



borders
forum

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PROCEEDINGS ARE ONLINE!

Publication of the 1st Borders Forum proceedings!

On 9-10 November 2020, the Borders Forum brought together over 1000 participants online, around many prominent figures, including ministers and elected representatives, from local to European level. The event was organised by the MOT, in partnership with the European Commission and the European Committee of the Regions. It highlighted the impact of the crisis in common cross-border living areas.

To access the political declarations and the eight roundtable discussions: [click here](#). At a time when cross-border territories continue to suffer from brutal border closures, these proceedings and statements resonate even more strongly today:

Elisa Ferreira, European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms: “we should no longer ignore the situation at borders. That is why we need an approach based on the local level and coordination between regions”.

Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the Parliament of the German-speaking Community of Belgium and President of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR): “As soon as there is a crisis, whether it is terrorist attacks, the migration crisis in 2015, and now Covid, states close borders, even outside of the realm any European legislation, when it is precisely when there should be cooperation across borders”.

Apostolos Tzitzikostas, President of the European Committee of the Regions: “The closures, which were very often decided without consulting local elected representatives, had drastic consequences for thousands of cross-border area inhabitants who could not go to work, receive medical treatment or see their loved ones, even if it was a matter of just a few kilometres from their homes. Cross-border territories represent 40% of the total territory of the EU – it is therefore not the problem of a few people, but one affecting everybody!”

Jacqueline Gourault, French Minister of Territorial Cohesion and Relations with Local Authorities: “In these difficult times, solutions can only come from our ability to make cross-border areas places of convergence, trust and partnership. They are particularly suitable sites for territorial action that we have been implementing: that of the ‘tailor-made’, of the ‘hand-stitched’”.

Christian Dupessey, President of the MOT, Mayor of Annemasse, President of the Metropolitan Pole of the French Genevois: “Never again! No more harsh measures, but instead coordination, coherence and a genuine policy for cross-border areas, with an overall vision involving citizens. I believe that it is possible – solidarity in periods of crisis exists, especially in the area of healthcare”.

Jean Rottner, President of the Grand Est Region: “The pandemic does not turn us into inward- looking people; it triggers initial reflexes that have had to be countered, bypassed and surpassed. The work we have been doing for many years with our German partners has made it possible to move faster. It has turned us into a European team which, by sticking together, has managed to find solutions”.

Anne Sander, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-president of the MOT: “Many obstacles remain and a great number of them come under the direct responsibility of Member States. We need a stronger European legal framework, and that’s why we strongly support the proposed ECBM aimed at overcoming cross-border obstacles”.

The four roundtables on the first day underscored the needs of border territories greatly exacerbated by the crisis. They highlighted the progress that has been made and the successes of cooperation: Interreg, the EGCTs, the Franco-German Aachen Treaty, etc.

For **Clément Beaune, the French Minister of State for European Affairs, France:** The Franco-German Aachen Treaty is a precursor, “opening the way to a new stage”.

It is during this first day that the MOT, the AEBR and CESCO, backed by the European Committee of the Regions, have officially presented the **“European Cross-Border Citizens Alliance”**. On the second day, the territories along France’s borders were presented in relation to core themes (climate change, mobility, attractiveness, digital), while at the same time highlighting their great diversity (metropolises, rural areas, mountain areas, etc.).

And for **Christophe Arend, MP for Moselle and member of the Franco-German Assembly**, the next stage “takes place in France in the ‘4D’ Act, which should contain a chapter on the cross-border dimension, since the smart solutions devised on the border with Germany can be transposed to all of France’s and Europe’s borders”. With the 4D law project now underway, the MOT has just published its position for a better consideration of cross-border issues: [more info](#).

Find:

The proceedings: [EN](#) – [FR](#)

[All the replays](#)

[The press kit](#)



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