

## MOT 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference

# Building cross-border territories: Europe for citizens



*Michel Delebarre, President of the MOT, former Minister of State (left), and Jacques Mézard, French Minister for Territorial Cohesion (right), at the MOT's European Conference.*

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, on 30 November and 1 December in Brussels the MOT organised a European conference on the topic "Building cross-border territories: Europe for citizens", which brought together more than 230 participants: attendance figures reflecting the importance of the issues! Hosted by the Committee of the Regions, the conference was organised around three round tables, addressing the place of civil society in border territories, presenting the achievements of cross-border initiatives, and also looking ahead to the perspectives on post-2020. Michel Delebarre, President of the MOT, opened the conference by setting out the issues of the debate: "continuing to foster harmonious living together in cross-border communities for a tangible Europe at the service of citizens". Anne Sander, MEP and Vice-President of the MOT, reminded participants that if 20% of

barriers were lifted in border regions, their GDP would rise by 2%. She also addressed the preparation of the upcoming budget programming. The first round table focussed on the place of the citizen, and more widely of civil society, in cross-border territories and in the European integration process, through accounts from stakeholders on French borders. They revealed the importance of carrying out tangible projects, in order to create veritable "shared living areas", as highlighted by Kotte Ecenarro, Mayor of Hendaye (FR-ES) and Loïc Delhuvette, Director of the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis (FR-BE). Efforts to improve knowledge of the neighbouring language and culture are also necessary. Patrice Harster, Director of PAMINA (FR-DE) illustrated the issue of financing these projects with the example of support mechanisms for microprojects.

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# EVENTS

**Workshop "Boosting Growth and Cohesion in EU Border Regions"**, 16 January 2018 in Copenhagen (Denmark)

**TEM Workshop on Sustainability in cross-border territories (mountain areas)**, 22-23 January 2018 in Chambéry (France)

**European energy transition conference**, 30-31 January - 1 February 2018 in Geneva (Switzerland)

**Conference at the European Parliament "European Territorial Cooperation Post 2020"**, 27 March 2018 in Brussels (Belgium)

[All the events](#)

## "Cross-border territories: Europe's laboratory"

To mark the 20th anniversary of its creation, the MOT has produced a publication entitled "Cross-border territories: Europe's laboratory". It came out at the time of the MOT's European conference "Building cross-border territories: Europe acting for its citizens" which took place on 30 November and 1 December 2017 in Brussels.

The publication is divided into three parts:

- The first part presents the achievements of the members of the MOT's network and its partners by way of **20 experiences aimed at serving the inhabitants of cross-border territories**. These prominent projects are accompanied by other projects highlighted by the MOT's network. The experiences presented may be stimulating for other borders and cover



all of the areas that affect the daily existence of the inhabitants of these territories throughout their lives.

- The obstacles that have been overcome or that still pose a problem, and **the toolkit** developed to overcome them are set out in the second part. The obstacles and solutions implemented are illustrated by good practices, in the form of tools, that enable the development potential of cross-border territories to be realised.
- **The current challenges for Europe and its cross-border territories**, and the political responses at the different levels of

territorial action – local and regional, national, European and beyond – are explored in the third part.

This publication provides an opportunity to review 20 years of cooperation, through **operational and concrete elements**, and also to take stock and think about the future of the MOT's activities, and more broadly of cross-border cooperation in Europe.

The publication and all of the projects presented are accessible on the MOT's website.

[Click here to go to the dedicated page.](#)

## 13<sup>th</sup> Antilles-Guiana regional cooperation conference

The 13th Antilles-Guiana regional cooperation conference took place in Pointe-à-Pitre on 15-17 November 2017. Under the patronage of the Overseas Minister, Annick Girardin, Ambassador Jean-Bernard Nilam, who is in charge of regional cooperation in the Antilles-Guiana area, welcomed representatives of territorial authorities and regions, as well as government players and French ambassadors from the Caribbean region. Opportunity was given, in the course of several thematic workshops, to discuss regional cooperation projects that have been implemented or are in progress. The stakeholders present were able to both talk about their experiences and express their aspirations for future regional cooperation in the following areas: training and jobs, with players in this field well represented;

climate change, with the recent climatic events in the region serving as a reminder of the urgency for environmental cooperation; and security. The workshop on decentralised cooperation allowed the MOT to point out the availability of its expertise, and to present the methodology and indispensable stages involved in setting up and monitoring cross-border cooperation projects. Other players that provide assistance to decentralised territorial cooperation, including Expertise France, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the Fédération des Entreprises d'Outre-Mer (FEDOM) and the Agence de l'Outre-Mer pour la Mobilité (LADOM) – also had the opportunity to set out their modes of assistance and the financial instruments available. [More info](#)

