic education', the RCI ratings are at national level on both sides of the border. Belgium scores well above the EU average while France scores lower than the EU average.
51. With regard to the share of the population aged 30-34 with high educational attainment, there are cross-border differences. The Belgian regions of Oost-Vlaanderen (51%), West-

³ Followed by retail trade at 16%, Construction 13.5%. Administrative and support service activities 12.2% Professional, scientific and technical activities 8.1%, Accommodation and food service activities 6.5%

Vlaanderen (47%) and Namur (46%) all have percentage shares higher than the EU average of 40%. The Belgian regions of Luxembourg (39%) and Hainaut (38%) are just below the EU average level, as are all the French border regions; Champagne-Ardenne and Nord Pas-de-Calais both at 37% and Picardie at 31%.

52. On 'higher education and lifelong learning' the Flanders regions of Oost-Vlaanderen and West-Vlaanderen and the French regions of Champagne-Ardenne and Nord Pas-de-Calais are rated relatively high, all being above the EU average. The French region of Picardie and the three Belgian regions in Wallonia all are rated lower, below the EU average.
53. In terms of educational achievement levels, these being a key framework condition for supporting effective growth and competitiveness, there is a substantial cross-border difference between the shares of the working population with tertiary-level educational attainment. The Belgian regions all have much higher shares than their neighbouring French regions. The highest share is in Oost-Vlaanderen at 40%, followed by the other Flanders region of West-Vlaanderen and then the Walloon regions of Luxembourg and Namur (all at 35%) and Hainaut at 30%. All of the French regions have lower shares (23-29%), all below the EU average of 31%.
54. Due to the incompatibility of the French and Belgian national legislations which define the status of a trainee or a worker in a given field or occupation, there is a still insufficient recognition of the equivalence of diploma, certifications and qualifications on both sides of the border despite close cooperation between the competent educational services. Finally, there is also a problem of identifying more specifically the professions that are most lacking recognition of prior learning. The still insufficient recognition of educational and professional qualifications, together with a lack of knowledge and information about the relevant audiences (i.e. students, workers, and especially businesses), means that some Belgium employers refuse to recognize French degrees. At some parts of the border, mainly between France and Flanders where language differences also tend to adversely influence the mobility of job seekers.
55. There are multiple regulatory differences of in relation to the legal status of trainees or apprentices (and for employees or job seekers as well); social protection and a prevention of occupational risks; remuneration of apprentices and the financing of vocational training. National legal systems are also incompatible for other related topics: different durations of rights to receive family benefits, the loss of French regional aids supporting domestic transport or accommodation cost (in case of cross-border mobility) and a difference in remuneration levels. Moreover, in case of failure, there is no automatic transfer from one institution to another. This incompatibility of national legal systems also makes it difficult to set up cross-border vocational training schemes. At some parts of the border (France-Flanders), also language differences tend to adversely influence the mobility of trainees or apprentices.

- ***Health and inclusion***

56. With regard to the 'health' indicator of 'RCI', ranking has also been done at NUTS 2 level on both sides of the border. Oost-Vlaanderen, scores close to the EU average while West-Vlaanderen and all the French border regions all score slightly lower than this. The Walloon regions all score quite a bit lower than the EU average.

