

# The Greater Region Saar-Lor-Lux : Towards cross-border supraregionalisation ?

Estelle Evrard

2018

Presses universitaires de Rennes

[www.pur-editions.fr](http://www.pur-editions.fr)

**B**Order areas are often portrayed as ‘laboratories of European integration’. Beyond the discourses and symbols, what does the concept of cross-border region actually entail?

By characterising the region as the construction of an identity, a territoriality and a governance system perpetuated over time, this publication identifies and questions the specificities of these processes in the cross-border context. It distinguishes between inter and supraregional cooperation thus questioning a border area’s capacity to develop an *ad hoc* cross-border cooperation whose *raison d’être* consists in strengthening the commitments pertaining to the border area’s interests. This study is underpinned by a discourse analysis and a conceptualisation of cross-border territoriality and supraregional institution. In this respect, the significance of the EGTC (European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation), a European instrument providing a legal framework for cooperation, is analysed.

This issue is explored in depth using the emblematic case of the Greater Region, a border area that launched in 2008 a long-term strategy to develop a ‘cross-border polycentric metropolitan region’. Composed of Lorraine (France), Luxembourg, Wallonia (Belgium), Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland (Germany), the Greater Region constitutes one of the oldest border areas (1971) and presents the highest concentration of cross-border workers in Europe.

Estelle Evrard is a researcher in political geography at the University of Luxembourg. She holds a Master Degree in European Law and a PhD in Geography. Her interest in European integration is the common thread through her professional career. Her research deals with the role of localities in the European construction, border areas and territorial governance.