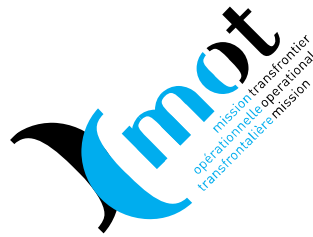


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# CROSS BORDER NEWS



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## Greater Geneva

Made up of 209 municipalities spread between the Swiss cantons of Geneva and Vaud and the French departments of Ain and Haute-Savoie, Greater Geneva is one of the most dynamic territories in Europe, both from an economic and demographic point of view. With over a million inhabitants and more than 550,000 jobs, the challenge for this shared cross-border living area is to maintain at the same time its attractiveness, quality of life, territorial and environmental balance and social cohesion.

Greater Geneva's inhabitants experience the cross-border reality in their day-to-day lives – in the journeys they take, their work and their cultural, sporting and leisure activities. In order to develop this territory, while protecting its environment, it is crucial to coordinate and implement cross-border public policies in the areas of

transport, spatial planning and the ecological transition. This is the purpose of the Greater Geneva Local Grouping of Cross-Border Cooperation (LGCC), which provides political, technical and financial solutions to enable joint cross-border actions to be carried out.

2019 will be an important year for Greater Geneva: it marks the launch of new transport infrastructures\*. With over 3 million daily journeys, of which 600,000 involve crossing the border between France and Geneva, sustainable mobility in Greater Geneva requires constant and sustained efforts. It is a fundamental issue that affects public health, quality of life and economic competitiveness for all of Greater Geneva's inhabitants. [More info](#)

\*The Léman Express cross-border regional rail-line, the Geneva-Annemasse cross-border tram, new park and ride facilities, dynamic car-sharing schemes, and new cycle routes.



**Christian Dupessey**

Mayor of Annemasse  
President of Annemasse Agglo  
Vice-President of the MOT



**Jean Denais**

Mayor of Thonon-les-Bains  
President of the  
Metropolitan Pole of the  
French Genevois

"Greater Geneva is a daily cross-border reality. It is the fruit of history and exceptional dynamism, with the complex issues that come with it. That is why the Metropolitan Pole of the French Genevois was created: 8 groups of French municipalities, including Annemasse Agglo, that have come together in order to be able to implement structural projects, to respond coherently to growth in our shared living area, and to find solutions with our Swiss partners, within the framework of Greater Geneva, but also with Europe, the French Government, the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region and the Ain and Haute-Savoie Departments.

To best address the cross-border issues, being a member of the Transfrontier Operational Mission (MOT) and sharing our experiences within this network is vital. That is why we are delighted to be hosting the MOT's annual conference on 20-21 March. In the light of the daily flows between France and Switzerland, we need to find solutions to address the challenges in terms of sustainable mobility, air quality, economic development, housing and social cohesion. We have chosen to work hand-in-hand with our Swiss partners to ensure good quality of life in this territory of a million inhabitants known as Greater Geneva. 2019 is a milestone year for our cross-border region, [...]" Cont. on page 2.



The cross-border greenway of Greater Geneva

## EVENTS

### MOT's annual conference

The MOT is holding its general assembly and annual conference on the topic of cross-border investment, on 20-21 March in Annemasse and Geneva, at the invitation of Annemasse Agglo, the Metropolitan Pole of the French Genevois, the Republic and Canton of Geneva and the Greater Geneva, which are members of the network. [More info \[FR\]](#)

**EGTC Platform of the European Committee of the Regions**, 9 April 2019 in Brussels

**"Missing Railway Links: A challenge for cohesion and growth in border regions"**, 11 April 2019 in Brussels

**International conference on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CESCO**, 25-26 April 2019 in Budapest

**ESPO seminar "The role of functional areas for territorial cohesion"**, 19-20 June 2019 in Iași (Romania)

**"Franco-German Cooperation 2.0"**, 28-29 June 2019 in Ludwigsburg (Germany)

[All the events](#)

# Interview with Anna-Karina Kolb, Director of the External and Federal Department of the Republic and Canton of Geneva



### What is the contribution made by Greater Geneva?

Greater Geneva is the current tool for constructing our natural cross-border shared living area. With the increase in flows in our region, we needed to move up a gear regarding issues of mobility and sustainable management of the territory. The Greater Geneva conurbation project enables the Swiss and French partners to jointly draw up an action plan, and to seek funding from national and European authorities. It brings together the energies and ambitions from the different sides, and provides a flexible framework both for concrete actions and to discuss issues for the future.

