



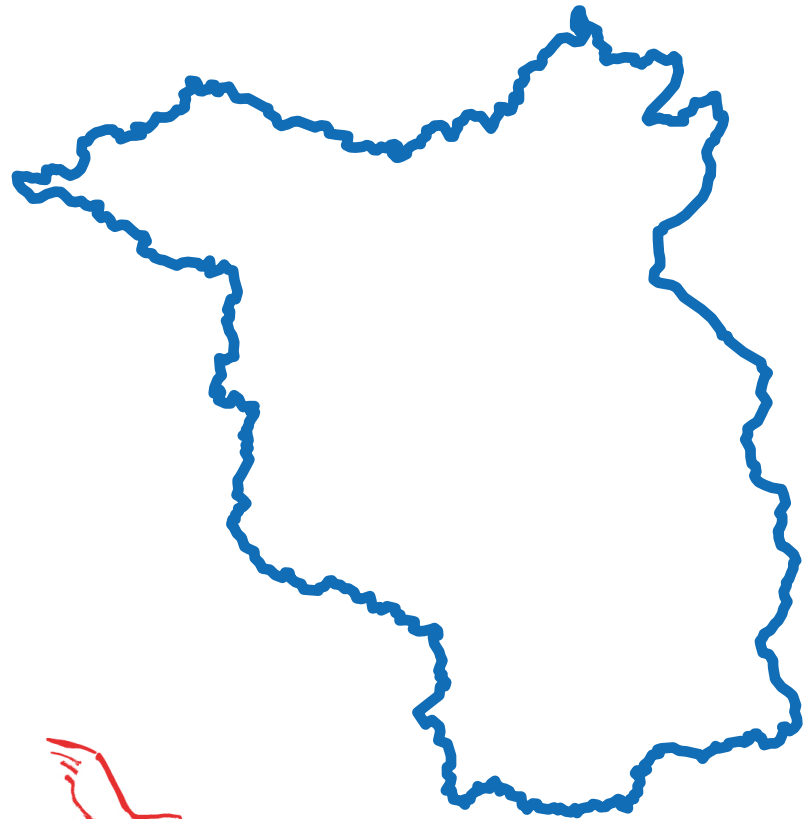
Executive Summary

D. 1.2.1.
Summary of existing
tools/best practices
at partner's MA for enhancing
metropolitan cooperation

This document was elaborated within the project MECOG-CE: Strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance in Central Europe and is part of the WPI: Analysis of metropolitan dimension, Activity 1.2. Analysis of existing tools/best practices for enhancing metropolitan cooperation. The content of the document is based on information supplied by the MECOG-CE consortium partners and was reviewed by them for final approval.

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Berlin-Brandenburg Metropolitan Area



Official name of the main governance structure in the MA

Capital Region Berlin Brandenburg

(Hauptstadtregion
Berlin-Brandenburg)

Date of creation/ start of cooperation	Number of municipalities	Area (in km ²) ¹⁾
1996/2012	69	30.545,5
Population (in mln) ¹⁾	Population density (people/km ²) ¹⁾	GDP per capita (EUR) ¹⁾
6,2	203,48	38.873,2

¹⁾ Source: IKM Initiativkreis Europäische Metropolregionen in Deutschland (2021).

Agency (relations with the state)

The Capital Region Berlin Brandenburg is one of the German metropolitan areas identified first in national planning documents as the European Metropolitan Region, and initiated by the Conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning in 1995. The basis of the cooperation is an agreement between the governments of the states (Länder) of Berlin and Brandenburg on their cooperation and the establishment of a joint coordination council from 1996. The number of joint authorities, courts, offices, facilities and institutions as well as state treaties has grown steadily since then.

An example of a common institution is the Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg as part of the Berlin Senate Department for Urban Development and Housing and the Brandenburg Ministry for Infrastructure and State Planning, which set up the State Spatial Planning Programme (LEPro 2007) and a state treaty in 2011/12.

Tasks

Main task: spatial planning²⁾, strategic planning.

- ▶ The Region is voluntarily involved in the implementation of the overall strategic framework intended to intensify the close cooperation between Berlin and Brandenburg at the various levels of politics and administration as well as between business and associations. The overall strategic framework delineates uniform goals for the development of the capital region through ongoing and new projects. It covers 8 fields of action, which are common for the whole capital region. Each field of action is underpinned by concrete joint projects (currently approx. 60 projects).

