

Nearly 180 people assembled to discuss the topic of cross-border economic development

The final conference of the project embarked on by the MOT in 2014 on cross-border economic development brought together nearly 180 people in Paris on 30 September. Marc Abadie, Director of the Network at the Caisse des Dépôts (France), stressed the priority that should be given to cross-border territories, affirming the Caisse des Dépôts' desire to invest in structuring and "pilot" projects. Jean-Christophe Baudouin, Director of Territorial Strategies at the General Commission for Territorial Equality (CGET, France) likewise affirmed the CGET's commitment: "This cooperation is today a necessity, not only to optimise territorial development along the country's borders, but also because these territories embody the European project par excellence". He recalled the importance of cross-border observation, the indispensable prerequisite for action, while saluting the contribution made by

the MOT's work, which is helping to reduce the ignorance about cross-border economic dynamics. Henry Beillet, President of the French-German Kiosk Office makes the same assessment on the ground: "Reading firms' business plans, we realised that entrepreneurs don't take account of the cross-border potential for the simple reason that they don't think of it! There is real work to do in terms of raising awareness". Among the other priority areas to be developed, the appropriateness of cross-border regional innovation strategies was strongly emphasised. The project's results, which have been published in the form of two handbooks, provide a comprehensive analysis of the topic, portraits of different territories, project factsheets (see the article on page 2), as well as a practical guide to the setting-up of partnerships and projects.

[The press release – More info on the project](#)



The first European cross-border inter-university seminar

On 24-25 September 2015, the University of Pau and the Pays de l'Adour (UPPA) welcomed twelve cross-border groupings of European universities at a seminar organised within the framework of the EBRoS 2020 project*. Cross-border cooperation is stated as the priority of the UPPA's international policy, as demonstrated by its numerous collaborations with the University of Zaragoza, the University of the Basque Country and the Public University of Navarra in the areas of training (expanding mobility and double

degrees) and research (inter-university thematic workshops and joint supervision of doctoral theses). The seminar helped to facilitate interactions between the players from the different cross-border universities and to share experiences and good practices. Jonathan Boudry, who is the MOT's legal expert, provided clarifications about the stages involved in setting up a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.

The seminar brought together 90 professionals

over two days. It constitutes the first stage in the creation of a European network of cross-border universities. The aim is to systematise this type of meeting in order to give visibility to the joint actions of universities and to coordinate and pool efforts in discussions with the European institutions.

[More info](#)

* A French-Spanish inter-university project funded by the Interreg programme POCTEFA.

EVENTS

European and international territorial meetings: Global warming: European and international territorial action heats up, 5-6 November in Strasbourg

Exhibition "Frontières" at the French National Museum of the History of Immigration, 10 November 2015 - 29 May 2016 in Paris

AEBR Annual Conference "The Future of Cross-Border Cooperation in Europe", 12-13 November 2015 in Brussels

First Trilateral Congress on climate and energy "Dialogue between the political and economic spheres in the Upper Rhine", 20 November in Liestal (Switzerland)

International congress "Generation Y + Gender democracy today = Economy of tomorrow; How does the young generation revolutions the conception of tomorrow's economy beyond borders?", 26-27 November 2015 in Strasbourg

[All events](#)

Illustrative projects in the area of cross-border economic development



The Kiosk Office, the first cross-border co-working space, was set up in Offenburg in July 2014 and in Strasbourg in early 2015. This meeting place for entrepreneurs from either side of the border fulfils a real need observed in the territory (administrative and legal advice, networking, etc.). Since it was established, 600 people have visited it and two French-German businesses have been set up.

Bihartean has brought together the Bayonne-Pays Basque and Gipuzkoa chambers of commerce and industry since 2010 to support businesses in their cross-border projects, develop joint economic activities and design a range of cross-border training. In 2014, 246 companies took part in B2B meetings.

In the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (Germany-Netherlands-Belgium), the objective of the **TTC project** is to set up cross-border consortia of SMEs and to develop innovative projects in the life sciences, healthcare, innovative materials, ICT and energy sectors. The project's

results are very encouraging and provide an example to follow with respect to accessing private funding.

The InnovARC project, which was born out of a partnership between the chamber of commerce and industry of the Doubs Department and arcjurassien.ch, helps to stimulate innovation in the microtechnologies sector in the French-Swiss Jura Arc.

The Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion, which is made up of the Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon Regions and the Autonomous Communities of Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, put in place a Euroregional Innovation Strategy in 2014 for priority sectors (water, e-health, agri-food and tourism).

The GAT Caraïbes Cluster, set up in September 2012, brings together public- and private-sector players to develop innovation, trade, logistics and transport in the whole region of the Caribbean, whose maritime borders offer an as yet little-explored opportunity for development.

The Regio Pamina Eurodistrict is drawing up for early 2016 a territorial component of the agreement on cross-border apprenticeships signed two years ago at the level of the Upper Rhine. This local approach is aimed at achieving a better match between the available labour force and the needs of businesses in terms of professional training.

