

Aachen Treaty

First meeting of the Cross-Border Cooperation Committee

One year on from the signing of the Aachen Treaty, a Franco-German "Cross-Border Cooperation Committee" was officially established, in Hambach, on 22 January 2020, in the presence of the German Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Michael Roth, and the French Secretary of State in charge of European Affairs, Amélie de Montchalin. Its objective is "to overcome everyday border problems by means of concrete and reproducible solutions".

To do this, the Committee will adopt an annual roadmap and bring together at least once a year representatives of the French and German interior and foreign affairs ministries, as well as its local executive members (Länder, Region, Departments and Eurodistricts, National MPs).

It looks "as a priority at issues relating to cross-border cooperation that the existing bodies have not been able to resolve, and whose resolution requires increased cooperation". To this end, it needs "to coordinate cross-border territorial

observation, set out a joint strategy for the choice of priority projects, analyse the impact of new legislation on territories, monitor the difficulties encountered in border territories and put forward proposals aimed at overcoming them". The Committee can set up targeted working groups and has the ability to propose that legislation be adapted. It has identified 12 obstacles to overcome, including six priority ones relating to healthcare, cross-border apprenticeships, marathons (with respect to medical certificates), school trips, the "Crit'Air" windscreen disc and tax issues relating to labour law. The MOT, which is an observer member of the Committee, is involved notably in providing legal assistance to players along the Franco-German border, in monitoring the process at national and European level (ministries and Parliament), and the collating of the needs and experiences across all of France's borders, together with its members. [More info \[FR\]](#)

Jean Rottner

President of the
Grand Est Region



Territorial authorities' new place in cross-border cooperation: passed with flying colours!

"Last year, 2019, was a crucial one for the shaping of the future of cross-border cooperation. With the signing of the Aachen Treaty and the setting-up of the Cross-Border Cooperation Committee, the Franco-German Council of Ministers and the Franco-German Parliamentary Assembly, many new areas of work were initiated in 2019.

Thanks to the creation of the diplomatic tandem between the President of the Grand Est Region and the Prefect of the Region within the framework of the Matignon Declaration, the Grand Est Region is now a fully-fledged participant in the diplomatic discussions to champion the interests of the territories.

In 2020, we therefore need to turn our aspirations into decisive action and to bring to these unprecedented tools in Franco-German cooperation clear objectives and concrete methods to achieve clear results: cross-border mobility, the post-Fessenheim redevelopment, cross-border apprenticeships, giving impetus to the border attractiveness zone – many areas that require coordination and operational construction. Taking concrete action – that is the task of cross-border diplomacy in 2020. Fortunately, the Grand Est Region did not wait until this year to initiate genuine, effective and operational cooperation with its border partners. [...]"

Continued on page 2.



EVENTS

Regional conference "What prospects for Franco-Italian cross-border cooperation?", 10 March 2020 in Marseille, organised by the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region. [More info \[FR\]](#)

First MOT working group on metropolitan cooperation, 11 March 2020, in Paris. [More info \[FR\]](#)

2020 MOT's general assembly and annual conference, 26-27 May 2020, in Colmar, at the invitation of the Haut-Rhin Department. [More info soon.](#)

EU Regions Week 2020: Call for ideas!

The 2020 edition of the European Week of Regions and Cities will take place from 12 to 15 October in Brussels. The three themes chosen for this edition are: "Green Europe", "Cohesion and Cooperation", and "Empowering Citizens".

If you would like to propose a workshop topic or organise a session in partnership with the MOT, contact us by 9 March: raffaele.viaggi@mot.asso.fr

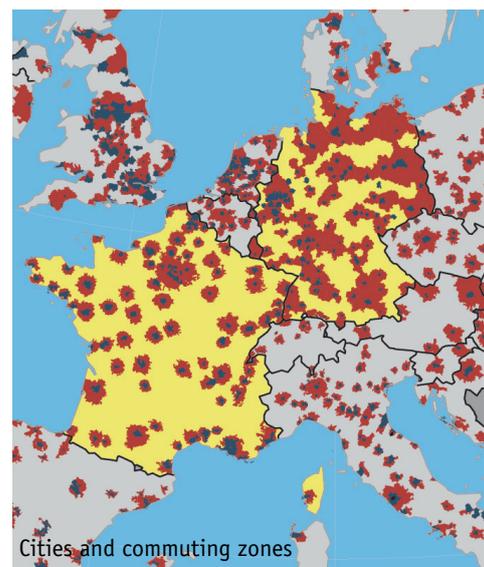
The deadline for applications is 27 March.

[More info](#)

[All the events](#)

Germany and France at the Forefront of Cross-border Observation in Europe

On 5 and 6 December 2019 in Bonn (Germany), the German Federal Institute for Research on Building Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR) brought together the signatories of the "Memorandum for the creation of a European network for cross-border observation", representatives from Germany's different borders (Statistics offices, local and regional authorities, ministries in charge of territorial cohesion, national bodies), as well as DG REGIO, the ESPON programme, and the MOT.



