

**Robert Herrmann**

President of the MOT  
President of the  
Strasbourg Eurometropolis

It is a great honour for me today to take up my post as the MOT's President and to follow in the footsteps of my predecessors – Michel Delebarre, Pierre Mauroy, Roland Ries – all great champions of the cross-border and European cause.

I am entirely convinced that the future of our territories and their inhabitants will depend on integration that transcends national borders. In Strasbourg, we experience it concretely every day with our tramline: a veritable accelerator of Franco-German exchanges, it now extends to Kehl, in Germany, and its success has exceeded all of our expectations.

Cross-border cooperation fosters and strengthens European construction. The MOT, a fantastic platform for promoting the European project, forges these links meaningfully, while ensuring that public services and common economic ambitions are enhanced for the benefit of citizens, and arguing for the appropriate European resources. I will now wait for the concrete realisation of the announcements made by the French government and the European Union.

Dear members and partners, I will passionately accompany and support your cross-border territories. Together, we will join forces in order to continue to build and champion these "laboratories of Europe" that are so dear to us!

## The MOT elects its new president at the General Assembly in Nice

Some 130 people gathered in Nice and Ventimiglia on 22-23 May 2018 for the MOT's General Assembly. The unanimously-elected new president, Robert Herrmann (see opposite), thanked the Nice-Côte d'Azur Metropolis, a member of the MOT since 2012, for hosting the assembly in this "city that is emblematic of France's international standing, but also of its profoundly European history". The meetings of the MOT's different bodies made it possible to validate the activity and financial reports, as well as the 2018-2020 work programme, to elect the new representatives of the MOT's board, and to present [the new members](#). The Technicians' Platform focused on the new interactive tool that has been available to them since the start of the year: an online forum. During the discussions, the representative of the European Commission, Ana-Paula Laissy, Head of Unit in DG REGIO, replied to

the many questions from the participants about the future generation of ETC programmes, the legislative framework of which is currently under discussion (see page 3).

In concluding the meetings of the MOT's bodies, Christina Bezes-Feldmeyer, representing Hugo Bevert, Director of Territorial Strategies at the General Commission for Territorial Equality, recalled that the next "Conference on the Territories organised by the French government will have Europe as its central theme. Supported by the Minister for Territorial Cohesion, Jacques Mézard, we are arguing for the right to experiment in these cross-border territories, which are pre-eminent places of European construction".

The following day, the two roundtables held in Ventimiglia centred on cooperation between France, Italy and Monaco (see page 2). [More info \[FR\]](#)



## EVENTS

**Forum on rural life in the Greater Region: "Towards a reference centre for rural life in the Greater Region", 15 June 2018 in Bastogne (Wallonia, Belgium)**

**Interdisciplinary conference: "Cross-border co-operation: practices and representations", 28-29 June 2018 in Mulhouse (France)**

**Conference on the international action of territorial authorities, 4 July 2018 in Paris**

**Association for Borderlands Studies 2nd World Conference 2018, 10-14 July 2018 in Vienna and Budapest**

**Study day on cross-border observation, organised by the MOT and the UMS RIATE, 17 September 2018 in Paris**

**8th cross-border job meetings, 27 September in Frethun (Pas-de-Calais, France)**

[All the events](#)

## Focus on cooperation between France, Italy and Monaco

Two roundtables devoted to cooperation between France, Italy and Monaco were held in Ventimiglia on 23 May following the MOT's General Assembly. They brought together many local elected representatives, such as Enrico Iocolano, Mayor of Ventimiglia, Jean-Pierre Vassallo, Mayor of Tende and Vice-President of the French Riviera Conurbation Community, Fabio Natta, Mayor of Cesio and President of Imperia Province, Frederico Borgna, Mayor of Cuneo and President of Cuneo Province and Marine De Carne-Treccion, France's Ambassador to Monaco.



The Mayor of Ventimiglia emphasised that the issues of cross-border mobility and transport remain a priority on the border: "In Ventimiglia, every day 500 cross-border workers face great difficulties in getting to their place of work on the other side of the border."

Another priority – education and languages – was highlighted by Emilie Mousselle, headteacher of the French school in Ventimiglia. "It is a great opportunity for parents to have a free and bilingual French school on the Italian side of the border," affirmed the representative of the parent-teachers' association at the conference.

The theme of health care was illustrated by the contribution of the Director of the "La Palmosa" Hospital in Menton, who presented his cross-border perinatal care centre. These examples are success stories, but nevertheless the potential for cross-border cooperation is still underexploited along this border and many difficulties remain. As the Mayor of Tende pointed out: "We do not have a structure at the political level that gives a framework for dialogue between players on either side of the border. This is a completely cross-border territory! We need a framework to enable us to formulate joint strategies." The MOT's role as a "platform that allows all of the

players to get together around the same table" was thus commended by all of the speakers.