### How can social cohesion be fostered in the cross-border area?

While our region enjoys a

very favourable position in terms of jobs and quality of life, price levels and a highly competitive job market do not benefit all of its inhabitants. Until now, differences in wage levels and regulations between Switzerland and France have made it very difficult to develop common tools to foster cohesion. But many cross-border initiatives contain a cohesion dimension: this is the case for collaborations in the areas of security and culture.

### What are the developments in Swiss federal policy in the areas of cross-border cooperation and cross-border investment?

In a federal country like Switzerland, competence for cross-border cooperation is exercised by the cantons. The Confederation supports

the cantons financially in their conurbation projects. Its funding crosses its borders with respect to projects that have an impact on the Geneva region such as the Annemasse and St-Julien tramlines. It also contributes to the co-financing of many Interreg projects for Greater Geneva.

### What are the current cross-border issues in terms of Switzerland's bilateral relations with the EU?

The current discussion on the framework agreement with the EU has a direct bearing on the cross-border region. With 650,000 crossings of the border a day and 120,000 commuters, Greater Geneva can only exist within a framework of free movement of people and goods that is secure and stable.

## Editorial cont. from page 1

"[...] with the realisation of projects that will revolutionise mobility in the territory and which would not have come about without this cross-border cooperation. After the inauguration of the Greater Geneva Greenway last year, 2019 will be marked by the coming into service of the Léman Express, an extensive rail network that will cover the whole of the Lake Geneva basin across two French departments and two Swiss cantons, as well as the arrival of the Geneva-Annemasse tram. We are therefore particularly pleased to be able to help the MOT's members get to know this territory and its prospects, in this decisive year for Greater Geneva."

## The territory of Greater Geneva

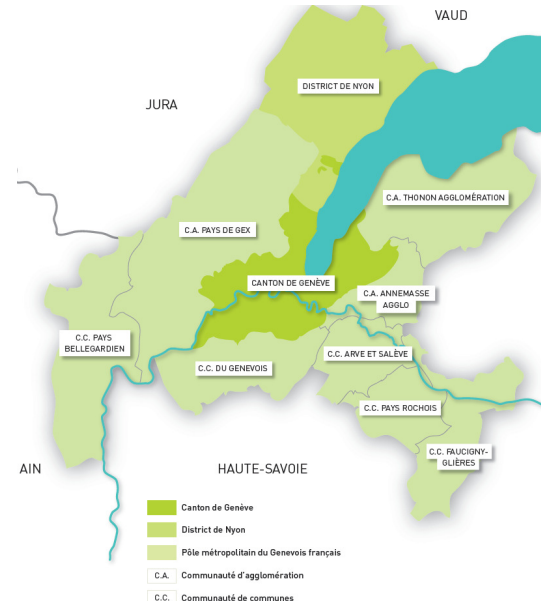
### THE TERRITORY

- 2 countries, 2 cantons, 2 departments,
- 2,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- 209 municipalities
- 1 million inhabitants
- 550,000 jobs

### MEMBERS

- Republic and Canton of Geneva
- Vaud Canton
- Regional Council of the District of Nyon
- City of Geneva
- Auvergne-Rhône-

- Alpes Region
- Haute-Savoie Department
- Ain Department
- Metropolitan Pole of the French Genevois (comprising 8 groups of French municipalities)
- Associate members
- the French Republic
- the Swiss Confederation



## IN BRIEF

### European Territorial Authority of Alsace — towards a principle of differentiation

The French decree establishing the European Territorial Authority of Alsace through the merger of the Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin Departments was published on 28 February. The new authority will come into being on 1 February 2021. Deliberations on the draft law will begin in the Senate in the first week of April. Jacqueline Gourault, the Minister for Territorial Cohesion, who brought forward the draft law, explained in [a press release](#): “The future territorial authority, which will be within the Grand Est Region, will exercise the competences of departments, but will also enjoy [...] specific competences tailored to Alsace’s particular characteristics. **These new responsibilities thus anticipate the principle of differentiation of territorial authorities’ competences that is proposed by the Government as part of the constitutional revision.** [...] While respecting the competences of the Grand Est Regional Council and the Strasbourg Eurometropolis, the European Territorial Authority of Alsace will be the lead partner for cross-border cooperation in its territory. It will be responsible for drawing up an Alsace cross-border cooperation plan, which will contain an operational component relating to structural projects and a component concerned with cross-border movements.”

[Draft law and impact assessment \[FR\]](#).

## Cross-border employment: the point of view of Michel Charrat, President of the European Cross-Border Grouping



*The European Cross-Border Grouping (Groupement Transfrontalier Européen) is a non-profit association that represents 32,500 cross-border workers along the Franco-Swiss border.*

[More info](#)

The employment situation in the Geneva basin would make many a French political leader green with envy. On both sides of the border, unemployment rates are low and the economic outlook positive. Around 120,000 people cross the border every day to go and work in neighbouring Switzerland. A huge flow that is not without some perverse effects, particularly in terms of transport and territorial development. A flow which, back in France, also generates substantial economic activity on the French side. In short, the cross-border phenomenon seems to be a win-win one for both sides.

