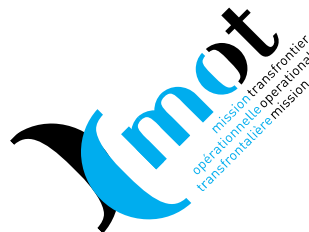


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Cross-border innovation fair in Metz

The second edition of “Startup Show 42”, a cross-border digital innovation fair, was held on 6 April in Metz on the fringes of the Franco-German Council of Ministers. Over forty startups from the Lorraine Corridor (Epinal, Nancy, Metz, Thionville) and the QuattroPole city network (Luxembourg, Metz, Saarbrücken, Trier) were there to present their know-how and latest innovations. This involved over 1000 visitors, political figures, decision makers, business leaders, including experts and the uninitiated, coming together to

forge links between the world of innovation and economic actors, notably around a dedicated networking space. For Philippe Hénau, head of multimedia services at the Metz municipal council, “it’s about giving a reality to a cross-border innovation space. A startup needs leverage, publicity, financing and new markets.” Organised within the framework of the LORnTECH project, the fair enables representation of all sectors of the economy, without borders!

[More info](#)



Uncertainties about the future of French-Swiss cross-border workers

The 31st Congress of the European Cross-Border Grouping (GTE) brought together over 500 cross-border workers and numerous political representatives of the French-Swiss territory on 11 March 2016 in Archamps.

According to Michel Charrat, president of the GTE, “2015 will no doubt go down in the history books of the cross-border phenomenon. The loss of private insurance and its replacement with mandatory schemes marks a major step in our very specific status! Never, in our history, have we been subject to such negative changes

concerning our status as cross-border workers, it is why we must remain mobilised.” Concerning unemployment and the system of fiscal compensation between the two countries, he indicated that it is “imperative to conclude a more equitable bilateral agreement that conforms to the realities on the ground!” Other concerns were raised, such as the threat to temporary employment, taxation at the source, and the vote against “mass immigration” on 9 February 2014.

[More info.](#)

Regarding the popular initiative of 9 February 2014, the Swiss government presented its implementation plan in December. The central idea of the initiative is to establish a threshold for the immigration of EU citizens, above which contingencies would be introduced the following year. The negotiations are underway with the European Commission and should lead to a new referendum by the end of the year.

EVENTS

Annual conference and general assembly of the MOT:

"Borders: a resource for the inhabitants of border regions", 24-25 May 2016 in Paris.

The two day program.

Online registration before 2 May.

This conference will be followed by a visit to the exhibition "Frontières" ("Borders") at the French National Museum of the History of Immigration. [More info](#)

Other events:

Series of conferences hosted by the University of the Greater Region (UniGR): "Migration & Refugee question", from 19 April to 31 May 2016, in Lorraine, Luxembourg and Germany

French-Belgian seminar: "Cross-border observation: which organisation for which actions?", 28 April 2016 in Tournai (Belgium)

CoR Forum on the EU Urban Agenda, 30 May 2016 in Amsterdam

[All the events](#)

Cross-border nursing education in the SaarMoselle territory



Since 2008, the IFSI (Nursing training institute) of the Centre Hospitalier de Sarreguemines in France and Völklingen Hospital in Germany have built a partnership in the field of nursing education, consisting of the development of interculturality and promotion of bilingualism in initial and ongoing training. Located within the SaarMoselle Eurodistrict, the two establishments have always shared the desire to develop projects tailored to the needs of the combined catchment area for cross-border healthcare and employment, while setting them within the framework of the strategic and cultural aims of the territory.

Thanks to the EU Directive 2011/24/EU on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, as

well as the cross-border cooperation agreement on cardiology between the Lorraine regional health agency (ARS) and Völklingen Hospital of 19 March 2013, cross-border flows of patients are growing within the territory of the Eurodistrict. In the interests of patients, it therefore makes sense for healthcare staff to be aware of the two systems and to acquire French-German intercultural skills.

The partnership was forged during two key developments:

- 14 October 2008: signing of the French-German agreement on traineeships, marking the beginning of cooperation activities.

- 14 November 2014: signing of the French-German partnership agreement.

From now on, the goal is to boost the employability of future French nurses on the German territory where there is particularly high demand for the recruitment of healthcare professionals. The IFSI is therefore offering a cross-border training curriculum incorporating traineeships in Germany and language classes along with assistance in finding employment.

Enriched by this experience of nearly eight years, and in light of the emergence of a strong culture of partnership, the two establishments hope to give new momentum to this cooperation by developing links in the area of ongoing training.

