



Association of European Border Regions

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Application form “AEBR-Cross Border Award” 2015

Deadline: 25.09.2015

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The Future of Cross-Border Cooperation in Europe

1. General information

1.1. Applicant border / cross-border region:

Eurodistrict SaarMoselle

1.2. Title of the cross-border measure* [project(s), programme(s) / strategy(ies)]:

Regional Marketing SaarMoselle

1.3. Period:

01.07.2011 – 30.06.2015

1.4. Lead Partner:

EGTC Eurodistrict SaarMoselle

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1.5. Partners:

Communauté de Communes du Warndt

Contact:

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Landeshauptstadt Saarbrücken

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Regionalverband Saarbrücken

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1.6. Financing of the cross-border measure (e.g. INTERREG):

Each activity developed within the project has been financed by the Eurodistrict and the three partners involved. These measures were also co-financed by ERDF, program Interreg IV-A Great Region.

Funds from the French State (National funds for territorial planning and development) and Lorraine Region (State-Regional Plan Contracts) also participated in the funding the project. The study “cross-border growth potentials in SaarMoselle”, carried out by the ISO Institute from Saarbrücken, was co-financed by these entities.

1.7. Links to other projects, measures and/or programmes (only if applicable):

This project was financed by the core area 1 “Economy” and the operative objective “support to collective actions for the development of the economic base” of the Interreg IV-A Great Region program.

2. Contents

2.1. Objectives of the cross-border measure:

The objectives of the project can be listed as follows:

- Economic promotion of the territory
- Giving the region a new image
- Drawing attention to the new social, environmental, economic and cultural realities of the SaarMoselle region
- Highlighting the specificities, whether or not linked to the cross-border nature of the region (bilingualism, biculturalism, quality of life and cost of living, specific staff capacities, concentration of resources and know-how, density, low cost land bank, easy access to means of communication and transportation...)
- Showing the numerous business settlement opportunities
- Keeping businesses on the territory and attract new ones
- Making the territory attractive to a potential workforce

2.2. Organisational structure and activities to implement the objectives (e.g. joint secretariat, contract, etc.):

The project coordination was managed by the EGCT Eurodistrict SaarMoselle (Cooperation office in Saarbrücken). One workgroup, representing each of the members on the territory, was created to monitor the project. Additionally, a steering committee was created for the study.

The Assembly and Steering Committee of the Eurodistrict (formed by elected members of local assemblies and councils) regularly received updates and validated the proposed orientations of the project and its progress.

Three methodological partners were also involved in the project

- AGEME (development agency for East-Moselle)
 - o Company project engineering
 - o Business services
 - o Encouragement of local economic structures – Economic promotion
- Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Saarpfalz mbH
 - o Consultation and support for all issues pertaining to enterprise creation
 - o Information on business parks and facilities
- Gesellschaft für Wirtschaftsförderung Saar mbH
 - o Economic promotion and business consultancy (business establishment, lot servicing, development and construction projects, ...)

2.3. How far has the measure been implemented?

The joint activities of regional marketing started in 2011. The partners working on the project have since participated in two international industrial fairs (Pollutec, Hannover Messe) and one international real estate trade show (MIPIM). Since 2011, several joint marketing tools have been developed, for example a brochure promoting the cross-border territory or an interactive map indicating the economic activity zones (used as a communication medium between the partners, but also towards the entrepreneurs and businesses).

The project eligibility period for the ERDF funds ended on June, 30th 2015. The partners, however, started several months prior the end of the funding period to reflect on the future of the actions which should be carried out to further develop the regional marketing in SaarMoselle.

The study was completed in 2015. It establishes and describes in details the three main niches which represent a significant potential for the economic development in the region. This step is crucial for the future and will guide the long-term strategy decided by the economic developers. Furthermore, the study provided recommendations for actions needed in the future in order to develop cooperation and overcome the obstacles still associated with the border and the differences between the German and French systems, for instance from a legal and fiscal perspective.

2.4. Special framework conditions (a. geographical, political, etc. / b. only rural area (no regional metropolis))

Situated at an equal distance of Paris, Rotterdam and Milan, the SaarMoselle region is a true European crossroad. Saarland and East-Moselle share a common culture built throughout history. In the past, the boom of the French and German coal undertakings attracted an important influx of workers from many countries to the region, shaping it into a melting pot of cultures and nationalities.

People of widely different origins are used to live together, learn and benefit from each other. Today, working together is already a reality as many people cross the border everyday, whether for work or leisure, and numerous cooperative projects are developed by municipalities, territorial collectivities as well as civic associations. There is no natural border of significance to hinder the cross-border exchanges in SaarMoselle. Saarland and East-Moselle now face the same issues and challenges following the end of the mining era.

3. Contribution of the measure (added value) to the development of the border/cross-border region

The workgroup put in place to implement the project has enabled the project partners and, more broadly, the local economic development stakeholders to liaise and to deepen their knowledge of the economic structures and players in the other country.

The local players met on many occasions during this project. This networking action has for example been strengthened when the partners worked together in order to monitor the study on the cross-border growth potential in SaarMoselle or during several events and international fairs. The SaarMoselle region was indeed presented on three occasions on different international fairs, where its cross-border aspect was highlighted: The primary goal was to present the region to potential entrepreneurs and investors as well as establishing it as an entry point into both French and German national markets

The project helped directly to develop a joint economic promotion for the cross-border region. The creation of an economic development brochure and corresponding data sheets were an additional step towards a harmonized and cooperative approach to advertise economic opportunities and services available to businesses in the cross-border region. Following the same idea, an interactive map of the available industrial land sites was created. It was set up as a communication medium between partners, who have the possibility to obtain relevant information on a given area and, for instance, relay it to a potential investor. The map is also directly accessible to all online: It is hosted on the Eurodistrict website, but can of course be integrated to any partner's page if need be.

