

The Nord Department celebrates 30 years of cross-border cooperation

On Monday, 21 October 2019 at the Stabliniski Velodrome in Roubaix, the Nord Department, West Flanders Province and Hainaut Province celebrated 30 years of cross-border cooperation.

Many political personalities and professionals involved in cross-border cooperation on both sides of the Franco-Belgian border came to shed light on the past years and expressed their desire to step up the actions carried out for the benefit cross-border populations.

Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), spoke about the evolution of cross-border cooperation. He stressed the importance of continuing to develop good relations between local

authorities and national governments in order to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of border regions. He recalled the importance of European instruments such as EGCTs, the MOT, the CoR and territorial cohesion.

After 30 years, the partners are once again joining forces in a cross-border strategy for the benefit of the region's inhabitants, in spite of the constant changes affecting the world in which they live. [More info \[FR\]](#)



The MOT holds its first webinar, on the topic of cross-border public services

Around 30 people took part in the first webinar organised by the MOT in partnership with the ESPON programme, on 21 November 2019, on the topic: "Potentials of Cross-border Public Services for French and Neighbouring Border Regions".

In 2018, the study "Cross-border Public Services (CPS)" carried out by ESPON made it possible to characterise the different models of cross-border public services in Europe's

border regions, providing the first overview of CPS in Europe: a total of 579 were identified, including some 177 along France's borders.

CPS can play a crucial role in their cross-border functional areas, where they help to reduce the negative effects of the border (improved connections, opening-up of the labour market, lower costs), thereby making it possible to maintain services in rural or sparsely populated border areas.

The webinar brought together, for the first time around a virtual table, members of the MOT network from borders far away from one another. The exchanges gave rise to a fruitful sharing of experiences between players who face similar issues, while coming from diverse institutional and geographical backgrounds.

[More info](#)

[View the recording of the webinar.](#)

EVENTS

"Let's talk together about the value added of European programmes for our border territories!", 4 December in Strasbourg.



The MOT and the Euro-Institut will present the initial findings of the Europ'Act capitalisation study for the Upper Rhine area at this cross-border seminar organised by the Grand Est Region, which commissioned the study. [More info](#) [FR]

"Cross-border job markets at the heart of Europe. Observing in order to act", 3 December in Scy-Chazelles (France)

"The presential economy: what perspectives for the Jura Arc?", 4 December 2019 in Bienne (Switzerland)

"Europe, je t'aime moi non plus?", 12 December 2019 in Courtrai (Belgium)

[All events](#)

Network day in Lille on cross-border mobility



At the invitation of the MOT, the CNFPT (National Centre for Territorial Public Administration) and the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis, 40 people gathered on 13 November in Lille to talk about cross-border transportation. The three sessions focused on: the need for the observation of flows and the reasons for travelling (work, shopping, leisure, healthcare); the challenges encountered in drawing up cross-border mobility strategies; and the breaking-down of the strategies into territorial projects. The experiences highlighted relate to metropolitan territories as well as less densely populated areas:

- One month from the launch of the Léman Express between Annemasse and Geneva, the director of Lémanis SA presented the history and expected impact

of the first cross-border regional rapid transit network.

- The Agape (North Lorraine Urban Planning Agency) presented the MMUST project, which, in collaboration with Luxembourg, will construct a model to describe the impact of projects with respect to flows of workers and goods.
- The Lille European Metropolis presented the results of the latest "Household Journeys Survey", extended to include the cross-border territory thanks to a partnership with the Walloon and Flemish regions.
- With the most frequently used means of transport to cross borders in France and Europe generally still being the car, the day highlighted alternative forms of car use, with the example of the car-sharing scheme in the Jura Arc.

- The Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict presented its cross-border tramline and other secondary links, such as the bus route between Erstein and Lahr. This latter case involves the integration of the private bus company into the overall transport network.
 - Lastly, a more recent project, called TRANSMOBIL, highlighted the existence of many "missing links" in the local public transport network between West Flanders Province and the Nord Department. [More info](#)
- The following day, the participants continued their discussions in Brussels at a seminar run by DG REGIO and DG MOVE: "Boosting Cross-Border Regions through better Transport!". [More info](#)

A cross-border waste water treatment plant between Belgium and Luxembourg



On 30 October 2019, the construction site of a new cross-border waste water treatment plant was presented to the public – a large-scale project on the border between Belgium and Luxembourg. Located near to the border post at Steinfort, the new cross-border facility will replace existing Belgian

and Luxembourg plants that have become too antiquated and small. Served by a waste water collection network covering several kilometres, the plant, which will have capacity of 15,600 population equivalent, will have an impact on the quality of the water of the River Eisch and downstream on the quality of the water of the Moselle. Led by Idélux-eau (BE) and SIDERO (LU), this project is receiving financial support from the Greater Region Interreg programme.

