

Establishment of the new Greater Geneva Conurbation Forum

A body for cross-border civil society dialogue launched in 2013 on the initiative of the Local Grouping of Cross-Border Cooperation (LGCC), the Greater Geneva Conurbation Forum has just started its second term. Made up of 75 cross-border structures, the Conurbation Forum is the consultative body for the Conurbation Project, which brings together cross-border civil society players, and now occupies a major place in the implementation of public

policies, and of the construction and governance programme of Greater Geneva. A powerful tool for promoting Greater Geneva among its inhabitants, this body provides a space for discussion and dialogue and works on a range of topics such as territorial cohesion, the cross-border action plan on air quality, and the development of a culture specific to Greater Geneva. [More info](#)



A "Micro-projects" page on the MOT's website

This summer, the MOT developed a page on its website entirely devoted to small-scale cross-border projects aimed at civil society.

Micro-projects and similar initiatives encourage the inclusion of citizens in cross-border cooperation, and therefore European construction. Thanks to these initiatives, small civil society structures, which are often overlooked by national and European funding, are able to develop their ideas using a dedicated framework. These kinds of

mechanisms are offered within the framework of Interreg programmes, but also by cross-border structures and France's border departments, with the latter often encouraging this type of cooperation in partnership with neighbouring territorial authorities.

The MOT analysed these tools along France's borders, with the help of the players who implement them on a daily basis. In order to promote these initiatives, it carried out a cross-sectoral analysis, including brief

explorations of their historical background and development, the geographical distribution, the topics addressed, and the institutions and players involved. Factsheets summarise the main characteristics of the micro-project funds and similar mechanisms, with a dedicated map as a visual aid.

Take a look at the page on our website to find out more about small cross-border projects along France's borders! [More info](#)

EVENTS

2nd Conference of Franco-Haitian decentralized cooperation, 4-6 Decembre 2017 in Port-au-Prince (Haïti)

ESPON seminar "Transforming territorial thinking through digitalisation", 6 and 7 December 2017 in Tallinn (Estonia)

Empleo : the state of play and prospects for cross-border employment, 15 December 2017 in Irun

Workshop "Sustainability in cross-border territories (mountain areas)", 22 and 23 January 2018 in Chambéry

European Energy Transition Conference, 30, 31 January and 1st February 2018 in Geneva

[All events](#)

10th anniversary of the Cross-Border Jura Arc Forum

The Cross-Border Jura Arc Forum celebrated the 10th anniversary of its creation on Saturday 21 October 2017 at the town hall of Le Russey in

the Haut-Doubs Department. Gilles Robert recalled how central the cross-border issue is to his mandate as mayor of this municipality that is so close to Switzerland. Olaf Kjelsen, Ambassador and Head of Cross-Border Cooperation at Switzerland's Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in Bern, and Olivier Denert, the MOT's Secretary-General, also addressed the gathering. On the occasion of this anniversary, the public discovered an original publication: a concertina-folded brochure containing a text by the author Odile Cornuz entitled "Adresse sans frontière" ("Address without Borders") and nine texts written by members of the committee. A timeline recounts the life and activities of the association from 2007 to 2017. On the back is a cross-border map produced by



Joël Chételat. This map shows the employment areas and flows of cross-border workers in this territory.

For the past 10 years, the Cross-Border Forum has carried out significant actions in support of cross-border cooperation in the Franco-Swiss Jura Arc. In its role as a think-tank, it organises events that make it possible to bring together citizens, specialists and political players around issues such as mobility, training, jobs, communication and cross-border identity. The objective is to draw up assessments of the current situation and to propose solutions to the malfunctions identified. During the Doubs Miroir Series, the Forum organised original cultural events in relation to the River Doubs, which was set up like a totemic symbol. The Forum also carries out initiatives on

the ground to gain in-depth understanding of a particular issue, as was the case when it surveyed local cooperation projects in the Jura Arc (Series 8). This resulted in recommendations that led to the creation of a specific fund by the Trans Jura Conference. In this way, the Cross-Border Forum fully plays its role as a stimulus for institutional players for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Franco-Swiss Jura Arc. In 2018, the Forum will begin its 9th Series, entitled "From a productive economy to a 'presential' one". [More info](#)

www.forum-transfrontalier.org

President Emmanuel Macron's visit to French Guiana

During his visit to French Guiana in October, the French President, Emmanuel Macron, stressed the importance of France's outermost regions. While different topics were discussed such as education, fishing and security, cross-border issues were highlighted with respect to the area of healthcare and support to people with disabilities in particular. The President expressed his desire to develop partnerships with neighbouring countries in order to give better treatment to patients, by investing in Suriname and Brazil with a view to setting up medical centres and providing high-quality treatment; but also by experimenting with a genuine cross-border status for the healthcare institutions established on the river-borders.