Cross-border issues on the agenda for the Franco-German Council

Cross-border cooperation was on the agenda for the 18th Franco-German Council of Ministers presided by François Hollande and Angela Merkel on 7 April 2016 in Metz. Another conference on cross-border cooperation, modelled on those in Sarrebrücken (2013) and Metz (2015), was announced for 2017, to be held in Germany. Other cross-border topics were addressed:

- Security: France and Germany signed an agreement allowing cross-border use of police aircraft. It will be completed, before the end of the year, by

a new agreement creating a joint riverine unit on the Rhine;

- Employment: Continuing the mobilisation of the French and German public employment services, and strengthening cross-border job placement services as well as bodies for advice and support;

- Health: strengthening the cross-border supply of healthcare in the Sarre-Moselle zone;

- Higher education and research: the creation of Eucor, the European Campus marks an important step.

[The summary of decisions](#)

The status of cross-border students examined in Bayonne

A symposium on cross-border student status was organised on 31 March in Bayonne by the students of the Master 2 in Cross-border and interregional cooperation at the University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour. The exchanges highlighted the advantages that the creation of such a status would represent in the Basque Country: access to the universities' libraries and cafeterias on either side of the border, special student rates for transport and cultural activities, enlargement of the employment catchment area with the creation of a double degree. Obstacles cited included the language barrier, and obtaining grants and student housing.

A new space for the Euroregion Aquitaine-Euskadi

On March 18th, Basque Country's President Iñigo Urkullu chaired the first 2016 Assembly of the Euroregion Aquitaine-Euskadi, at Vitoria-Gasteiz (Spain). The main points of the Assembly were related to the 2015 Activities' assessment, to the 2016 Orientations, to the election of Alain Rousset as the new President of the Euroregion, as well as to the approval of the adherence of Navarre to the EGTC. EGTC's activities will be, onwards, developed in a new and unprecedented territorial perimeter due to the adherence of Navarre and to the regional merger of Aquitaine Limousin and Poitou-Charentes.

[More info](#)

Call for evidence: the consequences in border regions of tightening border controls

In order to fuel the debate at its upcoming annual conference on 24 May on [“Borders: a resource for the inhabitants of border regions”](#), the MOT is launching a call for evidence on the impacts of tightening border controls in (cross-)border regions.

If you have any experiences to share or you know of any specific cases, we invite you to fill in our short questionnaire, which will help to inform the debate on 24 May: [click here](#).

Dutch Provinces’ seminar on cross-border cooperation

In the context of the Netherlands Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the House of the Dutch Provinces in Brussels hosted a seminar on 17 March 2016 on cross-border cooperation. Particularly affected by cross-border issues*, the Dutch provinces encounter numerous challenges in common with other European cross-border territories.

This seminar was the opportunity to address the issues of cross-border structuring of transport networks, cross-border employment, education and recognition of qualifications, the importance of cross-border statistics for making policy and measuring its effects, healthcare, etc.



Discussions also touched on measuring the effects of legislation on cross-border regions, as well as support for setting up cross-border projects. Participating in the seminar, the Luxembourg Department for spatial planning noted the links with the preceding Luxembourg Presidency and the legal instrument proposed by the Grand Duchy (with technical support from the MOT). This instrument, the “European Cross-border Convention on specific provisions in cross-border regions” (ECBC), would allow public backers of local projects to apply to their respective national governments for the implementation of legal solutions for the realisation of specific cross-border projects. The

proposed instrument resonates with the difficulties encountered by project leaders on Dutch borders (including the case of a cross-border industrial zone) and is similar to legal instruments used between members of the Benelux Union.

The Dutch minister in charge of urban policy indicated that the ministerial meeting on 30 May would adopt the Pact of Amsterdam, establishing the EU Urban Agenda which comprises twelve priority thematic areas, with cross-border territories taken into account as a cross-cutting issue.

**7 out of 12 provinces with national borders, including Limburg, a MOT member, which shares a greater length of its frontiers with Germany and Belgium than it does with the rest of the Netherlands.*

MOT mission in Haïti

At the request of the Haitian authorities, the French Embassy has mobilised the expertise of the MOT in a planning mission for a programme supporting the governance of Haitian local authorities located in the area bordering the Dominican Republic. This mission, conducted in March, was guided by the Haitian Directorate-General for local authorities. It allowed the definition of the main priorities of a roadmap for Haiti as well as ideas for future collaboration between the MOT and the Haitian authorities.



