

## Cross-border economic development: a challenge for Martinique



Martinique's potential for economic development with the other countries of the Greater Caribbean is underexploited. The different tax and economic policies do not facilitate trade relations between border regions and especially between the outermost regions and regions outside of the EU.

Today, 78% of Martinique's imports come from Europe, of which more than 50% are from mainland France, and less than 10% of its imports come from the Caribbean!

The optimisation of intra-Caribbean sea and air links is needed to increase the trade between neighbours in this greater region that stretches from French Guiana to Mexico.

Important strategies for the

development of trade flows between mainland France and the Greater Caribbean are in place, but there is still insufficient account taken of the key role that the French Caribbean can play in its natural geographical region. For example, in 2013 a bilateral agreement between France and Panama enabled the introduction of regular direct flights between the two countries; however, none of these flights include France's Caribbean territories (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Saint-Martin and French Guiana) in their routes. In addition, ticket prices and complicated journeys between places do not encourage links in terms of people and trade. Another example: the current discussions between Paris and Cuba about the large-scale projects that will be entrusted to French companies do not take on board the need to reserve some of these for French Caribbean SMEs, when the islands' economies are in great need of such contracts.

**Read the rest of the article.**

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The Greater Caribbean comprises 4.3 million km<sup>2</sup> of water stretching from the Caribbean Sea to the Gulf of Mexico, and numbers 800 million inhabitants. There is a major shift underway in the North American global transportation corridor due to the following three developments:

- The expansion of the Panama Canal scheduled to open by mid 2016.
- The construction of the Nicaragua Interoceanic Grand Canal due to be completed by 2020.
- The transformation of key ports from "transshipment hub ports" to "global gateway ports" facilitating "last mile logistics". The emergence of new "logistics hub ports" increases the opportunities for French and European Union companies to participate in the global supply chain. The "last mile" is the most inefficient part of this global supply chain and presents the greatest opportunities for adding value.

Nine out of every ten containers bound for the Caribbean will return empty to major export destinations due to the unavailability of physical exports. The primary economic focus of the French, English and Spanish Caribbean territories is on providing tourism and general services as opposed to mass physical exports. The imbalance between import and export volumes presents both a problem and an opportunity for the Greater Caribbean territories. In this context, the French Caribbean islands and French Guiana can position themselves as a primary gateway to Europe and equally Europe's gateway to the Caribbean, and form an integral part of the global supply chain. The [inaugural logistics conference](#) being organised by the Cluster GAT Caraïbes in Martinique in May 2016 presents a unique opportunity to change this paradigm!



# EVENTS

Programme and online registration for the MOT's general assembly and annual conference:

"Borders: a resource for the inhabitants of border regions"

24-25 May 2016, at the Palais de la Porte Dorée in Paris

[Programme and online registration](#)

## Other events:

**15th Border Regions in Transition (BRIT) Conference:** "Cities, States and Borders: From the Local to the Global", 17-20 May 2016 in Hamburg (Germany) and Sønderborg (Denmark)

[More info](#)

**Conference** "How is cooperation a tool to promote a territory's influence, economic development, social inclusion and harmonious coexistence?", 22 March 2016 in Lille

**Launching conference of the Interreg VA Greater Region Programme**, 8 March 2016 in Aubange (Belgium)

[All the events](#)

## A university for Europe: Eucor - The European Campus



The chancellors of the Eucor universities – The European Campus

The first European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) to be set up by an alliance of universities is located in the Upper Rhine area. In December 2015, the Universities of Basle, Freiburg, Upper Alsace and Strasbourg, together with the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, signed the documents establishing "Eucor – The European Campus", a trinational European campus.

Thus, the universities now possess a common legal personality whilst retaining their own autonomy. Based on the Eucor alliance, established in 1989, and thus backed by a long tradition of cooperation, Eucor – The European Campus

unites the potential for research and education in the Upper Rhine area. The EGTC will facilitate the implementation of even more joint measures such as joint funding applications in France, Germany and Switzerland, as well as to the European Union, and the shared recruitment of academic staff.

The project entitled "Eucor – The European Campus: Cross-Border Structures" will receive financial support from Interreg V for three years as from 2016. In the context of this project, "Eucor – the European Campus" – the first European university – intends to establish a joint structural

and development plan, remove administrative barriers and create synergies in research, training, higher education and administration to serve the 15,000 researchers and teaching staff as well as the 115,000 students. The aim is to establish a place where learning and research can thrive without walls or borders and serve as a magnet for attracting the best young international researchers and students.