57. The Franco-Belgian framework agreement on health cooperation was ratified by France in 2007 and by Belgian authorities only in 2011 (i.e. only six years after the signing of the agreement). Following this, other agreements have been set up and as a concrete consequence the creation of cross-border healthcare (ZOAST) along the whole border. These areas of cross-border healthcare permitted the pooling of healthcare along the Franco-Belgian border. This was followed by an agreement on medical emergency provisions in 2007, to improve the survival chances of patients in cases of eg. heart attacks or strokes in Lorraine, Ardennes-Thiérache and Nord.
58. Cross-border ambulatory care currently involves an advance payment by the patient and subsequent reimbursement of related costs, which are based on the tariffs of the country where the patient has rights in cross-border healthcare⁴, on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, generally supports coverage of related costs and encourages cross-border cooperation. However, the issue of additional costs occurring in cross-border ambulatory patient care has still to be addressed along the entire Franco-Belgian border. Persons in need of nearby ambulatory care which can only come from across the border can face additional costs that they must meet themselves. This problem particularly affects people living in the rural and more thinly populated border areas of the Ardennes, where there is a lack of doctors on both sides.
59. In the medical-social sector, difficulties persist in the application of the Franco-Walloon framework agreement on hosting persons with disabilities and supporting the latter in nursing homes of Wallonia. In 2013, a Franco-Walloon framework agreement was ratified. The following three problems are highlighted: (1) Difficulties in gathering information on the disability, the level of dependence and the geographical origin of people with disabilities accommodated in Walloon nursing homes (2) Not yet fully harmonised procedure for a joint inspection of nursing homes. Although the framework agreement addresses a number of issues including the applicable law (Walloon law) and legal consequences of inspections (i.e. only Belgium administration has the legal authority to sanction defaulting establishments), the pooling of French and Walloon inspection procedures will be done only gradually. (3) Poor coordination of French authorities (Regions) in the conclusion of bilateral conventions with specialised Walloon care institutions, which limits the number of care places reserved for French nationals in these structures and the quality of their care (divergence of the expected obligations of these institutions). The observed implementation difficulties and shortcomings primarily affect the quality and scope of care services provided to French persons with disabilities in Walloon nursing homes, especially as regards the securing of equivalent standards for the quality of care and of comparable cost for care.
60. Issues persist also in the elderly care where traditionally many French make use of nursing homes in Wallonia. For the moment, there is no Franco-Walloon framework agreement on hosting elderly persons in nursing homes of Wallonia. Regions should have an interest in quantifying the cross-border phenomenon more precisely and also in clarifying funding arrangements for the care of French elderly persons.
61. Moreover the lack of agreement also increases the costs to be paid by the French elderly person (or their family) who stays in a nursing home across the border in Wallonia. In France, the care assistance allowance for a French elderly person cannot follow this person across the national border because the financial system of the French State and the

⁴ according to Directive 2011/24/EU

General Councils supporting care cost of seniors is based on the principle of the “place of residence”. Another problem is related to the observed lack of information exchange between the concerned French and Walloon actors which are involved in the care of elderly persons. This does not allow to quantify the real scope of the cross-border needs.

ORIENTATIONS:

- *Promote actions to reduce the gap in information provision about the conditions for cross border employment.*
- *Support joint actions to improve the qualification of workers, including language and ICT training and other forms of practical training. This may be targeted to those sectors identified by local/regional partners as being of particular importance and potential for increased cross-border employment.*
- *Promote cross-border labour mobility by, in particular, ensuring support of the EURES Info Points. Support additional information points as appropriate.*
- *Promote local/regional actions on language training.*
- *Create exchange between stakeholders such as schools, business and local administrations to further develop schemes to promote study, traineeships and apprentices across the border.*
- *Develop a strategy to facilitate student exchanges, acknowledgment of degrees and certificates including for vocational training.*
- *Assess the needs in the labour market and develop a strategy on how the gap can be closed through labour force from across the border.*
- *Develop an integrated approach to cross border planning and provision of a range of health services. This includes increased use of digital tools and re-organised care models with the overall objective of making health systems more effective, accessible and resilient.*
- *Further promote the exchange between stakeholders in the field of medical-social care for people with disabilities and for the elderly. This can include the promotion fo access to nurseries for disabled and elderly.*
- *Mapping needs of elderly people and persons with disabilities assessing health services across the border.*

