Forty years of AEBR!

The idea of setting up a European association or "union for border regions" was first discussed in 1965 at a International Regional Planning Conference in Basel. Following intensive preparatory work, 10 border regions set up a Standing Conference of European Border Regions on 17-18 June 1971 at the Anhalt Castle (EUREGI). Alfred Mozer was elected President and Georg Wiek became its Secretary. The Conference chose to call itself the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR).

Forty years later, cross-border movement has haunted Europe within and outside the EU as far as in South America of Africa growing CBC initiatives aim to heal their own historical scars.

In Europe, a new Treaty has lead to new definitions for European policies, being Cohesion re-defined right now. In its framework, Territorial Cooperation in general, but CBC in particular, is considered acquis communautaire by the European Commission. Nowadays not only the AEBR but other networks at different levels promote and activate CBC instruments and initiatives all over Europe. The European Parliament has decided to promote a stronger participation of local and regional authorities in Europe, and initiatives to promote territorial cooperation are regularly performed at the REGI Committee.

For the AEBR, our 40th Anniversary has begun with a strong impetus given to our structure by President Karl-Heinz Lamberz. Last 29th September, the AEBR Task Force on Strategy proposed a set of measures to be widely discussed by AEBR members along this year until our General Assembly 2011 in Kursk (Euroregion Yaroslavl, RU) on 22 September. The Executive Committee of the Association decided last 4 February in Tábor (Euregio Silva Nortica, South Bohemia, CZ) to launch a wide consultation amongst AEBR members in order to better tuning current and future needs, better use of communication tools and to provide better services.

Without increasing our resources we can keep permanent debates within the Association thanks to the commitment of our members. A growing involvement in fields like Health, External Borders, Languages, Labour Market, Mobility, Innovation or Water Resources still need more contributions from AEBR members in order to activate long-lasting and sustainable initiatives. Our members are also invited to make a deeper use of available communication tools between the Secretariat, the Committees, Task Forces, the Members, partners and friends. The AEBR Website, this Newsflash, are open platforms waiting for you!

The AEBR Team

FIFTH REPORT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL COHESION


Here you can also find the Summary Report with a review of our contributions to this process of debate between 2007 and 2011: http://www.aebr.eu/files/publications/110301_AEBR_and_Cohesion_Policy_Historic_Summary_EN.pdf.

The celebration of the Fifth Cohesion Forum in Brussels on 31 January and 1st February let us confirm that our main claims are included in the general recommendation of the Report, and they are strongly supported by the Commission, the Parliament and the Committee of the Regions. The excellent dialogue promoted between the institutions and different European stakeholders had lead to a wide participation and a better knowledge about the citizen's expectations in the EU. There are still some steps to be developed in the decision-making process but future Territorial Cohesion looks quite safe. Several AEBR members and partners also reacted to this consultation: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/consultation/5cr/answers_en.cfm.
**AEBR Seminar on CBC in Central Europe, 3 February 2011, Prague**

All in all, 60 Participants attended the seminar, which AEBR organised in cooperation with the Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic and Euregio Silva Nortica. A thorough presentation of the Czech Strategy 2007-2013, including the distribution of funds and the different regional programmes, as well as their views on the future cohesion policy in Central European countries was offered by different departments of the Czech Government, showing their strong commitment with this approach to development. The final programme as well the presentations given by representatives of the Czech Ministry of Regional Development can be found here: [http://www.aebr.eu/en/news/news_detail.php?news_id=58](http://www.aebr.eu/en/news/news_detail.php?news_id=58).

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**AEBR Executive Committee Meeting 4 and 5 February 2011, Tábor (CZ)**


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**Meeting of the AEBR Advisory Committee - 28 January 2011, Brussels**

![A very rich debate on the state-of-the-art of Cohesion, Territorial Development and Cross-Border Cooperation was developed by the members of the Advisory Committee with the presence of President Karl-Heinz Lambertz. The AEBR position on the 5th Cohesion Report was reviewed, as well as the follow up of active projects (ULYSSES, EUREGIO II) and some other AEBR initiatives: our participation in the Eastern Partnership, follow up of the Draft Directive on Cross-Border Health, new project proposals for Interreg IV-C and Interreg IV-B Central Europe (CROSS-ADD) and NW Europe (PROMETHEUS).](http://www.aebr.eu/en/news/news_detail.php?news_id=57)

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**LATEST NEWS ON THE DIRECTIVE ON CB HEALTHCARE AND PATIENTS’ RIGHTS**

On 19 January 2011, the directive on patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare was adopted in second reading by the European Parliament. After the approval of the Council, expected during February 2011, the member states of the EU have 30 months in order to adapt their national legislation to the provision of the directive. After a long process to come out with a final proposal, it is the time for this Directive to be implemented. This is probably the maximum that can be accepted by all member states at this stage and not every recommendation made by border regions have been taken into account. However, there is a stronger focus on the case of citizens living in border areas where the better healthcare can only be provided across the border.


This is the first announcement of the II AEBR Forum “R & D and Innovation in Cross-Border Areas” to be held in Vigo (Galicia, Spain), hosted by the Euroregion Galicia-Norte next 5th April 2011. This Forum will concentrate on the opportunities for cross-border regions in this field, by analysing relevant European programmes, the presentation of on-going initiatives and some examples of good practice.


