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CROSS BORDER NEWS



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Geodata dedicated to innovative projects in Greater Geneva

Helping entrepreneurs located on either side of the border to create new digital services thanks to geodata on Greater Geneva – this is the aim of the Interreg project "Geofab Greater Geneva" launched on 4 April 2017.*

The principle of Geofab is to facilitate the exploitation of a large number of digital spatial, land registry and geographical data, accessible as open data, by selecting and supporting innovative Franco-Swiss digital projects through four calls for projects over two years. The objective is:

- to help project developers to put their innovative digital services on the market;
- to promote access to digital geographical data by project developers in the Greater Geneva area;
- to develop the digital market at the cross-border level. [More info](#)

* The partners in the project are the University of Geneva, the Canton of Geneva and the French Geneva Region Cooperation Assembly (ARC), supported by technical and institutional partners.



Franco-Swiss agreement for the binational Basel-Mulhouse EuroAirport

On 23 March 2017 in Paris, France and Switzerland signed an intergovernmental agreement that clarifies and defines the tax regime governing the binational Basel-Mulhouse EuroAirport, bringing to an end a dispute that has lasted for over two years.

The French and Swiss authorities reached an agreement on the principles of non-double taxation of companies and compensation of local authorities for the loss of tax receipts. In concrete terms, the document stipulates that

Swiss firms will be subject to Swiss VAT, and it defines how tax receipts from companies should be shared between France and Switzerland. Thus, firms on the Swiss side will also be subject to French income tax and Swiss tax on capital, but will be exempt from the main French associated and local taxes.

Having benefited from binational status since its creation in 1949, the Basel-Mulhouse EuroAirport, established on French soil, had become a source of conflict regarding the tax regime governing it.

The new agreement removes this misunderstanding and source of tension between the two countries following fruitful negotiations. "It's an important step towards ensuring the continuation of a flourishing cross-border collaboration initiated in 1949 between France and Switzerland," declared the Senator of the Haut-Rhin Department, Jean-Marie Bockel.

[More info](#)

EVENTS

Save the date: 20th anniversary of the MOT

"Building cross-border territories: Europe for citizens", 30 November – 1 December 2017 in Brussels

European conference organised by the MOT to celebrate its 20th anniversary, in partnership with the European Committee of the Regions.
[More info](#)

Conference "Cross-border cooperation in a changing security context: the role of civil protection and emergency management in large-scale disasters and specific hazardous situations", 18-19 May 2017 in Bonn

Workshop "Migration and Borders: The Humanitarian and Migration Crisis in Europe - A challenge for EU borders?", 22 May 2017 in Strasbourg

ESPON seminar "Revealing territorial potentials and shaping new policies - Contribution to the post-2020 Cohesion policy debate", 24-25 May 2017 in Valetta

International symposium "Borders - territories of health-care and treatment networks", 1-2 June 2017 in Arras

[All the events](#)

New projects for the Nouvelle-Aquitaine-Euskadi-Navarra Euroregion

On 6 March 2017, Navarra joined the Nouvelle-Aquitaine-Euskadi Euroregion. A new partnership that reinforces cooperation between the French and Spanish territories.



Gathered in Bordeaux for the general assembly of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), the President of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region and of the EGTC, Alain Rousset, the President of the government of Euskadi, Iñigo Urkullu, and the President of the government of Navarra, Uxue Barkos, signed a new partnership agreement that officially incorporates the Navarra Autonomous Community into the Franco-Spanish cooperation area. By virtue of its geographical location and its cultural heritage, it is natural that Navarra should participate in this Euroregional construction, which was launched at the end of 2011. With this new partner, the Euroregion now encompasses nearly nine million inhabitants across a territory of 100,000 km². It thus has additional assets with which to implement European projects and carry out

its many initiatives for the benefit of the region's citizens.

Transport

The Nouvelle-Aquitaine-Euskadi-Navarra Euroregion has developed a public information service for cross-border travellers by creating an information portal (transfermuga.eu) and a calculator of cross-border itineraries. It is also working on the development and linking-up of cross-border urban, inter-urban and rail transport services.

Employment

The Euroregion runs the European project "Strengthening Europe: development of an Aquitaine-Euskadi Euroregional labour pool", funded by the Interreg programme POCTEFA. This project aims to draw up an assessment of the reality of cross-border employment along

the border, to provide reference data on the subject, to promote the Euroregion as a territory of economic opportunity, and to identify potential obstacles to the free movement of labour. The MOT is assisting the EGTC with the drawing-up of an assessment and the formulation of solutions regarding cross-border employment within the Euroregional territory.

Higher education

The Euroregion funds strategic partnerships between players in higher education across the Euroregional territory, thus making it possible to offer "Euroregional Erasmus" grants to students, and to develop a "Euroregional Campus of Excellence", which provides the possibility of "double degrees" and co-supervision related to key sectors in the Euroregion.