These projects were presented during the final conference of the MOT project on cross-border economic development. The outputs highlighted other innovative projects: Tandem (FR-BE), Seed4Start (FR-BE-LU-DE), Framework agreement on cooperation regarding French-German job-seeker placement (FR-DE), Strategic workforce planning (SWP) for the ports of Strasbourg and Kehl (FR-DE), Interregional Council of the Chambers of Trades of the Greater Region (FR-BE-LU-DE), Euro3 (FR-BE) and GCS "Crossborder Cluster Stimulation" (NL-DE-BE).

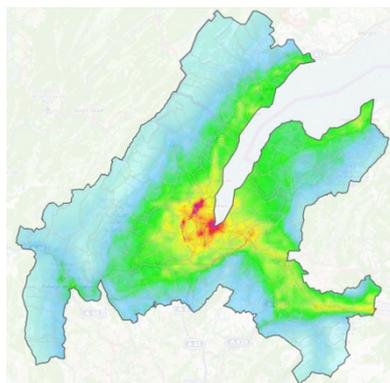
[The project factsheets – More info](#)



This project is financed by the European Union in the framework of the Europ'Act programme.

Europe invests in France with the European Regional Development Fund.

Greater Geneva puts in place cross-border monitoring of air pollution



On 21 September, the players from the Greater Geneva area presented an innovative new tool that makes it possible to monitor air pollution across the cross-border territory: the G²AME (Grand Genève Air Modèle Emissions – Greater Geneva Air Emissions Model) platform. This is the concrete outcome of the joint work carried out by air experts from the Rhône-Alpes Region, the Canton of Geneva and the Canton of Vaud with the aim

of producing a harmonised analysis of polluting emissions in order to be able ultimately to control them and thereby protect the health of the population. We should recall that the "France-Vaud-Geneva Conurbation Project" has set itself the objective of "controlling emissions and concentrations of pollutants and greenhouse gases".

[More info](#)

French-Belgian agreement in the area of policing and customs

An agreement between the Government of the French Republic and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium concerning cross-border cooperation in the area of policing and customs has been in force since 1 October 2015 in France. The MP for French residents in the Benelux, who is also the MOT's Vice-President, Philip Cordery, was the rapporteur at the Assemblée Nationale. [More info](#)

Opinion of the Committee of the Regions:

"Strengthening cross-border cooperation: the need for a regulatory framework?"

This opinion, drafted by Nikola Dobroslavić (HR/EPP) has been approved by the plenary of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) on 13 October. The opinion highlights the importance of cross-border cooperation for regional urban and rural development, and welcomes the initiative of Luxembourg's Presidency of the European Union's Council of Ministers to enhance the cross-border regulatory framework with new tools. It also backs the European Commission's plans to analyse the gaps, solutions and best practices in cross-border cooperation. The day before, the CoR's interregional group on cross-border cooperation met for the first time. Michel Delebarre, President of the MOT, which is a member of the group, submitted several amendments.

[More info](#)

OPEN DAYS 2015 – Cross-border cooperation in a worldwide approach

The MOT, in partnership with the UNCDF, organised a workshop on 14 October at the 2015 session of the OPEN DAYS in Brussels. This brought together over 250 people to address the topic "Cross-border cooperation and regional integration, a worldwide approach".

Jean Peyrony, the MOT's Director-General and chair of the workshop, introduced the discussions by presenting the MOT's experience in Europe, which for several years has benefited other continents, for example in French Guiana and West Africa through the "LOBI UNCDF" project. Christel Alvergne, Deputy Director at UNCDF, presented the experience of the LOBI project in West Africa, which is an experiment in cross-border cooperation carried out using multi-level governance and the financing of practical projects, with the possibility of extending it to other parts of the world. For Christel Alvergne, "borders are places of important socio-economic exchanges that can contribute to local economic development and the preservation of peace". Rony Soerakoeseomah, a consultant for UNCDF, presented an initiative aimed at improving cross-border trade and the creation of

border region special economic zones launched by ASEAN. The ultimate objective is to draw up a regional policy for cross-border cooperation that could be based on the LOBI project. German Granda Alva, a Senior Adviser to DG REGIO, set out the issues relating to cross-border cooperation in Central and South America. In his view, it is necessary to create a EU-Latin America platform for dialogue on cross-border questions. Hélène Julien, for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, talked about France's support for decentralised cooperation actions, particularly in cross-border territories in the countries of the South within the framework of the ACTS project ("Appui à la Coopération Transfrontalière au Sahel"). "We are convinced that the cross-border dimension is an important topic for the coming years." Ronald Hall, Principal Adviser at DG REGIO,

explained the importance of the partnerships forged by DG REGIO with other countries in the world around the topic of regional integration, of which cross-border cooperation is a major aspect.

[More info on this workshop \(code 14C02\)](#)

OPEN DAYS 2015 – The other workshops to which the MOT contributed:

- "The need for specific legal provisions in border areas"
- "Filling the data gap in border regions: the importance of developing meaningful cross-border data for policy making and programme management"
- "Cross-border urban integration: European groupings of territorial cooperation in twin cities and cross-border agglomerations"

[More info on these three workshops.](#)



Meeting at the European Parliament on cross-border healthcare

On 21 October, Anne Sander, MEP and Vice-President of the MOT, chaired the second meeting of the European Parliament working group on cross-border cooperation on the subject of cross-border healthcare.