Main strategic documents

- ▶ The State Development Plan Capital Region (LEP HR): <https://www.berlin-brandenburg.de>

²⁾ The Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg has a full responsibility in setting up a binding Spatial Plan for the capital city region of Berlin-Brandenburg.

Other governance structures in the MA

Berlin-Brandenburg Transport Association

(Verkehrsverbund
Berlin-Brandenburg, VBB)

Date of creation/ start of cooperation	Number of municipalities	Area (in km ²) ³⁾
1996	69	30.545,5
Population (in mln) ³⁾	Population density (people/km ²)	GDP per capita (EUR)
6,2	203,48	38.969,35

³⁾ Source: IKM Initiativkreis Europäische Metropolregionen in Deutschland (2021).

Agency (relations with the state)

The Berlin-Brandenburg Transport Association (VBB) is a publicly owned transport authority for the metropolitan region, having legal status of a limited liability company. The VBB can trace back its roots as far as to the German Unification Contract in 1990, feeling the necessity to reconnect Berlin to the surrounding Brandenburg. It is an entity based on the cooperation between the states (Länder) of Berlin and Brandenburg and the 14 counties (Landkreise) and 4 cities (kreisfreie Städte) within Brandenburg, which are represented as shareholders in the Supervisory Board of the company (4 members per each of the states of Berlin and Brandenburg and one member from each of the counties (Landkreise) and cities (kreisfreie Städte) in Brandenburg).

As shareholders, the territorial authorities (federal states, counties and municipalities) provide the major contribution to the total annual budget of the company. They also ensure the decision-making process and political support for the implementation of the VBB projects and proposals. Other relevant stakeholders (transport companies, passengers, experts, etc.) get involved in the VBB operation via various committees, advisory boards and expert working groups.

Tasks

The VBB GmbH is responsible for the management of transport services, as well as for ordering and handling regional and suburban rail transport in the federal states of Berlin and Brandenburg – the capital area of Germany. Main tasks:

- ▶ Co-ordination of the services of public transport companies and neighbouring authorities to ensure their better connections.
- ▶ Introduction and development of a common fare system and the standardized passenger information.
- ▶ Improvement and quality control of public transport services.
- ▶ Assistance in planning, tendering and management of regional railway services.

Main strategic documents

- ▶ Transport plans of the participating territorial authorities (states/ Länder, counties, municipalities), such as the Public Transport Plan Brandenburg 2023-2027: https://mil.brandenburg.de/sixcms/media.php/9/Langfassung%202023-08-31_LNVP_2023-2027_final_V.32-CD-bunt.pdf

Other governance structures in the MA

Municipal Neighbourhood Forum

(Kommunales Nachbarschaftsforum KNF e.V.)

Date of creation/ start of cooperation	Number of municipalities	Area (in km ²)
1996/2020	43	—
Population (in mln) ⁴⁾	Population density (people/km ²)	GDP per capita (EUR)
4,2	—	—

⁴⁾ Source: KNF e.V. (2022).

Agency (relations with the state)

The KNF started functioning as a form of voluntary, informal intermunicipal cooperation in 1996, and in 2020 was transformed into a registered association of municipalities and other local authorities in the core area of the Berlin-Brandenburg capital region. The Brandenburg cities and municipalities in the city-surrounding area and neighbouring districts as well as the city of Berlin and the Berlin districts have their political representatives (mayors, city councilors, aldermen and department heads) in the forum.

There are also associated partners such as the Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg, the Chambers of Industry and Commerce, the Berlin-Brandenburg Transport Association, the regional planning communities, the Berlin-Brandenburg Trade Association and the umbrella association of regional parks in Brandenburg and Berlin. Depending on their regional affiliation, the actors operate in sub-spatial working groups AG North, AG East, AG South and AG West.

The association plays a supporting and advisory role, representing the interests of its members and partners without direct influence on the decision-making process. It fosters mutual dialogue between politicians, administrative entities and other partners in city-regional development.

