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Vice-President of the Greater Besançon Metropolis in charge of forward planning, regional development and strategy for the territory



The Greater Besançon Metropolis is particular in being the first major urban centre one gets to when coming from the Swiss Jura Arc, while at the same time being relatively far away from it. The Jura mountain range is both a geographical obstacle and a territorial asset; indeed, the border region is a well-preserved area with a wealth of shared natural and cultural features. The joint Franco-Swiss application for the area's expertise in watchmaking and artistic mechanics to be included on UNESCO's list of humanity's intangible cultural heritage, submitted in March, is a good illustration of the many cultural and economic aspects that link us. Highly-skilled labour from Greater Besançon benefits the Swiss economy and, conversely, our research laboratories and our firms specialising in micro- and medical technologies create value thanks to synergies with the Swiss market. Under the Greater Besançon Metropolis territorial project, strengthening cooperation with Switzerland is therefore a priority. For there are opportunities for co-developing cross-border metropolitan functions based on our common assets that remain to be incorporated into our shared strategic vision. It is up to us, local authorities, but also government departments and chambers of commerce and industry, to facilitate initiatives by cultural, academic and economic players by joining forces. This is a major issue for the Greater Besançon area, the Franco-Swiss Jura Arc and the whole of the Region.

The MOT network in Besançon

Cross-border metropolitan cooperation initiatives were spotlighted at the MOT network's day-long meeting, co-organised with the Greater Besançon Metropolis, on 25 September. Three roundtables structured the discussions:

1. In the first, cooperation between universities was highlighted as a resource to enhance the standing of the region and metropolitan area concerned, as well as for the construction of Euroregional citizenship.
2. Cooperation initiatives in the economic sphere are perhaps not self-evident in the competitive environment in which companies operate, and are fostered by methods of working shared between public and private players that are still being developed. Nevertheless, their contribution to territorial development is unquestionable. Cédric Bôle, the Mayor of Morteau, thus returned, in the second roundtable, to the common issues relating to flows of cross-border workers, the most important economic link. In this session, Françoise

Delcasso-Dejoux, head of the Pyrénées-Orientales chamber of commerce and industry, analysed the benefits and expertise that private-sector players involved in renewable energies are able to bring to the government of Andorra. 3. Healthcare was the subject of the last roundtable. The presentation of several Franco-Swiss and Franco-German projects for the development of innovative preventive and curative tools highlighted as yet little-exploited areas for cooperation, such as the prevention of work-related diseases.

Having brought together nearly 90 participants from the Franco-Swiss region, other French borders and the European Commission, the day initiated a cross-cutting and multi-level dialogue aimed at providing operational solutions, which the MOT is planning to make permanent in 2020 by means of a dedicated working group.

[The presentations are available to members by clicking here \[FR\].](#)



EVENTS

Upcoming MOT events:

Topical day on "Cross-border mobility – Franco-Belgian perspectives", 13 November 2019 in Lille, organised by the MOT, the CNFPT (National Centre for Territorial Public Administration) and the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis. [More info \[FR\]](#)

Webinar "What are the opportunities for developing cross-border public services between France and its neighbours?", 21 November 2019 – online, co-organised by the MOT and the ESPON programme. [More info](#)

4th cross-border health forum, 7 November 2019 in Mouscron

DG REGIO Conference "Boosting Cross-Border Regions through better Transport", 14 November in Brussels

Meeting "Innovative pedagogical practices and methods at the level of a cross-border territory", 21 November 2019 in Tournai

[All events](#)

Workshops in Bayonne and San Sebastian for the Basque Country Cross-Border Cooperation Plan



As part of the process of drawing up its Cross-Border Cooperation Plan, the Basque Country Community (CAPB) ran "cross-border cooperation workshops", in Bayonne on 20 September and in San Sebastian on 25 September, with support from the MOT and the AUDAP*.

