Table of contents

PRESENTATION OF THE FIRST DAY 09 NOVEMBER 2020 ..................................................4
« Cross-border territories in Europe and the 10th meeting of the EGTC1 Platform 2020 »
Presentation of the « European Cross-border Citizen’s Alliance » ...........................................5
The European Union’s support for border regions ........................................................................2
10 years of the EGTC Platform ..................................................................................................8
The example of the Franco-German border ..............................................................................10
The Treaty of Aachen
The Grand Est Region: a border area affected by the COVID-19 crisis

PRESENTATION OF THE DAY OF 10 NOVEMBER 2020 ......................................................12
« Territories on the French borders »
Border metropolises: the example of « Cross-Border Cooperation Strategies » ............................13
Territories on French borders, on the frontline of the pandemic ..............................................6

Editorial

Christian Dupessey
President of the MOT, Mayor of Annemasse, President of the Metropolitan Pole of the French Geneva

« The global health crisis we are going through has highlighted the specific issues faced by our cross-border regions. We never could have imagined seeing such drastic closures of the borders. And yet it happened. This caused real disruption for our populations – because the borders in most of our territories have little meaning given how fully integrated the cross-border areas are in daily life. The economic impacts were obviously great for cross-border workers and economic players, but not only for them. Families and lives were quite simply cut in two for several months, and that should give us pause for thought. How can we ensure that the specificities of cross-border territories are taken into account concretely, legally and in terms of regulation?

This is a major challenge that we need to address together in the coming months, and it is the purpose of the MOT’s proposal to European and national institutions: to set up a European Cross-Border Citizens’ Alliance in order to put cross-border territories back at the heart of Europe’s concerns!

It is together, by sharing our experiences and speaking with one voice, that we will succeed in having our specificities recognised. I am committed to actively ensuring that this voice is heard loud and clear, and I look forward to seeing you on 9-10 November at the MOT’s first Borders Forum! »

Elisa Ferreira
European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms

« Building Europe together means leaving no-one behind. This is particularly important in cross-border regions which are often peripheral with fewer public services. I am determined to ensure we give border citizens and businesses an adequate level of access not only to basic infrastructure and public services, but also to employment, education and healthcare. »

Apostolos Tzitzikostas, President of the European Committee of the Regions

« The cooperation among border regions has been strategic during the pandemic and must be strengthened to boost Europe’s recovery and resilience. From health service to smart and sustainable transport, from environmental protection to shared innovation, the joint work of border regions can help pioneer ways to a stronger European integration, focusing on the real needs of citizens and local communities. »

TWO COMPLEMENTARY JOURNEYS:
• The 1st day will be dedicated to cross-border territories in Europe and to the 10th Meeting of the EGTC Platform.
• The 2nd day will be dedicated to territories on French Borders.

Some key figures
8 ROUND TABLES 40 SPEAKERS 9 REPRESENTED COUNTRIES

CROSS-BORDER TERRITORIES REPRESENT

40% of the territory of the European Union. More than 1 European in 3 lives in a border region.

2 MILLION cross-border workers in the EU – of which over 20% live in France.

20,000 KM of internal land borders in the EU – 11 of which are in France’s border areas.
PRESENTATION OF THE FIRST DAY 09 NOVEMBER 2020

Cross-border territories in Europe and the 10th meeting of the EGTC Platform 2020

The first day of the Borders Forum, co-organised with the European Commission and the European Committee of the Regions, will be introduced by Elisa Ferreira, European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reform, Apostolos Tzitzikostas, President of the European Committee of the Regions, and Christian Dupussey, President of the MOT, Mayor of Annemasse, 1st Vice-President of Annemasse Agglo. Europe’s internal borders and European management of the Covid crisis, as well as its external borders on the eve of the Brexit and after the American elections, will be discussed.

The objectives

- reaffirm, along the representatives of the European institutions and States, that at a time when the world is going through an unprecedented health and economic crisis, European and cross-border cooperation is the right response;
- highlight the EGTCs’ role after 2020, and the draft European ECBM regulation (resolution of cross-border obstacles);
- highlight the Franco-German Treaty of Aachen and debate the possibility of similar approaches in Europe, in order to strengthen bilateral cross-border cooperation and European integration.

Moderator: Caroline de Camaret, Chief editor of Europe, France 24

The 1st day will be organised on the basis of 4 round tables:

ROUND-TABLE #1 10H-11H30
Overcoming borders, a major challenge for the future of Europe

ROUND-TABLE #2 11H30-13H00
What European tools to implement an effective cross-border policy?