[More info](#)

France-United Kingdom: for strengthened cooperation between local authorities

The successful bids for the call for projects "France-United Kingdom: for a strengthened cooperation between our local authorities" launched by the British Embassy in France, with the support of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have been announced. Among them may be noted: a project between the Pas-de-Calais, the Hauts-de-France Region and Kent to strengthen and formalise their cooperation, a project on the theme of energy between Brest and Plymouth, and another between the Ille-et-Vilaine Department, Jersey and the South Coast of England aimed at encouraging business exchanges.

[More info](#)

A 2030 strategy for the Upper Rhine Trinational Metropolitan Region

The 2030 strategy for the Upper Rhine Trinational Metropolitan Region was signed in Basel on 22 November. "We want to be a model region for Europe and to make visible and tangible the benefits that Europe provides day by day. To do this, we will continue to develop excellence in the economic and scientific field, to strengthen structures of cross-border cooperation and to develop new potential," the political representatives affirmed on this occasion.

[More info](#)

A Council of Europe resolution on the distribution of taxes in cross-border areas

On 29 October, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution entitled “Fair distribution of taxes in transfrontier areas”. In the report presented by Karl-Heinz Lambertz, the Congress calls for greater cooperation between the countries concerned on this issue. “Transfrontier working and the free movement of labour across borders are a vital aspect of European cooperation and integration. To prevent this causing fiscal disparities between regions on either side of borders and thereby undermining territorial cohesion, it is essential that taxes be distributed fairly between workers’ places of employment and places of residence,” Karl-Heinz Lambertz recalled during the session. [More info](#)

The European Territorial Authority of Alsace and cross-border cooperation: what does the Act say?

The Act¹ of 2 August 2019 concerning the competences of the European Territorial Authority of Alsace (CEA) ratified the creation of this new territorial authority arising from the merger of the French Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin Departments on 1 January 2021. [The CEA has been designated lead partner for cross-border cooperation to organise in its territory the joint actions of territorial authorities](#), in their respective fields of competence. In order to do this, the Act provides for the formulation by this authority of an Alsace Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy² – a process to which the government, the Grand Est Region, the Strasbourg Eurometropolis, the other territorial authorities concerned and their cross-border groupings will contribute. This strategy will be drawn up in coherence with the cross-border

component of the SRDEII,² as well as with the cross-border cooperation strategy of the Strasbourg Eurometropolis.³

As well as benefiting from new transfers of competences in the areas of language teaching, regional cultures, tourism and the public highways located in the territory of the two departments which it is succeeding, the CEA will have the role of exploiting the cross-border opportunities linked to its key position within the Franco-German partnership. As lead partner on cross-border cooperation in its territory, [it will contribute to the implementation of the Aachen Treaty and the possibilities it gives to French and German border region authorities and their groupings](#):

- granting by national governments of “appropriate competences, dedicated resources and accelerated procedures to



enable obstacles to the realisation of cross-border projects to be overcome”;

- creation of a Cross-Border Cooperation Committee, a body for coordination and making proposals that involves players from the territory.

[In particular, the CEA’s role is to generate proposals for concrete projects via its Alsace Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy, in order to take advantage of the new opportunities offered by the treaty, as well as by the upcoming Interreg programme for 2021-2027.](#)

¹ Act No. 2019-816.

² Regional Strategy for Economic Development and Innovation and Internationalisation.

³ See the Act of 27 January 2014 concerning the modernisation of territorial public action and affirmation of metropolises, known as the “MAPTAM Act”.

Meeting of the National Mountain Council on cross-border issues

The National Mountain Council is a consultative body, established by the Montagne Act, that has a proposal-making role with respect to setting goals for the development, spatial planning and protection of mountain ranges. It is made up of parliamentarians and representatives from the regions and departments of the six mountain ranges in metropolitan France (the Alps, Corsica, the Jura, the Massif Central, the Pyrenees and the Vosges) and the three overseas mountain ranges, social professionals and representatives from the voluntary sector. The General Commission for Territorial Equality provides its general secretariat.

Several of France’s mountain ranges are located along its borders. The National Mountain Council’s working group “European and cross-border cooperation”, which the MOT participates in, met on 6 November, in the presence of Annie Genevard, MP of the Doubs Department and President of the National Association of Mountain Elected Representatives. The discussions focused on the role of diplomatic advisors, the possibilities opened up by the ECBM and the Aachen Treaty, and – presented by the MOT – fiscal equalisation mechanisms aimed at addressing border region imbalances.

