



EUROPEAN YEAR OF RAIL 2021

Online event

**CROSS-BORDER
RAIL CONNECTIONS:**
**fostering cohesion between
regions and their citizens**

10th & 11th June 2021



An event co-organised by **EGTC Eurodistrict PAMINA¹** & **Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT)²** with the support of the **European Committee of the Regions**.

When ? Thursday 10th and Friday 11th of June 2021

Where ? Online: register [HERE](#) to receive the link to the online event

Cross-border missing railway links: how it started, how it is going.

- ▶ According to the European Commission's "*Comprehensive analysis of the existing cross-border rail transport connections and missing links on the internal EU borders*" (DG REGIO, 2018), **9 out of the 19 "potentially most beneficial" missing links across the EU borders are located around France.**
- ▶ On behalf of French border regions and after successfully organizing the first *Borders Forum¹* in November 2020, the MOT started planning another event amid the European Year of Rail in cooperation with the EGTC Eurodistrict PAMINA. The Eurodistrict has been a driving force for boosting the reactivation of cross-border rail connections by advocating from the local to the European level.
- ▶ PAMINA's territory is concerned by the Karlsruhe-Rastatt-Haguenau-Saarbrücken missing link¹. Consequently, the Eurodistrict had already held a meeting together with the CoR¹ in Brussels on April 19th 2019: **"MISSING RAIL LINKS AS A CHALLENGE FOR COHESION AND GROWTH IN BORDER REGIONS"** gathered several elected officials representing cross-border territories across the EU

Simultaneous translation will be provided for the following languages: **ENGLISH, FRENCH, GERMAN.**



¹ <https://www.eurodistrict-pamina.eu/>

² <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/>

JUNE 10TH – EXISTING RAILWAY LINKS

NEEDS AND CHALLENGES TO BOOST RAIL MOBILITY ACROSS EUROPEAN BORDERS

The first day is dedicated to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on cross-border rail transport. Both short-term and long-term consequences of the pandemic will be discussed, from the border shutdowns in spring 2020 to financial challenges that CB railway services face. The first round-table will focus on functional urban areas characterised by large commuter flows. The second round-table will focus on smaller lines connecting less densely populated areas. The aim is to discuss their current needs and business models as well as the way they contribute to connecting communities across the EU borders.

10.00 – 10.15 (CET) | OPENING SPEECHES

- ▶ **Christoph Schnaudigel**, President of EGTC Eurodistrict PAMINA
- ▶ **Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg**, Member of the European Parliament, Rapporteur on the European Year of Rail

Round-table #1: Cross-border functional urban areas

Moderation by: **Aurélien Biscuit**, Secretary General of the MOT

10.15 - 11.30 (CET)

- ▶ **Loïc Delhuyenne**, Director of the EGTC Lille–Kortrijk–Tournai Eurometropolis
- ▶ **Anna Engblom**, Senior Advisor Infrastructure and Green charter, Greater Copenhagen (DK-SE)
The Øresund Line, Malmö-Copenhagen
- ▶ **Christelle Duc**, Project Manager, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region
The Léman Express railway network, Greater Geneva (CH-FR)
- ▶ **Josef Doppelbauer**, Executive Director, EU Agency for Railways

In Europe, cross-border functional urban areas are defined as extensive traffic areas, within which borders tend to disappear in favour of shared socio-economic development at the scale of the cross-border living area. The cross-border dimension is often a major axis of their metropolitan development strategy, which cannot be achieved without a dense, efficient and sustainable transport network. Rail has often been seen as an obvious way of satisfying mobility needs while responding to the ecological challenge. That is why several cross-border rail projects have emerged in the recent years.

However, the Covid-19 crisis has forced a slowdown, or even a sudden interruption, to the logic of free movement of flows within the European area, putting the economic model of these networks in danger. This challenge was added to pre-existing dysfunctions, sometimes substantial, in terms of interoperability and of cross-border coordination. This underlines the need to invent new systems to overcome the administrative constraints linked to the existence of a national border.

What challenges do existing cross-border connections face today? What actions were undertaken in cross-border metropolitan areas in order to respond to the consequences of the pandemic on cross-border mobility? What tools could facilitate the emergence of future cross-border networks, to strengthen territorial cohesion and meet climate-neutrality ambitions?



