

## Signature of the "Strasbourg Declaration" on 7 October by AEBR, MOT and CESCI in Strasbourg Maintaining cross-border cooperation at the heart of the European project

The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), the Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT) and the Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives (CESCI) met on 7 October 2021 at the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg to sign the "Strasbourg Declaration", in the margins of the research seminar "The model of the Franco-German border-Reconciliation, cooperation, integration", organised by the FRONTM Jean Monnet network. This signature is placed under the auspices of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

The unprecedented outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led national governments to apply certain measures with a view to protecting their citizens. These measures lacked coordination and had a devastating impact on the primary achievement of the EU: free movement. These measures had a particularly harmful effect on the lives of border citizens, many of them cross-border commuters, and on the health and social institutions in which they worked.

The Strasbourg Declaration aims at affirming the commitment of AEBR, MOT and CESCI to establish "ever closer cooperation [...] to preserve what has already been achieved along the internal and external borders of the EU and to facilitate their further development", based in particular on the positive experiences of the European Cross-Border Citizens' Alliance (see box).

► To download the Strasbourg Declaration: [click here](#).

Today, 2 million workers cross borders every day to work. While border territories represent 40% of the territory of the European Union, the health crisis has revealed the extent to which they are interdependent. The sudden closure of borders has jeopardised the economic activity of cross-border regions and called into question one of the main achievements of the EU: the free movement of people across internal borders.

### **The European Cross-Border Citizens' Alliance**

An initiative launched on 9 November 2020 by AEBR, MOT and CESCI, with the political support of the European Committee of the Regions, the Alliance advocates that European and national decisions should offer more resources and powers to border authorities, and enable them to deepen their cooperation beyond national borders. It is addressed to European and national authorities. More info: <https://cor.europa.eu/en/engage/Pages/cross-border-alliance.aspx>

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