

Preparation of the European programmes for 2021-2027

What account is being taken of the cross-border territorial approach?

The Covid-19 crisis demands that European and cross-border cooperation be strengthened. The 2021-2027 programmes, the preparation of which is continuing, should be informed by the lessons learned from it. The draft regulations proposed by the Commission, which are in the process of being negotiated with the Parliament and the Council, contain positive innovations for cross-border territories that address their aspirations, as expressed in the Cross-Border Cooperation Strategies along France’s borders. The MOT encourages all of the stakeholders to take them on board. First of all, the Commission is opening up Interreg; regional and national programmes, as well as other policies (transport, etc.), must take

account of cross-border, transnational and interregional issues. Other points to note:

1. introduction of a specific "Better Interreg governance" objective;
2. a new objective: "A Europe closer to citizens";
3. the ECBM regulation and the possibility for local players to propose solutions to governments to overcome obstacles, as exemplified by the Aachen Treaty on the Franco-German border;
4. the requirement for greater account to be taken of cross-border structures and territories in the design and monitoring of cross-border programmes.

[More details of these innovations on p. 3.](#)

Special dossier – Cross-Border Cooperation Strategies along France’s borders

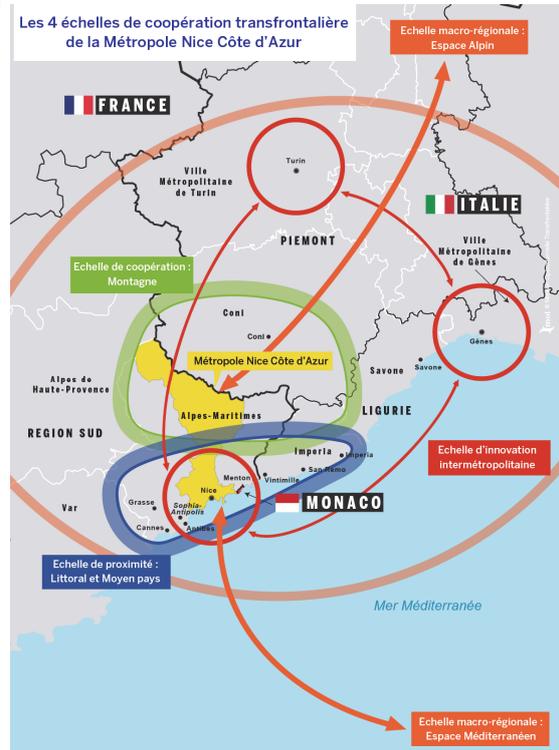
The four levels of cooperation of the Nice Côte d’Azur Metropolis

The Nice Côte d’Azur Metropolis is a unique cross-border territory, located between the sea and the mountains and adjacent to two borders: an internal EU border over 100 km long with the Piedmont Region in Italy and an international border with the Principality of Monaco. Its 2020-2030 Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy, adopted on 16 December 2019, is organised into four complementary levels of work:

- **The coastal and hinterland level** where the issues of mobility, jobs and natural risks require a close partnership with its neighbours;

- **The mountain level** to maintain and develop eco-responsible public and economic services in the context of climate change;
- **The inter-metropolitan level** where Genoa and Turin metropolises are the main players, also involving Monaco to develop cross-border innovation, in particular to create a cross-border research and innovation zone;
- **The Alpine and Mediterranean influence level**, in partnership with the Sud Region, to ensure that this cross-border area takes action in macro-regional strategies.

[To be continued](#)



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The MOT’s general assembly, which was scheduled to be held on 26-27 May in Colmar, at the invitation of the Haut-Rhin Department, has been postponed as a result of the health crisis, until 8-9 September. [More info](#)

What is a Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy?

The Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy first appeared with the French MAPTAM Act of 2014, which affirmed the role of metropolises. It is a strategic coordination document for the French side of the border aimed at enabling cross-border actions. The act provides for its drafting by metropolises that border on a foreign country, in association with “the department, the region and the municipalities concerned”.

