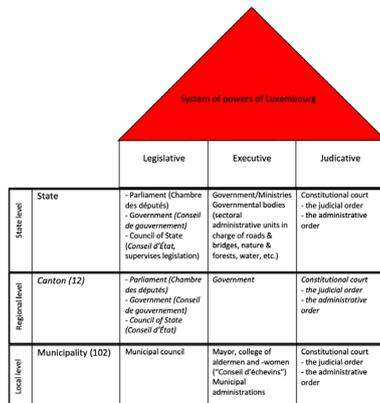


Fact Sheet for Planning Levels

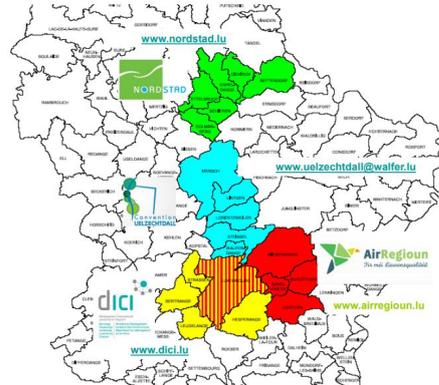
Planning level

Inter-municipal



Type of plan

Konventionsgebiete: Voluntary cooperation agreement between municipalities



Facts: Inter-municipal collaboration (Luxembourg)

Legal basis

The informal territorial agreement (*Convention relative à un développement intercommunal coordonné et intégratif*) between the then Ministry for Sustainable Development and Infrastructures (Directorate for Spatial Planning) and the municipalities of Luxembourg, Hesperange, Leudelange, Strassen and Bertrange, 'DICI' for short, was officially signed in 2005. The agreement was extended twice (2010 and 2015) and ended in 2018.

Competencies

The main objectives of the intermunicipal agreement are the improvement of the quality of life, the preservation of the environment, economic competitiveness and social cohesion for sustainable development of the south-west agglomeration of the city of Luxembourg.

Binding force

Informal agreement.

Tasks and content

The aim of the informal territorial agreement DICI was to implement the specific objectives defined by the Grand Duchy's 2004 Spatial Planning Master Plan (PDAT, *Programme directeur d'Aménagement du territoire*) and the 2003 Integrated Traffic and Spatial Planning Concept (IVL, *Integratives Verkehrs- und Landesentwicklungskonzept*) with regard to the country's core urban centres. The agreement thus aimed at (i) safeguarding more sustainable development; (ii) implementing the objectives presented in the PDAT and the IVL; (iii) coordinating and integrating the territorial development of the municipalities involved.

Process, duration, participation:

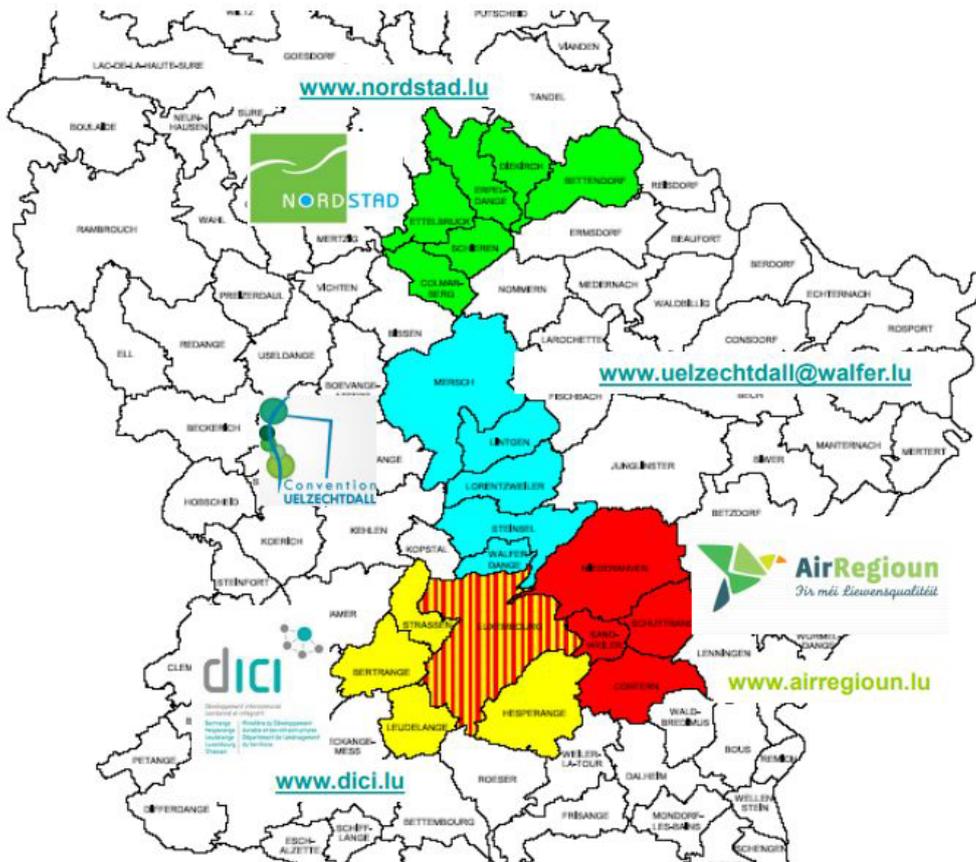
A policy steering committee, co-chaired by a representative of the national and local governments (Directorate for Spatial Planning and municipalities), as well as a technical steering committee, chaired by a national government representative from the Directorate for Spatial Planning, were responsible for determining and implementing the working programme. In addition to these two committees, the DICI cooperation and planning processes were supported by external experts such as consulting and planning agencies who acted as facilitators and moderators as well as by representatives from the Ministry of Housing, Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Economy.