## The "Temporelles" Congress 2017 : It's time to go beyond our borders!



On 16 November, the MOT took part in the 2017 edition of the "Temporelles" organised by Tempo Territorial and the Lille European Metropolis. At this event, which was awarded the "20 years of the MOT" label, cross-border players exchanged views on the topic "It's time to go beyond our borders!". The time-based aspects of life in a cross-border territory and examples of cross-border projects linked to time policies (ALARM in the area of civil security, the Cerdanya Hospital and the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict bus) were thus the subject of the discussions. [More info](#)

## The Cohesion Alliance

Set up thanks to cooperation between the European Committee of the Regions and the main associations of European cities and regions, the Cohesion Alliance (#CohesionAlliance) argues that account should be taken of the needs of European territories in the European Union's budget after 2020, through stronger and more effective cohesion policy for each of the EU's regions. It aims to bring together all of the stakeholders – national, regional and local public authorities, SMEs, NGOs, schools, universities and cultural organisations – that believe that the EU's cohesion policy must continue to be a pillar of Europe's future. The MOT supports this initiative. Join the Cohesion Alliance!

[More info](#)

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The second round table allowed the presentation of tangible projects on French borders, such as the tramline linking Strasbourg and Kehl, the Cerdanya cross-border hospital and the integrated development of the Espace Mont-Blanc, as well as on other European borders, notably around Hungary. Finally, support for cross-border projects with financial instruments was illustrated by Marc Abadie, Director of the Network and Local Development at the Caisse des Dépôts.

In closing the first day, Christine Moro, Ambassador, Delegate for the External Action of Local Government at the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, spoke about local and regional government diplomacy, and action at different levels for overcoming obstacles.

On the second day, the final round table enabled Christian Dupessey and Mathieu Bergé, representing Greater Geneva and the Working Community of the Pyrenees respectively, to express their expectations for European policy after 2020.

Hugo Bevort, Director of Territorial Strategies at the CGET (General Commissariat for Territorial Equality), developed the perspectives of the French government in matters of cross-



border policy: cross-border strategy and local pacts.

Marc Lemaître, Director-General of DG REGIO, presented the propositions of the European Commission's 20 September Communication.

Concluding the conference, Camille Gira, Secretary of State for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, restated the importance of developing the "European Cross-Border Convention" (ECBC) tool proposed by the Intergovernmental working group on innovative solutions to cross-border obstacles.

Jacques Mézard, the French Minister for Territorial Cohesion, underlined the necessity for experimentation, for "overcoming regulatory and administrative

borders" and establishing interministerial coordination on cross-border issues. Throughout these exchanges, moderation was provided by the journalist Véronique Auger.

The first day concluded with a festive evening celebrating the 20th anniversary of the MOT, held at the Belgian Comic Strip Centre, in the presence of Michel Delebarre, Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the Committee of the Regions, Roland Ries, Mayor of Strasbourg and first President of the MOT, and the Walloon Government – the evening's hosts – represented by Ariane Fradcourt, member of the Cabinet of Willy Borsus, Minister-President of Wallonia.

[More info](#)

## Strasbourg's "Rendez-vous européens"

On 24 November, the MOT made a contribution during a workshop organised as part of Strasbourg's "Rendez-vous européens". The purpose of this workshop, whose theme was the crisis on the European Union's borders, was to debate the policies that should be implemented to reconcile security and free movement – an issue that is at the heart of the concerns about the future of European construction and cross-border territories.