First results of the “Cross-border Review”

DG REGIO has just published a [36-page report](#) on the public consultation “Overcoming obstacles in border regions” carried out in autumn 2015. It has also made available [all contributions](#) and [the proceedings of the second experts’ workshop](#) of 28 January 2016. A series of four workshops is being organised with cross-border cooperation experts, including the MOT, to support the work of the “Cross-border Review”. [More info](#)

EGTC Platform

The EGTC Platform of the Committee of the Regions held its annual meeting on 20 April in Brussels, on the topic of the impact of the Schengen Area crisis on cross-border cooperation. One of the roundtables brought together the representatives of the AEBR, the MOT and two EGTCs: EfxiniPolis (Greece/Cyprus/Bulgaria) and Strasbourg-Ortenau. During the event, the 2016 EGTC Award was given to [the French-Spanish cross-border hospital in Cerdanya](#), the first of its kind in Europe. [More info](#)

PRESS REVIEW

Nuclear power: Luxembourg ready to co-finance the closure of the French nuclear plant at Cattenom

AFP, 11 April

"Luxembourg's prime minister Xavier Bettel declared on Monday that the 'greatest wish' of the Grand Duchy was that France 'close' the Cattenom nuclear power station, and that it would be prepared 'to make a financial commitment' to achieve this. [...] Mr Bettel raised the question of this nuclear power station located in Lorraine which according to him, in the event of a problem, could 'wipe the Grand Duchy off the map'."

The border metropolis moving

Républicain lorrain, 12 April

"They are determined. Already a year of drumming up support, a year since they collected a hundred signatures in their Call of the 100. 'We could have got 1000!' A year of attempting to start the debate in the political arena, which is meanly stalling on this idea of a border metropolis between Metz and Thionville. Yet the goal is to bring together 14 intercommunal structures and 596,000 inhabitants within an entity with greater competences, capable of negotiating on an equal footing with neighbouring states and gaining direct access to EU funding. [...] Civil society actors have created an association: Métropole frontalière Metz-Thionville, with two co-presidents and six vice-presidents."

Strasbourg, the Eurometropolis straddling the Rhine

Les Echos, 13 April

"The border city of Strasbourg is turning into a bridging metropolis by stretching towards Germany. [...] Ardently developed over several decades, cooperation with the communes of the German district of Ortenau has shifted the lines and made Strasbourg, a border city, into a sort of 'Strasbourg-on-Rhine'."

An Erasmus apprenticeship scheme launched by eleven French and German companies

Le Figaro, 6 April

"Currently 270,000 European students benefit from grants for the pursuit of their studies in other European countries. A group of French-German companies has decided to open up this possibility to apprentices."

Why Alsatians are tempted to seek healthcare in Germany

Rue89, 5 April

"Shorter waiting times, treatments that are non-existent in France: more and more Alsatians are choosing to go to Germany for medical treatment."

The Trans-Jura Conference reviews its territorial approach and enlarges its mode of governance

L'Est républicain, 12 April

"The CTJ is back on the public stage. Marie-Guite Dufay [President of newly created Bourgogne-Franche-Comté], believes this should allay the fears of Swiss elected representatives who were wondering how the fusion of regions would accommodate this cooperation they are so attached to, for neighbourhood reasons but also because France is one of their gateways to the EU."

Greater Geneva will be playfully taking over our cities

Le Dauphiné libéré, 8 April

"Inviting people to reflect on the border, but not in a scholarly way, in the street so that people can appropriate it and play with it."

When French and Spanish bodies work together for social welfare

Le Petit Journal, 25 March

"This project, initiated by the Comarca community of communes, [...] has cross-border development as its goal, in order to encourage social and professional integration of vulnerable people in rural areas."

[Consult all of the press articles*](#).
Reserved for members – in French.

* Each month, the MOT posts online around 100 articles about cross-border cooperation.

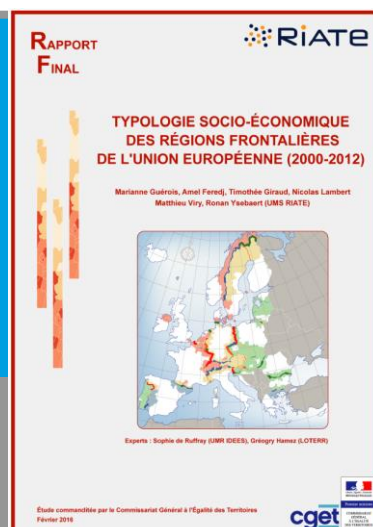
Socioeconomic typology of border regions in the European Union

Study commissioned by the CGET and conducted by UMS RIATE, March 2016

This study, which has just been published on the UMS RIATE website, looks at the analysis of border regions on internal borders of the European Union with a methodological approach: How do we define border areas? How do we measure the multi-criterial territorial discontinuities? How do we qualify their evolution in time? How do we evaluate accessibility between border regions? [Download the study \[FR\]](#)

This publication is available in the MOT's document portal [FR].
Specialising in cross-border cooperation, the portal provides more than 3,900 document references. [More info](#)

NB: the downloading of online documents is reserved for MOT members and, on request, students and researchers.



CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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