

Overseas territories: a 'blue book' to set the territories' priorities and strengthen their "regional foothold"

“Passe-Partout”, a cross-border educational game for schoolchildren

Launched in 2017 in the Pamina Eurodistrict, the educational game “Passe-partout – Weltenbummler” (“Globetrotter”) has successfully completed an initial pilot phase, and in September 2018 begins a new phase now covering the whole of the Upper Rhine region. A project to replicate! Intended for French, German and Swiss primary school children, this online game aims to encourage bilingualism and self-identification with the cross-border region, by allowing pupils to discover the Upper Rhine region in a fun way: built around a map of a Eurodistrict in the region, the game sets challenges linked to knowledge of the

cross-border region; players are co-creators of the game and earn points when they create a new challenge in the neighbouring country's language.

The game was created through cooperation between schools as part of the Pamina Eurodistrict's “neighbouring schools” programme, supported by the Interreg V Upper Rhine programme. As main partner, Réseau Canopé (the learning resources arm of the French Ministry of Education), was responsible for the development of the online game. The project also finances meetings between border-area schools and workshops to train teachers. [More info \[FR\]](#)



At the end of the pilot phase, the two winning classes, from Brumath (France) and Karlsruhe (Germany), met at the Château de Lichtenberg in June 2018.

Youth meeting from the Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein region

Around 50 young workers from the border region between Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Liechtenstein got together in June 2018 for the first transnational symposium of young workers. During the meeting, held in Neuhausen am Rheinfall in Switzerland, they exchanged views on the forms of work and working conditions in the region and presented best practice examples as

well as ongoing projects. The main thrust of symposium was “investing in youth does not only means constructing places for youth but also bringing youth to democratic processes, in a humorous and age-appropriate way”, and the wish of “furthering cross-border networking and projects”.

The symposium was organized by the Youth

Working Group of the International Lake Constance Conference (IBK), under the direction of the Government Secretary of the Principality of Liechtenstein Horst Schädler, and was conducted by the GFGZ, a Swiss-German think tank oriented to promotion of cross-border cooperation, a member of the MOT network since 2016.

[More info](#)

EVENTS

Cross-border citizen consultations

The MOT has partnered with the Jacques Delors Institute to promote the organisation of citizen consultations at the cross-border level. This mobilisation has allowed the holding of five consultations in partnership with a number of MOT members:

- "**Greater Geneva, a cross-border territory at the heart of Europe**", two consultations on 18 and 19 September in Saint Genis-Pouilly, then in Annemasse, in partnership with the European Cross-Border Grouping (GTE) and the French Geneva Area Pôle métropolitain. [More info](#)
- "**Citizens speaking to Europe**", on 27 October in Tournai, in partnership with the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis. [More info](#)
- **A citizens' consultation with French and Italian high school students**, in September/October in Nice, in partnership with the Métropole Nice-Côte d'Azur, the Alpes Maritimes branch of "Mouvement Européen" and the high schools.
- A consultation to be confirmed on 11 October in Haguenau on the territory of the Pamina Eurodistrict.

[View other upcoming events](#)

Overseas territories: a 'blue book' to set the territories' priorities and strengthen their "regional foothold"

France's borders can be found not only in Europe, but also in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific. France's overseas territories are all concerned by cross-border issues. At the Assises des Outre-mer ("Overseas France Conferences", promised in President Macron's election campaign), the Minister for Overseas France, Annick Girardin, presented the President on 28 June with a 'blue book' detailing the roadmap and the priorities for these territories for the President's five-year term.



Numerous similarities between France's outermost territories: geographic remoteness from mainland France, socio-economic structural weaknesses, and lack of infrastructure. One of the shared challenges of the overseas territories is the need to integrate the territory within its geographical area at the local level. This regional anchoring of the territories needs to be accompanied by cross-border cooperation projects.

At the Assises des Outre-mer, held from October 2017 to April 2018, citizens had the unique opportunity to make themselves heard on the public issues as well as to propose new initiatives. A summary of these public

consultations and the selected projects are presented in the blue book. The new priorities for the overseas territories are set out across four strategic axes: "territories for better living", "territories supported in their transformation", "pioneering territories" and "territories of influence and prestige".

Strengthening regional foothold

The 4th strategic axis concerns the strengthening of the overseas territories' 'regional foothold'. This priority implies a strategy of coherent development in the context of the marine basins whose culture and common challenges these territories share. The overseas territories

must therefore invest in their neighbourhood in order to strengthen local ties and reaffirm their geographic position. [More info](#)

A new section on the overseas territories on the MOT website

The MOT is working with Overseas France: developing and supporting cross-border cooperation at the local level is indeed essential for increasing regional standing.