[More info](#)



## New measures to promote the learning of German in East Moselle



As set out on 22 January 2016 by Patrick Weiten, president of the Moselle Conseil Départemental

and first vice-president of the Alsace Champagne-Ardenne Lorraine Region responsible for territorial and cross-border cooperation, the Trilingua scheme aimed at promoting the learning of German in Moselle is being replaced by two new experiments in this regard.

Patrick Weiten thus officially unveiled two new measures aimed at reinvigorating the learning of German in the former coal-mining area: a framework agreement for the in-depth teaching of German in the border region of East Moselle, and a digital portal designed for teachers.

The two measures have been operational since the start of the academic year in September 2015.

Source: [La semaine](#)  
More info on [Trilingua](#)

## The end of double taxation for former cross-border worker pensioners

Since 1 January 2016, pensioners in French and German border regions who previously worked in the other country no longer run the risk of being taxed twice. An amendment to the bilateral tax agreement signed by French and German ministers simplifies the taxation of pensioners who were formerly cross-border workers and who receive a pension from the other country. The right of taxation under the statutory social security regime is given solely to the country of residence of the pensioner concerned. In this way, taxpayers living in France but receiving a German pension will only be taxed in France, and vice versa. The amendment provides for financial compensation to offset each country's loss of tax revenue. The law was promulgated in France on 22 December 2015.

# EUROPE NEWS

## What would be the economic consequences of abandoning the Schengen agreements?

France-Stratégie has published an analysis of the economic consequences of abandoning the Schengen agreements.

The permanent reinstatement of controls at the internal borders of the Schengen Area would result in an annual economic cost for France of €1-€2 billion over the short term, and €10 billion over the longer term.

In the short term, those most affected by this measure would be tourists on short stays from neighbouring countries, non-European tourists visiting several European countries, cross-border workers and road freight transport.

[More info](#)

# NETWORK NEWS

## The MOT's operational studies since its creation in 1997 now available online

**A new section on the MOT's website lists more than 130 operational studies that have been produced by the MOT since it was set up in 1997.**

The studies are generally commissioned by local players in cross-border territories. They can for example concern legal or technical assistance provided in the setting-up of cross-border projects, or the production of territorial assessments.

### A few examples:

- Preparation for Luxembourg's presidency of the EU Council: tools and removal of obstacles to cross-border cooperation, September 2015

- Development of cross-border rail services for travellers between Nice and Imperia, December 2014

- Preparatory work on a "cross-border house" on the French Guiana-Brazil border, March 2014

- Cross-border development strategy for the French-Swiss Jura Arc, 2013-2014

- Technical support for the UN's "LOBI" programme on the strengthening of cross-border governance in West Africa, 2013-2014

- Legal support for the setting-up of the Espace Mont Blanc European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation, 2013

- Capitalising on the cross-border

cooperation projects of the European programme ALCOTRA, March 2013

- Parc National du Mercantour/Parco Naturale Alpi Marittime EGTC – methodological support, October 2012

- Cross-border mobility between France and Belgium, 2012

- Studies relating to the project for high speed rail services between the United Kingdom, Nord-Pas-de-Calais et Bruxelles, October 2011.

**Certain studies are reserved for members.**

[Consult this section](#) [in French only].



## European programmes, calls for projects issued: position yourselves!

All of the territorial cooperation operational programmes for the 2014-2020 period have been approved by the European Commission, and the first calls for projects have been issued.

### The calls for projects include:

- [Strand A cross-border programmes](#) on France's borders (click here for more information on each programme).
- [Interreg VB South-West Europe Programme](#): closing date 29 April

- (phase 2).
- [Interreg VB Alpine Space Programme](#): closing date 8 April (phase 1).
- [Interreg VB North-West Europe Programme](#): closing date 27 May.
- [Interreg Europe Programme](#): closing date 13 May.
- [Innovative Actions Programme](#): closing date 31 March.
- [ESPON Programme](#) (targeted analyses aimed at territorial players): closing date 9 March.

The network and transnational programmes can also be a source of relevant funding for cross-border projects involving partners along different European borders.

**By virtue of its network, the MOT is able to help cross-border project developers in their search for European partners; it can also take part in projects.**

For all enquiries on this subject: [mot@mot.asso.fr](mailto:mot@mot.asso.fr)

## Cross-border masterclass

From 26 to 28 January 2016 in Marseille, the Institut Catholique de la Méditerranée, the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region and the Villa Méditerranée jointly organised, together with lecturers and students from different universities, the fourth edition of the "Trans/frontières et dialogue des disciplines" ("Cross/boundaries and dialogue between disciplines") on the topic "The age of transitions to another generation of players?". The MOT took part in it as an associate partner to the event. It was attended by 140 people.

