



# EVENTS

**2nd seminar on cross-border territorial observation**, 30 September 2014 in Budapest, organised by the CESCI, the MOT and INFH. [More info](#)

**OPEN DAYS 2014** - MOT and Budapest Platform Workshop: "New generation cross-border cooperation support at national level to overcome obstacles", 8 October 2014 in Brussels. [More info](#)

**ESPON Day** "What European Territory Today and Tomorrow?", 10 October 2014 in Brussels. [More info](#)

**Espace Alpin 2020 Conference** "Building on Experience: Cooperation towards 2020", 21-22 October 2014 in Salzburg. [More info](#)

**European Straits Initiative Political conference**, 22 October 2014 in Brussels. [More info](#)

**Messe Offenburg-Ortenau - 2nd trinational conference sustainable use of biomass in the Upper Rhine**, 23 October 2014 in Offenburg. [More info](#)

**Eurodistrict Strasbourg-Ortenau Marathon**, 26 October 2014 in Strasbourg. [More info](#)

All the events on:  
[www.cross-border-territories.eu](http://www.cross-border-territories.eu)

## Watercourses in South-West Europe: the example of the Garonne



Flowing through both Spain and France, the Garonne river encourages cross-border exchanges. These exchanges constitute assets for the Joint Association for the Study and Development of the Garonne (Syndicat mixte d'études et d'aménagement de la Garonne - SMEAG) in its work to ensure better management of the river. They are aimed at carrying out new projects and disseminating the lessons and good practices in each of the partners' territories.

The SMEAG, which is a member of the MOT, has recently conducted two projects co-financed by the Interreg programme IVB Sudoe: the "European River Territories" project,

completed in June 2014, and the "Sud'eau 2" project, which runs until December 2014.

### [A river territory for watercourses](#)

The closure of the "European River Territories" project on 5-6 June 2014 in Pamplona was an opportunity to affirm the need to reconquer "river territories" - areas of effective functioning of watercourses - in order to reduce the risks of flooding and erosion and to enhance the biodiversity and state of watercourses. [More info](#)

### [A network for players in the area of watercourses in South-West Europe](#)

The "Sud'eau 2" partners, for their part, have noted the unequal ability across local

players to get involved in the management of watercourses due to a lack of methodologies and tools. The SMEAG leads the "good practices" working group: a "toolkit" is going to be produced in order to disseminate existing good practices and thereby foster cooperation and networking among players with similar preoccupations. Dissemination of this toolkit is scheduled for December 2014.

If you wish to promote a project or share an experience and join this network, contact:

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[More info](#)

## The first French-German cross-border co-working space

On Wednesday 2 July 2014, the first cross-border co-working space was inaugurated in Offenburg - the "KiosK Office" - with the opening of the German site, which will soon be followed by the opening of the French site in Strasbourg. The KiosK Office is aimed at French and German entrepreneurs "who wish to develop their activity on either side of the Rhine at low cost in a stimulating working space".

[More info](#)

## German toll?

The announcement of Germany's intention to introduce a toll in 2016 for all vehicles on German roads has provoked a barrage of criticism from neighbouring countries, notably with respect to the Meuse-Rhine Euregio, Alsace and the Regio Pamina Eurodistrict. The latter has stressed in a press release that this tax "constitutes a threat for the daily lives of people living in border regions and the development of cross-border cooperation". Following these reactions, the Minister-President of the German-speaking community stated in late August that "Germany says it is ready to discuss its toll plan".

[More info](#)

## Study of housing in the France-Geneva area

The cross-border statistical observatory for the France-Geneva area has published an analysis of the housing stock and construction on both sides of the border, counting nearly 70,000 additional housing units in 11 years in this cross-border area. The study shows that growth in the housing stock has been particularly strong in the French part of the Geneva area (average annual growth of 2.2%) and in the district of Nyon (up by 2%), whereas it has been significantly more moderate in the canton of Geneva (up by 0.7%).

[More info](#)

## French-Belgian border walk/ride

Held on 20 July 2014 as part of the "TransSport Sportifs sans Frontières" project and the West-Vlaanderen/Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale EGTC, the "Schrevelpromenade" or "Promenade frontalière" (Border walk/ride) by bike or on foot brought together many sportspeople and inhabitants of the cross-border territory. Many itineraries were offered (from 9 to 120 km), starting and ending in Leisele, with routes that crossed the border several times. The aim of the event was to encourage exchanges and meetings between French people and Belgians.