[In order to present these territories and the challenges for their cooperation efforts, the MOT has created a new section on its website: \[click here to view.\]\(#\)](#)

Grand Est: a report to the French prime minister on responding to the "longing for Alsace"

The French prime minister has entrusted the Prefect of the Grand Est region with a mission relating to the institutional solutions available to give form to the "longing for Alsace". The report was submitted in August. It envisions a merging of the Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin departments, but excludes any exit from the Grand Est region. The government should adopt a position in October. [More info](#)

Cross-border agenda at Grand Est council 'board meeting'

On 11 July 2018 in Châlons-en-Champagne in France, a meeting of the Grand Est Regional Administration Committee (CAR) was held: a veritable 'board meeting' of the State in the region, bringing together every two months the prefects of the region and the départements, and all of the decentralised services of the State. For the first time, an "Interministerial commission on cross-border cooperation" was held, in which Jean Peyrony, director-general of the MOT, participated.

Cooperation in the renewable energies field between Andorra and France

The first day of French-Andorran exchanges on the topic of energy was jointly held in April 2018 by the Pyrénées Orientales and Andorran chambers of commerce and industry, brought together within the PirineusMED Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the context of the Interreg POCTEFA 2014/20 programme and the DERBI competitiveness cluster. High attendance of French and Andorran entrepreneurs contributed to the day's success. Accompanied by his Minister for the Environment, Agriculture and Sustainability, Silvia Calvó

Armengol, the Prime Minister of Andorra, Antoni Martí Petit, emphasised the need for a change in the energy model for Andorra.

This close cross-border relationship, since 8 March 2018, will lead to the signing of a convention between the University of Perpignan, and SUP'ENR - the only French engineering institute dedicated specifically to power engineering and renewable energies - for the training of Andorrans in this field.

8th Meeting of the Working Group on innovative solutions to cross-border obstacles

The 8th meeting of the Working Group on innovative solutions to cross-border obstacles was held on 28 June 2018 at the European Committee of the Regions in Brussels. The European Commission's DG REGIO was able to present the proposal for a regulation on the European cross-border mechanism, as well as to discuss informally with the representatives of the States and European Institutions on the content of the proposal. The second part of the meeting was dedicated to a brief presentation of lessons learnt from the B-Solutions call for proposals, as well as the experience of the Working Community of the Pyrenees in the resolution of cross-border obstacles. [More info](#)

"Boosting growth and cohesion in EU border regions"

In July 2018, the European Committee of the Regions published an "Opinion" on this subject, in response to the European Commission's Communication published in September 2017. The MOT actively contributed to the elaboration of this Opinion. [Click here to view the Opinion.](#)

The European Parliament also published its report on the subject on 18 July. [Click here to view the report.](#)

Third French National Conference of Territories

Publication of a report on territorial cohesion

On the occasion of the third *Conférence nationale des territoires* (CNT) on 12 July 2018, a "Report on Territorial Cohesion" was presented by Serge Morvan, head of the CGET (General Commission for Territorial Equality). A new tool shared with associations of elected representatives, this report fulfils two objectives: updating an inventory of France and its territories after a decade of crisis, and the elucidation of the factors influencing territorial cohesion. What about cross-border issues?

The report identifies six factors contributing to cohesion among the territories: solidarity, quality of life, cooperation, social capital, empowerment, and the socio-environmental transition.

The 3rd factor, "cooperation between territories", was presented by Serge Morvan as "the key driver of territorial cohesion": "The notion of cohesion between territories invites us to put what holds the territories together, what creates solidarity between them on a functional and political level, at the heart of policy." Thus the report reads:

"It appears essential to have at our disposal suitable and efficient statistical and methodological tools, that allow us to measure/quantify the flows and exchanges between the

territories. These tools would help to give an objective view of the complementarities and interdependencies between territories, at the different levels of governance, and thus establish inter-territorial cooperation initiatives. While systems and tools for observation have been developed at the local level, they do not yet cover all types of flows and exchanges."

"The question of specific engineering constitutes a [further] challenge. The development of cooperation actions between territories may indeed require the conception and implementation of specific mechanisms and tools, for example in the case of cross-border cooperation. Furthermore, it is important to determine whether a national framework would contribute to facilitating and multiplying both horizontal and vertical cooperation,

or conversely whether we need to prioritise flexibility, agility, experimentation and adjustment by the stakeholders themselves in order to obtain tailor-made solutions."