ROUND-TABLE #3 14H30-16H00
10 years of the EGTC platform and 30 years of INTERREG – outcome and visions for the future

ROUND-TABLE #4 16H00-17H30
The Treaty of Aachen, a driving force in Europe?

And two key points:

- Presentation of the « European Cross-border Citizen’s Alliance »
- 2020 EGTC award, by the European Committee of the Regions

Presented on 9 November, during the round table #1.

THE SIGNATORIES OF THE ALLIANCE ADVOCATE THAT:

- border regions are reflected more fully in EU policy and legislation,
- border regions and their cross-border groupings be involved in the conference on the future of Europe,
- border public authorities have appropriate powers and specific resources, as well as fast-track procedures,
- negotiations on the draft regulation on a European Cross-Border Mechanism (ECBM) come to a successful conclusion,
- the legal and administrative obstacles to cross-border cooperation are removed,
- the States and the European Commission carry out cross-border territorial impact assessments of policies,
- cross-border observatories be set up to measure cross-border integration and identify obstacles,
- an effective framework allows the implementation of cross-border public services,
- border regions be involved in the implementation of the European Green Deal, and fully benefit from the Next Generation EU recovery plan,
- a minimum level of cross-border cooperation is guaranteed in the event of a global, European or regional crisis.

Key point

Presentation of the « European Cross-border Citizen’s Alliance »
« BORDERS AT THE HEART OF TOMORROW’S EUROPE »
By the European Committee of the Regions, the MOT, the AEBR and the CESCI,
Presented on 9 November, during the round table #1.

While the crisis initially provoked uncoordinated border measures, it also revealed interdependencies and gave rise to multiple forms of cooperation and cross-border solidarity, which now need to be organised and strengthened by European and national public policies that take full account of the specific nature of cross-border territories.

This is why, at a time when Europe is preparing to decide on its budget and trajectories for the period 2021-27, the European Committee of the Regions, the MOT, the AEBR and the CESCI, will propose on 9 November a « European Cross-border Citizen’s Alliance » and are calling on elected representatives, local authorities, organisations and (trans) border citizens to join them.

This Alliance advocates, on behalf of cross-border territories throughout Europe, that European and national decisions should in the future provide border authorities with more resources and powers to deepen cooperation across borders. It is addressed to European and national authorities.

TO CONSULT THE TEXT OF THE ALLIANCE:

TO SIGN THE ALLIANCE:

TO CONSULT THE TEXT OF THE ALLIANCE:

TO SIGN THE ALLIANCE:

Digital information adapted from: https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/info/ European-Cross-Border-Citizens- Alliance

Data adapted from: https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/info/ European-Cross-Border-Citizens- Alliance

6 EGTC platform of the European Committee of the Regions, hosted by the MOT on behalf of the EGTCs at the French borders, which are, directly or via their constituent members, members of the MOT.
7 Association of European Border Regions.
8 Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives (equivalent structure to the MOT on the borders with Hungary).
9 The text is translated in the 24 official languages of the EU.
10 Commission European Union.
THE EUROPEAN UNION'S SUPPORT FOR BORDER REGIONS

Interreg

The European Union has 40 internal land border regions, which represent 20% of the Union’s territory and close to 30% of the EU population. However, border regions generally perform less well economically than other regions within a Member State. Access to public services such as hospitals and universities is generally lower in border regions. Individuals, businesses and public authorities in border regions face specific difficulties when navigating between different administrative and legal systems.

Different types of obstacles hamper interactions across borders, thus preventing border regions from reaching their full potential. This unmet potential – the border effect – is significant. Research shows that, along internal EU borders, a potential gain of 2% GDP in border regions could be obtained if one fifth of existing obstacles would be overcome. Along external borders too, similar challenges persist.

**THE INTERREG SUPPORT**

The European Commission has been providing financial support to cross-border cooperation with European Territorial Cooperation – Interreg – for the past 30 years. With its limited resources when compared to the whole Cohesion Policy (Interreg represents less than 3% of ERDF), Interreg intervenes mainly on establishing the cooperation elements. Building trust is key!

**FURTHER SUPPORT**

This is all highlighted in the Communication “Boosting Growth and Cohesion in EU Border Regions”. With it, the European Commission has triggered the process of providing support to cross-border regions to overcome legal and administrative obstacles. In particular, two elements illustrate the recent support (beyond funding) to border regions:

- **The « b-solutions » initiative** in favour of very small projects addressing very specific cross-border obstacles in a given cross-border region. For each project, a legal assessment of the root causes of the obstacles is made and a potential solution is identified. (https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/)
- **The European Cross-Border Mechanism (ECBM)** - To overcome obstacles we must ensure that an adequate legal framework is in place. This is why the Commission has proposed a new “Mechanism to overcome legal and administrative in a cross-border context”. This would allow for specific solutions to be found when incompatible legal or administrative frameworks hamper the development of cross-border projects. (http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/en/activities-obstacles-intergovernmental-group/).