[More info](#)

14th edition of the cross-border workers fair

The 2017 edition of the cross-border workers fair, organised by the European Cross-Border Grouping in Annemasse, attracted nearly 2000 visitors. This high attendance, which was a record since the fair's first edition, can be explained by the variety of exhibitors that came to provide information to Franco-Swiss cross-border workers – who face sometimes complicated administrative situations – as well as by the topicality of cross-border issues. Discussions focused notably on the implementation of the "Léman Express" project, the cross-border rail service under construction that will link Geneva to Annemasse by 2019. Healthcare questions were also at the heart of discussions, for example the

right to choose with respect to health insurance. [More info](#)



The third Franco-German cross-border conference

On 5-6 April 2017 in Neustadt-an-der Weinstraße (Rhineland-Palatinate), the third Franco-German cross-border conference was held, in the presence of Harlem Désir, the Secretary of State for European Affairs (FR), and Michael Roth, Minister of State for Europe (DE). On this occasion, they signed the "Hambach Declaration", a joint declaration that affirms their desire to pursue "integration in the Franco-German cross-border region in the spirit of mutual benefit, to serve the interests of its citizens and promote economic and social development". It identifies areas of cooperation to be strengthened such as young people, labour market integration, languages, higher education, transport, sustainable development, social integration, healthcare and policing and legal affairs. [Download the Declaration \(in French\)](#)

EUROPE NEWS

"PASSAGE" to a low-carbon economy in the Dover Strait

On 13 March 2017, around 50 French and British stakeholders from either side of the Dover Strait met in St Margaret's Bay, in Kent, to discuss an action plan for the low-carbon transition. The Strait, which is at the heart of the Franco-British border, is currently one of the most heavily-used maritime routes in the world. The resulting movements and activities contribute directly to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions, making this a shared challenge for the territories on either side of the border.

This meeting was organised by Kent County Council and the Pas-de-Calais Department within the framework of the Interreg Europe project "PASSAGE".

[More info](#)

NETWORK NEWS

Study on cross-border issues in mountain areas

At the request of the CGET,* the MOT has conducted a study on the cross-border issues in mountain areas, which cover nearly 42% of mainland France's borders.

This work, which has taken place in the context of part II of the Montagne Act, adopted on 22 December 2016, involved the updating of the knowledge on border region mountain ranges in mainland France, as well as the analysis of the issues relating to their development, planning and protection, with the aim of improving support in the implementation and coordination of public actions.

Four mountain ranges were analysed: the Alps, the Jura, the Pyrenees and the Vosges, which encompass all of the "natural areas" involved in cross-border cooperation projects:

- the Northern Vosges-Pfälzerwald Cross-Border Biosphere Reserve in the Vosges mountain range;

- the Franco-Swiss Doubs Cross-Border Park project and the Haut-Jura Regional Nature Park in the Jura;

- the Espace Mont-Blanc, the Hautes-Vallées Conference, the Mont-Viso Cross-Border Biosphere Reserve and the Alpi Marittime-Mercantour European Park in the Alps;

- the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation of the Espace Pourtalet, Huesca Pirineos-Hautes Pyrénées, Pirineus-Cerdanya, the Cross-Border Art and History Country, the Pyrenees and Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Parks, and the Pyrénées Ariégeoises and Pyrénées Catalanes Regional Nature Parks in the Pyrenees.

The study consists of three parts:

- an analysis of the cross-border issues specific to each mountain range, and a comparative analysis of the common issues;

- a typology of the areas specific to each mountain range: the inhabited border mountain area, the periurban border mountain area, the border mountain area in demographic and economic decline, and the tourist destination border mountain area;

- an examination of good cross-border practices in domains such as transport, accessibility, biodiversity and ecological development, access to services, governance, territorial marketing and tourism.

* General Commission for Territorial Equality.



The Fourth European Forum of the Outermost Regions

On 30-31 March 2017, before more than 500 participants, the Presidents of the outermost regions (ORs) submitted to the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, a memorandum urging for better account to be taken of their specificities in European policies through a "New Strategy for the ORs".

[More info](#)

[Briefing of the European Parliament on the New Strategy for the Ors](#)

["Omarjee" report on the development of the Ors](#)

["Vlody" report on the integration of France's overseas departments and regions in their geographical environment.](#)

Castle Talks and study day on the diplomacy of territorial authorities

On 20-21 March 2017 in Strasbourg, Jean Peyrony, the MOT's Director-General, took part in the second edition of the "Castle Talks on Cross-Border Cooperation", a series of conferences organised notably by the University of Strasbourg and the Euro-Institut in Kehl that brings together researchers, students and players involved in cross-border cooperation. The discussions focused on the threat of a return of borders in Europe. These participants also met for the study day on the diplomacy of territorial authorities that was held on 21-22 March, and that was aimed at promoting dialogue between practitioners and researchers in the context of the "Diplomacy and Territories" white paper. [More info](#)

Young European volunteers at the heart of Interreg projects

The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) manages on behalf of the European Commission the new initiative known as "Interreg Volunteer Youth" (IVY), which aims to give young Europeans aged 18-30 the opportunity to serve as volunteers in Interreg programmes and projects. Launched on 1 March 2017 for one year, this pilot scheme is designed to promote awareness of the concrete achievements of European territorial cooperation and the values of solidarity linked to it.

