



Press release  
30 May 2022  
Paris

## BORDERS FORUM 2022 on 21-22 June in Paris and online *Strengthened cross-border governance for an effective Europe*

30% of the European population lives in cross-border territories. For these people, employment, training, health, education, culture and hobbies - in short, all the pillars of individual and collective life - are practised with different languages, political institutions, administrations and legal bodies! *"Cross-border territories make European integration concrete in everyday life,"* underlines **Christoph Schnaudigel, Landrat of the Landkreis Karlsruhe and President of the Franco-German Eurodistrict PAMINA**. But how can projects be built, in a sustainable way, in such a complex environment? What solutions can be found to ensure that cross-border living areas prevail over institutional borders?

The issue of governance covers the various topics that will be discussed at the **2nd Borders Forum: resource management, green transition, employment, public services, management of migratory flows (the war in Ukraine is causing one of the largest population displacements at Europe's doorstep)**. During a round table, the numerous experiences of cross-border cooperation will be shared and the emerging mechanisms for strengthened, functional and ambitious cooperation will be put into perspective.

The event, co-organised by the Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT), in partnership with the European Commission and the European Committee of the Regions, and with the support of the French National Agency for the Cohesion of Territories and the European programme Espon, is being held this year at the Cité Internationale Universitaire in Paris on 21 and 22 June 2022. It is part of the French presidency of the Council of the European Union, at a time when France is leading the way in cross-border governance. The 3DS law (Differentiation, Decentralisation, Deconcentration and Simplification), voted in February 2022, promotes the recognition of





the specific characteristics of cross-border territories, while the two recent Franco-German and Franco-Italian treaties commit each signatory country to removing the obstacles to the implementation of projects on either side of their border.

The [press kit](#) provides a better understanding of the issues involved in cross-border governance. It gives a comprehensive account of these experiences and reflections, as well as of the progress to be made to overcome the persistent obstacles to cross-border dynamics.

The [programme is online](#) and [registration](#) is now open on the website: [www.bordersforum.eu](http://www.bordersforum.eu).

## KEY FIGURES

- . Cross-border territories represent **40%** of the territory of the European Union
- . **More than 1 in 3 Europeans** live in a cross-border area
- . **2 MILLION** cross-border workers in the EU, more than 20% of whom live in France
- . **20,000 KM** of internal EU land borders
- . **37** cross-border conurbations in Europe
- . And **11** of them are on the French borders

## A MULTITUDE OF GOVERNANCE SOLUTIONS

How could it be otherwise considering the diversity of the perimeters and contents of the cooperation and the diversity of the actors involved? *"The cross-border territory is a living area. Each cross-border living area is different, with its own history. Governance models must take this into account"* confirms **Christoph Schnaudigel**. He will present the experience of the PAMINA Eurodistrict, and its skills-sharing platform which supports the cross-border projects of citizens, companies, associations and local authorities.

Cross-border governance exists at different levels and in many forms. The mapping<sup>1</sup> of the entities created shows their diversity and density: cross-border business areas, organised cross-border healthcare access areas, local or European cooperation





groupings, Eurodistricts, Euroregions, etc. *"Complementarity between the different levels is an important element"*, underlines **Christoph Schnaudigel**.

## THE EGTCs, PIONEERS OF CROSS-BORDER GOVERNANCE

France and Belgium are pioneers, with the first EGTC created in 2008. It is composed of 152 municipalities bringing together their public partners in a single structure, the **Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai**<sup>1</sup>. It aims to set up joint actions in favour of training, mobility, environment or employment. There are now 1,000 local authorities in 80 EGTCs, which for the past 12 years have benefited from a platform, led by the European Committee of the Regions, for the exchange of experiences and their promotion as instruments of territorial cohesion<sup>2</sup>.

## BILATERAL COOPERATION TREATIES

**The Franco-German Aachen treaty**, signed in 2019, defines a method of cooperation on the common border to remove cross-border obstacles to the implementation of projects and in the daily lives of border residents. **Jean Rottner, President of the Grand Est region**, and **Philippe Voiry, Ambassador for the intergovernmental commissions**, will present the progress made, in particular the creation of a Cross-border Cooperation Committee (CCT in French). This Committee is responsible for dealing as a matter of priority with issues not resolved in the existing cross-border structures and which require increased cooperation.