In 2011, the European Union adopted a directive that facilitates access to healthcare abroad and clarifies the procedures for obtaining reimbursement for costs incurred. "Unfortunately, the administrative procedures are often cumbersome,

patients are ill-informed and the public authorities are reluctant to facilitate the mobility of patients for fear of an increase in costs," the MEP regretted.

"However, the current financial restrictions oblige us to cooperate if we wish to maintain the same quality of care for everyone. To do this, we need to strengthen the communication and trust between the medical profession and public authorities across borders [...]."

[More info](#)



A European study on Integrated Territorial Investment

The European Commission has just published a report on Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI), a European structural funds tool that enables the implementation of integrated territorial strategies. The report sets out the tool's territorial approach along with four application scenarios, including one which relates specifically to cross-border settings. [More info](#)

PRESS REVIEW

▲ The Region and Belgian authorities working together

Horizons Nord-Pas de Calais, 2 October

"Jean-François Cordet, Prefect of the Nord-Pas de Calais Region, brought together the French and Belgian authorities on Wednesday 23 September. This meeting concluded with the French and Belgian authorities agreeing to embark on a concrete and immediate action plan in the areas of employment, training and apprenticeships, transport, territorial and environmental planning, healthcare and medical-social welfare and civil security."

▲ The electric car without borders

Environnement Magazine, 7 October 2015

"In the east of France, various projects are aimed at developing a system of self-service electric cars for people living in border regions. The first concrete result of these different projects is expected to be seen in 2017."

▲ Lorraine-Saarland: last strategy before liquidation

La Semaine, 5 October

"The Lorraine Region has just given birth to a 'Germany strategy' in order to develop cross-border cooperation with its neighbour. It contains many proposals, but will this response to Saarland's 'Frankreich Strategie' survive the arrival of the new merged region (Alsace, Lorraine, Champagne-Ardenne)?"

▲ Refugees: Strasbourg and Kehl want to coordinate their efforts

20 Minutes, 28 September

"As Strasbourg prepares to receive 50 refugees, an item on their reception was discussed at the French-German municipal council..."

▲ Geneva will not pay more money to France for border projects

Le Pays Gessien, 8 October

"The canton has set out the major elements of its cooperation policy with France and suggests using the advantageous exchange rate of the border worker funds to finance projects. A suggestion judged out of place by some French elected representatives who recall that already Geneva has not honoured some of its financial commitments."

▲ The Léman — the first local currency "made in Greater Geneva"

Le Pays Gessien, 8 October

"It's well and truly settled: since mid-September Greater Geneva has had its own currency: the Léman. [...] Yes, but who is this currency intended for and how does it really work?"

▲ The territory's local councillors want a border metropolis

Le Messenger, 15 October

"Meeting on Thursday 8 October in Archamps, the local authority councillors reaffirmed their desire to see the France-Geneva region move into a metropolitan dynamic. [...] This is the idea behind progressively turning the ARC [Assemblée régionale de coopération] into a metropolitan centre of the French Geneva area through an agreement signed with the Rhône-Alpes Region for the 2015-2020 period."

▲ First cross-border forum on flood prevention

La Dépêche du Midi, 24 September

"[...] a Spanish detection network from the Pique to the Garonne rivers. This Friday 25 September in Marignac the first forum will take place of this programme called 'RisqHydro' whose objective is the prevention of the risk of flooding of watercourses in the Pyrenees."

▲ Eurostat regional yearbook 2015: a statistical picture of the EU through its regions

Inforegio News, 9 October

"The European Union (EU) attaches great importance to regional policy. The regional yearbook, which is published every year by Eurostat, the European Union's statistical office, gives an insight into European regional statistics for a broad range of subjects."

A Eurobarometer survey on perceptions of regional policy and cross-border cooperation in Europe

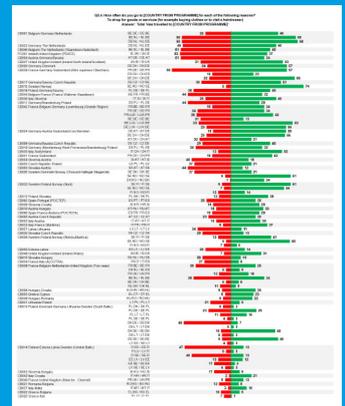
Eurobarometer surveys are analyses of public opinion by the European Commission. For the first time, a Eurobarometer survey identifies and analyses the attitudes of citizens living in border regions.

The Interreg programmes play an important role in removing obstacles at borders and encouraging cross-border cooperation. Interreg projects have produced many concrete results for citizens in border regions. However, the loss of trust and the existence of negative attitudes between neighbouring countries mean that significant economic potential remains untapped in border territories. The Commission therefore carried out a Eurobarometer survey (based on ad hoc telephone interviews) to identify and analyse the attitudes of European citizens in border regions.

Two reports are available:

[Cross-border cooperation in the EU \(Eurobarometer 422\)](#)

[Citizen's awareness and perceptions of EU Regional Policy \(Eurobarometer 423\)](#)



CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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