

# COOPERATION AT THE EUROPEAN LEVEL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS DERIVE MEASURABLE, TANGIBLE BENEFITS FROM CROSS-BORDER COLLABORATION. THE NATURE AND FOCUS OF ASSOCIATIONS IS TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROMOTE AND SHARE COMMON INTERESTS. ACROSS EUROPE, PROCEDURES ARE GROWING WITH THE GOAL OF SHARING GOOD PRACTICE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE, AS IN THE CASES OF THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS MENTIONED BELOW.

## FRANCE AND GERMANY: A HISTORY OF BILATERAL COOPERATION

France and Germany have a distinct tradition of cooperation at the association level. Bilateral contacts and summits are commonly held to promote dialogue - a well-documented way of working at the public sector level but also commonly used by non-profit organisations and commercial enterprises as well.

## BULGARIA PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN CROSS-BORDER ASSOCIATION PARTNERSHIP THROUGH ITS ASSOCIATION FOR EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP - PROMOTING PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION IN THE CONTEXT OF A NEWLY-ENLARGED EUROPE

Germany is known to have about 14,000 associations which focus on issues in a wealth of disciplines such as the arts, business, education, culture and social development. Underlying the strength of many bi-lateral partnerships is the 'twinning' of over 2000 towns in France and Germany.

**For more information please visit**  
[www.france-allemande.fr/Vie-associative-franco-allemande,2188.html](http://www.france-allemande.fr/Vie-associative-franco-allemande,2188.html)

### Case Study 1: European Society for the Study of English, France

An interesting case is the European Society for the Study of English, part of Université de Rouen, France. Here, a society focusing on using English as a common communication tool is based in France, with clear ties to Anglo-Saxon countries, and a contact point for the exchange of information. Here, the subject matter - a common language -

facilitates dialogue, and is the key to inviting participation from far afield.

**More information:**  
[www.essenglish.org/associations.html](http://www.essenglish.org/associations.html)

## NEW EASTERN EUROPE MEMBER STATE INITIATIVES

### Case study 2:

#### Association for European Partnership, Bulgaria

On the 25th of March 1957 the signing of the Treaty of Rome marked the beginning

of the European project - the most successful integration project in the world bringing together countries and peoples and helping them to overcome their differences, unite, and build a community based on democracy, solidarity and cooperation. Since January 2007 Bulgaria has been an integral part of the EU family.

Fifty years after the Treaty, the EU states are coming closer together. While remaining diverse in culture, language and traditions, the EU unity is based on common values such as peace and stability, freedom and democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and equality.

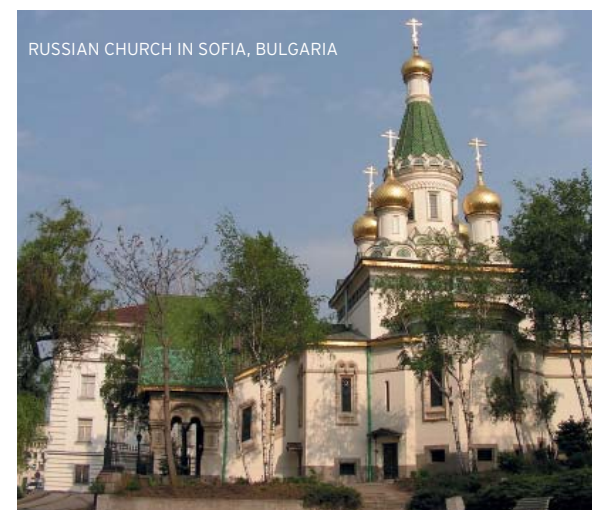
Bulgaria plays a key role in cross-border association partnership through its **Association for European Partnership** - promoting partnership and cooperation in the context of a newly-enlarged Europe.

A nationwide communication campaign using the motto '**The Parliament of all European Citizens - from the Treaty of Rome to the Challenges of Enlargement and the Constitution for Europe**', aimed at raising awareness on the part of several target groups, promoted the activities and role of the European Parliament. The initiative was launched on 25 March 2007 in Sofia with the planting of an 'EP tree' in front of the Bulgarian Parliament and with the opening of an Information Rally, consisting of 28 Info Days, organised in all 28 districts of Bulgaria, accompanied by a travelling exhibition, *The European Parliament - for half a century a Parliament of the Citizens*, and cultural events, *The European cultural diversities - the wealth of the United Europe*.

The closing event of the communication campaign was the round table *The Parliament of all European Citizens - from the Treaty of Rome to the Challenges of Enlargement and the Constitution for Europe*, at which representatives from various localities debated on the political role of the EP in the United Europe.

This organised and coordinated communication campaign invited discussion from throughout Europe, and promoted the idea of a united Europe within the local Bulgarian context.

**More information:** [www.aep-bg.org/index.html](http://www.aep-bg.org/index.html)



RUSSIAN CHURCH IN SOFIA, BULGARIA