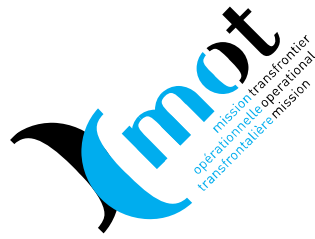


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# CROSS BORDER NEWS



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XV<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

## A key step for the future of the MOT

The XV<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the MOT took place at the Palais Brongniart in Paris on 4 April, attended by nearly 100 participants and welcoming a number of personalities and elected representatives from cross-border territories.

This annual meeting was an excellent opportunity for discussions between the members, the partners and the technical team of the MOT, which had the pleasure of welcoming four new members: the Ain and Haute Savoie Department councils, the Métropole Nice Côte d'Azur and the Maubeuge-Val de Sambre Agglomeration.

The main event of the day was the adoption by the Assembly of the project to transform the MOT into a public interest grouping (groupement d'intérêt public, GIP). By opting for a legal form governed by public law, the project will enable the MOT to confirm its role of support, relay and technical coordination of local, regional and national cross-border cooperation participants, affirm its "multi-level" positioning and boost its visibility at European level.

The GIP is by essence the tool for partnership between local authorities, ministries and any other legal person. It had been considered when the MOT was established in 1997. On the agenda once more, thanks to the passing of the act on the reform of the status of GIPs,

this transformation involves finalization of the list of members until the summer, so that the application for formation of the GIP can be submitted at the beginning of 2013.

The meeting was also the opportunity to present and vote on the objectives of the MOT, now defined within the framework of a triennial programme (2012-2014).

The events scheduled in 2012 include the European congress of the CECICN on 25 and 26 June in La Coruña, Spain, organized in partnership with the AEER, and two seminars in the autumn, the first on cross-border governance\* and the second on territory monitoring in partnership with the FNAU and the DATAR.

The Assembly was concluded by a cultural evening with the showing of a film entitled *La frontière intérieure* (the interior border), in the presence of its directors Simon Brunel and Nicolas Pannetier. The film, drawing the portrait of seven border workers living along the borders of the former Iron Curtain, stimulated intense discussions around the concept of the border.

### Michel Delebarre

Former French Minister of State  
President of MOT  
Senator and Mayor of Dunkirk



### Join MOT !

The MOT brings together elected representatives from all parties, who share a common commitment to the service of their cross-border territories and who are removed from purely national concerns and open to the multicultural exchanges that Europe makes possible. Today more than ever we are pursuing this commitment, and we invite all these territories and their elected representatives to join us!

The MOT effectively finds itself at a strategic time in its development. With increased support from our institutional partners and the commitment of our members, as numerous as ever, we want to affirm our purpose as a public tool for aiding cross-border cooperation participants, and this is made manifest in our transformation into a public interest grouping, which has just been approved in principle by our General Assembly on 4 April in Paris.

The parliamentary report by Blanc, Keller and Sanchez-Schmid in 2010 opened up promising leads, but today we are in the middle of the crossing and are calling for the practical implementation of its proposals, such as the activation of the inter-ministerial cross-border cooperation steering committee.

Join us! All border territories are called upon to be represented within our network. Together we will be stronger to defend the cause of cross-border cooperation, at the service of the many populations of the cross-border regions in France and in Europe!



\*Presentation of a study conducted by the MOT intended to link cohesion policy, mechanisms of governance and cross-border territorial needs. Study funded by Europact.

# EVENTS

## MAY-JUNE

Forum of the Committee of the Regions "Regions and cities for integrated territorial development"

10 May 2012 in Brussels

MOT working group on "Renewable Energies"

29 and 30 May 2012 in Lauterbourg, organized by the MOT and the Eurodistrict Regio Pamina

Seminar "Cross-border business takeovers: the aspects of the transaction"

21 June 2012 in Forbach, organized by the MOT and the Eurodistrict SaarMoselle

CECICN\* congress: "Territorial Cooperation fostering European integration: Cities and Regions linking across borders"

25 and 26 June 2012 in La Coruña, Spain, organized in partnership with the AEER.

The registrations are opened on: <http://cecicn.eu>

Further information: [www.espaces-transfrontaliers.eu](http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.eu)

\* The Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional City Networks involves six cooperation networks: the Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière, the Union of Baltic Cities, the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities, MedCities, the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities and the Iberian Network of Crossborder Bodies.

## Netherlands/Germany/Belgium border

# A new border information service



The Aachen-Eurode border information service was officially inaugurated on 7 March on the Dutch-German-Belgian border\*.

Intended for the border workers and recruiters of the cross-border territory, it should be operational in the spring. The information desks in Aachen and Eurode will be open to answer all questions related to taxes and social security.

In order to be able to answer questions of a specialist nature, the border information service is cooperating with several other government organizations including the Dutch tax authorities, the Bureau for Belgian Affairs and the Bureau for German Affairs.

The key aim of the border

information service is to stimulate and support economic cooperation and the development of a euregional labour market within this border region.