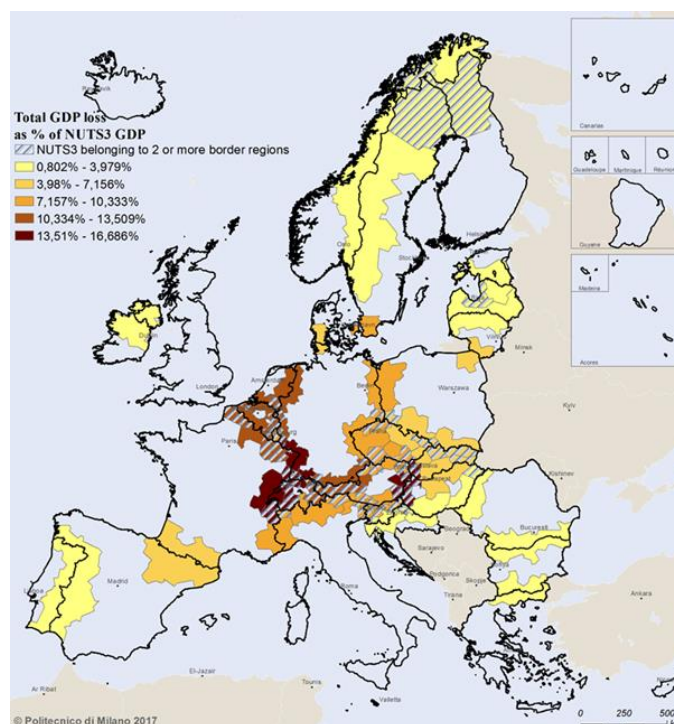
7. GOVERNANCE

Section 1: Cross-Border Governance in a wider context (and use of the new "Interreg Governance" specific objective)

62. Cross-border cooperation is not limited to Interreg programmes. It also builds on policies (e.g. cross-border mobility), on legal instruments (e.g. bi-lateral agreements, treaties, European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation) and on funding (including but not limited to Interreg).
63. Actions and orientations set out in this section may be supported by using the France-Belgium programme's budget as proposed in the ETC (Interreg) Regulation for improving governance issues.

- *Working on border obstacles and potential*

64. As illustrated in the Commission Communication "Boosting Growth and Cohesion in EU Border Regions", there are many different types of obstacles to cross-border cooperation. There is also scope for greater sharing of services and resources in cross-border regions. Among the obstacles, legal, administrative and institutional differences are a major source of bottlenecks. Other issues include: use of different languages or lack of public transport for instance. When it comes to unused potential, the shared use of health care or educational facilities could contribute greatly to improving the quality of life in border regions. As the France-Belgium Interreg programme is instrumental to effective cross-border cooperation, it should seek to address these particular obstacles and tap the common potential to facilitate cooperation in this wider context.



- ***Links with existing strategies***

65. Cross-border cooperation cannot be done in isolation. It has to be framed in the existing strategies (e.g. national, regional or sectoral). Ideally, there should be a dedicated cross-border strategy which is based on reliable cross-border data, which is politically supported and which has undergone a wide consultation with relevant stakeholders. It is a useful exchange forum and a necessary step for sustainable and structural cooperation (i.e. a Monitoring Committee is not sufficient as its focus is on funding and not on designing a development strategy with strong political support). Whilst many borders have such strategies, it is not always the case. When there are such strategies, they are often partly implemented with the Interreg programmes.

- ***Role of existing cross-border organisations***

66. Several regions have cross-border entities which can be established under EU law (e.g. European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation – EGTC), national law (e.g. private law associations or public law bodies) or international law (e.g. under bilateral agreements). In the France-Belgium border region, two EGTC exists, the EGTC Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai and the EGTC Dunkirk-Flanders-Côte d’Opale.

- ***Links with other Cohesion policy programmes***

67. The proposed Common Provisions Regulation stipulates that “each programme shall set out, for each specific objective the interregional and transnational actions with beneficiaries located in at least one other Member State”. Whilst a similar provision was already present in the past, it is now compulsory for the mainstream programmes to describe the possibilities for cooperation for each specific objective.

68. It means that if mainstream programmes do not plan such cooperation actions, they will have to justify why. This may have many benefits for cross-border areas: more ambitious projects (e.g. joint infrastructures), involvement of new players (e.g. the national authorities such as Ministries) and overall more ambitious policies (e.g. spatial planning with associated funds).

- ***Cross-border data***

69. In order to have good public policies (e.g. spatial planning), these should be based on evidence (i.e. data, studies, mapping). Whilst this is generally available at national level, it is not always the case at regional/ local level and even less at cross-border local level. Some of this evidence is particularly important: economic flows, transport flows and trends, labour mobility and mapping of competences, health of the citizens, mapping of important infrastructures and services (such as energy, waste treatment, hospitals, emergency services, universities), mapping of risky areas (to floods, fires, etc.), mapping of natural areas (e.g. Natura 2000, sites under the Ramsar convention of wetlands, etc.) and mapping of the main inclusion difficulties (poverty, marginalised communities, etc.).