**INTERREG HAS ACHIEVED MUCH IN SUPPORT FOR THESE REGIONS. HOWEVER, CONSULTATIONS AND CONTINUED EXCHANGES WITH STAKEHOLDERS HAVE SHOWN THAT MORE SHOULD BE DONE TO SUPPORT BORDER REGIONS TO ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL. TWO MAJOR LESSONS HAVE BEEN LEARNT WITH THIS PROCESS:**

- **Support beyond funding** should be given to border regions to facilitate cross-border interactions.
- **Focus on legal and administrative obstacles**: frequently incompatible legal frameworks are present on the two sides of a border, hampering interactions. Work needs to be done to identify, analyse and lift those obstacles.

This work has a clear impact on the global challenges the European Commission has set as its priorities.

Supporting border regions is a way to ensure that no individual or territory is left behind. De facto, as public services tend to be planned mainly from a national perspective and within national boundaries, citizens living in often peripheral border regions have on average lower access to public services, like healthcare or education.

**CROSS-THEMATIC ISSUES**

Ensuring that EU internal borders remain as permeable in terms of networks, like public transports, would have a significant impact in terms of green mobility; managing common natural spaces across borders is vital to preserving biodiversity; also cross-border risk prevention plans for floods or forest fires contribute to preservation of biodiversity; water and air quality and developing cross-border value chains can make a real difference in promoting a more effective circular economy.

Enhancing SMEs accessibility to markets just across the border, by ensuring their digital innovation would take in consideration their full catchment areas with a 360° degrees perspective (namely with cross-border digital innovation hubs), would ensure that border regions would also be fit for the Digital Age.

Ensuring the correct tools are put in place (e.g. EGTC and ECBM) to ensure that cross-border administrations and citizens in border regions can fully cooperate with their natural peers and partners in the neighbouring region – e.g. establishing common access to cross-border healthcare services – is a way to promote our European way of life.

Finally, working with border regions located along external borders of the EU allows us to play a constructive role in promoting good neighbourly relations and socio-economic prosperity. With this work, we also promote Europe as a global player.

**NEXT STEPS**

A formal Report of the European Commission is being prepared to best shape the financial and non-financial support that can be granted to all border regions. National and regional authorities are currently programming their ERDF programmes – including Interreg – for 2021-2027. The knowledge built, and the experience gained, with the work on cross-border legal and administrative obstacles should now contribute to ensuring that ERDF will address those challenges.

Cross-border regions are made of contiguous border regions – they might be peripheral at times, but they are not isolated from each other. Therefore one important lesson is that to work effectively on the development of an individual border region, its neighbours should be taken into consideration. This is why national and regional ERDF operational programmes (counting for circa 97% of ERDF) will also have to contribute to cross-border cooperation in 2021-2027.

**KEY ACTORS**

Besides border regions and their national or international associations, the European Commission has also established a dedicated “Border Focal Point” whose task it is to ensure the border dimension is duly considered in all its legislative or financial proposals and to support networking and exchanges of experience among border regions. The Border Focal Point works in close cooperation with the Committee of the Regions’ EGTC platform.

**SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT**

Elisa Ferreira
European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms
Opening at 9h30, TRR1, 09/11 at 10h00

Normunds Popens
Deputy Director General, DG REGIO, European Commission
TRR1, 09/11 at 11h00

Anne Sander
Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President of the MOT
TRR1, 09/11 at 11h30
10 YEARS OF THE EGTC PLATFORM

What is an EGTC?

The European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) was introduced in 2006 through a European Union Regulation in order to overcome cross-border obstacles and assist public authorities in different Member States looking to implement actions across national borders.

The EGTC instrument enables public actors to establish an international entity under European law, and in that way simplify cross-border cooperation and cut red tape considerably. This legal instrument complements funding instruments for European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), also known as Interreg, to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion. The EGTC provides a stable structure for public actors at different levels to cooperate, which helps multi-level governance within the EU and with Third countries.

As of November 2020, there were 78 EGTCs in the EU, with several more being set-up. These EGTCs are established in 20 EU Member States, four non-EU countries, and they involve over 1,000 local and regional authorities, universities and other public bodies.

The EGTCs fulfil many different purposes, all of which aim to add value through long-term territorial cooperation, going beyond the projects’ horizon. EGTCs contribute to implementing ETC programmes and Cohesion Policy projects as well as other European, national and regional projects, enhancing economic, social and territorial cohesion.