[More info \[FR\]](#)

# PRESS REVIEW

## ▲ Anne-Laure Amilhat Szary: 'Schengen is a perfect scapegoat'

La Croix, 14 January

"Interview with Anne-Laure Amilhat Szary, geographer and professor at Grenoble-Alpes University. People simplify the Schengen Agreement in the political debate. The reinstatement of borders is presented as being a solution for the problems coming from outside. But it is illusory to think that the borders can be exhaustively controlled."

## ▲ German industry sounds the alarm faced with the possible closure of national borders

Les Echos, 26 January

"With a volume of foreign trade (exports and imports) amounting to €2,600 billion, Germany depends on the free movement of goods. Industrial leaders are worried about a reinstatement of borders. The minister of the economy fears an 'economic catastrophe'."

## ▲ Jobs without borders

Le Républicain lorrain, 31 January

"After Sarreguémines and Forbach, the French employment service is, for the first time in Saint-Avold, putting in place a coaching programme for job-seekers."

## ▲ PAMINA is changing its structure

L'Ami Hebdo, 10 January

"In Lauterbourg, the PAMINA Eurodistrict is in the process of becoming a European grouping (EGTC) and is proposing a new Interreg project for the labour market. Under the presidency of Fritz Brechtel, administrator of Germersheim district, the PAMINA Eurodistrict Council approved the convention and statutes of the future European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) at its session in December 2015."

## ▲ Europe cofinances footbridges over the Rhine

DNA, 29 January

"Europe has given the go-ahead for the cofinancing of the construction of bridges for cyclists and pedestrians adjoining the existing structure at Gamsheim. [...] This project represents an investment of €5.9 million."

## ▲ The Swiss jump off the Geneva-Annemasse tram

Transport Public, 8 January

"The extension of the number 12 tramline which is to link Geneva to Annemasse is at a standstill. The Canton of Geneva can no longer finance this project for budgetary reasons. This 3.5 km-long extension was scheduled to connect the two towns by the end of 2016."

## ▲ A French-Geneva observatory to deal with the departure of nurses

Le Messenger, 13 January

"The fruit of 20 years of discussions between the French and the Swiss, a French-Geneva healthcare personnel observatory has just been set up. It will enable the two countries to better assess cross-border flows in this domain."

## ▲ Cross-border funds in the firing line of a popular initiative

L'Essor Savoyard, 28 January

"The Mouvement citoyen genevois (MCG) wants to abolish the financial compensation that Geneva pays to France. It has called on the people to support them in this. In the end, the MCG has succeeded in four months in collecting the 7,400 signatures needed for its popular initiative to be accepted."

## ▲ Ever better cooperation

Sud Ouest, 21 January

"Jean-Jacques Lasserre, president of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques Conseil Départemental, met the president of the Basque government, Iñigo Urkullu, in San Sebastian. The Department wants to strengthen ties between both sides of the Bidassoa and increase its investment in the cross-border domain."

Consult all of the press articles \*. Reserved for members.

\* Each month, the MOT posts online around 100 articles about cross-border cooperation (in French).

## "City-networks and spatial rescaling in the Baltic Sea area"

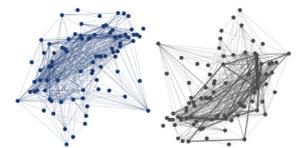
Doctoral thesis in geography by Nicolas Escach, under the supervision of Lydia Coudroy from Lille and Boris Grésillon, defended in 2014 at the École normale supérieure in Lyons. Published in French – Abstract in English.

"The Baltic Sea area is often quoted as the archetype of a transnational space achieved through networks. [...] Since the 1980s, a period that was characterized by a change in the role of States, city authorities have been able to launch more autonomous international policies and extend the scope of their actions to unprecedented levels. [...] City networks make up an intermediary space allowing the territories bordering the Baltic Sea to develop strategies within and together with various geographical levels. With its many disparities, the Baltic Sea area exemplifies not one single model of rescaling, but a vast number of inter-territorial strategies and approaches." [More info](#)

ENE École normale supérieure de Lyon  
École doctorale 485 Sciences sociales  
UMR 5600 Environnement Ville Société



Réseaux de villes et recompositions interterritoriales dans l'espace baltique



Nicolas ESCACH

Thèse de doctorat de géographie, aménagement et urbanisme  
Sous la direction de Lydia COUDROY DE LILLE et Boris GRÉSSILLON  
Présentée et soutenue publiquement le 14 novembre 2014

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