



# OVERCOMING OBSTACLES IN BORDER REGIONS

## AFFORDABLE TICKETS FOR LOCAL TRAVEL ACROSS THE BORDER



### France and Germany: international yet local trips made easy

What if you were charged high international fares for travelling a couple of kilometres? European citizens who live in border regions face this issue daily. Preferring not to pay **high prices to travel to work**, many drive instead. However, this leads to increased traffic on the roads, meaning more congestion and pollution for cross-border areas.

Strasbourg, France and Kehl, Germany are separated by the Rhine River. The two cities form the cross-border agglomeration of **'Strasbourg-Kehl'**. About

**36 000 vehicles** cross the bridge linking the two cities every day. To provide an affordable solution for cross-border commuters and other travellers, the **two cities cooperated** in building a tramline linking the two cities.

Ticket rates were a key concern – how should tramway fares fit into the public transport pricing schemes already available in both cities? By creating a **common tariff zone for cross-border transit** only, Strasbourg and Kehl found a solution to the problem of ticket pricing. The tramline began operating in early 2017 across a new bridge.

**Strasbourg and Kehl provide an example to other regions seeking to make cross-border transport easier and affordable for their citizens.**



## Two cities, one fare

An **integrated fare area** allows travellers to use a single ticket to access different means of transport or different transport operators within a coverage area.



## Ticket to ride — a common strategy

In the early stages, citizen input led to the concept for the tramline being rethought. The goals were to connect Strasbourg and Kehl in a comfortable and convenient way, improve existing services and align with a plan for eco-efficient urban development.

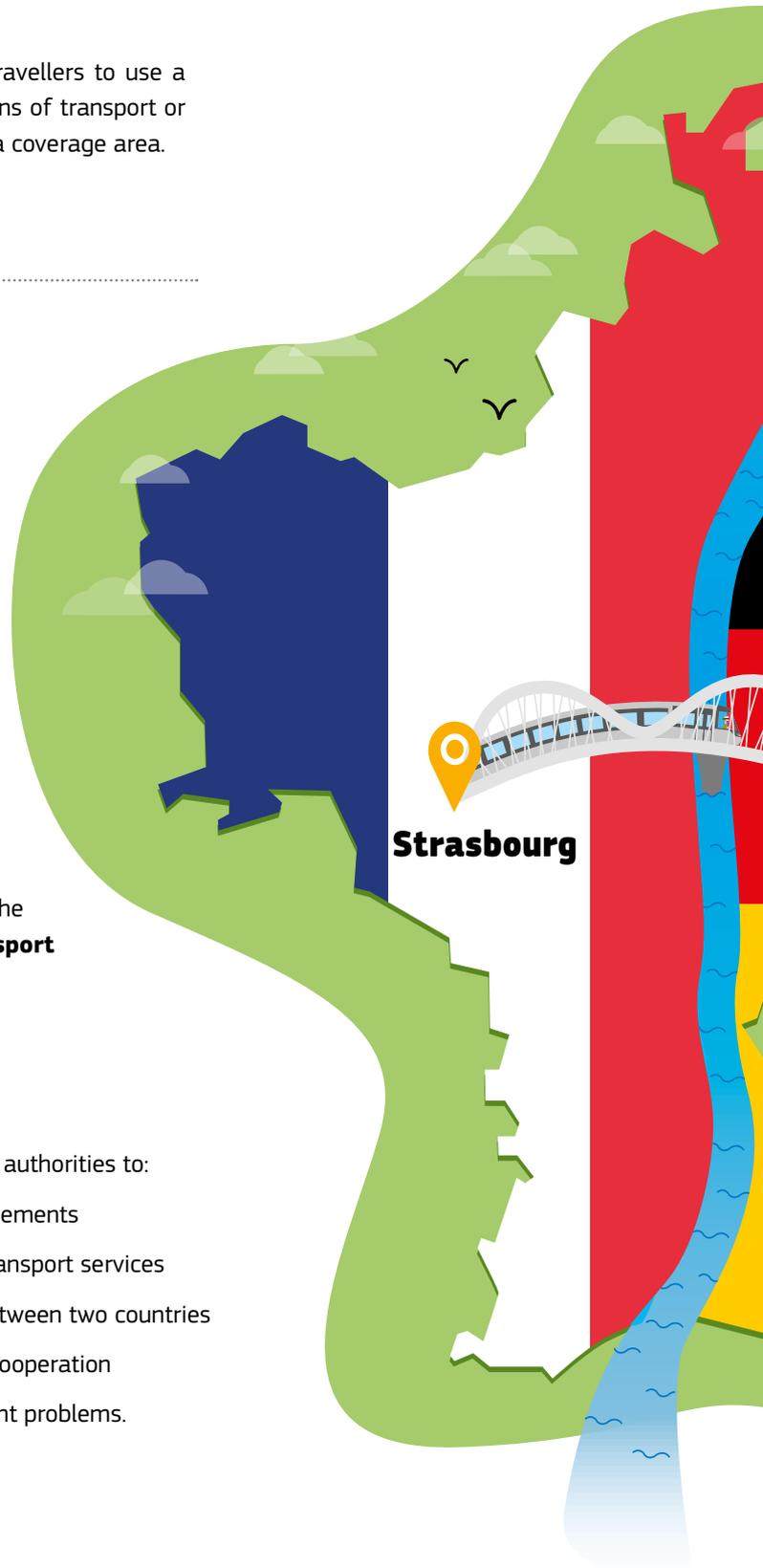
Both Strasbourg and Kehl authorities agreed that a **fair price for tickets** should be decided upon, comparable to a domestic fare. A **common zonal tariff** was the solution.