Source: Eurostat, JRC, European Commission DG REGIO.

During this meeting, the BBSR presented the second pilot project of the "MORO" spatial planning research initiative on cross-border statistical observation at Germany's borders, of which one of the goals is to establish a catalogue of cross-border indicators that can serve as a basis for work on all European borders. This represents the birth of a European network for cross-border observation, in line with the dynamic created by the Aachen Treaty.

With the goal of implementing better public policy for border regions, this network's mission will be to survey their needs and to make progress on issues around data, at European and multinational levels (harmonisation, networking of players), and at the local level, on specific topics linked to the different characteristics of the territories. The MOT will co-organise, with the BBSR, Luxembourg's Ministry for Energy and

Spatial Planning and the Netherlands' Statistical Institute, a participatory workshop to highlight the initiatives being undertaken across Europe on cross-border observation, during the European Week of Regions and Cities (EWRC) in October 2020 in Brussels.

- [More info](#) (presentations from the meeting).
- [Brochure "France-Germany: Cross-border Observation at the Heart of Europe"](#).

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"[...] Already in 2019 a unique cooperation agreement, both in terms of its scale and its territorial scope, was reached with the three neighbouring German Länder (Saarland, Rhineland-Palatinate and Baden-Württemberg), with the joint purchase of rolling stock comprising 30 cross-border trains, at a cost of €370 million. Today, cross-border cooperation must go beyond the current bodies and have a fresh perspective on the cross-border territories, and thus go beyond the current territorial cooperation structures (the Upper Rhine, the Greater Region and the Franco-Belgian Ardennes). The creation of the European Artificial

Intelligence Valley is a superb example of this, promoting scientific and economic cooperation from Switzerland up to Belgium. Backed by a proactive trinational strategy by Paris, Brussels and Berlin, the Grand Est Region intends to vigorously champion the interests of the cross-border territories at regional, national and European level. I am thus calling on all of those who support the cross-border and European cause to join us in this endeavour. And of course I am counting on the MOT to support us in our projects!"

"Together For a Sustainable Alpine Region"

The French presidency of the EU strategy for the Alpine Region, launched on 4 February in Lyon, intends to move into higher gear regarding the ecological transition within this transnational space among the most vulnerable and under threat due to climate change. Led by the ANCT (National Agency for Territorial Cohesion), this presidency is shared with the regions Auvergne Rhône-Alpes, Bourgogne Franche Comté and Provence Alpes-Côte d'Azur. "The Alps are at the heart of Europe. They are its spinal column, its highest point, and its water tower", underlined Jacqueline Gourault, the French minister for territorial cohesion and relations with local and regional authorities, on the occasion of the launch conference. [More info \[FR\]](#)

Launch of the first MOT working group on metropolitan cooperation

In 2020, the MOT plans to set up several working groups open to the whole of its network. Their purpose is to step up the sharing of experiences, and exchanges between experts, to produce joint resources and to foster the creation of cross-border communities.

The working group on metropolitan cooperation will be jointly coordinated by the Greater Besançon Metropolis and the Besançon Centre Franche-Comté Urban Planning Agency, with the first meeting due to be held in Paris on 11 March.

The first phase of the working group (March 2020-spring 2021) will be devoted to issues around attractiveness. Three other meetings (on higher education and research, attractiveness and regional strategies, etc.) will be scheduled in June, the autumn and early 2021.

Contact for more information:
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Capitalisation study for the Grand Est region

"Together, Let's Discuss the Added Value of EU Programmes For Our Border Territories"

The MOT and Euro-Institut are carrying out a capitalisation study on behalf of the Grand Est region, funded by the Europ'Act technical assistance programme. Within this framework, three seminars have been held: in Strasbourg on 4 December, in Metz on 3 February, and in Charleville-Mézières on 10 February. Bringing together 250 participants, involved in cross-border issues by virtue of their commitments as project leaders or their functions within local and regional authorities or cross-border bodies, these three days enabled those present to compare their analyses on the implementation of projects in the Grand Est region and to reflect on possible

improvements for the next programming period. The meetings were an occasion to bring together players involved in each of the three cooperation spaces of which the Grand Est region is a part: the Franco-Belgian Ardenne, the Greater Region, and the Upper Rhine. The discussions gave rise to a number of important observations on the progress of cooperation in the Grand Est, with the spotlight on projects highlighting both the growing needs linked to these territories and to their daily interactions across borders, and the interest of the territorial authorities concerned for the deployment of autonomous cross-border policies - guarantees for

cohesion and development. The collaborative workshops held each afternoon on the themes of project set-up, cross-financing linked to the different EU funds, and ensuring the sustainability of initiatives, highlighted several key issues linked to implementation. The strengthening of networks of potential partners, support from territorial authorities in the preparation of applications, and the participation of new players and of end users in projects notably emerged as proposals for future work. A public conference relaying the findings of this study will take place on 11 May in Metz.
[More info \[FR\]](#)



The MOT's contribution at the conference "Spatial planning in the Franco-Swiss Jura Arc"

On 23 January 2020, the MOT took part in the conference "Spatial planning in the Franco-Swiss Jura Arc", held in La Chaux-de-Fonds (CH) within the framework of the Interreg V – ARC-AD programme. As well as being an opportunity to share views on spatial planning issues in the cross-border territory, the purpose of the conference was to present the ARC-AD tool, a decision-making tool designed to facilitate the coordination of territorial planning across the Jura Arc.