According to Mark Verheijen, Member of the Provincial Executive for Economic Affairs 5Province of Limburg):

"As a border region, we are only too aware of the problems one encounters when crossing the border for work or business purposes. These obstacles are detrimental to the economy. A large flexible labour market and cross-border cooperation would be of great benefit to this region. The answer to the existing problems would be to draw up a new tax treaty between the Netherlands and Germany, a point we continue

to impress on the national government. In the meantime, we are taking an important step forward in facilitating employment and business opportunities in the region by providing this border information service in Aachen and Eurode as a help desk to meet the needs of employees and employers. We have pooled all our resources and strengths to create the only joint venture of its kind in the Dutch-German-Belgian border region."

\* The signatories of this project are the Province of Limburg, the Region of Aachen, the government of the German-speaking part of Belgium and the regional and local authorities from the border regions of Parkstad, Heuvelland, Aachen and the German-speaking part of Belgium, together with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce IHK Aachen and the Chamber of Commerce Limburg.

## IN BRIEF

### NOSTRA project

The launch conference of the Interreg IVC NOSTRA (Network Of STRAits) project took place on 3 April 2012 in Wimille, Pas-de-Calais (France).

The aim of this project is to work towards recognition of the specific aspects of strait areas by the European institutions and to encourage the development of cooperation projects. It networks eight straits in Europe and is coordinated by the Pas-de-Calais department council.

## Networking of European microproject funds



The Eurodistrict Regio Pamina organized a two-day seminar on 29 and 30 March on microproject funds, bringing together a number of European cross-border organizations.

The seminar emphasized the growing importance of these European funding instruments for implementing actions close to the citizens in the border regions.

Sharing of experiences, the discussion of grant criteria and the preparation of joint development prospects were the priorities of the event.

Marcin Wójcik, from the European Commission Regional Policy DG, stressed the importance of these funds for European integration of the

citizens: "In recent years microprojects have proved that they are often an incubator of innovative ideas and long-term cooperation".

The round table was moderated by Jean Peyrony, MOT director-general. Comparison of the various microproject funds showed that management and experiences can vary greatly from Spain through France and Germany to the Czech Republic.

<http://www.eurodistrict-regio-pamina.com>



## “Cross-border cooperation needs to be driven by European policies”

At the MOT General Assembly on 4 April in Paris, president Michel Delebarre stressed the importance of the impetus given by European policies: **“We must now be mobilized by the necessity of preparing the 2014-2020 programmes.”**

He highlighted three requirements:

- an adequate budget for cooperation, compatible with the ambitions of the new European cohesion policy;
- a strategic roadmap for Europe 2020, not too rigid, so that the cohesion policy continues to meet the diverse needs of the cross-border territories;
- a greater association of participants in the field, the economic world and civil society.

## Wallonia/ Champagne -Ardenne seminar

The French Embassy in Belgium organized a seminar on 20 March in Brussels on the governance of Wallonia/Champagne-Ardenne cross-border cooperation, attended by Rudy Demotte, minister and president of the Wallonia Government, Jean-Paul Bachy, president of the Champagne-Ardenne regional council, Michel Guillot, prefect of the Champagne-Ardenne region, and Michel Delebarre\*. Jean Peyrony, MOT director-general, also participated in the moderation of the discussions. Although cross-border cooperation between Wallonia and Champagne-Ardenne is a central issue in bilateral relations between France and Belgium, the participants



identified a need to structure it and give it strategic priorities in areas such as economic development, scientific and university partnerships, training and employment, health, the environment and security. The seminar concluded with the signature of a memorandum of understanding on reinforced cooperation between Wallonia and Champagne-Ardenne. Moving beyond the existing cooperation arrangements, the signatories want to build joint programmes, define milestones and agendas, and lastly set up a three-level working organization: a policy

body, a technical body, and working groups, forums for discussions and operational proposals. This triple governance body must have a role of coordination, listening to the populations and the economic players of the territory. An EGTC may be considered at the end of this stage, when the revision of the European Community regulation is completed.

*\* Former Minister of State, Senator and Mayor of Dunkirk, President of MOT.*

## Annual event of the CoR on the EGTC

The interinstitutional conference and the annual meeting of the EGTC Platform of the Committee of the Regions took place on 29 March 2012 in Brussels.

With 26 EGTCs formed, involving more than 570 local and regional authorities in 14 Member States, impacting some 22 million Europeans, and with twenty or so EGTCs in the process of formation, the conference placed the emphasis on the fact that “the EGTC concept is no longer an experiment”. As EGTCs can operate without European funding, Michel

Delebarre, chairman of the CoR COTER Commission, stressed **“the importance of adopting the EGTC regulation, which has no particular impact in terms of the EU budget, without delay and without waiting for the adoption of the whole of the legislative package on the post-2013 cohesion policy”**.