EGTCs are often multi-level governance instruments, bringing together authorities from different countries, administrative levels and policy sectors. This happens both within the EGTC membership and through involvement in the project or other activities.

EGTCs are suitable as cross-border micro-laboratories to develop public services, new public transport and new approaches for cross-border education. EGTCs also play an important planning role in functional areas such as environmental protection, transport planning, integrated tourism and economic cooperation. They less frequently manage ETC programmes, in whole or part, or cross-border infrastructure.

The EGTC Platform integrates the political and technical representatives of all the existing EGTCs, EGTCs under construction and experts. The Platform aims to facilitate the exchange of experiences on the ground, to promote the EGTC as a tool for territorial cohesion and give visibility to the EGTC projects, while supporting the consultative works of the CoR in cross-border issues.

THE EGTC PLATEFORM

The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) has been one of the main political promoters of the EGTC instrument. The Committee has a specific consultative role in the Territorial Cooperation (Article 306 of the Treaty) and can support effectively EGTCs on the basis of interinstitutional cooperation and a constructive and forward-looking approach.

The CoR has been very active in promoting and supporting the EGTC: it adopts political opinions, monitors the implementation of the EGTC legislation in Member States, informs about the EGTC Regulation and its evolution, organises events, gives advice and support to existing EGTC in constitution, produces studies, and acts as a meeting point for politicians, officials, experts and civil society. The CoR is at the same time also the official European register of EGTCs.

The EGTC Platform is a key point in the European perspective of cooperation across international borders.
The Treaty of Aachen, a driving force in Europe?

On 22 January 2019, Chancellor Angela Merkel and President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron signed a new Treaty of Cooperation and Integration between Germany and France in Aachen, complementing the 1963 Elysée Treaty.

The Treaty of Aachen (TALC) marks a clear recognition of the cross-border phenomenon as a central feature of European construction.

A CHAPTER ENTIRELY DEDICATED TO CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

This treaty, drafted with an active contribution from the MOT, aims to eliminate cross-border obstacles to ease the implementation of projects and simplify the daily life of border residents. To this end, « the two states shall provide the territorial authorities of border territories and cross-border entities such as Eurodistricts with appropriate competences, dedicated resources and accelerated procedures »; and « if no other means enable them to overcome these obstacles, appropriate legal and administrative provisions, including derogations, may also be granted ». A declaration on 15 priority cross-border projects was also adopted.

A FRANCO-GERMAN COMMITTEE FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION (CCC)

This is one of the key measures of the Treaty. The CCC examines « as a matter of priority those issues relating to cross-border cooperation which it was not possible to resolve within the existing bodies, and whose resolution requires increased cooperation », adopts an annual roadmap and brings together at least once a year representatives of the French and German Ministries of the Interior and Foreign Affairs, as well as local executive members. It met for the first time on 22 January in Hambach.

The last CCC met on 6 October 2020 at the invitation of Clément Beaune, Secretary of State for European Affairs and Michael Roth, Minister of State for Europe, to assess the health situation on both sides of the Rhine and the strategies needed to halt the spread of the pandemic.

A MODEL FOR OTHER BORDERS

The specific example of French-German cooperation with the establishment of the Cross-border Cooperation Committee (CCC) could serve as a reference on some other French or perhaps European borders.

The Grand Est Region: a border area affected by the COVID-19 crisis

On 16 March 2020, the Franco-German border is closed, except for the transport of goods and cross-border workers. The Strasbourg Transport Company has no longer been authorised to serve Germany, and the tramway going from Strasbourg to Kehl stops at the border.

The Grand Est region is the prime cross-border region, with nearly 780 km of borders, including a 450 km French-German border. It is home to 166,800 people working abroad.

The emergency and exceptional measures required by the situation of cross-border workers also reflect the interdependence of local economic systems on regional borders. They are today proof of the continuity and integration of these territories. In times of crisis, this continuity can represent a basis for operational cooperation between European states.

TOWARDS A CROSS-BORDER MODEL FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT?

Already on 16 March, the date on which the border between France and Germany was closed, a contact group was set up between the Grand Est Region, the regional Prefecture and the three German Länder along France’s border. The aim of the group was to be in daily contact about the restrictions on free movement and their impact on cross-border workers. The group was later expanded to include the regional health agency, the French border departments, the German health and police authorities, the German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the French Interior Ministry.