A tool to help decision-making

The report is the result of a co-construction between the State and associations of elected representatives. It constitutes a basis for reaching the definition of priorities for action, calling for a joint mobilisation of local and regional authorities, the State and, more widely, civil society and businesses. It should also be noted that the report makes use of a "Barometer of territorial cohesion" produced by the Territorial Observatory, proposing a series of indicators. [More info](#)



"For competitiveness clusters with European ambition"

French "pôles de compétitivité" (competitiveness clusters) are entering their 4th phase of construction for the period 2019-2022. A call for applications, launched by the economy and finance minister, and supported by the CGET, will be open until 19 October. It launches a new dynamic for reforming the model of competitiveness clusters around four ambitions, of which the first is: "to give them a European ambition (through collaborative projects at the EU level in order to ensure their international reach)". [More info](#)

Proceedings of the 2018 MOT Conference

During its General Assembly in May 2018 in Nice and Ventimiglia, the MOT held two round tables on the topics "Local cross-border cooperation in the French-Italian border area" and "The French-Italian-Monacan Metropolitan area under construction", which were complemented by a presentation of cross-border projects within the Nice Côte d'Azur metropolis. Summaries [in French] of the meetings are online: [click here.](#)

Death of Professor Charles Ricq

It is with great sadness that the MOT learned of the passing of Charles Ricq, professor at the European Observation Centre for Regions (C.O.E.U.R.), and a frequent participant in MOT events.

Today, the team and the whole of the network wish to pay tribute to his commitment to cross-border cooperation, and to express their sincere condolences to his family and friends.

PRESS REVIEW

▲ A new metropolitan pole at the Luxembourg border

Correspondances Lorraines, 22 July

"At the end of June, the Portes de Frances - Thionville conurbation community enacted the establishment and adopted the statutes of the border metropolitan cluster of North Lorraine, which will bring together eight intercommunal bodies from Moselle and Meurthe-et-Moselle."

▲ Cross-border workers: Luxembourg victim of its own success

AFP, 8 August

"With a robust economy and a record mean annual salary within the OECD, Luxembourg attracts many foreign workers, principally from France. But the high property prices are pushing nearly half of all employees to live outside the borders of the Grand Duchy, leading to the saturation of transport infrastructure. [...] 'We are confronted with a sort of thrombosis of road and rail infrastructure'."

▲ Launch of the Huningue-Weil am Rhein 'Vis-à-vis' project

Trinational Eurodistrict Basel website, 3 September

"Since the beginning of this year, the INTERREG V project 'Vis-à-vis', led by the TEB and by the towns of Huningue and Weil am Rhein, has officially begun."

▲ Opposed to cross-border commuters, Switzerland now applying local preference"

Courrier international, 3 July

"As of 1st July, Switzerland is giving preference to the hiring of residents of the country over that of cross-border commuters, whether French, Italian or German. A measure called 'local preference', which is applied to professions showing an unemployment rate greater than 8%."

▲ A border zone: between economic dynamism and dependence

L'Est républicain, 11 August

"There is what we call in economics a border effect, it is evident', explains Yannick L'Horty, an economist with expertise in employment issues. [...] This 'border effect' is particularly strong in the employment catchment area of Val de Morteau. According to an INSEE survey, over 40% of economically active people in the Morteau employment zone work in Switzerland."

▲ The first three cross-border holidays of 2018 around Mont-Blanc

Le Messenger, 2 August

"The French, Swiss and Italian partners, within the framework of the Espace Mont-Blanc, have since 2011 been holding the first cross-border holidays. Seven years later, this action is marked by great success symbolised by its continuation and by the support of the local authorities."

▲ The High Salt Road officially reopened

Nice Matin, 28 August

"On the initiative of the Cuneo tourism office, a visit of the route linking the Tende Pass to Monesi, freshly rehabilitated, was organised on Thursday in the presence of elected representatives and professionals. 'It was once a military road for dividing the peoples. Now it is a friendly link, thanks to the will of five little mayors' emphasised the mayor of Tende, Jean-Pierre Vassallo."

▲ Creation of the first network of incubators in the Euroregion

Le Journal Catalan, 5 July

"On Wednesday 4 July, the incubators of the Balearic Islands, Barcelona and Perpignan [...] enacted, by signing a convention, the creation of the Euroregion's first network of incubators, on the site of the Perpignan incubator."

▲ A new cross-border nature reserve is born: the Pyrenees Three Nations Park

France 3, 27 August

"On Friday 24 August the representatives of France, Andorra and Spain signed the protocol creating a new Pyrenean park. It is the bringing together of nature reserves already in existence [...]"

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

Proceedings of CHEMI's day on prefects and cross-border cooperation: "Renforcer la coopération transfrontalière"*

On 15 June 2018, the French Ministry of the Interior's Centre for Advanced Studies (CHEMI) organised with the MOT a day of reflection on cross-border cooperation for the benefit of prefects. The discussions, which brought together representatives of the DG REGIO, the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the CGET, as well as the MP Sylvain Waserman, notably concerned the future of cooperation, EU funding, the topic of security, and legal obstacles. They concluded with recommendations for cross-border action by prefects up to the year 2030. The proceedings of the day have just been published. [Click here to download them \[in French\]](#).

* "Strengthening cross-border cooperation"

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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