Following the roundtables, the Nice-Côte d'Azur Metropolis presented its strategy regarding cross-border projects. These projects, which are funded by the ALCOTRA or MARITTIMO programmes, can be grouped into "integrated territorial plans" (PITER, groups of projects on different themes that implement a common territorial strategy) or "integrated thematic plans" (PITEM, groups of projects on a theme aimed at standardising the approaches used and the pooling of tools).

[More info](#)

## Franco-German cross-border cooperation: "Six proposals to innovate in the heart of Europe" – A parliamentary working group set up

The report by the MP of the Bas-Rhin Department, Sylvain Waserman, was officially submitted to the French Prime Minister on 18 May. It sets out six proposals aimed at promoting a "renewal" of Franco-German cross-border cooperation, in the perspective of the forthcoming new Elysée Treaty. The six proposals concern:

- 1- Learning the language and the culture of the neighbouring country as a "mutual priority".
- 2- The institution of a "binding Cross-Border Development Plan to set out a common vision and

priority projects".

- 3- Three decisive territorial innovations: "a principle of territorial differentiation for Eurodistricts, local cross-border EPCIs (public intermunicipal cooperation bodies) and new forms of cross-border cooperation to meet the challenges of the economy of the future".

- 4- The launch of a "Franco-German Commission for Cross-Border Strategy" which would be dedicated to "the acceleration of cross-border development".
- 5- The creation "of a permanent

- body to facilitate consistency in citizens' rights and turn cross-border territories into laboratories for European convergence".
- 6- The affirmation of "Strasbourg as the capital of European citizens".

[More info – the report in French](#)

**The MOT assisted the parliamentary team in the drafting of these proposals.**

In parallel, a **Franco-German working group** made up of 18 French and German MPs was set up to draft a "Franco-German Parliamentary Agreement" on

cooperation between the two national assemblies. It will meet regularly during 2018 and will conclude its work before 22 January 2019 (the 56th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty). It is to participate in the intergovernmental negotiations on the new Treaty. It has just adopted two positions, on:

- "Deepening cross-border cooperation between France and Germany"

- "Implementing projects of cross-border benefit: the 'border regions package'". [More info](#)

## The European cross-border mechanism - a victory for the MOT and its partners

Among the European Commission's draft regulations is a new regulation on "a mechanism to resolve legal and administrative obstacles in a cross-border context". This regulation proposes an "off-the-shelf" instrument with two options: the European Cross-Border Commitment (ECBC), or the European Cross-Border Statement (ECBS), while leaving Member States the possibility of using existing instruments. The aim is to create a "mechanism to apply, for a common cross-border region, in a given Member State, the legal provisions from the neighbouring Member State if applying its own laws would present a legal obstacle to implementing a joint project". It is a real innovation in terms of designing a multilevel architecture for overcoming obstacles. [Continued](#)

# EUROPE NEWS

## Draft regulations for cohesion policy in 2021-2027



On 29 May, the European Commission published its draft regulations for cohesion policy in the 2021-2027 period.

Spending is focused around five policy objectives, including a specific objective for integrated territorial development (previously there were 11 thematic objectives). The specific "Interreg" regulation<sup>1</sup> now comprises five components:<sup>2</sup> cross-border cooperation, transnational and maritime cooperation, outermost regions' cooperation, interregional cooperation and interregional investment in innovation. The cross-border component centres on land borders (internal and external), while maritime cooperation is incorporated into "transnational cooperation and maritime cooperation", and a specific component has been

created for cooperation involving the outermost regions. A new regulation concerns a European cross-border mechanism aimed at removing legal and administrative obstacles (see opposite), based on the work carried out over the past three years on the ECBC tool.

In addition, Interreg may fund two specific objectives: "better Interreg governance" making it possible to address institutional issues, notably cross-border obstacles, and a "safer and more secure Europe" (external borders).

The role of EGCTs and cross-border structures is being reinforced, and the "small projects funds" are for the first time the subject of specific provisions.

The regulations, which will be negotiated by the Council and European Parliament, must be adopted by 2020 at the latest so

that programmes can begin on 1 January 2021, the start of the next programming period.

The MOT will shortly invite its network to formulate together its position on the 2021-2027 regulations. In the context of the drawing-up of the 2021-2027 operational programmes, the MOT is available to discuss any aspect with the members of its network.

### [More info](#)

<sup>1</sup> Regulation on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments."

<sup>2</sup> The five components:

- component 1: cross-border cooperation
- component 2: transnational cooperation (component 2A) and maritime cooperation (component 2B)
- component 3: outermost regions' cooperation
- component 4: interregional cooperation
- component 5: interregional investment in innovation.