[More info](#)

The Lille European Metropolis’s Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy - an opportunity to rethink its cross-border strategy

The need to draw up a Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy was an opportunity for the Lille European Metropolis to rethink its cross-border strategy and regional leadership in this regard. In order to better assess the aspirations and orientations of its Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy, in 2016 the MEL commissioned the MOT to help prepare it, and set up a technical committee bringing together central government, the Region and the Department as well as the territories and urban planning agencies along the Franco-Belgian border. This first phase resulted in a framework deliberation in December 2017, which set out four priority levels of issues and actions (concerning border municipalities, the Lille Metropolis, the Euroregion including the coast and the inter-metropolitan relationship with Brussels). This strategic framework also highlighted the need for coordination on each side of the border given the number of partner institutions on either side. The MEL commissioned the Lille Metropolis Development and Urban Planning Agency (ADULM) to help flesh out the strategic content of the Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy and combine these levels with five thematic areas (mobility, citizenship, economic development, climate issues and quality of life). This also made it possible to foster, during the whole process of drawing up the Regional Spatial Planning, Sustainable Development

and Territorial Equality Strategy (SRADDET), dialogue between the MEL and the Hauts de France Region, as well as with the regional border territories.

The MEL now has a governance manual and an operational framework to be incorporated into future European Territorial Cooperation programmes, which are designed to guide it together with the French partners in the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis in its response to new cross-border challenges, such as anticipating and managing ecological and environmental, health, economic or social crises. [More info](#)



The Strasbourg Eurometropolis’s Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy

The territory of the Strasbourg Eurometropolis has an abundance of players and initiatives in the area of cross-border cooperation, for the most part designed and implemented with its German partners in Kehl and Ortenau. It also has several tools for dialogue and cross-border governance that enable it to foster and coordinate the daily contacts that make it one of the centres for cooperation in the Upper Rhine area.

With its Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy adopted in December 2019, the Strasbourg Eurometropolis sought to put forward a shared vision of its territorial development as well as responses to the different issues faced at the cross-border level in the areas of mobility, the energy transition, vocational training or innovation.

Entrusted to the Strasbourg Conurbation Urban Planning Agency (ADEUS) and benefiting from support from the MOT, this initiative was innovative in two respects. **First, although the Strategy only covers the territory of the Eurometropolis, from start to finish it has involved all of the border territory partners, who were invited to contribute to it in the same way as French bodies like the Bas-Rhin Department and the Grand Est Region. Second, its pragmatic and evolving character give it a flexibility and adaptability that enable it to position the territorial authority in the most efficient way in a multi-level framework undergoing major institutional changes.**

With its different topics set out in a roadmap at local, regional and supra-regional levels covering 11 priority projects, the Eurometropolis’s Strategy formalises a new strategic vision of its action and anticipates the complete integration of the cross-border dimension in all of the territory’s public policies. [More info](#)

The Basque Country Community has also adopted a strategy based on the Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy

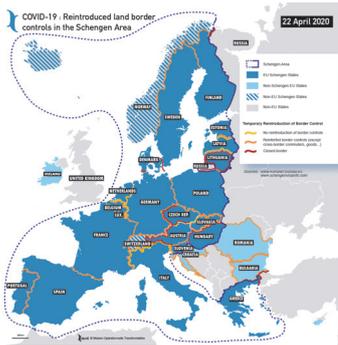
On 15 December 2018, the Basque Country Community approved a “cross-border cooperation” competence. [Drawing on the Cross-Border Cooperation Strategy approach, it embarked on a consultative process to draw up its cross-border cooperation strategy up to 2030. The objective was to codesign cross-border public policy and to be aligned with the framework of the forthcoming 2021-2027 European programming period.](#)

In order to draw up this strategy, it set up specific governance and consultation bodies such as a steering committee made up of representatives of the competent institutions on either side of the border, and organised thematic workshops with public and private players from the cross-border territory. It received technical assistance from the MOT and the Atlantic and Pyrenees Urban Planning Agency to complete the drafting of the strategy.