70. There is a lack of precise knowledge of the cross-border labour market and also of different "sub-markets" existing in the cross-border area (supply and demand). Deeper reasons for this are the incompatibility of statistical data collected on both sides of the border (divergence of statistical systems, indicators, data collection methods, definitions, census periods, the geographical coverage, etc.), the relatively low commuter flows which make it complicated to analyse the issue and also a lack of bilateral cooperation on the subject matter between competent services in France and Belgium.
71. This is assessed as having a moderate negative impact on cross-border labour market integration. This lack of precise knowledge on the border-regional and cross-border labour market hinders the actors in conceiving a joint cross-border employment policy. At some parts of the border, also language differences tend to adversely influence this lack of knowledge of the cross- border labour market.

Section 2: Governance of the programme

- ***Partnership principle***

72. The principle of partnership is a key feature covering the whole programme cycle (including preparation, implementation and participation in monitoring committees), building on the multi-level governance approach and ensuring the involvement of economic, social and environmental partners. Examples of good practice include involving representatives of different interests in the programming process; involving them in programme evaluation or other strategic long-term tasks for instance by setting up temporary working groups; consulting all members on key documents also between meetings. An active involvement of economic, social and environmental partners should be ensured by their participation in key steps. Technical Assistance can be made available to facilitate their full involvement in the process.

- ***Role of the monitoring committee***

73. The monitoring committee is the strategic decision-making body of the programme. In 2021-2027 the monitoring committee will be given a more prominent role in supervising programme performance.
74. ***Good practices include*** having strategic discussions as a standing agenda point, inviting institutions playing a key role in the border area, organising project visits. Some examples of strategic discussion themes: border obstacles, cross-border data needs, inclusion of SMEs, NGOs and other under-represented beneficiaries or target groups of the programme.
75. **The composition of the monitoring committee** must be representative of the cross-border area. It must also include partners relevant to programme objectives (i.e. priority axis), e.g. institutions or organisations representing environment, SMEs, civil society or education.

76. **Project selection** shall take place in the monitoring committee or in steering committee(s) established under the monitoring committee in full respect of the partnership principle. It is crucial that all are involved in the process. Selection criteria and its application must be non-discriminatory and transparent. They should also be clear and they must enable the assessment of whether projects correspond to the objectives and the strategy of the programme. They are to be consulted with the Commission and communicated to applicants in a clear and systematic way. The cross-border dimension should be compulsory in every selected project. The programme might consider the use of independent expert panels for preparation of project selection. Larger strategic projects / flagship projects (i.e. designed and implemented by public authorities without a call) may be pre-defined in the programme document or selected via a transparent and agreed procedure. It is up to each programme partnership to decide on the optimal balance between different types of projects to reach the overall programme objectives (flagship projects, regular projects, bottom-up or top-down project selection, small projects etc).

77. **Decision-making** must also be non-discriminatory and transparent. The procedure should also be inclusive. Each monitoring (or steering) committee member shall have a vote. Voting by delegation should not be encouraged unless it is transparent and puts weaker partners at equal footing with "institutional" partners.

- ***Role of the managing authority***

78. The managing authority shall ensure effective implementation of the programme. The managing authority is also at the service of the programme and its monitoring committee. It acts as the programme authority representing all countries participating in the programme.

- ***Role of the Joint Secretariat***

79. The Joint Secretariat (JS) should ideally be the cross-border executive body of the programme at the service of the managing authority. It should consist of professional and independent staff from the participating countries. The JS should possess representative linguistic competence and relevant border country knowledge. Its procedures should be efficient and transparent. Communication with beneficiaries, potential applicants and the general public should be ensured mainly by the JS. **Regional contact points/antennas** operating directly under the JS' responsibility may be useful in border areas characterised by large distances and/or difficult accessibility.

- ***Trust-building measures***

85. Effective cross-border cooperation requires a good level of trust between partners. Trust needs to be built and maintained. This is a long-term investment which aims at fostering cooperation-minded future generations. The Interreg programmes can make a substantial contribution by providing financial support for trust-building activities such as linking up schools, sports clubs, cultural organisations, etc. The beneficiaries of such activities are often not equipped to manage full-blown Interreg projects.

86. *Therefore*, it is highly recommended to put in place mechanisms to finance smaller projects or people-to-people projects that make a strong contribution to the social and civil cohesion of the cross-border region. This can be done using the new tool proposed by the Commission (the Small Projects Fund) or via specific calls managed by the Managing Authority itself.

