



Kick-off Event

Common Ground –

Shaping Regions Across Borders

14th June 2022, Französische Straße 32, Berlin



Common Ground – Shaping Regions Across Borders

Regions that connect neighboring countries – border regions – are special spaces that offer a lot of potential. The links between them are close and diverse. However, although cross-border relations between Germany and its neighboring countries have intensified, different administrative structures on both sides of the border continue to hinder the joint shaping of the regions. This also applies to the participation of residents in the political processes of a border region. This is where the program "Common Ground – Shaping Regions Across Borders" comes in: With Common Ground, the Robert Bosch Stiftung wants to promote the cross-border participation of the population in shaping and developing their region. The focus of the program is on creating a unifying culture of participation between politics, administration, civil society, and the local population on both sides of the border.

During the festive launch event of the "Common Ground" program, the eight border regions selected in a multi-stage selection process will be officially accepted into the program.

Together with representatives from politics, administration and civil society, we will explore the questions of how citizen participation can strengthen democracy in Europe, how democratic potential can be released and solutions through citizen participation can be found. Another focus will be on the specific opportunities and challenges for participation that arise in border regions.

Preliminary Program

Moderation: Dr. Christiane Dienel, nexus Institute, Berlin

18.00	Arrival and Registration
18.30	Welcome Address and Opening Statement Claudia Rolf , Program Director Democracy, Robert Bosch Stiftung
18.45	Keynote “Strengthening Democracy in Europe: Challenges and Opportunities of Cross-Border Citizen Participation” (Working Title) Claudia Chwalisz , Innovative Citizen Participation Lead, OECD
19.15	Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claudia Chwalisz, Innovative Citizen Participation Lead, OECD • Dr. Gesine Märtens, State Ministry of Justice and for Democracy, Europe and Equality, Saxony • Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the Parliament of the German-speaking Community of Belgium, (previously Chairman of the European Committee of the Regions) • Vanessa Edmeier, Managing Director Hochrheinkommission
20.00	Official Admission of the selected border regions into the Common Ground program <u>Laudation:</u> Ralf Göbel , Head of the Departments for Equivalent Living Conditions, Demography and Municipalities, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (BMI) Dr. Ben Behmenburg , Head of the Department for Cross-Border Regional Cooperation, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community
	Brief introduction of the eight nominated Common Ground regions.
from 20.30	Evening Reception

Note: We would like to notify you that in the course of this event, photographs and sound and film recordings may be made by TV stations as well as for public and non-public purposes.

Livestream: The conference will be streamed live on our website.

Conference languages: The conference languages are German and English. There will be simultaneous interpreting during the conference.

Common Ground – Shaping Regions Across Borders is a Program of the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

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