Similar informal agreements between the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure and municipalities in the Grand Duchy's core urban areas were subsequently set up on the example of the DICI: the municipalities adjacent to Luxembourg airport (AirRegion) and the municipalities in the Alzette Valley (Uelzectedall, comprising five municipalities in the north of the agglomeration of Luxembourg City) and the Nordstad (comprising six municipalities in the core urban area in the north of Luxembourg). All the work carried out on the basis of these informal agreements was financially supported by the state. All informal agreements came to a close in 2018. Since June 2020, following the expiry of various agreements in the capital region, DICI and AirRegion have been replaced by the Central Regional Forum, a platform for exchange comprising Luxembourg City and all its adjacent municipalities. A specific format for cooperation and consultation between the state and municipalities has been developed with the municipalities concerned in order to (i) facilitate exchanges on concrete topics; (ii) support the exchange between the state and municipalities in territorial matters; (iii) initiate concrete intermunicipal and/or state/municipal projects.

Duration of validity

2005–2018

Details of the plan



Detail 1: Areas of inter-municipal collaboration (Konventionsgebiete/DICI)

Characteristics

Location of the area

DICI regroups the five urban and sub-/urban municipalities of Luxembourg City, Hesperange, Leudelange, Bertrange and Strassen in the south-west of the Grand Duchy's capital. The strong development of the agglomeration of the City of Luxembourg makes it necessary for the municipalities to consult more and engage in more dialogue in order to guarantee sustainable development and to maintain a high quality of life, not only for the municipalities themselves, but also for the region. 25% of the population of the Grand Duchy lives in these five municipalities alone. The fact that approximately 60% of national jobs are based in the agglomeration of the capital city accounts for some 50% of the internal journeys in the country.

Initial situation

The positive economic development of Luxembourg exerts a high development pressure, leading to bottlenecks and problems, especially in the Grand Duchy's main urban areas such as Luxembourg City. Besides a high demand for building land and an increase in the price of land prices, there have been substantial increases in traffic and shortages of natural resources. Municipalities in and around these urban cores have to meet these challenges and develop alternative paths in order to preserve the quality of life as well as the functional and competitive capacity of these areas. New residential areas, ribbons of construction along trunk roads and housing estates, are developing throughout the country. These suburbanisation trends lead to growing urban sprawl in the natural landscape and amplify the densification of the road and motorway network. These extensive trends not only result from the recent demographic growth; they also reflect far-reaching changes in society, such as the reduction in the size of households and the associated increase in their number. In addition to being responsible for the spatial explosion of villages and for urban sprawl in rural areas, the ideal of a dwelling of one's own helps to fuel the identity crisis experienced by urban areas. The latter, increasingly deprived of their residential function, are losing their identity, vitality and appeal. The effect of this change in housing patterns is increased social segregation, as the more specialised rented accommodation and low-cost markets are traditionally more important in agglomerations than in rural areas.

Particularities of the procedure and/or contents

One of the key particularities of the DICI territorial cooperation process was the strong role of the state, not only in terms of agenda-setting but also in terms of financing collaborative processes and projects. The other particularity includes the absence of a formally codified regional planning level in the small state. The voluntary collaborations effectively aim to compensate for the lack of binding regional planning competence. However, such approaches are largely ineffective in modifying the context of municipal autonomy, nor has the central government enacted any real changes here. In line with equally long-standing experience in other European countries, such voluntary approaches are facing significant constraints as concerns both implementation and impact. Given the complicated political context in the small state, which is also characterised by the regular practice of double mandates of mayors and members of the national parliament (the well-known French system of *députés-maires*), it is no surprise that the peculiar power balance between these two levels of policy making leads to a policy vacuum that in turn leads to the city-region being a blind spot in planning practice.

Notes and links

<https://amenagement-territoire.public.lu/> ; www.dici.lu Accessed on 2 September 2021