

EUROPEAN UNION



**Committee of the Regions**

**EGTC monitoring report 2014**  
**Implementing the Europe 2020 Strategy**  
**Executive Summary**

**This Executive Summary was written by the CoR Secretariat-General Unit E2, and is based on the study "EGTC Monitoring Report 2014 – Implementing the Strategy Europe 2020" written by Metis GmbH (Jürgen Pucher and Stefanie Zöchmann).**

More information on the European Union and the Committee of the Regions is available online at <http://www.europa.eu> and <http://www.cor.europa.eu>, respectively.

The full study "EGTC Monitoring Report 2014 – Implementing the Strategy Europe 2020" is available in English at:  
<http://cor.europa.eu/en/documentation/studies/Pages/studies.aspx>

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# Executive Summary

The Committee of the Regions regularly publishes a monitoring report on the development of the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs). The present report analyses the latest developments from 2014 and late 2013, providing an overview of the current status of all EGTCs.

By the end of 2014 50 EGTCs had been established in total, including more than 800 national, local and regional authorities from 20 different Member States. Another 18 Groupings were in the pipeline.

## National implementation

The amended EGTC Regulation was adopted on 17 December 2013 and has been applicable since 22 June 2014. The deadline for Member States to implement the Regulation was 22 June 2014. Throughout 2014, EGTCs and Member States discussed the implementation of the Regulation<sup>1</sup>, along with specific items contained in the new Cohesion Policy that are relevant to the EGTCs.

This process is still ongoing. To date, the CoR has identified the Spanish Royal Decree 23/2015 of 23 January. Furthermore, the amended Hungarian and Slovak provisions entered into force on 20 December 2014 and 1 March 2015 respectively. In the Federal State of Austria, the "*Länder*" Burgenland, Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol amended their legislation to comply with the revised EGTC regulation between October 2014 and February 2015. In Luxembourg a check was carried out to determine whether the current legislation should be amended. Officials concluded that there was no need to make any changes.

All other EU Member States did not amend their legislation until the end of March 2015. It is possible that they did not identify any need to amend current legislation.

The European Commission did not adopt the delegated act envisaged under Article 17 and 17(a) of the Regulation.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1302/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 amending Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) as regards the clarification, simplification and improvement of the establishment and functioning of such groupings. The revised EGTC Regulation shall apply from 22 June 2014.

## Overview of the status of EGTCs

8 EGTCs were created between the end of 2013 and the end of 2014. 4 recently established EGTCs cover territories in Hungary and Slovakia, as well as Poland and Sweden. One grouping established a central European transport corridor and Romania was included in the European Common Future Building EGTC (which was established in 2012 but did not previously give notification). Authorities – particularly those from Spain and France – were involved in the other 4 new EGTCs.

### *EGTCs established in 2014 or late 2013*

#	Name	Countries	Constitution
1	Torysa EGTC	HU, SK	09/10/2013
2	Svinka EGTC	HU, SK	09/10/2013
3	GETC Alzette Belval	FR, LU	13/02/2012
4	AEuCC Cities of Ceramics, AECT limitada	ES, FR, IT, RO	07/01/2014
5	European Common Future Building EGTC	HU, RO	17/10/2012
6	Central European Transport Corridor EGTC Ltd.	PL, HU, SV	24/03/2014
7	Huesca Pirineos – Hautes Pyrénées (HP-HP)	ES, FR	11/11/2014
8	AECT Faja Pirítica Ibérica	ES, PT	14/10/2014

The report also analyses the status of the 41 EGTCs that were established before October 2013 and provides detailed information on key indicators such as bodies, projects and members.

According to information from the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Karst Bodva EGTC could be combined with another EGTC from the region and thus dissolved. The Sajó–Rima EGTC is also reported to have stopped work and it should therefore be dissolved soon.

## **The groupings in a nutshell – implementing the Europe 2020 strategy and the new Cohesion Policy**

2014 is distinguished by the fact that funds earmarked under 2007-2013 programmes had already been allocated and programmes for the new period had not yet begun. It can therefore be considered as a difficult transition period for those EGTCs that cannot operate solely on basis of their membership fees.

With regard to geographical trends, the dynamic development around Hungary continued. 3 new groupings have been founded, with the intention of enlarging them further.

In the past two years, several groupings have either reported successful enlargements or they have set out specific plans to take new partners on board. 3 EGTCs have enlarged their territories and 7 have specific plans to enlarge – this process is ongoing (two such plans involve the new Member State, Croatia).

In terms of partnership building, there have been some interesting reports of EGTCs founded for specific purposes. National associations of cities with a tradition in ceramic arts and crafts have founded the AEuCC. Similarly, authorities involved with national parks and the environment are behind two maritime EGTCs, formed between French and Italian partners. The Grande Région EGTC– which acts as managing authority for a multilateral cross-border ETC programme – will not take over this role during the new period (2014-2020), although a new EGTC may be established.

Regular membership fees are an essential and stable component of an EGTC budget. The current aggregate annual budget originating from membership fees is estimated at around **€ 12 million** for the 50 EGTCs. The Hospital of Cerdanya –which is by far the largest budget– adds around € 20 million, representing its annual operation cost.

The total volume of EU projects implemented by EGTCs which a) ran during the course of 2014, b) ended in 2014 or c) are currently at the final stage of implementation amounts to almost **€ 60 million**. ETC projects are a vital source of income for practically all EGTCs: In 2014, a total of **18 out of 49 groupings** continued ongoing projects from the 2007-2013 programmes: in total **44 projects** are reportedly still under implementation.

About 27 of the 50 EGTCs report having staff and in the majority of cases workers are hired directly by the EGTC. According to the figures provided it is possible to estimate that by the end of 2014, around **130 persons** across the EU worked for an EGTC on a regular basis.

## **EGTCs preparing for the new funding period 2014-2020**

Only the EGTC Espacio Portalet has reported that it was involved in the process of setting up and developing the Partnership Agreement – the overarching framework for all ESIF programmes at national level.

EGTCs were more closely and actively involved in the programming process for ETC programmes. EGTCs were most frequently involved by taking part in the Programming Committee or they were consulted; about one third of all responding EGTCs (11 out of 34) were involved in this way.

For many groupings, preparing new programmes is also an ideal time to reconsider their strategic foundations: 9 out of 34 EGTCs have indicated that they intend to change their profile or portfolio in the short-term.

7 out of 34 groupings have pointed out that they intend to focus on specific investment priorities during the new period.

With regards to their involvement in the new programme, the clear practical focus for EGTCs is the management of Small Project Funds or comparable arrangements for managing smaller activities. In total, 15 groupings out of 34 have reported a) actually being in charge of future SPF management, b) intending to do so, or c) an unsuccessful attempt to fulfil this role. 9 out of these 15 groupings are actually in charge of future Small Project Funds.

With regard to the new instruments, – i.e. Community-Led-Local-Development (CLLD), Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) and Joint Action Plan (JAP) – none of these options were applied in the ETC programmes.

## **EGTCs in the pipeline**

According to our information, 18 EGTCs were in the process of being established at the end of 2014. Other than the ESPON, it was not possible to find new projects and ideas which have not yet been identified. This EGTC currently performs as single beneficiary, implementing the content of the OP based on a grant agreement.

The Regio Pamina Eurodistrict and the Euroregions Neisse-Nisa and Grand Genève have been newly added to the section "EGTCs in preparation". In the "Ideas" section, the Novum EGTC, the European Small Islands Federation (ESIN) and the Saint Martin-Sint Maarten EGTC – involving two Outermost Countries and Territories (OCTs) – have been added to the list.