**A report will be soon available in the Members’ area of the MOT website.**

<http://portal.cor.europa.eu/egtc>

## The Technicians’ Platform

The second meeting of the Technicians’ Platform was held on 5 April at the DATAR in Paris. Organized annually on the occasion of the General Assembly, the meeting is a forum for discussion between the network members on the activities of the MOT, and more particularly on the events, the working groups and the sharing of experience. It was the opportunity to take stock of the actions in 2011 and 2012 and to determine more precisely the topics of interest for the network.

The preparation of the working group meeting on renewable

energies (29-30 May), the workshops of the CECICN congress (25-26 June) and the seminar on territory monitoring (autumn 2012) were covered by three discussion groups. **Further information in the Members’ area of the MOT website.**



# PRESS REVIEW

## ▲ Cross-border mobility: the Commission wants to track down discriminatory tax measures

Europe Information Service, 3 April

"The European Commission is tracking down tax obstacles that deter citizens from looking for a job in another member state. On 2 April it announced that it would assess national direct taxes throughout 2012 to determine whether they may unfairly penalize workers who live in one member state and work in another."

## ▲ The cross-border platform starts work

La Sambre, 23 March

"The first working groups have been officially inaugurated by the representatives of the Maubeuge-Val de Sambre conurbation and the Charleroi - Sud-Hainaut region."

## ▲ A cross-border water supply

DNA, 27 March

"Within the framework of the Interreg IV programme, Wissembourg town council and the Bad Bergzabern Verbandsgemeinde are working together on the supply of drinking water in northern Alsace and southern Palatinate. A survey of groundwater capacities on either side of the river Lauter has been conducted."

## ▲ Cycle tracks: an agreement signed with Pirmasens

Le Républicain lorrain, 3 April

"Francis Vogt, president of the Pays de Bitche community of municipalities, and his Pirmasens counterpart Dr Matheis have signed an agreement for establishing cross-border cycle tracks."

## ▲ The future cross-border regional express rail service

Le Dauphiné libéré, 30 March

"The future cross-border regional express rail service is guest of honour at the 9th border workers show, which opened its doors yesterday in Annemasse. This choice could not be better timed, as just yesterday the federal tribunal rejected the last four petitions that might have delayed the works. Construction of the Ceva (Cornavin-Eaux-Vives-Annemasse rail link) can be continued normally."

## ▲ France, the low-cost country for the Swiss

Le Nouvel Observateur, 5 April

"Most of them are men, 25 to 45 years old and living around fifteen kilometres from Switzerland, towards Pontarlier, Morteau or Morez. 20,000 of them cross the border each morning at a customs post located on the 230 kilometres of frontier. A record in the long history of migratory movements on this Jurasian arc formed by the four departments of Franche-Comté and three Swiss cantons."

## ▲ Bidassoa and Urumea rivers: the Bidur projet presents its results

EITB, 22 March

"The aim of the Bidur 'cross-border' project (2009-2012) is shared management of the Bidassoa and Urumea river basins."

## ▲ A million euros for the Euroregion

Sud Ouest, 24 March

"The first general assembly of the Eurorégion Aquitaine-Euskadi European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) was held yesterday in Hendaye. The 20 members of the bureau of the new cross-border entity (10 for the Aquitaine region and 10 for Euskadi) voted the budget guideline report, which presents a budget of 1 million euros for 2012."

## ▲ Green light for the Bordeaux-Toulouse and Bordeaux-Spain high-speed line

Le Moniteur, 6 April

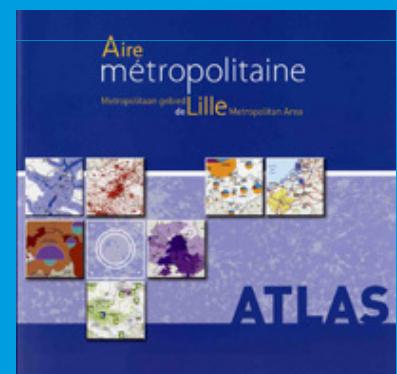
"A few weeks after elected representatives, RFF and prefect sent the alignment accepted at local level of the two new high-speed lines from Bordeaux to Toulouse and towards Spain, the ministry has approved the alignment and the functional features of the new lines."

## Atlas of the Lille Metropolitan Area

The cross-border space of the Lille Metropolitan Area (LMA) forms a territory of more than 7,000 sq. km with a population of 3.8 million. The LMA is now a functional reality and a living space increasingly accepted by its inhabitants. The Atlas of the Lille Metropolitan Area is the outcome of a collaboration between the ADULM (Lille Metropolitan Area Development and Urban Planning Agency), the regional department of the INSEE and the Mission Bassin Minier Nord-Pas de Calais (Nord-Pas de Calais mining area planning and development agency). It has six chapters:  
Chapter 1: history, geography, urban morphology, administrative and political organization  
Chapter 2: demographics and habitat  
Chapter 3: human resources  
Chapter 4: economic activities  
Chapter 5: accessibility and transport  
Chapter 6: outreach capacity of the LMA

Trilingual French-Dutch-English - Price: €25

For further information and to consult the PDF version: [click here](#).



## CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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