[More info](#)

## Seventh meeting of the parliamentary working group on cross-border cooperation

On 29 November, Anne Sander MEP, hosted around a breakfast the seventh meeting of her parliamentary working group on cross-border cooperation. The topic chosen was that of barriers to cross-border investment. To discuss this subject, Anne Sander had invited the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the Caisse des Dépôts (Grand Est Region) and the Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur Region. In border regions, European programmes are often insufficiently effective, as a result of national biases or cumbersome administrative processes. One of the conclusions of the discussion was that the financial resources are available, but there is a shortage of projects. Where initiatives are developed by local players, there is a lack of



real political will on either side. One of the solutions envisaged by the participants is to set up pilot projects to serve as examples and catalysts.

[More info](#)



# PRESS REVIEW

## “I hope to make Grand Est the leading region in France for trilingualism”

**L'Abeille, 30 November**  
"On the occasion of the 'decentralised' session in Esch-sur-Alzette (Grand Duchy of Luxembourg) of the departmental council of Meurthe-et-Moselle, its president spoke about, among other topics, cross-border relations. Never before had a French regional authority held a session outside national borders, as did the departmental council of Meurthe-et-Moselle on 20 November in holding a plenary session in Esch-sur-Alzette in Luxembourg."

## Green light for the border Metropolitan Pole

**Le Républicain lorrain, 15 December**  
"For several months now, Pierre Cuny has been working with his fellow intercommunity presidents in north Lorraine on the creation of a border Metropolitan Pole. But he had not received a clear political mandate from the community council. In order to concretise the project, he officially sought the green light of the mayors and elected members of the community council last night. And he received it. Unanimously."

## A European pilot project for electric charging tested by EDF

**Le Journal des Entreprises, 1 December**  
"EDF and its mobility subsidiary, Sodetrel, participated, in the Grand Est region, in Oslo2Rome, a European pilot project for cross-border electric charging, coordinated by the German company MotionWerk."

## A cross-border agency links schools and businesses in Sarreguemines

**Le Républicain lorrain, 5 December**  
"Yesterday, the two cross-border apprenticeship officers, based in Saarbrücken, met students of the lycée and of the apprentice training centre of the Lycée Henri-Nominé in Sarreguemines. They have 15 positions to fill in Germany."

## In Saint-Louis, a second cross-border tramway opens in Alsace this year

**Ville et Transports Magazine, 14 December**  
"The year 2017 will have been very good for cross-border tramways in Alsace. Following the extension towards Kehl of the D line in Strasbourg, line 3 of the Swiss network of Basel-Stadt (BVB) now serves the commune of Saint-Louis (68)."

## An eco-bridge in the Pays de Gex to preserve cross-border fauna

**France 3, 6 December**  
"It is a structure one encounters on motorways, but rather less on departmental roads. An eco-bridge is under construction on the 2x2-lane road of the Pays de Gex, towards Geneva. It will allow the passage of wild animals that have difficulties with human infrastructure."

## Cross-border workers' headache fully deserved a drop-in centre

**Le Dauphiné libéré, 15 December**  
"The traps to avoid... What advice to give to cross-border workers. A new service dedicated to cross-border workers has just taken up residence in Bellegarde."

## French and Spanish united in improving the lives of vulnerable people

**Le Petit Journal, 1 December**  
"A big step was taken on Thursday 23 November in the implementation of the project between France and Spain, a cross-border partnership convention, christened 'Se canto' [...]. Objective: joining forces, on either side of the Pyrenees, to offer a better life to the most vulnerable in the fields of health, employment and social care."

Consult all of the press articles\*.  
Reserved for members – in French.  
\* Each month, the MOT posts online around 100 articles about cross-border cooperation.

## Cross-border employment dynamics in Europe and France

The territorial observatory provides, in the form of factsheets, a set of analyses and an overview of the state of France's territories. This factsheet seeks to analyse employment dynamics in cross-border territories, in France and the Europe as a whole. Its main findings are: an increase in the number of European residents who cross a border at least once a week to go to work; the flows of workers, linked to socioeconomic disparities on either side of a border as well as to the development of infrastructures, and the profiles of workers vary from border to border. Finally, the analytical factsheet provides an overview of the five main destinations for French cross-border workers: Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Monaco and Switzerland. [More info](#)

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](#)



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