**The Franco-Italian Treaty of Quirinale**, signed in 2021, defines the Franco-Italian border as a continuous living area. *"It will considerably strengthen the feeling of belonging to a common European area,"* emphasises **Sando Gozi, MEP**. Based on the model of the Aachen Treaty, a Cross-Border Cooperation Committee will also be created.

<sup>1</sup> See the map on page 3 of the press kit

<sup>2</sup> Not to be confused with the Eurometropole de Lille

<sup>3</sup> See the link to the platform on page 9 of the press kit





## IMPROVE AND STRENGTHEN THE EXISTING STRUCTURES

The 2nd day of the Borders Forum, titled "Cross-border alliances, compasses to be (re)imagined", will be an opportunity to look towards new models of governance, after examining the interdependencies and cross-border imbalances to be overcome. According to **Sandro Gozi**, *"the Borders Forum must allow us to discuss concrete cases and organisational solutions"*. For his part, **Jean de Béthune**, **President of the Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai, Member of Parliament for the Province of West Flanders**, insists: *"We must invest in bilateral and multilateral dialogue without hampering existing models"*.

As a pioneering governance structure, EGTCs could evolve into a new generation of structures. The MOT territorial and cross-border cooperation working group anticipates 220 EGTCs with democratic legitimacy in 2050. *"Moreover, the existing systems will have to evolve towards a better recognition of the specificities of our territories, notably with appropriate competences for cross-border structures such as EGTCs"* adds **Christoph Schnaudigel, President of the Eurodistrict Pamina**.

## NEW GOVERNANCE TOOLS

Aware of the governance issue, the European Commission has launched a process to help cross-border regions overcome legal and administrative obstacles with two schemes:

**The B-Solution Initiative** allows small projects to carry out a legal study on the obstacle to be removed in a given cross-border region and to find a solution.

**The European Cross-Border Mechanism (ECBM)**, a mechanism under discussion whereby a country could locally adopt the legislation of the neighbouring country to establish a cross-border public service.

In parallel, Interreg, the long-standing cross-border cooperation programme, is evolving and will be able to support the construction of new governance frameworks.



The Border Forum 2022 will highlight this ongoing dynamic of cross-border governance. *"It is an excellent place to reflect and a tool to discuss concrete results, organisational solutions and tools to use to win this crucial battle on the way to progress."* says **Sandro Gozi**. **Jean de Béthune** reminds us what is at stake: *"Terrorist attacks, the Brexit, the COVID-19 crisis, the war in Ukraine show that borders remain fragile and that cooperation is more necessary than ever"*.

Cross-border territories can be valuable leaders in terms of governance, as long as their specificities and potentialities are taken more into account in national and European recovery plans.

## ORGANISERS ET PARTNERS

Main organiser: Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT)

European partners: European Commission, European Committee of the Regions, ESPON EGTC

Media partners: France Média Monde, France 24

Other partners: Res publica, BIG (Borders in Globalization)

An event organised with the support of the French National Agency for the Cohesion of Territories

## About the MOT

The Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT) is an association that was set up in 1997 by the French government. Its role is to assist project developers, to promote the interests of cross-border territories and to create networks of players and experiences. It serves as an interface between the different stakeholders to help them find cross-border solutions at the right levels.

[www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org](http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org)

## About the Borders Forum

The Borders Forum is the meeting place for cross-border players. The first edition of the Borders Forum took place entirely online, in November 2020. It brought together more than 1000 participants from over 40 countries and highlighted the specificities of cross-border territories as well as the equilibria to be found on either side of borders.



## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

BORDERS FORUM, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition - 20 and 21 June 2022

Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris

Access to the Konrad Adenauer Room (1<sup>st</sup> floor) from the entrance hall

17 boulevard Jourdan 75014 Paris

[www.ciup.fr](http://www.ciup.fr)

Opening hours of the Cité Universitaire: 8:30AM - 4PM

Registration on [www.bordersforum.eu](http://www.bordersforum.eu)

## SOME ARTICLES AND LINKS TO FURTHER CONTENTS

- ["EU Border Regions: Living labs of European integration", European Commission report of 13 July 2021](#)
- [Les principaux enjeux de la coopération transfrontalière », by Jean Peyrony, Revue Annales des Mines](#)
- ["Cross-border governance" page on the MOT website](#)
- [Map of French border territories](#)
- [Map of EGTCs in Europe](#)

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