The MOT, represented by Aurélien Biscuit, made a contribution in order to present other experiences and tools along France's borders, and in particular the cross-border cooperation strategy of the Nice Metropolis, and the tools and approaches developed in the Greater Region. It also saluted the ARC-AD initiative, which is a rare one in cross-border settings, but very necessary: "We need to observe to understand, and to understand in order to act." [More info \[FR\]](#)



The MOT's position on the Territorial Agenda 2030

The Territorial Agenda sets out the European strategy for spatial planning. Following on from its adoption in 2007 in Leipzig, and the first update in 2011, the ministers in charge of territorial cohesion have embarked on a new update of the Agenda. A consultation has been launched, to which the MOT has responded in order to highlight cross-border issues. The new Territorial Agenda will be adopted by ministers at the end of 2020 in Leipzig, under Germany's presidency of the EU Council.

[Consult the MOT's position.](#)

PRESS REVIEW

▲ Brexit: Will British Patients Still Come to Calais For Healthcare?

La Croix, 29 January

"The Calais hospital centre signed, in 2015, an agreement with the British public health system to treat patients without requiring advance payments. The agreement is unlikely to be called into question, but uncertainty around Brexit has already led to a decline in visits."

▲ Cross-border Employment: Decline in flows between the region and Belgium

La Voix du Nord, 8 February

"It's a curve in the shape of a peak. After multiplying six-fold between 1982 and 2010, the number of salaried workers in Hauts-de-France in employment abroad has decreased by 2,800, representing a drop of 10.5 % between 2013 and 2017. The main cause of this drop: the change of tax regime for border workers that took effect on 1st January 2012".

▲ Employment: A Model to Strengthen

L'Alsace, 22 January

"Living in Mulhouse and finding a job in Germany, or living in Baden-Baden and working in Alsace - it's possible! A cross-border framework convention, that establishes a partnership for jobs between different bodies from the two countries, was renewed this Monday in Freiburg."

▲ Border Cities Like Strasbourg Must Become the Linchpins of Europe

Huffington Post, 31 January

"Yes, Europe must, and can, become a near-everyday practice for tens of millions of people. The era of dialogue from capital to capital, passing over the borders, is no longer sufficient. Henceforth, the peoples must talk to each other on the borders. There has to be a decentralised approach to the building of Europe."

▲ Heating network between Kehl and Strasbourg: Heat will cross the Rhine

DNA, 14 February

"A semi-public company will be set up to create a heat recovery network between Kehl and Strasbourg."

▲ Healthcare Costs in Basel Soon to be Reimbursed

DNA, 13 Feb. - "An Alsatian with healthcare cover in France cannot be reimbursed for health-care costs incurred in Switzerland. Since the signing of a bilateral agreement in 2016, cross-border health cooperation has yet to materialise. But work on the ground is finally underway, announces the Grand Est Regional Health Agency."

▲ Espace Mont-Blanc Elected Officials Come to Agreement on Charter

Le Dauphiné, 16 February

"This document is super important", says Éric Fournier, mayor of Chamonix, driving force behind the AdaPT Mont-Blanc transalpine programme, whose framework this charter falls within. 'The crucial point to remember, is that henceforth, the text is the same on the Italian side and on the French side of Mont-Blanc'."

▲ Rescue - The First Cross-border Centre Inaugurated

La République des Pyrénées, 11 February

"It's a first for the département. This Saturday at 11am at Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, the new fire and rescue centre will be inaugurated, the first considered cross-border in scope..."

▲ Basque Country: For Stronger Cross-border Cooperation

Sud Ouest, 10 February

"The survey, of 2100 people in Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Euskadi and Navarre, shows that their links need to be strengthened. Little known, but useful provided that it goes further. These are the findings of a survey undertaken for 'Sud Ouest' and the 'Diario Vasco' by the polling organisation Ikerfel on the Nouvelle-Aquitaine-Euskadi-Navarre Euroregion."

Agenda-setting dynamics in the post-2020 cohesion policy reform: the pathway towards the European cross-border mechanism as possible policy change

Article by Estelle Evrard and Alice Engl, published in the *Journal of European Integration*, Ed. Taylor & Francis, November 2019, 20p.

The article examines issues specific to the development of the European Cross-Border Mechanism (ECBM) proposed by the European Commission for the next programming period. It describes the manner in which the ECBM tool proposal arose through the action of an ensemble of "policy entrepreneurs". The article highlights the role of the MOT as a facilitator and a relay.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07036337.2019.1689969>

This publication is available in the MOT's documentary portal. Specialising in cross-border cooperation, this contains over 4,000 documents and documentary references. [More info \[FR\]](#)



CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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