These workshops brought together experts from the cross-border territory with the aim of formulating concrete measures around four objectives:

- making the most of the assets and opportunities in the cross-border living areas;
- acting together to achieve excellence and improve the territory's standing;

- fostering sustainable and coordinated management of common resources and natural areas;
- promoting shared values and a sense of cross-border belonging.

At the start of the first session in Bayonne, the CAPB's President, Jean-René Etchegaray, recalled that "the cross-border dimension should be at the heart of our public policy". The discussions focused on mobility, jobs and training, services to the population, promoting the territory, higher education and research, large-scale infrastructure and the territory's attractiveness.

The areas of work addressed by

the second day, in San Sebastian, were protection of natural resources and environments, the circular economy, strengthening multilingualism and cross-border citizenship. The MOT, which assisted the AUDAP in this exercise, and with which it co-facilitated several workshops in Bayonne, is working more specifically on the development of cross-border governance and its adaptation to the CAPB's roadmap. This roadmap will be adopted by the CAPB's Council by the end of 2019.

** Atlantic and Pyrenees Urban Planning Agency*

Signature in Toulouse of a Franco-German declaration

The 21st Franco-German Council of Ministers took place in Toulouse on 16 October 2019, bringing together France's President, Emmanuel Macron, Germany's Chancellor, Angela Merkel, as well as the French and German ministers. On this occasion, and following on from the Aachen Treaty, the "Franco-German Declaration of Toulouse" was signed, which reaffirms the commitments made at the highest level of government with respect to Franco-German cooperation. Regarding cross-border cooperation: "France and Germany are building a common future by strengthening their cooperation and integration." Prominent in the declaration are citizen-focused projects, with the setting-up of a "Common Citizens Fund", mobility programmes for young people, mutual recognition of qualifications, and bilingualism. In terms of governance, the setting-up of the "Cross-Border Cooperation Committee" aimed at finding solutions for everyday difficulties, with which the MOT is involved, was highlighted. The first informal meeting of this committee took place on 30 September in Strasbourg. [More info \[FR\]](#)

Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict A cross-border cycle ride to bring citizens on either side of the Rhine together

On 22 September 2019, amateur and professional cyclists from either side of the Rhine set off to discover the territory of the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict during a cross-border cycle ride. Over the course of a 60 km route through fields, forests and villages, ten or so gourmet staging posts offered tastings of local products, accompanied by artistic and musical entertainment. Organised every year by the Eurodistrict and its partner municipalities, this Franco-German event brings together in a convivial atmosphere organisers, volunteers and participants from both sides of the Rhine. It is an opportunity to promote the local culture and its players, the beauty of the region and eco-friendly mobility in the cross-border setting, as well as strengthening the sense of belonging within the Eurodistrict. [More info \[FR\]](#)

Another perspective on the economy of the Jura Arc region

With an exploration of the imbalances between the productive and residential economies, the Jura Arc Cross-Border Forum ended its thematic series of discussions on the economy involving all the members of its committee. They debated, made observations and expressed their perception as citizens, basing their contributions on a method and a number of concepts. The result is a manifesto and a documentary lasting 26 minutes. [More info \[FR\]](#)

#EURegionsWeek

Energy, citizenship, the ECBM, observation: major topics at the heart of the workshops attended by the MOT

At the 2019 edition of the European Week of Regions and Cities, which brought together over 9,000 participants in Brussels, the MOT ran a workshop entitled “No country is an island: joint cross-border strategies for a clean energy transition”. The presentations made by three members of the network and a partner from Estonia illustrated the issues and the actions aimed at implementing the energy transition across borders. [More info](#)

The MOT took part in other workshops, some of which were devoted to topics that are at the heart of the issues facing cross-border territories: “Cross-border territories: Crucial places for engaging citizens for the future of Europe” (TEIN), “Better evidence on cross-border regions and INTERREG impacts” (DG REGIO), and “Completing the toolbox to overcome legal obstacles in cross-border regions” (DG REGIO).

The MOT underscores the importance of the discussions that took place, and invites people to consult the presentations from each workshop available online.