[More info](#)

## The Commission adopts a Partnership Agreement with France

This document sets out the strategy for the optimal use of European Structural and Investment Funds in the country's regions and cities for 2014-2020. Following a national consultation and, having been communicated by the French authorities in December 2013, it was the subject of negotiations with the European Commission before being finally adopted on 8 August. The MOT was a member of the national body charged with preparing the partnership agreement and its positions, formulated after consultation with its network, were taken into account.



Drawing on an assessment of cross-border territories, the document highlights the objectives of cross-border cooperation, notably with respect to jobs. It stipulates that, to ensure that they function effectively, cross-border territories "must have a territorial organisation and appropriate governance, based on a shared knowledge of and vision for the territory [...]". [Read more](#)

## The opening of Europe's first cross- border hospital

The cross-border hospital in Puigcerda opens its doors on 19th September on the French-Spanish border. It is a pioneering project in Europe since it is the first time that a hospital has been managed on a cross-border basis from the construction phase onwards. An EGTC to manage this structure was set up in March 2007. [More info in the next newsletter.](#)

## European experiences in the area of cross-border economic development

As part of its project on economic development\*, in June 2014 the MOT travelled to several European borders in order to meet players involved in cooperation in this sector and to gather examples of good practices. Read about some of these experiences below...

### Germany-Denmark

The German-Danish cross-border region (the Syddanmark region and the Land of Schleswig-Holstein) benefits from a very particular geographical situation. With the North Sea on one side and the Baltic on the other, the climatic conditions are very favourable for onshore and offshore wind farms. The Danish side, which is primarily agricultural, has also extensively developed the exploitation of biomass. The region is thus one of the most technologically advanced in Europe and led between 2008 and 2013 an Interreg project known as **FURGY**, which was designed to map the sector's capacities, to coordinate the activities of the German and Danish clusters and to foster research relating to the storage and energy efficiency of wind power.

Situated on the route between Hamburg and Copenhagen, close to the Scandinavian markets and on the threshold of continental Europe, the region constitutes a leading logistical hub. In Padborg, a Danish border town, there is the

largest area for refrigerated storage in northern Europe. Logistics has thus been identified as an economic strongpoint to be developed at the cross-border level. In this regard, Interreg **CB-Log project** (2009-2012) has helped to set up a platform that brings together representatives of the transport and logistics industry, as well as researchers/academics, with the aim of formulating an overall marketing strategy around the Jutland corridor. Infrastructures have been strengthened and actions to promote the sector have been carried out among young people.

### Vienna-Bratislava-Győr-Brno

Separated only by 60 km, Vienna and Bratislava are the two European capitals that are closest together. Nearby are also two regional capitals: Győr, in Hungary, and Brno, in the Czech Republic. Between these four countries and around the Vienna-Bratislava axis, cross-border cooperation (known as the "Centroppe region") has great potential, notably through the



The Slovak-Austrian border in Bratislava

stepping-up of innovative projects linking businesses, laboratories and universities. The economies of these territories mutually reinforce one another, with all sides benefiting, as illustrated by the large automotive industry in Hungary and Slovakia, which provides Austrian SMEs with openings in the area of innovation.

With the prospect of strong economic growth in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, the ultimate aim is to ensure the effectiveness of cooperation and the continuity of the economic area and labour pool. That is why the Land of Lower Austria has developed an original project, which has been adopted by the neighbouring Länder and then become a cross-border project, with the setting-up of equivalent programmes on the other side of Austria's borders: its objective is [...]. *[Article continued below]*

\* More info about the "integrated economic development of cross-border territories" project being carried out by the MOT.

*[Article on economic development continued]*

[...] to acquaint children with the languages of the neighbouring countries from nursery school onwards. This strategy helps children to become aware of the region's cross-border dimension and the culture of the neighbouring country, but also to encourage the learning of foreign languages, which is essential for the development of cooperation.

### Euregio Meuse-Rhine

The border between Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands is a

territory of highly-developed cooperation, as is shown by the activities of the **Euregio Meuse-Rhine** at the institutional level and the TTR-ELAt region (Top Technology Region – Eindhoven-Leuven-Aachen triangle) at the economic level. This region shares recognised expertise in the chemicals-pharmaceuticals, materials and electronic products industries.