This commitment to the outermost regions was also reaffirmed at the European level by the presentation of the European Commission's new strategy for the outermost regions on 24 October 2017.

[More info](#)

38th Conference of Urban-Planning Agencies: "Building a Europe of Places and Links"

The 38th Conference of Urban-Planning Agencies was held on 8-10 November in Strasbourg, with the theme "Building a Europe of Places and Links" ("Construire l'Europe des Lieux et des Liens"). The MOT co-organized

a workshop entitled "From border territories to the cross-border territory". The aim was to present concrete experiences of cross-border programmes in France and elsewhere in Europe, at different levels ranging from large regions to cross-border conurbations. This approach enabled participants to formulate concrete proposals to European bodies aimed at promoting cooperation and cross-border territorial cohesion.

[More info](#)



Seminar on observation of cross- border territories

On 9-10 November 2017, the MOT took part in the final conference of a project on the observation of cross-border territories along Germany's borders. Introduced by the European Commission's DG REGIO, the conference consisted of a presentation of good practices implemented in seven "model regions", including the Greater Region and the Upper Rhine, and an overall study. The reactions of experts from neighbouring countries made it possible to highlight the multi-level and European dimension of this process. This initiative with respect to the observation of cross-border territories echoes the action taken along France's borders by the General Commission for Territorial Equality (CGET), with assistance from the MOT.

[More info](#)

MOT NEWS

Launch of the MOT's online forum

The MOT's Forum is up and running!

The MOT's members and partners can now use this network coordination tool to share ideas on all of the topics relating to cross-border cooperation, the obstacles encountered, the solutions found and good practices developed.

This project, which was launched by the meeting of the Technicians' Platform on 18 November 2015, aims to:

- facilitate dialogue and direct exchanges between members of the MOT's network;
- provide technical answers notably via the "obstacles/solution" entry point, and share experiences in this area;
- enable the MOT to identify recurrent obstacles and to communicate them, where necessary, to the relevant

levels (government departments, the European level).

You can contribute straightaway by creating discussion threads and adding your comments. And you can tell us about obstacles to cooperation you have encountered, solutions you have found and good practices implemented in the resources information sheets.

A search engine allows users to easily find the relevant information in the Forum that correspond to their needs and interests.

While this tool can carry out simple searches using keywords, it is also possible to do advanced searches by border, European programme, type of territory, topic or the nature of the obstacle.

The Forum is accessible only to the MOT's members and partners – the general public only has access to the titles of the discussion threads and information sheets via the homepages and search engine, but not to the content. A tutorial has been designed to help you familiarise yourself with this very user-friendly tool. [Video tutorial \[FR\]](#)

[More info about the forum](#)



Call for projects promoting decentralised cooperation

The Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs has launched a call for projects promoting decentralised cooperation, within which cross-border cooperation has been identified as a priority area. The aim is to support projects supported by French territorial authorities in partnership with foreign territorial authorities, as well as to implement Agenda 2030 for sustainable development and the Paris Climate Agreement. Launched in November 2017, this call for projects will close on 28 February 2018. [More info](#)

Castle Talks on Cross- Border Cooperation

On 8-10 November 2017 in Strasbourg, the MOT took part in the third edition of the "Castle Talks on Cross-Border Cooperation". This series of conferences is organised as part of the Jean Monnet Project on conflict and cooperation on the EU's borders by the University of Strasbourg and the Kehl Euro-Institut. It brings together researchers, students and players involved in cross-border cooperation and the conference made it possible to shed light on this issue, by means of case studies. [More info](#)

Workshop on the Commission's Communication on cross-border obstacles and the AEBR's annual conference

On 25 October 2017 in Merida (Spain), the MOT took part in a workshop of the European Commission's DG REGIO with the border regions of Spain, Portugal, France and Italy on the topic of obstacles to cross-border cooperation, following the Communication published in September. This event was an opportunity to look again at the actions initiated by the Communication, notably the procedures for implementing the call for pilot projects aimed at public authorities wishing to resolve cross-border problems of a legal nature, which will be launched at the start of 2018. [More info](#)

After this workshop, the annual conference of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) was held, in Badajoz (Spain). At this event, the topics of the place of cooperation in cohesion policy, the circular economy in border regions and the actions of civil society were discussed. [More info](#)



PRESS REVIEW

Club for cross-border businesses set up

La Voix Eco, 6 November

On Thursday 9 November, the Interreg project Factory 4.0 launched its first club for cross-border businesses. [...] The aim? To modernise cross-border SMEs and help them increase their competitiveness.