These daily exchanges facilitated the transfer of patients from the Grand Est Region to the neighbouring Länder. The setting-up of this binational group in the context of the crisis made it possible to forge a joint response to the health emergencies, while also enabling information to be passed on about the difficulties linked to crossing the border faced by economic players who found themselves on the frontline. The use of this crisis contact group reveals the possibility of urgent action on the scale of a catchment area rather than through predefined perimeters.

This cooperation is occurring within the framework put in place by the Aachen Treaty and its Cross-Border Cooperation Committee.
PRESENTATION OF THE DAY OF 10 NOVEMBER 2020

Territories on the French borders

The second day will be inaugurated by Jean Jouzel, Climatologist and glaciologist, Member of the Academy of Sciences. It will highlight cross-border territories on French borders, to reveal their diversity and specificities, from Dunkirk to Bayonne, via Nice, Geneva and Strasbourg, and will discuss decentralisation, deconcentration and differentiation.

The objectives

→ discuss the position of the « local » and the role of cross-border spaces in the face of international challenges, in particular health, economic, digital and climatic challenges;

→ discuss the capacity of cross-border territories to respond to these transitions, the cross-border engineering at their disposal - the ANCT (Agence Nationale de Cohésion des Territoires) - having been set up at the beginning of 2020, and the opportunity to constitute pioneering territories in terms of territorial differentiation;

→ highlighting the need for inter-territoriality, solidarity and cohesion on a cross-border scale by crossing perspectives between different types of territories (metropolitan, peri-urban, sparsely populated, rural, mountain, coastal, etc.).

Moderators:
Morning: Marianne Malez, Mission Director, FNAU (The French Network of Urban Planning Agencies)
Afternoon: Giuseppe Bettoni, Professor at the University of Rome, expert in geopolitics

The second day will be organised on the basis of 4 round tables:

ROUND-TABLE 03 10H-11H30
Health, digital evolution, climate... time for cross-border transitions?

ROUND-TABLE 09 14H00-15H30
Cross-border areas, differentiated areas?

ROUND-TABLE 06 11H40-13H00
Cross-border mobility and attractiveness, back to the borders?

ROUND-TABLE 08 15H30-17H00
Metropolises, mountains, rural areas: what kind of cross-border cohesion?

BORDER METROPOLISES:
the example of « Cross-Border Cooperation Strategies »

Known to have given birth to the « French métropoles » in the legal sense of the term, the MAPTAM law has paved the way for new cross-border cooperation projects in French border areas.

The MAPTAM law invited « métropoles bordering a foreign state » to draw up a « Schéma de Coopération Transfrontalière (SCT) » (Cross-Border Cooperation Strategies) in conjunction with the Département, the Region and the concerned municipalities. Lille, Strasbourg and Nice have begun working on this project with the MOT. The Basque Country agglomeration community has voluntarily associated itself with it.

Six years later, these four métropoles completed the development of their SCT with adoption in plenary council. In order to meet the requirements of the law, they have committed themselves extensively to a multi-stakeholder, multi-level consultation process, in conjunction with institutional partners such as the Region, the Département, the state services and the municipalities, as well as with economic partners, civil society and neighbors on the other side of the river.

COMMONALITIES AMONG THE FOUR INITIATIVES

The projection of each intercommunality on several scales of cooperation: whether local, metropolitan, Euro-regional or macro-regional cooperation, the content of the SCT reflects the driving role of metropolitan actors in the dynamics of cooperation, and their role in structuring the development of cross-border living areas.

FOLLOWING STEP

The next step is to link SCTs to strategies being pursued by authorities on the other side of the border. This evolution towards fully integrated cross-border strategies is in fact a second step towards approaching the examples of the métropoles of Basel and Geneva, models of functional continuity and cross-border strategy. Other territories, such as the European Community of Alsace, are preparing to engage in such an approach.

AN SCT NETWORK

Today, the four pilot territories are engaged with the MOT in a favourable environment for the exchange of experiences and the implementation of projects. An initial publication has just been published, and a joint observatory of cross-border functional dynamics may ultimately emerge.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF SCT DID NOT FOLLOW THE SAME COURSE FOR EACH TERRITORY:

In Nice, on a territory with few cross-border structures, the SCT marks a major step, creating a cross-border response with partners from Monaco and Italy.

In Lille, where governance is focused on the functional space of the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis, the SCT has initiated discussions on other forms of inter-territoriality (by associating territories neighbouring the French side) and multi-level cooperation (in connection with the regional actor).

In Strasbourg, a territory «multi-endowed» with cross-border governance bodies, the SCT has clarified the ambitions of the metropolis in terms of metropolitan cooperation with the urban centers located on the German side.