[More info](#)

PRESS REVIEW

EU: start of systematic checks on Europeans at external borders

Le Parisien, 6 April

"Europeans will be subject to systematic checks at the EU's external borders from Friday, under new European legislation targeting 'foreign fighters'."

Around 200 French cross-border workers at Caterpillar

La Nouvelle Gazette, 7 April

"The Caterpillar factory in Gosselies (Charleroi), which is soon to close, employs 100 manual workers and 79 managerial staff that are French cross-border workers, the Northern French daily La Voix du Nord reported on Thursday."

Yes to a border metropolitan hub*

20 minutes, 20 April

"To develop cross-border cooperation in areas such as healthcare, transport or vocational training – this is the aim of the creation of a new metropolitan hub in the Grand Est Region. A report by the General Commissioner for Territorial Equality recommends this type of structure to provide a new type of governance in North Lorraine and ensure a more balanced relationship between the municipalities in the north of the region and Luxembourg."

* "Pôle métropolitain"

In Kehl, the last preparations to receive Line D of the Strasbourg tram network

France Info, 19 April

"On 29 April 2017, Line D of the Strasbourg tram network will cross the Rhine to stop at Kehl station, in Germany. This extension, which comprises four additional stops and 2.7 kilometres, required €70 million in investment."

44.5% of French cross-border workers live in the Grand Est Region

L'Alsace, 20 April

"160,000 employees in the Greater Region cross borders regularly to go and work abroad: Luxembourg (69,000) is the number one destination, followed by Germany (46,000), Switzerland (36,100) and Belgium (8500)."

Cross-border workers: concerns on three issues

Le Progrès, 14 April

"The cross-border worker interest group L'Amicale des frontaliers is sounding the alarm on several issues. 1. Road infrastructures unsuited to worker movements [...] 2. Unemployment benefit for cross-border workers – could Switzerland contribute more? [...] 3. Swiss taxes: cross-border workers contribute indirectly."

Cross-border committee set up to preserve flora

Nice Matin, 11 April

"Cophymed, an association based in Menton that brings together specialists from parks and gardens in the Mediterranean Basin, has just been launched to deal with the emergence of parasites [...]. Coming together within an association that has just been set up in Menton – Cophymed, standing for "Coopération phytosanitaire méditerranéenne" – the specialists intend to 'find solutions to regulate the situation'."

Var/Bastia/Livorno: consular and economic synergies

TPBM Semaine Provence, 19 April

"The Presidents of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Var, Upper Corsica (Bastia) and Maremma and the Tyrrhenian (Livorno) recently signed a partnership agreement making their historical cooperation links official and enabling them to sign up jointly to European programmes for the benefit of their territories."

Creation of the Tech and Ter Cross-Border Art and History Country

L'Indépendant, 2 April

"It's a great chance for the village as the centre of the Cross-Border Art and History Country to have hosted the signature marking the official creation of this European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)."

Consult all of the press articles*. Reserved for members – in French.

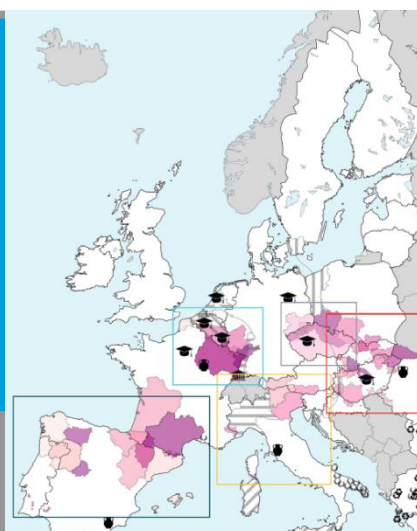
* Each month, the MOT posts online around 100 articles about cross-border cooperation.

The Committee of the Regions' annual monitoring report on EGTCs

This publication looks at developments in EGTCs during 2016. Based on an updated overview and case studies, the report aims to highlight the EGTCs' main areas of action, their involvement in cohesion policy, and their achievements and the obstacles encountered.

The report also focuses on the impact of the Schengen crisis and introduction of border controls on the territories and work of the EGTCs. [Download the report.](#)

This publication is available in the MOT's document portal [FR]. Specialising in cross-border cooperation, the portal provides more than 4,000 document references. [More info](#)



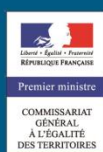
CROSS-BORDER NEWS

Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière
38 rue des Bourdonnais
75001 Paris France
Tel: +33 (0)1 55 80 56 80

Director of publication:
Jean Peyrony
Production: Domitille Ayral,
Blandine Lysensoone

Photos: All rights reserved ;
page 3: Andrea Alborno.

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