Lor'N'Tech – a generalist ecosystem being developed by four cities

Correspondances Lorraines, 13 November

Instead of linking a conurbation with a sector, the Lorraine ecosystem encompasses four cities and is generalist in its scope. While nationally the Made in France brand is promoted, Lor'N'Tech emphasises its partnerships with Luxembourg and Saarland. Developed by the Lorraine Corridor European Metropolitan Centre, the structure now brings together some 80 start-ups spread across Metz, Thionville, Nancy and Epinal.

A hub dedicated to cross-border teleworking in Thionville

Correspondances Lorraines, 16 November

In an employment area focused on Luxembourg, which every day draws in 80,000 cross-border workers from the Lorraine Region, this initiative should help to ease traffic on the increasingly congested roads.

For an ever more cross-border employment area

Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace, 31 October

Launched on 1 January and running until 31 December, this project has three objectives: "to foster the integration of jobseekers into the cross-border labour market, support businesses in finding solutions to the problems of the shortage of labour, and encourage hiring particularly in sectors where there are staff shortages, such as the healthcare sector," explained Rémi Bertrand.

Supporting cross-border projects

Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace, 12 November

Grenz'up will give advice on launching and making a success of cross-border projects, whether they are individual or collective, and will attempt to answer the questions of people who plan to undergo training or to work in Germany, or of associations that would like to develop links with associations in Switzerland or Baden.

The SITG Forum: geodata at the service of policymakers

Greater Geneva website, 9 November

The Système d'Information du Territoire à Genève (SITG – Geneva Territorial Information System), with its principles of openly sharing geoinformation, is an indispensable instrument for policymakers, enabling them to compare data, decompartmentalise topics and help partners work together within the territory, especially at the cross-border level.

IN.VI.TRA – a cross-border virtual incubator

Corse Matin, 1er November

IN.VI.TRA. Behind this acronym, which stands for "incubateur virtuel transfrontalier" (cross-border virtual incubator) is a cooperation project between European territories in the Mediterranean, in this case France and Italy, involving private, consular and institutional players working for economic development in Corsica, the Var, the Alpes-Maritimes, Liguria, Tuscany and Sardinia.

€190 million for cross-border cooperation

Sud Ouest, 11 November

For 10 years, the Working Community of the Pyrenees (CTP) has managed the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding for cross-border cooperation. Nearly €190 million is made available to project developers within this framework.

The outermost regions and the EU: a special, renewed and reinvigorated partnership

Inforegio News, 24 October

The EU has long recognised the common specificities of the Azores, the Canary Islands, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Madeira, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion and Saint Martin, and gives them special status. But for the first time the Commission is putting in place bespoke assistance, together with Member States.

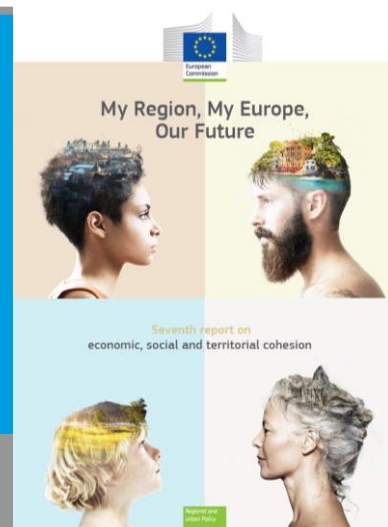
Consult all of the press articles*. Reserved for members – in French.

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

Seventh report on economic, social and territorial cohesion

This report assesses the current state of economic, social and territorial cohesion in the European Union. Following the economic crisis, there are signs of a recovery in Europe, but regional disparities persist between Member States between regions within the same country. Cross-border cooperation occupies a significant place in the report. In spite of the elimination of many institutional and regulatory obstacles, borders still represent barriers to the free movement of people, goods, services, capital and ideas. The elimination of these barriers could stimulate economic growth and improve access to services in these regions, and would also help the European economies to take full advantage of regional integration. [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

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Photos: All rights reserved
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