In the Basque Country, where cross-border cooperation is being revised in the light of the new XXL conurbation created in 2017, the SCT has laid the foundations for better coordination of cross-border development and for investment in territorial observation.

12 Act of 27 January 2014 on the modernisation of territorial public action and the affirmation of métropoles. The CCP is a strategic document intended for the territory of border region/métropoles; it has no legal effect on the other side of the border.
Territories on French Borders, on the frontline of the pandemic

Franco-Spanish border: a cross-border hospital facing the crisis

The Cerdanya Hospital - Europe’s first cross-border hospital - is located in Catalonia, a few kilometers from the French-Spanish border. It stands out in its management of the health crisis thanks to a major asset: its dual nationality. It showed that cross-border movements in the area of healthcare are necessary. It showed that cross-border movements in the area of healthcare are necessary. Located in the Spanish municipality of Puigcerdà, a few kilometres from the border, since its opening in 2014 it has considerably improved the provision of healthcare in a remote cross-border area. The facility, co-managed by the Generalitat of Catalonia and the French Ministry of Health (ARS), set up in the form of a European Grouping for Cross-Border Cooperation (EGTC) falls entirely within the competence of cross-border cooperation: a first in Europe. The health crisis has had dramatic consequences for hospitals and Cerdanya Hospital in particular, which had to deal a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) for medical staff and of beds in intensive care units (ICUs) in patients’ referral hospitals.

Concrete actions to deal with the crisis:
• Faced with the closure of the Franco-Spanish border, the hospital and the police, both Spanish and French, reached an agreement to set up a transit route to enable the free movement of medical staff and patients.
• During the whole of the crisis period, ICU beds in the Arèges Valley Hospital in Foix, on the French side, were made available for Spanish patients in a critical condition. In normal times, patients that need to be transferred are sent to hospitals in the patient's home country.
• Access to protective equipment and to Covid tests was also facilitated throughout the pandemic thanks to the provision of PPE by the two health authorities (ARS Céitanie and Servei Catalá de la Salut), thereby ensuring uninterrupted supply and complete control of the situation.

More than ever, the hospital’s dual nationality has been an asset in managing this unprecedented crisis.

HEALTH

Franco-Spanish border: a cross-border hospital facing the crisis

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SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT
François Calvet, Senator for Pyrénées-Orientales, President of the Cerdanya Hospital EGTC support committee

TR8, 09/11 at 14h30

SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT

Rudy Demotte
President of the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis, President of the Parliament of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels

TR8, 09/11 at 13h30

Pia Imbs
President of the Eurometropole of Strasbourg

TR9, 10/11 at 10h00

Jean-René Etchegaray
President of the Communauté d’agglomération Pays Basque

TR9, 10/11 at 14h00

Christian Estrosi
President of Nice Côte d’Azur Metropolis

TR8, 10/11 at 13h30

SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT

MOT Newsletter:

BORDERS FORUM 2020 - Press kit
**Greater Geneva: the example of the Léman Express**

Greater Geneva forms a highly integrated cross-border agglomeration of nearly one million inhabitants. 100,000 border workers cross the border daily to reach the heart of the city of Geneva. 600,000 border crossings are recorded every day.

**RESPONDING TO CROSS-BORDER FLOWS**

In 2018, a very large majority of cross-border workers in Greater Geneva travelled by car: 62.8% travelled by motorway, the others used smaller customs crossing points. It is in this territory on the boundary road congestion that Europe’s first and largest cross-border rail express network was created: the Léman Express was inaugurated on the 15th of December 2019. It consists of a 270-kilometer network linking Annecy, Saint-Gervais, and Bellegarde to Geneva, and provides daily service covering two Swiss cantons and two French departments.

**A COMPLEX PROJECT**

Resulting of an investment of 2 billion and 10 years of cooperation, the network is supported by a Swiss-French structure in charge of its operation (the Lemanis operator, 60% financed by the CFF and 40% by the SNCF). It comprises 5 lines and 45 stations. Some have been completely renovated to accommodate the new infrastructure, such as Annemasse station. The success of this implementation does not detract from the health crisis and the lockdown. Nevertheless, one year after its opening, the network appears to be delivering on its commitments: an average of 43,000 passengers a day are expected to use the network in 2020, compared with a target of 50,000 after two to three years of service.

**AN INTEGRATED ECOLOGICAL PROJECT**

In response to the needs of ecological transition and low carbon mobility, the network is part of a wider agglomeration project including other mobility investments: the recent establishment of a cross-border tramway line, the project to extend the Geneva Vélib to France, or the prospects for future investments in the widening and strengthening of the Léman Express links (the Auvergne-Rhône Alpes Region promised the delivery of 10 additional trains for €100 million in 2022.)

**SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT**

Christian Dupessey, President of the MOT, Mayor of Annemasse, President of the Metropolitan Pole of the French Geneva, Opening, TR#8, 09/11 at 10h00

Serge Dal Busco, State Councillor of the Republic and Canton of Geneva, TR#8, 10/11 at 11h30

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**Lorraine Corridor European Metropolitan Pole: cross-border workers on the frontline**

With over 105,000 cross-border workers working in Luxembourg (up by 5,000 every year) and crossing the border twice a day, a major reflection with our neighbour about issues of accessibility and mobility requires joint and balanced responses. The Covid crisis has exacerbated the effects of globalisation, particularly with respect to the movement of goods and services: the logistics platform in Bettembourg, the terminus of the Silk Road, and the 25 weekly round trips of Cargolux, have meant that, in a certain sense, China has become the first country with which the Grand Est Region has a border. For the Lorraine Corridor, we need to develop the basis of a co-development project with Luxembourg that makes it possible for both sides to contribute fairly to a collective effort.

**CROSS-BORDER WORKERS ON THE FRONTLINE**

At the height of the health crisis, the immediate closure of borders was brutal. Luxembourg provided 50 face-masks to each cross-border worker while France was coping with a shortage of them. Luxembourg’s wish to maintain income tax for cross-border workers working from home, for an unlimited period (with the approval of the French authorities) provoked some strong reactions. The current state: Establish new rules that cover these kinds of remote working a rationale of co-development that benefits both the country of residence and the country of work.

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**LORRAINE CORRIDOR, A COMPLEXITY**

Border territories give rise to a particular kind of economy and territorial organisation, with big variations between mountain ranges. Border areas must be considered in their multiplicity.

Among the issues specific to mountain areas, we should first mention the issue of mobility and daily traffic jams, as the infrastructures there are inadequate. Mountains are natural borders, which also limits movement as some passes are difficult to cross. It is important to develop rail transport and to expand the provision of public transport.

The border is also a line of cooperation. There have always been movements of cross-border workers, to varying degrees from period to period, depending on the interplay of often contradictory factors: wage levels, social security insurance systems and availability of transport.

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**SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT**

François Calvet
Senator for Pyrénées-Orientales, President of the Cerdanya Hospital EGTC support committee
TR#8, 09/11 at 14h15

Christian Estrosi
President of Nice Côte d’Azur Metropolis
TR#8, 10/11 at 17h30
**Citizenship**

**Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis:** « Exchanging views and experiences to shape the future »

The role of an actor like the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis is to work towards connecting citizens to Europe through more intense dialogue and strengthened territorial cooperation. How can this be achieved by being active on a local and cross-border level?

We have already tried this out with the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis’s three-part event “Europe, je t’aime, moi non plus” spread over more than a year. Nearly 300 citizens from the cross-border region took part in the three gatherings. The objective? To collate people’s concerns in order to identify areas for reflection and joint action over the long term.

This citizen-focused mobilisation drawing on our collective intelligence was a success, as it brought together the Eurometropolis’s inhabitants around the future of Europe. They highlighted the need for a Europe that is more ecological, social, citizen-focused and closer to Europeans’ current needs. The findings from the discussions will give us the substance and the energy to jointly set up the European Citizens’ Space, which will provide the missing link between European institutions and citizens.

Loïc Delhuvenne, Director of the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis:
« The daily information put out by the EGTC is to adapt to local specificities is crucial to enable the genuinely 360° development of these areas. The pandemic has moreover laid these issues bare, by showing up the “double lockdown” brought about by the unilateral closing of borders (with local services inaccessible, families divided, the range of movement restricted, jobs threatened and stigmatisation of cross-border workers, etc.).

The prospects for evolution offered by the forthcoming draft legislation on “decentralisation, differentiation and deconcentration” (3D) is coming just at the right time to give these territories greater room for manoeuvre.

The devolution of regulatory powers to local players (decentralised departments of central government and local authorities), the generalisation of comprehensive territorial agreements, the modularity of local authorities’ competences depending on the issues involved, following the example of the future European Territorial Authority of Alsace, form part of the progress towards an approach to territorial development that is entirely focused on functional areas. The success of these guidelines will then depend solely on the ability to embed them in multi-level governance and proactive cooperation initiatives along France’s borders.

**Differentiated territories**

Cross-border territories at the time of the « Decentralisation, Differentiation and Deconcentration Act »

While each territory has its own particular geographical, socioeconomic and cultural features, the institutional and legal environments in which cross-border areas operate resemble no other.

