

## **Metroborder: Cross-border polycentric metropolitan regions**

The ESPON 2006 project 3.4.1 identified 28 European cross-border regions (none involving places in the UK or Ireland). The Metroborder project narrows the focus to concentrate only on those that are metropolitan and polycentric in character. The aim of the project is to map and to better understand the structures and the functioning of this type of spatial pattern.

The stakeholders in this Priority 2 project are led by Switzerland's Federal Office for Spatial Development, and the others are the Luxembourg Ministry of the Interior and Spatial Planning, DIACT (the French Inter-ministerial Delegation on Territorial Planning and Competitiveness), Germany's Federal Ministry for transport and Urban Affairs, and the Ministry for the Walloon Region's Directorate for Spatial Planning, Housing and Heritage.

The project will look at both the European level and the case study level. The case study areas are Upper Rhine and the 'Greater Region' (which covers parts of France, Germany and Belgium around Luxembourg). The aim is to support strategy building in order to improve the performance of the cross-border polycentric metropolitan regions in Europe and in particular of the case study regions.

There are two dimensions to cross-border relations: institutional/political integration and market / economic integration. Both of these will be investigated. More particularly, there will be analysis of some key economic sectors: the automotive industry in the Greater Region, and life sciences in the Upper Rhine.

A crucial part of the analysis of governance will be a Delphi study, conducted in both case study regions. The two-round Delphi study will be organised in the form of an on-line questionnaire. The aim of the survey is to develop, aggregate and assess strategic options for the future of cross-border metropolitan region development.

The research team will also undertake a feasibility study of cross-border access to emergency services. They will also use SWOT analysis to help build strategies: one SWOT analysis for each case study (Greater Region, Upper Rhine), and several SWOT analyses based on the typology of cross-border metropolitan regions at the European level. An integrated multi-criteria scenario is also foreseen.