To establish this, Kehl ended its association with the German transport operator. Instead, a **new transport operating authority** was created in Kehl.

## Best practices

EU recommendations for cross-border transport advise authorities to:

- ▶ **gather detailed information** on cross-border movements
- ▶ **engage citizens** to identify needs for new public transport services
- ▶ **coordinate bids** for local cross-border transport between two countries
- ▶ **use existing legal instruments** for cross-border cooperation
- ▶ **develop long-term strategies** to remove persistent problems.





## Border barriers

Across the EU, local authorities attempt to resolve several issues including:

- ▶ **different fare systems** — transportation prices vary between countries
- ▶ **complex licensing procedures/technical standards** — regulations regarding transport vehicles differ between countries, so modifications have to be made to gain official approval. Companies often bear extra costs to meet two sets of licensing requirements
- ▶ **lack of information** — travel and ticketing information is often available only in one language, not both.



## Invisible obstacles, real issues

An **integrated fare area** exists throughout the German Land Baden-Württemberg region, where Kehl is located. Strasbourg has a completely separate transport system. Could the tramline be integrated with both?

Finally, the authorities decided it could not. But doing nothing would create problems for commuters who already had season tickets or transport subscriptions for either Strasbourg or Kehl. They would have to buy completely new tickets for the tramline – would they do it?

If they did not, it would affect the profitability of the entire tramway since **60%** of the **12.000 potential users** needed more certainty on price to decide to use the tram line.



## Strasbourg and Kehl — strongholds of the Rhine



Population: Around **510 000 people** live in the cross-border agglomeration of 'Strasbourg-Kehl.

Before the tramway, the main public transport link between Strasbourg and Kehl was bus number 21, which is still running. Established 50 years ago, it is the busiest bus line of Strasbourg. The number of passengers has **increased by 65 %** between 2007 and 2012. About **36 000 vehicles** travel from Strasbourg to Kehl every day for work and shopping and on Saturdays up to **42 000** cross the Rhine river via the Europe Bridge.



## Europe's local cross-border transport

Developing a trans-European road and rail network has been largely successful, but relatively little has been done for short cross-border travel. Local authorities have to deal with a number of **technical, political, legal and administrative difficulties**, such as:

- ▶ passengers need to buy **two tickets** to make certain connections
- ▶ **fare reductions** in one country often will not apply in another — for example, discounted prices for children, students, and seniors
- ▶ **limited sales outlets** for cross-border tickets.

### More information

Communication 'Boosting growth and cohesion in EU border regions': <http://bit.ly/2v5u4PK>

[#EUBorderRegions](#) | [@RegioInterreg](#)

The Cross-Border Review: <http://bit.ly/28h802K>

The full case study: <http://bit.ly/2xubyS5>



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