At the junction of two national regulatory jurisdictions, these territories are administered by territorial authorities and institutions that have different competences, modes of organisation and capacities for action on either side of the border, making the process of coordination all the more complex.

Perhaps more than elsewhere, the ability of territorial authorities to adapt to local specificities is crucial to enable the genuinely 360° development of these areas. The pandemic has moreover laid these issues bare, by showing up the “double lockdown” brought about by the unilateral closing of borders (with local services inaccessible, families divided, the range of movement restricted, jobs threatened and stigmatisation of cross-border workers, etc.).

Brigitte Klinkert, French Minister Delegate for Economic Inclusion, 1st Vice-President of the Haut-Rhin Department, Vice-President of the MOT:
« Being above all a local elected representative, convinced that each territory can do a lot at its own level, I believe that it is important not to always apply the same policies everywhere. »
Source: La Semaine, 14 September 2020

**EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY OF ALSACE (CEA)**

The French Act of 2 August 2019 concerning the competences of the European Territorial Authority of Alsace (CEA) ratified the creation of this new territorial authority arising from the merger of the French Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin Departments on 1 January 2021. The CEA has been designated lead partner for cross-border cooperation to organise in its territory the joint actions of territorial authorities, in their respective fields of competence.

* In French: «Collectivité Européenne d’Alsace».

**SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT**

Rudy Demotte, President of the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis, President of the Parliament of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels TRR3, 09/11 at 11h30
In which the closing of borders resulted in increased constraints and discriminatory situations that were specific to these populations.

The publication aims to set out the impacts, difficulties and initiatives linked to the management of the Covid-19 health crisis in cross-border territories.

In the first part, it recalls the border control measures employed. In the second part, it provides an assessment of the impacts on workers, patients, residents, families, retailers and local authorities that move around within these areas.

The last section then sets out an analysis of inhabitants’ perceptions with respect to the crisis and the lockdown, in a context in which the closing of borders resulted in increased constraints and discriminatory situations that were specific to these populations.
**WHAT IS THE MOT?**

The MOT is an association specialised in supporting cross-border cooperation. It was established in 1997 on the initiative of the French government. Its network brings together more than 70 cross-border cooperation actors: cross-border structures, regions, departments, municipalities, groupings of municipalities and communities, states, businesses, federations and networks, urban planning agencies, etc. Its mission is to defend the interests of cross-border territories, to establish networks between them and to provide them with operational and legal assistance. Its multi-level positioning promotes dialogue between national and European authorities and local and regional actors, to ensure that cross-border issues are better taken into account in legislation.

**MORE INFO**

http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/en

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**Two main funders**

**FRENCH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR TERRITORIAL COHESION (AGENCE NATIONALE DE LA COHÉSION DES TERRITOIRES, ANCT)**

Created on January 1st 2020, the ANCT is responsible for implementing the government’s main policies in terms of urban policy and territorial cohesion. Based on joint governance between the State, associations of elected representatives and members of parliament, it designs and implements development policies and programs to revitalize territories («Action Cœur de ville», «Territoires d’industrie», «Petites villes de demain»...), leads programs to revitalize territories («Action Cœur de ville» for the deployment of the current «Small towns of tomorrow» programme¹⁵, and intervenes both at the local and national level (collection and enhancement of project partnerships and the search for European funding), at the national level (collection and enhancement of cross-border good practices) and at the regional level (workshops for networking and training of stakeholders).

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**THE BANQUE DES TERRITOIRES**

As a public institution with a special status, the Banque des Territoires (Caisse des Dépôts Group) is involved in the financing of public policies and has a stake in the financial capital of several major public and private groups. Its mission includes co-financing the national programmes deployed by the ANCT such as «Action cœur de ville» or «Petites villes de demain». Relaying and disseminating information on European funds, cross-border calls for projects, and promoting structuring investments in border regions are among the MOT’s main missions alongside it.

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¹⁵ Succeeding the Commissariat Général à l’Égalité des Territoires (CGET).
²⁰ Concerning its deployment in border towns.

**MORE INFO**


The Banque des Territoires: https://www.banquedesterritoires.fr

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**Catégorie d’adhérents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>États</th>
<th>Régions, cantons ou communautés autonomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Départements ou provinces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Groupements plurinationaux de collectivités territoriales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gérontopole des Pays de la Loire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collectivités territoriales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entrepôts et CCI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fédérations et agences nationales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agences d’urbanisme et pôles métropolitains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associations de personnes morales et autres structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associations de personnes physiques</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GÉRANT**

The Banque des Territoires

**MORE INFO**

The MOT network

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