## Healthcare: an important study published by the European Commission

In March the European Commission published a study devoted to cross-border healthcare. It analyses the strengths and opportunities of cross-border cooperation based on projects funded by the EU, as well as on existing bilateral or multilateral agreements. It provides a complete overview of cooperation, discusses the fight against fraud linked to cross-border healthcare, and evaluates the adoption of the "Joint Action on Patient Safety and Quality of Care". [More info](#)

## "Building a Europe of places and links"

The journal "Urbanisme" has devoted a special issue to the topic "Construire l'Europe des lieux et des liens" ("Building a Europe of places and links"). This issue summarises the 38<sup>th</sup> conference of urban planning agencies that took place in November 2017 in Strasbourg, in which the MOT actively participated. An extensive chapter in the special issue looks at "territories without borders". [More info](#)

## Special edition on cross-border issues and the ecological transition

The General Council on the Environment and Sustainable Development, which is responsible for advising the government in the different fields of competence of the French Ministry for Ecological Transition, has devoted a special edition of its magazine "Pour mémoire" to cross-border issues in the areas of transport, the environment and energy. [More info](#)

## Reference work on European territorial cooperation

Entitled "European Territorial Cooperation", this book that has just been published by Springer provides a sound and succinct analysis of the process of European territorial cooperation over the past 30 years. It is already regarded as a reference work at European level for the post-2020 period.

[More info](#)



# PRESS REVIEW

## Death of Camille Gira, Luxembourg's Secretary of State for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure

**Correspondances Lorraines, 8 May**

"Luxembourg has decreed three days of national mourning following the death of Camille Gira, the Secretary of State for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure. As Secretary of State, this former trade unionist stood out in having a cross-border and alternative approach to transport. He worried about the traffic jams in which cross-border workers get stuck, but also the effects of peaks in nitrogen dioxide levels on public health. He represented a Luxembourg that was different from how we imagine it: a creative country capable of in-depth reflections on managing growth."

## Budget: towards a reorientation of cohesion policy

**Toute l'Europe, 30 May**

"The EU's cohesion policy could well be reshaped for the 2021-2027 period. In a communication unveiled on Tuesday 29 May, the European Commission argues for an increase in funding for countries that host migrants and those that are strongly affected by youth unemployment – proposals that may mainly benefit Southern European countries, to the detriment of Central Europe."

## The European Parliament calls for the Schengen Area to be fully operational again

**Euractiv, 31 May** - "The European Parliament is calling for Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia to be admitted to the Schengen Area, the functioning of which has suffered from the reinstatement of border controls in several places since 2015."

## Brexit: regions bordering the English Channel make arrangements

**Localtis, 24 May** - "The United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU is rapidly approaching, with major consequences for France's regions, particularly in terms of trade. Border regions such as the Hauts-de-France, Normandy and Brittany haven't waited for the end of the negotiations or the official Brexit date in March 2019 to make arrangements, establishing task forces and close relations with the UK and Brussels."

## A project for a "rebirth of Alsace" submitted to the Prefect

**L'Alsace, 29 May** - "The Presidents of the two Alsatian Departments submitted a report to the Prefect of the Bas-Rhin Department that proposes a 'rebirth of Alsace' within the Grand Est Region, in the form of an 'Alsace Euro-authority' with specific competences, based on the Corsican model."

## The Swiss State's refusal to provide schooling to border residents was illegal

**La Tribune de Genève, 24 May** - "The Executive restricted access to Geneva's schools. The courts consider that it flouted the principle of equality and has quashed its decisions. In February, there was an outcry on the other side of the border when the Council of State curtailed access to Geneva's schools for pupils resident outside the Canton."

## Between Italy and France, the dangers of the border...

**Le Monde, 20 May** - "Faced with the flows of migrants coming from Italy, France stepped up its controls of illegal immigrants, who are systematically escorted back to the border. This stance, which was reinforced after the terrorist attacks in 2015, has created tensions between the two countries."

## Cooperation agreement between four French and Spanish universities

**Sud Ouest, 21 May** - "The agreement between the universities of Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Euskadi and Navarra was signed within the framework of the Eskola Futura project, which is being implemented by the Euroregion. The aim is to help master's students who wish to become bilingual teachers."

[Consultez tous les articles de presse\\*](#)  
Réservé aux adhérents.  
\*La MOT met en ligne une centaine d'articles par mois sur la coopération transfrontalière.

## "Greater Geneva in all its forms"\*

*Monograph edited by Vincent Mottet, Preface by Jean Denais.  
Editions Slatkine, March 2018. Price: SFR 27.30.*

"Who better than the players involved to talk about Greater Geneva in an overall and multidisciplinary approach? Through 16 testimonies representative of a transdisciplinary perspective, the authors and contributors, both Swiss and French, affirm their strong commitment with illustrations and experiences that have arisen from their practice. This publication, with its diverse points of view and the quality of its contributors, aims to stimulate discussion, to ask questions about Greater Geneva's purpose and to work collectively to promote its influence and prosperity, with a common vision firmly oriented towards innovation and the future." More info

\* Published in French only - Original title: "Le Grand Genève dans tous ses États".

This publication is available in the MOT's document portal [FR].

Specialising in cross-border cooperation, the portal provides more than 4,000 document references. [More info](#)

Le Grand Genève  
dans tous ses États

Florilège

Sous la direction de  
Vincent Mottet

Preface de M. Jean Denais  
Président du Pôle métropolitain du Grand Genève français  
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## CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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