However, over the past ten years, the rise of populism in Geneva has made relations somewhat tense. The Canton has put in place a cantonal preference, in spite of many condemnations from both sides of the border; then last July, the Swiss Confederation introduced “national preference light”.

The forthcoming arrival of the tramline in the centre of Annemasse and of the Léman Express will give a boost to the region. Let us hope that the improvement in transport links will ease relations between the populations. The work of Greater Geneva must go in this direction and it will be

considerable. Indeed, experts estimate that over the next five years, a quarter of Swiss workers will retire. They will therefore need to be replaced. Geneva has the good fortune to have, in neighbouring France, an extensive territory to accommodate its active population. But this development can only take place within the framework of a large-scale project coordinated on both sides of the border. Greater Geneva has an important role to play – above all, a strong political will to promote openness is needed if we wish to bring citizens together and foster social cohesion in our territories.

### Greater Region Summit

At the 16<sup>th</sup> Greater Region Summit on 30 January 2019, the Greater Region Executives argued for “ambitious territorial cooperation and a Europe that listens to its citizens”. They presented their joint declaration, which summarises the work of Luxembourg’s presidency (2017-2018) and sets out their future orientations, outlining the objectives of Saarland’s presidency, which has just begun. [More info](#)

### A new website for the Basel Trinational Eurodistrict

The Basel Trinational Eurodistrict brings together the three countries of the Basel conurbation with over 900,000 inhabitants. A member of the MOT since 2005, it was the first trinational Eurodistrict to be created in Europe. Its new website notably presents the territory’s cross-border projects, its governance and the funding mechanisms available to project developers. [More info](#)

### The IMeG’s position on the ECBM

The “Cross-Border Metropolitan Regions” Initiative\*, which works on developing cross-border cooperation along Germany’s borders, has just published a position paper on the European Commission’s proposal to create a “mechanism to resolve legal and administrative obstacles in a cross-border context”. [More info](#)

\* Initiativkreis Metropolitane Grenzregionen (IMeG), a project of the “MORO” spatial planning programme of the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development (BMVBS).

### Creation of a European Labour Authority

The European Parliament and Member States have reached an agreement on the creation of a new “European Labour Authority” to protect workers’ rights and launch cross-border investigations in the event of possible abuses. “More than 17 million workers living or working in another Member State are exposed to possible violations of their rights, either because of poor implementation of the EU rules, disinformation or lack of coordination among Member States.” [More info](#)

# PRESS REVIEW

## ▲ Brexit: concern grows among road hauliers

**Banque des Territoires, 15 February**

"A 'no deal' would put road hauliers in a situation of 'chaos', warns the [French] National Road Haulage Federation, 40 days away from Brexit. Some 60% of freight between the United Kingdom and the European Union transits through France, the Senate's Brexit monitoring group notes."

## ▲ Alsatian elected representatives received at the Elysée: 'Give us a break!'

**DNA, 26 February**

"On Tuesday, 15 mayors from Alsace questioned the French President, who was receiving nearly 150 elected representatives from the Grand Est Region at the Elysée Palace on the occasion of the great debate. They all concurred with the head of state's vision that the transfer of competences brings with it responsibility. [...] Regarding the cross-border dimension, Emmanuel Macron made clear that the objective was the creation of 'tax transition zones', structures that are called for by 'businesses and citizens'."

## ▲ 2019: renewed Franco-German cooperation

**La Lettre Diplomatique, No. 124, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2018**

20-page report on Franco-German cooperation

## ▲ Tax: the cross-border issue between France and Luxembourg isn't settled

**Les Echos, 15 February 2019**

"France has just ratified a new tax agreement with Luxembourg. But elected representatives from the Grand Est Region are increasingly critical of an imbalance that is detrimental to French tax revenues. In spite of this progress, negotiations on the cross-border issue have not advanced as much as the elected representatives would have liked. 'The situation in the border territory should be the subject of an additional agreement, given the strong pressures on human resources and Luxembourg's needs with respect to skills in the coming years,' declared Emilie Cariou, the LREM MP for the Meuse. In his report on the new tax agreement, Frédéric Petit (LREM), MP for French nationals living in Germany and Eastern Europe, explains this problem that is often underestimated in Paris."

## ▲ The minister Jacqueline Gourault discusses issues of cross-border cooperation

**L'Est républicain, 22 February**

"The minister Jacqueline Gourault was in Haguenau on Monday to discuss cross-border cooperation with the mayors of Haguenau and Karlsruhe and the president of the Pamina Eurodistrict. [...] She announced the setting up of a centre of excellence for bilingualism in Strasbourg."