[More info](#)

Sign the joint declaration on healthcare in cross-border regions!

The network of European Regional and Local Health Authorities (EUREGHA) and the Healthacross initiative have published a joint declaration aimed at promoting cross-border cooperation in the area of healthcare, and at putting forward political recommendations. The goal is to encourage stakeholders to take measures to ensure fair access to healthcare. Bodies that wish to be invited to join the initiative by signing the declaration.

[More info](#)

Assessing the territorial impact of cross-border cooperation

The ESPON programme has published its new report about Territorial Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation – TIA CBC.

This work for this report was focused on designing a methodology aimed at assessing the territorial impact of cross-border cooperation programmes across Europe.

[More info](#)

PRESS REVIEW

▲ Cohesion policy feels the squeeze in the upcoming European budget

Euractiv, 10 October

"Some EU Member States wish to lower the percentage used to allocate the budget for Europe for the 2021-2027 period. It looks like it will be cohesion policy subsidies in the regions that will take a hit. [...] The 2021-2027 budget proposed in May by the Commission corresponds to 1.11% of the EU-27's gross national income. [...] This proposal introduces a 10% reduction in cohesion policy funding."

▲ Amélie de Montchalin pleads the cause of TER rail-users

Wort.lu, 15 October

"On Monday morning, the French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs tried in vain to persuade the Greater Region Minister, Corinne Cahen, to back down on the issue of TER regional express trains, which are prohibited from running in Luxembourg from 1 January 2020. [...] They took stock of the work of the Intergovernmental Commission on Cross-Border Cooperation, which the two young women jointly chair – an opportunity to reaffirm the shared goal of creating the 'best living and working conditions for citizens on both sides of the border'."

▲ Cross-border taxation: Bettel says no to Rhineland-Palatinate

Le Quotidien, 6 November

"Relations between the Grand Duchy and Rhineland-Palatinate remain 'excellent' [...]. However, the 'close cooperation' is not enabling progress to be made on the issue of tax."

▲ Edouard Husson: 'Germany's political fragmentation calls for a radical change of method in Paris'

Le Monde, 30 October

"Our country is going to have to learn how to step up contacts at all levels in Germany, to make our parliamentarians work much more with those of the Bundestag, and our regional councils with those of the Landtag."

▲ The Aachen Treaty gradually takes shape

Localtis, 22 October

"The act authorising the ratification of the Aachen Treaty was published in the Journal Officiel on 22 October. The treaty [...] is gradually taking shape. While the Common Citizens' Fund seems well underway, there is still some uncertainty surrounding the Cross-Border Cooperation Committee."

▲ Conurbation project No. 3: CHF 120 million for Greater Geneva

Greater Geneva, 6 November

"The partners in the Greater Geneva LGCC today signed the agreement on the services provided under the third-generation conurbation project."

▲ Actions with the 'Man and biosphere' label on both sides of the border

Dauphiné libéré, 23 October

"Across the huge area between the north of the Hautes-Alpes Department and Piedmont, project developers can aim to be awarded the 'Man and biosphere' label."

▲ A cross-border campus

Sud Ouest, 22 October

"The Euroregional strategy has relaunched cooperation between universities and vocational training centres. Universities have always been engines for change, and crucibles for large-scale projects. And the Nouvelle-Aquitaine - Euskadi - Navarre Euroregion is no exception: 11 universities coexist across its territory of 100,000 square kilometres."

"Diplomatie territoriale et coopération transfrontalière : Le cas des frontières françaises"*

Article by Jean Peyrony, Director-General of the MOT, published in: "La diplomatie des collectivités territoriales des années 1980 à nos jours"**, Editors Birte Wassenberg and Marion Aballéa, L'Harmattan, collection Cahiers de Fare, No. 17, 2019, pp. 75-102.

"The study of developments since the 1980s raises questions about the role and place of territorial authorities in an international system involving diverse players, and prompts a rethinking, by means of infra-State players, of the historical roles of diplomacy: representing and negotiating." The article analyses this diplomacy in the cross-border context along France's borders. [More info \[FR\]](#)

* "Territorial diplomacy and cross-border cooperation: the case of France's borders"

** "The diplomacy of territorial authorities from the 1980s to the present day"

DynamE

La diplomatie des collectivités territoriales des années 1980 à nos jours

Local and Regional Authorities as New Diplomatic Actors Since the 1980's

Sous la direction de/Edited by Birte Wassenberg & Marion Aballéa

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L'Harmattan

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