- ***Conflict of interest***

87. Conflict of interest between decision-making bodies and applicants and beneficiaries is to be avoided at any moment, including project generation, project preparation, project selection and project implementation. One way to avoid this is to ensure a proper segregation of duties between institutions and persons.

- ***Communication and visibility***

88. The programme makes use of the Interact-developed eMS. This is very positive as it also provides a direct interface with the KEEP database of projects which is an invaluable resource for all actors of territorial cooperation. The programme should ensure it continues to contribute to the completeness and correctness of KEEP.

89. The programme runs a clear and well-structured website that contains good and up-to-date information including for instance on progress towards achieving the programme's targets. This level of transparency is much welcome and should continue.

90. In the future, the programme should make use of the opportunities offered by the Interreg Volunteers Youth Initiative (IVY) and host young volunteers in the programme management bodies or within individual projects.

ORIENTATIONS:

- *Identify key obstacles and unused potential (e.g. cross-border labour market hindrances, health care, transport connections, use of languages, etc.; the Cross-Border Review should be used as a starting point), bring the relevant actors together (e.g. authorities at national/ regional/ local levels, enterprises, users, etc.) and facilitate the process of finding ways to reduce these obstacles or exploit the potential (e.g. by funding meetings, experts, pilot projects, etc.).*
- *Embed strategies with clear actions and results (e.g. through the intervention logic and indicators). In addition, the Interreg programme should be well coordinated with existing national, regional or sectoral strategies (e.g. with an analysis on how to translate these in a cross-border context). This requires a coherent overview of all existing strategies (i.e. have a mapping of the strategies affecting the border area).*
- *Build on the legitimacy, experience and expertise of existing cross-border organisations such as the Eurometropole and the Cote d'Opale EGTC. They could play a role e.g. by managing a Small Projects Fund or by managing strategic projects (as sole beneficiary, in particular for the EGTCs).*

- *Establish (or participate to) a strong coordination mechanism with the authorities managing mainstream programmes. This coordination implies exchange of information and cooperation and should happen at all stages: planning (e.g. designing complementarities), implementation (e.g. building on synergies) and communication (showing the benefits for the citizens and the region).*
- *Identify the areas where important cross-border data is missing and support projects that would fill the gap at the latest by 2017 (e.g. in cooperation with national statistical offices, by supporting regional data portals etc.).*
- *Member state hosting the programme authorities is represented in the monitoring committee separately from the managing authority (i.e. a different person). The managing authority shall ensure the effectiveness and transparency of the project selection, reporting and monitoring systems. The use of Interact's Harmonised Implementation Tools and electronic monitoring system (eMs) is recommended if relevant.*

Existing sources of information

- Border needs study (Commission, 2016) – [Collecting solid evidence to assess the needs to be addressed by Interreg cross-border cooperation programmes - Regional Policy - European Commission](#)
- EC ex-post evaluation of ETC 2007-2013 http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/evaluations/ec/2007-2013/#11
- European Territorial Cooperation - best practices and innovative measures, European Parliament, 2016 [REPORT on European Territorial Cooperation - best practices and innovative measures - A8-0202/2016](#)
- Quantification of the effects of legal and administrative border obstacles in land border regions (Commission, 2016) – [quantification of the effects of legal and administrative obstacles in land border regions - Bing](#)
- Easing legal and administrative obstacles (Commission, 2017) – [Easing legal and administrative obstacles in EU border regions - Regional Policy - European Commission](#)
- Comprehensive analysis of the existing cross-border transport connections and missing links on the internal EU borders (Commission, 2017-2018) – https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/cb_rail_connections_en.pdf
- DG SANTE's study on cross-border health care [Building Cooperation in Cross-border Healthcare: new study published! | FUTURIUM | European Commission](#)
- ESPON's Targeted Analysis on Cross-Border Public Services [CPS - Cross-border Public Services | ESPON](#)
- Smart Specialisation Strategies <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>
- Strategy of the 2014-2020 programme (ex-ante evaluation, SWOT, priorities, evaluations)
- Frontière France – Belgique <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/ressources/territoires/frontieres/frontieres-en-europe/frontiere-france-belgique/frontiere-france-belgique-2/>
- S. Verger, Les chemins multiples de la coopération transfrontalière franco-belge : analyse des dynamiques institutionnelles, Science politique. Université de Grenoble, 2011