## ▲ With the Léman Express, the Annemasse rail node is going to grow in size

**Rail Passion, 1 February** - "The Franco-Swiss express service, which by the end of 2019 will connect Annemasse to Geneva and beyond it the towns around Lake Geneva towards Lausanne, will greatly increase the number of passengers using Annemasse station."

## ▲ 30,000 Swiss nationals living in France undeclared

**Le Point, 25 February**

"Thousands of Swiss nationals live in the Haute-Savoie and Ain Departments without declaring themselves. The Geneva Court of Auditors could come to the rescue of the French municipalities concerned."

## ▲ Perpignan University applies to set up European university

**La Tribune, 23 February**

"Within the framework of an EU call for projects to set up European universities, the University of Perpignan Via Domitia (UPVD) is going to submit an application together with its 7 partners, from 5 countries, with which it has formed a consortium around the 'Univers' project."

## Crossing the border to find a home: the little luxury of Lille's middle classes

Article by Garance Clément, Métropolitiques, April 2017.

"Belgium is often perceived to be an attractive country for highly-skilled expatriates [...]. But the Franco-Belgian border is also an area where migrations by households belonging to the middle classes have become more frequent and more commonplace, as a result of changes in property and labour markets."

<https://www.metropolitiques.eu/Passer-la-frontiere-pour-se-loger.html>

This publication is referenced in [the MOT's document portal \[FR\]](#). Specialising in cross-border cooperation, the portal provides more than 4,000 document references.



Passer la frontière pour se loger : le petit privilège des classes moyennes illusoires  
Garance Clément

La Belgique est souvent perçue comme un pays attractif pour les expatriés très qualifiés, soucieux pour les institutions européennes, ou pour les « middle classes » d'origine portugaise. Mais la frontière franco-belge est aussi un espace où se jouent des migrations de ménages appartenant aux classes moyennes, sous l'effet des transformations des marchés immobiliers et du travail. Ces migrations transfrontalières de personnes ont notamment un coût et constituent un petit privilège réservé à une fraction seulement des classes moyennes.

Si les migrations internationales des catégories populaires et de la bourgeoisie ont fait l'objet de nombreux travaux, celles des classes moyennes sont moins étudiées. Le cas belge est particulièrement intéressant de cette polarisation des rejets. D'un côté, les politiciens analysent les migrations comme preuve de la supériorité des compétences, notamment la diversification des pays d'origine et la formation des flux. De l'autre, les enquêtes sur l'expatriation et les difficultés sociales ont l'effet de délégitimer le projet d'immigration internationale (Olivier 2007 ; Côté 2009 ; Lantieri 2013) et les logiques de l'évasion fiscale (Pharos et Pharo-Chabot 2013).

Cet article se penche sur des migrations moins courantes, les qu'on appelle « migrations de la classe moyenne ». Il s'agit de migrations de personnes appartenant à la catégorie des classes moyennes, qui se caractérisent par un statut professionnel en France. Entre 2004 et 2006, la première Belgique dans les données disponibles a été l'Allemagne, suivie par la France et l'Espagne, où elle représente désormais respectivement 20 %, et 10 % de la population. Dans plus de 11 000 communes françaises, plusieurs milliers de familles ont élu domicile. À l'est de la France (Belgique figure 1). Ces chiffres cachent des réalités sociales contrastées. À l'est de l'agglomération lilloise, certains espaces sont denses de grandes familles d'élites dans des villes ou d'anciens corps de ferme confortablement aménagés. Les centres anciens de Compiègne, Valenciennes et Reims, caractérisés par la présence de l'habitat ancien bâti de l'architecture de l'habitat rural, accueillent pour leur part des populations françaises appartenant aux classes moyennes. C'est à ces dernières que s'adresse cette enquête.

<sup>1</sup> Depuis novembre 2015, les données de l'Insee (France 2015), sous l'angle de la cohésion des territoires, sont complétées par les données de l'Insee (France 2015).  
<sup>2</sup> Voir, par exemple, le rapport commandé par la Direction générale des territoires ruraux de la région wallonne.  
<sup>3</sup> Les centres urbains, une fois d'un régime en cours qui constitue une situation d'exception, sont donc très rares. L'analyse de la situation de la région wallonne, de la région flamande et de la région bruxelloise, montre que l'habitat rural est toujours plus attractif que les zones urbaines (Dierckx, 2008).  
<sup>4</sup> Pour l'analyse de la situation de la région wallonne, voir l'ouvrage de la Direction générale des territoires ruraux de la région wallonne.

## CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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