Since the mid-2000s, the TTR-ELAt partners have been working together to become even more competitive internationally thanks to cross-border exchanges. Many

relationships of this kind have been formed and the public authorities are supporting these initiatives. For example, the **Top Technology Cluster (TTC)** and **Cross-border Cluster Stimulation (GCS)** have contributed to the creation of cross-border consortia and have supported these partnerships in their first steps towards the creation of innovative products in the areas of life sciences, advanced materials, ICT and energy.



Project co-funded by the European Union. Europe is committed in France with the ERDF. [www.europ-act.eu](http://www.europ-act.eu)

# PRESS REVIEW

## ▲ Calais's hospital dreams of attracting British patients

**Le Monde, 29 August**

"When he thinks of the Channel Tunnel, Martin Trelcat, the director of the hospital in Calais (Pas-de-Calais), starts to dream: 'Hundreds of British people come to our region every day, by train or ferry, to do their shopping, taking advantage of the lower prices. Why wouldn't they also come here for medical treatment?'"

## ▲ Eurometropolis. Creation of a cross-border investment fund

**Le Journal des entreprises, 5 September**

"Sponsored by the Greater Lille, Wallonie Picarde, West Flanders and French-Belgian CCI's, the Eurometropolis is on the move. A cross-border investment fund will be set up in early 2015. The creation of a business park is also under discussion."

## ▲ A French-Belgian heritage map for tourists

**Nord Eclair, 5 septembre**

Nord Eclair, 5 September  
"Over 100 sites to discover. The Eurometropolis also takes care of tourism and has just published a tourist map of the Euroregion. It is available in all of the tourist offices in the Eurometropolis, in French, Dutch and English."

## ▲ The EuroAirport in danger?

**DNA, 21 August**

"The French-Swiss negotiations regarding the tax position of Swiss firms present on the site of the airport are currently at a stalemate. If no solution is found, the whole of the economy of the "Three Countries" region would be jeopardised."

## ▲ The Annemasse tram risks breaking down

**Le Temps, 4 September**

"A 30-million-euro payment by Geneva for the project is slow in coming. The French elected representatives are threatening to track down bogus Swiss residents and to tax them.

The project to extend tramline 12 as far as Annemasse could be halted if Geneva does not quickly unblock the 30 million euros (36 million Swiss francs) that it has undertaken to provide."

## ▲ Switzerland – still an Eldorado?

**L'Expansion, 27 August**

"In spite of the popular vote to introduce quotas for foreign workers, Switzerland still seems like a promised land." A French-Swiss dossier including the following articles:

- **The cross-border headache:**

"Ever more numerous, cross-border workers play a major role in Geneva's economy. But their status has now been called into question..."

- **At the heart of the housing problem:**

"The border phenomenon weighs heavily when it comes to housing."

- **Pressure is mounting on the border region goldmine:**

"On both sides of the border, the rich pickings of the bilateral economy attracts widespread envy."

- **Greater Geneva blown off course?:**

"The prospect of an international French-Swiss structure has never seemed so distant. In the meantime, problems remain and co-financing is slow to emerge."

## ▲ The Nice-Cuneo train line

**Nice Matin, 4 September**

"Jean-Claude Guibal has urged the secretary of state to put pressure on RFF [Réseau Ferré de France – the French railway infrastructure company]. The MP-mayor of Menton wasted no time in addressing the new secretary of state for transport. [...] The issue? The maintenance of a primary axis for the Alpine valleys served by the train line – particularly the Roya Valley – and for the populations that live and work in this shared cross-border area."

## ▲ Final phase of the cross-border EHV project

**L'Indépendant, 1 August**

"The project for an interconnector linking the electricity networks of France and Spain is at last seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. [...] All of the civil engineering on the French side was completed in June. Yesterday, they finally began laying the cables inside the tunnel on the French side..."

## A guide to cross-border services in the Upper Rhine

The aim of this guide is to present in a user-friendly manner different services that operate in the French-German context, mainly located in the Upper Rhine region.

It is intended to help and guide consumers and citizens towards the service that can answer the questions that arise in a cross-border setting.

Ranging from educational guidance to notarial queries by way of questions about pensions and other areas, nearly 80 services are listed.

The European Centre for Consumers is a French-German association based in Kehl (Germany) that provides information and advice to consumers. Its aim is to "safeguard and promote consumers' rights in Europe".

Download the guide [in French]



## CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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