Study for the EIB: Identifying cross-border investment projects in Europe



Between November 2018 and July 2019, the MOT and CESCO (the Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives) collaborated on producing a study for the European Investment Bank and its European Investment Advisory Hub. Due to the greater emphasis on cross-border cooperation in the European agenda, one of the European Investment Advisory Hub’s priorities, as set out by regulation Invest EU, is to contribute to more integrated development of cross-border regions. Within the framework of this study, which is entitled

“Cross-border investment and economic development projects – Needs, tools, obstacles”, the MOT and CESCO were tasked with identifying cross-border investments and emerging economic development projects, and analysing these projects in terms of their maturity and soundness, with the focus on clusters of multi-sector and integrated projects capable of overcoming common challenges in a cross-border territory. By approaching a large number of project developers on a diverse range of

European borders, the MOT and CESCO were able to identify their specific needs and select a list of cross-border projects or clusters of projects potentially eligible to receive customised support aimed at enhancing their degree of maturity. In the final phase of the exercise, the MOT and CESCO identified eight measures to help increase the number of cross-border investment and economic development projects in Europe, and adapt the European Investment Bank’s technical and financial assistance to the specificities of these projects.

Towards coordination on obstacles at the European level?

With the support of the International Visegrad Fund, CESCO, the Hungarian equivalent of the MOT, and its partners along the borders between Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland have put forward proposals concerning the ECBM and the resolution of cross-border obstacles between these four countries. They suggest the creation of a European network of national contact points that could either be set up at national level or be pooled by several countries, as happens in the Nordic Council.

[More info](#)

Annual meeting of EGTCs in Palma

The annual meeting of the EGTC Platform took place in Palma, Spain, on 27 September 2019, in partnership with the Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion EGTC and the Government of the Balearic Islands. Jean Peyrony made a contribution in a roundtable devoted to the new ECBM tool, currently under discussion by the EU Council, which is aimed at facilitating the resolution of cross-border obstacles along Europe’s borders. The discussions also focused on good practices among EGTCs and the future of European territorial cooperation (ETC). [The presentations are online.](#)

TEIN4CITIZENS - a project to involve citizens

“How can we encourage citizens in border regions to take part in the discussions about the future of Europe?” This is one of the questions at the heart of the “TEIN4citizens” project being implemented by nine partners from the TEIN network. Co-funded by the “Europe for Citizens” programme, its aim is to give the inhabitants of border regions the opportunity to express their views about Europe. Through to May 2020, five events will enable discussions with them on issues such as security, multilingualism and citizenship. [More info](#)

Congress of Local Public Enterprises in Strasbourg

On 9 October 2019, the Federation of Local Public Enterprises (EPL) held its annual congress in Strasbourg, bringing together EPL from all over France. After a brief address by its President, Robert Herrmann, who notably mentioned examples of cross-border partnerships, the MOT took the floor to invite these entities to engage with the cross-border dimension, by means of a presentation of the opportunities both in terms of Interreg funding and structuring with entities on the other side of France’s borders. [More info \[FR\]](#)

PRESS REVIEW

▲ The Council of State wants to facilitate experimentation

Gazette des Communes, 7 October

"On 3 October, the Council of State presented its new study entitled 'Experiments: how to innovate in the conduct of public policy?' In it, it provides a guide to good practices and envisages possibilities for simplifying procedures without revising the Constitution."

▲ Namur Province - French Ardennes: coordinated healthcare

La Nouvelle Gazette, 1 October

"Optimising the coordination of cross-border healthcare in rural areas in Namur Province and the French Ardennes – this is the aim of the project Health in Smart Rurality (HIS2R), which was presented on Monday evening in Mariembourg."

▲ Cross-border cooperation: Meurthe-et-Moselle wants a co-development fund

Le Quotidien, 30 September

"The Meurthe-et-Moselle Departmental Council has taken a position in favour of a 'France-Luxembourg co-development fund', it emerged on Friday, 'which would not only be concerned with transport infrastructure, and which should help to meet the territories' needs with respect to services and equipment'."