Tasks

- The KNF developed as a result of the bottom-up cooperation of municipalities and local and regional authorities with no legally binding instruments on hand. It mainly operates as a platform for discussion, information-sharing and exchange linking different stakeholders in the capital region. It stimulates a cross-border exchange, project implementation and development of common politics in the following fields: mobility and transport, housing and settlement development, open and green spaces, economy and businesses, water management, social infrastructure, inner city centres.

Metropolitan governance system in the MA

At the heart of the metropolitan governance system, there is the Capital Region Berlin Brandenburg created in 1995. However, it is not organized as a separate metropolitan organizational structure, but is managed through an intergovernmental cooperation of two states (Länder), i.e. Berlin and Brandenburg, based on joint agreement. The German capital region Berlin-Brandenburg is represented jointly by the governing mayor of Berlin and the Prime Minister of Brandenburg.

In this context the overall strategic framework co-ordinated by the Berlin and Brandenburg state chancelleries form a state of the art overview covering all cooperation fields.

Among different metropolitan dialogue and cooperation spaces, there are three that should be distinguished based on their well advanced form, namely the:

- 1) Joint Spatial Planning Department (JSPD),**
- 2) Joint Transport Association (VBB) and**
- 3) Municipal Neighbourhood Forum (KNF).**

Even if they have different status and way of functioning, their common objective is to support an integrated and sustainable development of the capital region in different fields. Their relationships are consensual through involvement in diverse formats of mutual dialogue.

Neither initiative is entrusted with the ITI implementation or has any special funds of that type at its disposal.

Best tools and practices

1. **OVERALL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE BERLIN-BRANDENBURG CAPITAL REGION (STRATEGISCHER GESAMTRAHMEN HAUPTSTADTREGION BERLIN-BRANDENBURG)** formulates goals for the development of the capital region in this decade, creates a uniform framework for ongoing projects, launches new projects and strengthens interdepartmental links between the projects. It is developed in an administrative dialogue and with online participation of civil society strengthening its legitimization and the awareness of the capital region as a proper field of action. The framework covers the cooperation of two states of Berlin and Brandenburg in 8 thematic fields of action with approx. 60 projects: settlement development and housing; mobility; economy, skilled workers, energy and climate protection; civic engagement, media and promotion of democracy; natural resources and quality of life; digital transformation; science, research, culture and education; openness to the world, international networking and cooperation with Poland. The tool has a form of a “living document”, flexible for further updates. It is set up by both governments (Berlin and Brandenburg), jointly adopted by them (self-binding) and steered by a steering committee at the state secretary level – under the leadership of both state chancelleries.



2. **JOINT STATE DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF THE CAPITAL REGION BERLIN-BRANDENBURG (LEP HR)** is a comprehensive planning document covering both states, which represents a unique approach in Germany. Its main role is to regulate the land use and orientate the infrastructural development, but also to protect open spaces and natural resources. It steers (above all) the settlement development, following polycentric development along public transport (railway), and aiming at avoiding urban sprawl and keeping higher density of settlement in central places. The Plan is legally binding based on a state treaty and valid for a period of ten years at least. It is an example of a top-down practice of state planning, elaborated at the state level by the Joint Spatial Planning Department, but with joint strategic perspective and intensive consultations at the local level. It is one of the examples of initiatives falling under the scope of actions of the overall strategic framework of the capital region.

3. **BERLIN-BRANDENBURG TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (VBB)** is a transport association for the states of Berlin and Brandenburg established in 1996 (see *description of the governance structure above*). It provides smooth public transport as well as joint and transparent ticketing in the entire region. There are some parts of the integral transport system that can be successfully transferred to other places, such as the joint ticketing or public transport plan.



4. **MUNICIPAL NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM (KNF)** is perceived as a best practice in form of a common platform of cooperation between Berlin districts and adjacent municipalities in Brandenburg (see *description of the governance structure above*). It is a bottom up structure driven by joint communal interests, based on a voluntary cooperation, also encouraging the municipalities in the capital region's hinterland to raise their voice in different matters (equal partnership). Its main role is to advise on sustainable development of the capital region and on solutions to current challenges based on position papers, joint projects, studies and recommendations (e.g. with regard to settlement development). The association KNF has developed an annual conference for knowledge sharing on different thematic fields and joint projects (annual topics).





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