The cross-border strategy now enables the Basque Country Community to prioritise its areas of cooperation, to develop a policy to support the cross-border dimension in order to encourage initiatives by players in the territory, to rethink the frameworks for cross-border governance, and to enhance the Basque Country’s standing at national, European and international level. It comprises four major objectives: facilitating the lives of inhabitants and businesses in the cross-border living area; developing shared values and representations – forging a cross-border sense of belonging; addressing the challenges of the ecological transition, and the management of shared resources and natural spaces; and promoting excellence and the cross-border territory’s standing. The councillors of the Basque Country Conurbation approved the strategy on 14 December 2019. [More info](#)

Covid-19 -

The MOT has produced a map showing the reintroduction of border controls in the Schengen Area following the outbreak



Covid-19 -

Send us your cross-border experiences

The MOT and its European partners are giving a voice to local and regional players in border territories during this very unusual period. [More info](#)

Continued from page 1

1. Political objective “Better Interreg governance”: by reserving at least 10% of the budget for support for the structuring of cross-border governance via this objective, programmes will notably be able to fund actions of network building, statistical observation, assistance to players in overcoming obstacles (using the model of the b-solutions initiative), or micro-projects to foster meetings between citizens.

2. Political objective “A Europe closer to citizens”: the formulation of an objective focused on the “territorialised” approach complements the more sectoral approach that prevailed before. It leads at European level to the drafting of BOPs by the Commission – strategic documents in which the latter puts forward its analysis of the needs on each border, using a functional approach, prior to the drawing-up of future programmes. Cross-border structures (EGTCs and others) can play a crucial role in this, by coordinating future

integrated strategies and by acting as the single beneficiary in order to channel larger amounts of funding into a given cross-border territory. The adoption of Cross-Border Cooperation Strategies in France is also contributing to this dynamic, by coordinating players on the French side of the border (including to ensure account is taken of cross-border territories in regional operational programmes and State-region planning contracts (CPER)), and by initiating dialogue with their cross-border neighbours.

3. To address the low level of interoperability of national legislations, which hampers the development of cross-border projects, the draft ECBM regulation creates a process that enables border region players to propose innovative solutions to governments, via a network of national focal points, which coordinate with one another along each border, and within the framework of a European network steered by the DG

REGIO contact point. Interreg programmes will also now be oriented towards overcoming obstacles (see the governance objective). The innovations introduced by the Franco-German Aachen Treaty already anticipate on the Franco-German border the development of such an instrument, by involving governments, territorial executive powers, national parliamentarians and cross-border governance structures in overcoming obstacles in a joint steering committee.

4. The place of cities and cross-border territories in programmes (in their strategy, partnerships and monitoring committees) is a crucial issue.

The Commission recommends involving territorial authorities and cross-border players such as EGTCs in the drawing-up of the 2021-2027 operational programmes. If the OPs are drawn up without involvement from local players, they run the risk of not being adopted.

[More info](#)

Covid-19 and European measures:

Free movement of workers: on 30 March, the Commission published practical guidance to ensure the free movement of critical workers, including cross-border workers. [More info](#)

Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus (CRII+): on 2 April the European Commission put forward a new set of measures, the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus (CRII+), which introduced greater flexibility and simplified procedural steps to allow all unutilised support from the European Structural and Investment Funds to be mobilised to the fullest. [More info](#)

Flow of essential goods and services within the EU: on 23 March, the Commission published practical guidance on the implementation of the “green lanes” provided for by the guidelines on border management measures. [More info](#)

Emergency assistance in cross-border cooperation in healthcare related to the Covid-19 crisis: on 3 April the Commission published guidelines on EU emergency assistance with respect to cross-border cooperation in the area of healthcare. [More info](#)

Common EU toolbox for the use of technology and data in the context of the Covid-19 crisis: Commission recommendation of 8 April. [More info](#)

Covid-19 and cooperation: Franco-German declaration

The MP for Moselle, Christophe Arend, and his counterpart, Andreas Jung, have published a joint Franco-German declaration entitled “**Together against coronavirus!**”, calling for Franco-German and European solidarity in this period of crisis. Christophe Arend chairs the Franco-German friendship group at the Assemblée Nationale, and is also co-chair of the board of the Franco-German Assembly under the Aachen Treaty. [More info](#)

It should be noted that a **manifesto for Franco-German cooperation** has also been signed by many local elected representatives. [More info](#)

Prefects’ power of derogation: a new decree

A new decree concerning the right of derogation available to prefects was adopted on 8 April 2020. In accordance with the commitment made by the French President, and following an experiment conducted over nearly two years, it was decided to extend the power of derogation to all prefects and thereby step up the devolving of decisions to the local level. Among the areas in which this ability to derogate is authorised are: spatial planning and city policy, the environment, housing and urban planning, jobs, economic activity, culture, etc. [More info](#). [The decree](#).