▲ Parliament approves the Franco-German Aachen Treaty

AFP, 8 October

"On Tuesday Parliament authorised, by means of a vote in the Assemblée, the ratification of the new treaty between France and Germany signed in Aachen."

▲ Provision of cross-border healthcare

Dauphiné libéré, 28 June

"In Lauterbourg, [...] the launch of the Interreg VA Upper Rhine project 'PAMINA healthcare provision' took place. [...] This project led by the PAMINA Eurodistrict aims to improve the provision of healthcare to citizens by involving the competent French and German partners in the area of healthcare."

▲ Greater Geneva gives itself a night-time fright

24 Heures, 26 September

"The Geneva conurbation was plunged into darkness in the night from Thursday to Friday to raise people's awareness about the negative effects of night-time pollution. All in all, 45 Geneva municipalities, 25 from the Vaud Canton and 79 French ones took part in this initiative, which was a first in Europe."

▲ Beneath the Alps the Lyon-Turin line takes shape

Le Monde, 24 September

"The boring of an initial 9 km section of tunnel will be completed on Monday. The construction work will speed up. The tunnel is eight metres in diameter and nine kilometres long, buried deep within the mountains, in the heart of the Alps."

▲ The inhabitants of the Roya Valley mobilise to preserve the 'train des merveilles'

France Bleu Azur, 6 October

"The 'train des merveilles', which connects Nice to Cuneo, celebrated the 40th anniversary of its reopening today, Sunday 6 October. But many local inhabitants now regard this rail line as under threat."

▲ Working on both sides of the Pyrenees

L'Eclair des Pyrénées, 1 October

"The cross-border chamber of commerce Bihartean (Bihartean.com) is opening a new joint platform to help French and Spanish businesses work together."

"A multidimensional measurement of the integration between European border regions"

Academic article by Frédéric Durand and Antoine Decoville published in the *Journal of European Integration*, Publisher Taylor & Francis, September 2019

Cross-border integration in Europe is a complex and multifaceted process that has contrasting impacts on border regions. In this article, the authors provide, with the aid of statistical indicators, an analysis of cross-border integration along the EU's internal borders, highlighting the similarities and discrepancies that can be observed between different territories. They propose a methodology to measure the dimensions of integration based on combining the "functional", "ideational" (collective representations) and "institutional" dimensions. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2019.1657857>

JOURNAL OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
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ARTICLE

A multidimensional measurement of the integration between European border regions

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ABSTRACT
Cross-border integration in Europe is a complex and multifaceted process, which has contrasting impacts on border regions. In order to contribute to better depict it, this paper provides, with the help of statistical indicators, a systematic and multidimensional analysis of cross-border integration along all the EU internal borders. It highlights the similarities and discrepancies that can be observed between the different European regions with regards to the intensity of cross-border practices (the functional dimension of cross-border integration), the level of mutual social trust between border populations (the ideational dimension), and the involvement of stakeholders in cross-border cooperation projects (the institutional dimension). The different patterns that emerge from this analysis show that there can be no unique cross-border cooperation strategy at the EU scale to accompany the dismantlement of EU internal borders.

Introduction

For the inhabitants of border regions within the European Union (EU) and more specifically within the Schengen area, it is fascinating to measure the extent of the changes that have occurred since the times when borders still constituted obstacles to the flows of people. There have been many achievements since the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952; the first step toward the creation of the European Economic Community. The objectives of this first supranational structure were at this time to pool resources in order to create economic relationships that would be so strong they would discourage anyone from engaging in a new conflict. The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible. (Declaration of 9 May 1950 delivered by Robert Schuman). Since then, references to peacekeeping in Europe have disappeared from the institutional rhetoric of the EU in favor of territorial cooperation and cross-border cooperation. Peace seems probably so much embedded in collective perceptions that its evocation is no longer politically profitable to support the European integration project, even if the recent history in the neighboring regions of the EU should force us all to be far more cautious.

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