Virtual coffee break (10 min)

Round-table #2: From peripheral regions to 360°

Moderation by: Christoph Rat-Fischer, SynappCity

11.40 – 12.50 (CET)

- ▶ **David Asséo**, Delegate of Transport, Republic and Canton of Jura (CH)
Belfort-Delle-Bienne line (FR-CH)
- ▶ **Sandra Sodini**, Directorate of International Relations and European Programmes Department
& **Massimiliano Angelotti**, Directorate of Infrastructures and Territory, Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia
Railway lines at the Italian-Slovenian and Italian-Austrian border
- ▶ **Szilárd Kövesdi**, General director, GYSEV Hungarian-Austrian railway company
Railway lines at the Austria-Hungary border
- ▶ **Slawomir Tokarski**, Director, European Territorial Cooperation, Macro-regions, Interreg and Programme Implementation, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Many European border areas with lower population densities have also become significant traffic areas, where cross-border commuting is often possible via private cars. Regional rail links, connected to the important employment areas on either side of the border, respond to the challenge of opening up, while being aligned with the logic of decarbonisation of transport. Support for small railway lines from all political levels, including their modernisation, is therefore a necessity to stimulate economic growth and job creation, while reducing inequalities and providing solutions to fight against climate change.

How to improve cross-border connectivity in rural and mountainous border areas, while easing their accessibility from larger urban nodes and employment areas?

How can we ensure the use and the durability of existing lines in rural areas where public transport is less systematically seen as an effective alternative to private cars?

12.50 – 13.00 (CET) | CLOSING SPEECH

- ▶ **Christian Dupessey**, President of the Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière, Mayor of Annemasse (FR)



JUNE 11TH – MISSING RAILWAY LINKS

AN UNEXPLOITED POTENTIAL TO BOOST A LOW CARBON TRANSITION

The second day will host two round-tables dedicated to missing links across Europe. What is their current state of play? And how could these railway links contribute to boosting the economic development of border regions while fostering the transition towards a cleaner cross-border mobility? These two round-tables will host policy makers and stakeholders who will point out way towards a more connected Europe.

10.00 – 10.15 (CET) | OPENING SPEECHES

- ▶ **Winfried Hermann**, State Minister for Transportation, Baden-Württemberg (DE)
- ▶ **David Valence**, Vice-President of the Grand Est Region in charge of mobility and transport infrastructure (FR)

Round-table #3: Missing railway links

Moderation by: **Patrice Harster**, EGTC Eurodistrict PAMINA

10.15 – 11.30 (CET)

- ▶ **Rémi Bertrand**, Vice President - EGTC Eurodistrict PAMINA
Karlsruhe-Rastatt-Haguenau-Saarbrücken line (FR-DE)
- ▶ **Arnaud Clemens**, Deputy Director General - Territorial Planning and Development, Collectivité Européenne d'Alsace
Colmar-Freiburg line (FR-DE)
- ▶ **Luc Federman**, Deputy Director General of Transport-Infrastructure-Mobility-Living Environment Department, Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region
Zaragoza – Canfranc – Pau missing link (ES-FR)
- ▶ **Guido Beermann**, Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Planning of Brandenburg
Missing links at the border between Germany and Poland

Back in 2018, the European Commission identified at least 19 “potentially most beneficial” missing links located across the EU borders.

In a decisive year for the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), this round-table will leave the floor to elected officials who will present the great potential and the opportunities which lie behind the re-activation of cross-border missing links in their own border region.

What technical and financial challenges are yet to be overcome? What are the gaps identified by local and regional authorities?

 **Virtual coffee break (10 min)**

Round-table #4: Next Steps towards closing the gaps

Moderation by: **Jean Peyrony**, Director general of the MOT

11.40 – 12.50 (CET)

- ▶ **Pascal Mangin**, Member of COTER, ENVE commissions at European Committee of the Regions
- ▶ **Philippe Voiry**, Ambassador for intergovernmental commissions, cross-border issues and cooperation, French Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs
- ▶ **Philippe Chantraine**, Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, European Commission
- ▶ **Anne-Marie Deransart**, Senior Loan Officer, European Investment Bank

Cross-border regions are laboratories of the European integration.