PRESS REVIEW

Brussels recommends a coordinated, gradual exit from the lockdowns in a spirit of solidarity

Localtis/Banque des Territoires, 15 April

"At the request of Member States, the Presidents of the European Commission and Council have set out a European roadmap for a coordinated exit from the crisis. As well as the necessary harmonisation of tools and decisions, the document particularly stresses the need for a gradual lifting of the containment measures. Once the crisis has been got through, it will remain to manage what comes after. The hardest part is yet to come."

[Read article \[FR\]](#)

Borders blocked, territories congested

Localtis/Banque des Territoires, 27 March

"To address the coronavirus crisis, countries have chosen solitary paths rather than one of solidarity, particularly in tightening border controls, which has an impact on very interdependent cross-border economies. The first affected are cross-border workers and the transportation of goods. 'Regarding border controls, this situation is not new however,' points out Jean Peyrony, Director of the MOT, interviewed by Localtis."

[Read article \[FR\]](#)

"Border territories at the heart of what this crisis reveals"

L'Alsace, 8 April

"Crossing points, authorisations for 'essential workers': the epidemic has generated a whole host of complexities for border territories, which countries are managing 'in a cross-cutting manner', as the Secretary of State for European Affairs, Amélie de Montchalin, explains."

Opinion piece by the PAMINA Eurodistrict: What comes after the present crisis?

Eurojournalist, 7 April

"The current health crisis is unprecedented. It is impacting the whole world and paralysing all countries regardless of their political regime or constitution."

[Read the opinion piece \[FR\]](#)

In Alsace, cross-border cooperation has saved lives

Le Figaro, 16 April

"At the height of the health crisis, patients were transferred across the border to Germany, thanks to the involvement of elected representatives. There are lessons to be learned for the future."

The border will be erased again

Le Républicain lorrain, 17 April

"Jean Rottner, President of the Grand Est Regional Council, and Tobias Hans, Minister-President of Saarland, have signed a joint opinion piece on the future of Franco-German relations. The ongoing pandemic is seriously testing Europe's open borders. We feel it particularly in our region, on the border between France and Germany."

Switzerland. Cross-border workers: how the pandemic complicates their lives

Courier International, 18 April

"On both sides of Switzerland's borders, which are now closed, family and work life has become a headache for many cross-border workers. Stories gathered by Le Temps: 'I had never realised that I lived in France up till now' [...]."

Close to the Roya Valley, Italy closes the border to French nationals

Nice Matin, 18 April – "For the past few days, the Italian authorities have almost systematically turned French people back from the border. [...] This is problematic given that the Roya Valley is a kind of enclave between Liguria and Piedmont."

Websites giving information on France's borders

To help the public to access information, the MOT has drawn up a list of the main sites that provide up-to-date information along France's different borders. [Click here – in French.](#)



European platforms

- The EU's Committee of the Regions has launched an exchange platform on Covid-19 to support regional and local communities.
- The European Commission has set up a task force that will act as a one-stop shop for questions from Member States.
- The ESPON programme has issued a call for experiences regarding local and regional responses to the Covid-19 crisis, in particular initiatives to adapt public services to the current context, as well as any information that can help the programme to monitor the territorial impact of the crisis and design responses to it.

[More info](#)

Covid-19 - European platforms

EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS
The Committee of the Regions has launched an exchange platform on Covid-19 to support regional and local communities.

<https://ec.europa.eu/regions/pages/COVID19-exchangeplatform.aspx>
<https://ec.europa.eu/regions/pages/COVID19-exchangeplatform.aspx>
#EuropeansAgainstCovid19 Map
#EuropeansAgainstCovid19 Wall

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
The European Commission has set up a task force that will act as a one-stop shop for questions from Member States. Click here. Consult DG REGIO's FUTURUM platform.

<https://ec.europa.eu/futurum/boosting-eu-border-regions/covid-19-changing-our-lives-how-it-impacting-cross-border-regions>

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STRE/2020/49347_IPRS_IPRS_BRG202049347_EN.pdf

ESPON PROGRAMME
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CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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