## EVENTS IN THE EU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE/PLACE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>INFOS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22 February 2011 CoR</td>
<td>Territorial Dialogue for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth</td>
<td>Organised by INTERACT Point Valencia  <a href="http://event.interact.eu.net/227138/8878930/0/2361">http://event.interact.eu.net/227138/8878930/0/2361</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brussels, Belgium</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:europa2020@cor.europa.eu">europa2020@cor.europa.eu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2-5 March 2011 Alexandropolis, Greece</td>
<td>NEEBOR General Assembly</td>
<td><a href="http://www.reebor.eu/?page=news&amp;id_news=194&amp;str_nr=1">http://www.reebor.eu/?page=news&amp;id_news=194&amp;str_nr=1</a> &amp;lg=gb</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-8 March 2011 Strasbourg, France</td>
<td>ULYSSES partners meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-18 March 2011 Bled, Slovenia</td>
<td>What future for Regional Policy? An academic and Policy Debate</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bledconference@teamwork.fr">bledconference@teamwork.fr</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>31 March - 1 April 2011 Brussels, Belgium</td>
<td>CoR Plenary Session</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cor.europa.eu">www.cor.europa.eu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>13-14 April 2011 Brussels, Belgium</td>
<td>CoR Eastern Partnership on CBC, Brussels</td>
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NEWS FROM EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

- Results of the 5th Cohesion Forum: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/5thcohesionforum/index_en.cfm

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT:


Miscellaneous:
The Carpathian Convention (United Nations Development Programme) has established a partnership with the AEBR, the AEM, the Carpathian Euroregion and other stakeholders in the area in order to coordinate efforts for the sustainable development of the Carpathians. Please find more information in the document Towards a Macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Area.
EUROPEAN GROUPINGS OF TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

The EGTC Platform was launched on 28th January by the CoR, the Commission, the Trio of Presidencies and different stakeholders, including the AEBR. An Online Forum is now active. You may join it directly through this link: http://portal.cor.europa.eu/egtc-en-US/Platform/Pages/welcome.aspx, or via the EGTC portal www.cor.europa.eu/egtc (click on “EGTC Platform”). That day the Plenary of the CoR approved its own-initiative opinion on “New Perspectives for the Revision of the EGTC Regulation” (Rapporteur: Alberto Núñez-Feijóo, President of the Xunta de Galicia (ES/EPP). Here you can find a brief report, the consolidated version of this document and other related material: http://portal.cor.europa.eu/egtc-en-US/news/Pages/TheCoRAdoptsitson-initiativeopiniononEGTC.aspx

EVENTS, NEWS AND PRESENTATIONS OF AEBR MEMBER REGIONS

- The President of Aquitaine (FR) and the Basque Country (ES) have announced the signature to constitute an EGTC Aquitaine-Euskadi. They are only waiting national decisions to proceed.
- Cross-Border Constituency? Well-known Dutch Politician Frans Willeme, former President of EUREGIO (DE/NL), has the chance of being elected Mayor of the German border town of Nordhorn (DE).

OTHER NEWS OF INTEREST

- On 4th February, Portugal Telecom announced one of the biggest e-communication motorways to be installed in Covilhã (Centro Region, PT), some 50 km from Spanish border (Castilla y León and Extremadura, ES), with a expected great impact in cross-border cooperation, development and employment for these territories.
- Last 9th January, 98.83% of South Sudanese voted in favour of secession from the North. Next 9th July 2011 South Sudan will become the 54th African country, adding some more borders in this continent. However, before that both countries have to agree their borders and their share of oil resources.
- And, many news have arrived from the Southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The citizens in Tunis and Egypt have overthrown long-lasting corrupt and non-democratic governments. A strong wave runs across other countries in Northern African and Near East countries. The role of the EU and its related policies face an extraordinary challenge with this new situation.

Consultations:

Calls:

If you wish to announce events or publish news from your region in this section, please get in touch with the AEBR Head Office by contacting c.paulary@aebr.eu. Deadline for the next edition is 15 March 2011. Thank you!
**MAIN AEBR EVENTS 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 2011</td>
<td>CBC Conference &amp; AEBR Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 June 2011</td>
<td>AEBR Executive Committee meeting in Gotse Delchev, Euroregion Nestos-Mesta, Bulgaria</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-12 August 2011</td>
<td>III. AEBR Youth forum, Lappeenranta</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 September 2011</td>
<td>AEBR Workshop in Moscow, Russia</td>
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<tr>
<td>22-24 September 2011</td>
<td>AEBR Executive Committee meeting, General Assembly and Annual Conference 2011 in Kursk, Russia, Euroregion Yaroslavna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 December 2011</td>
<td>AEBR Executive Committee meeting in Vaasa, Finland</td>
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Within this study you can find a review of CBC in some selected areas of South America, including good practices, a SWOT analysis, a set of recommendations and a road map for CBC in Latin America.

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**In the next edition:**

1st Announcement of AEBR General Assembly and Annual Conference in Kursk (Euroregion Yaroslavna, Russian Federation)

The European Eastern Partnership

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The AEBR Newsflash is sent to everyone on the AEBR “members and friends” e-mail list. If you have friends or colleagues who would like to be added to the mailing list, please send their details to the AEBR Head Office.

Please think twice before printing this Newsletter. Perhaps you can enjoy and share it by electronic means!

A PDF version of this newsflash is available for download from our website ([www.aebr.eu](http://www.aebr.eu)).