Missing railway links represent a solution for better connecting the European territories, from the large urban areas, to less densely populated regions. Via its Cohesion policy, the European Union can bring an added value to bring solutions to overcome technical and financial bottlenecks, which always represent a major in all cross-border projects.

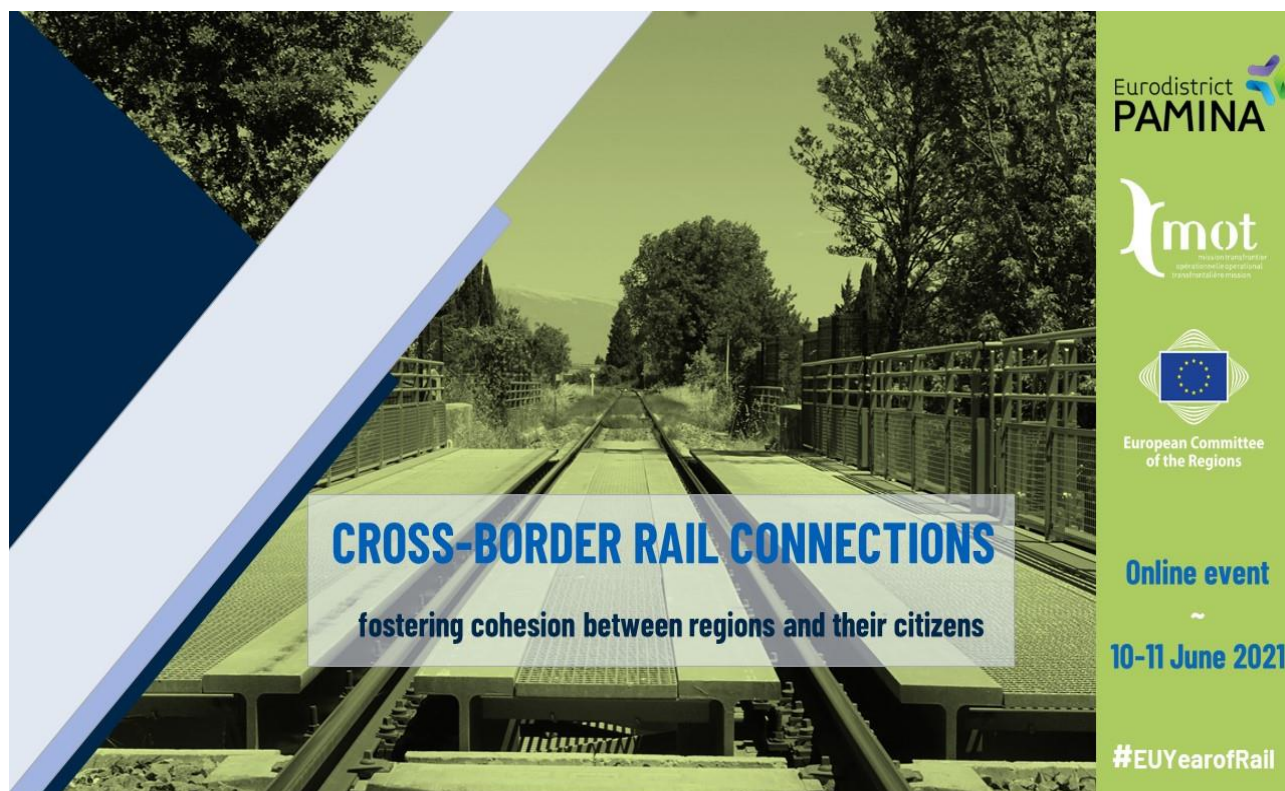
Moreover, they offer a solution for achieving the ambitious targets of the European Green Deal, by decreasing the carbon footprint of the transport sector, which represents an increasing share of the EU's carbon emissions.

Which financial tools are available at European level in the context of an ambitious recovery plan? How to achieve strong political support from the national and the European level?

12.50 – 13.00 (CET) CLOSING SPEECH

- ▶ **Karl-Heinz Lambertz**, President of the Association of European Border Regions





More info :

MOT website :
<http://www.espaces-trans-frontaliers.org/en/conference-eyr-06-2021-en/>

European Year of Rail website:
https://europa.eu/year-of-rail/index_fr

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