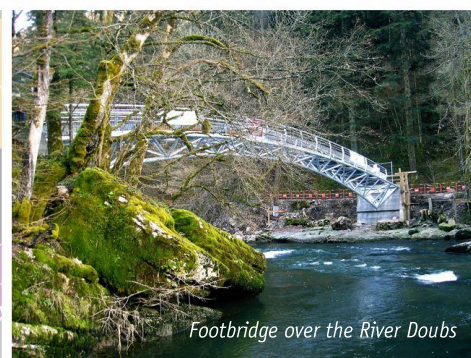
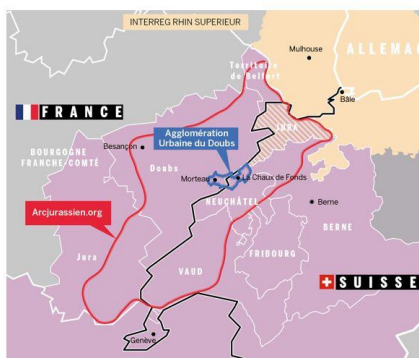


The Doubs Urban Conurbation hosts the MOT's annual event

Pierre Vaufrey

President of the Doubs Urban Conurbation and Deputy Mayor of Morteau



Footbridge over the River Doubs

The Doubs Urban Conurbation was set up in 2006. Initially an informal collaboration, it led to the creation of a local grouping of cross-border cooperation, the only one in the Franco-Swiss Jura Arc running between the Basel Trinational Eurodistrict and Greater Geneva. Today the LGCC comprises the Val de Morteau group of municipalities and the towns of Chaux-de-Fonds and Le Locle. This binational area of over 68,000 inhabitants, a real shared living space, represents 37,000 jobs on either side of the border and nearly 10,000 cross-border workers. The largest economic and residential centre in the Jura mountain range, the cradle of Swiss and French watchmaking and ideally located on the route from Besançon to Bern, this territory with a strong industrial vocation is developing high-level expertise in a well-preserved natural setting. Our goal is to contribute to balanced, socially-equitable, competitive and sustainable development in a context where mobility (rail services, road infrastructure and eco-friendly transport) is a major challenge due to the mountainous terrain. In parallel, we are working to promote a shared territorial identity with the aim of creating a genuine sense of cross-border citizenship in order to end a mode of operating based solely on economic opportunism.

We are therefore extremely happy to be hosting the MOT's general assembly this year, and to acquaint you with our territory and its challenges.

The MOT's general assembly is taking place this year in Morteau and La Chaux-de-Fonds on 21-22 September, at the invitation of the Doubs Urban Conurbation, a member of its network.

Joël Giraud, Minister of State under the Minister for Territorial Cohesion, in charge of Rurality (France) and former Vice-President of the MOT, will speak at the end of the first day.

Thus, two days of cross-border discussions and exchanges of views¹ await the participants over the course of the general assembly, four roundtables and field visits on either side of the Franco-Swiss border.

In the context of the recent progress made at European level,² the topics of the roundtables will highlight key challenges for cross-border territories:

- RT1 The ecological transition: "Towards cross-border sobriety?"
- RT2 Co-development: "Can the economic recovery be cross-border and mutually supportive?"
- RT3 Citizenship: "How can cross-

border citizens' and territorial inclusion be promoted"

- RT4 Resilience: "The Jura mountains: what are the (re)sources of recovery and adaptation?"

Alongside the MOT's President, Christian Dupessey, and many local elected representatives,³ participants include the MEP/MPs, Isabelle Rauch (Moselle) and Annie Genevard (Doubs), and Philippe Voiry, ambassador for border issues (France).

More info

¹ They can be watched in person or remotely.

² See page 3: European Committee of the Regions resolution and publication of a report by the European Commission on cooperation and cross-border living areas.

³ Anne Vignot, Mayor of Besançon and President of the Greater Besançon Metropolis, Cédric Bole, Mayor of Morteau and President of the Val de Morteau Community of Municipalities, Philippe Alpy, Vice-President of the Doubs Department, Pierre Vaufrey, President of the Doubs Urban Conurbation and Deputy Mayor of Morteau, Catherine Barthelet, President of the Besançon Centre Franche-Comté Urban-Planning Agency.

EVENTS

#EURegionsWeek: registration is now open

Don't forget to register for the workshop that the MOT is running on 13 October at 14:30:

["Breathing without borders: challenges to improve air quality in cross-border regions"](#), and the one being run by the TEIN network in which the MOT is also taking part, on 14 October at 11:30: ["Citizens at the forefront of the development of cross-border living areas"](#).

EGTC Platform meeting,
30 September-1 October, in Innsbruck.
[More info](#)

Cross-border mobility: rail links between Germany and France within the framework of the European Year of Rail, 5 October, online. [More info](#)

Research seminar of the FRONTEM network: "The model of the Franco-German border: Reconciliation, cooperation, integration", 7-8 October 2021, in Strasbourg and Kehl, and online. [More info](#)

Exhibition "Frontières : entre histoires et géographies", in La Roche-Guyon, until 28 November.
[More info](#)

[All the events](#)

The Doubs Urban Conurbation: "We need to develop local cross-border cooperation"



Seven years after its creation, the LGCC¹ of the Doubs Urban Conurbation (Agglomération Urbaine du Doubs – AUD) has shown its effectiveness in helping local elected representatives to get to know one another better, which has enabled them to set out joint projects while at the same time speaking with one voice on behalf of the binational territory.

An urban and economic centre at the heart of the Jura Arc, the cross-border interactions here are numerous. The area is unusual in having an economy based on identical and complementary sectors in the fields of microtechnology and micromechanics.

However, while there is a steadily growing number of

cross-border workers and a buoyant tourism sector bringing in visitors with purchasing power, its incomplete road network and a rail link that struggles to meet users' needs constitute barriers to its accessibility.

This need to improve mobility, both internally and externally, is now a priority.

The AUD is also active in other areas that are vital for its attractiveness, such as spatial planning, healthcare and citizenship, in liaison with the higher and competent authorities concerned. The aim is to arrive at a competitive and sustainable balance, while remaining faithful to the framework agreement adopted by Neuchâtel Canton, the Burgundy - Franche-Comté

Region and the Doubs Department.

"It is our duty to develop local cross-border cooperation by involving civil society. With no linguistic barrier, we can only strengthen our common identity, by encouraging the spread of information about cross-border activities in areas such as training, culture and youth. It is also our role to support cross-border micro-projects and events. Our new website² is a first response to this need. Today it's a crucial challenge within our societies that are tending to turn in on themselves," Pierre Vaufrey explains.

¹ Local grouping of cross-border cooperation.

² <https://www.agglomeration-urbaine-du-doubs.com/>

Cross-border monitoring of the 3DS bill (France) by the MOT

Following its adoption at its first reading in the Senate on 21 July 2021, the 3DS bill (standing for "differentiation, decentralisation, deconcentration and various measures to simplify local public action") will be examined under a fast-track procedure in the Assemblée Nationale, in France, from the beginning of December. Taking on a number of the proposals put forward by the MOT, the senators adopted a series of amendments relating to cross-border issues.

[Read this note \[FR\] for more detail on these developments and the proposals made by the MOT.](#)

Summary of the "Territorial Solidarities" MOT working group: Border crises: joint responses and imbalances

What have been the different forms of border crisis since the start of 2020? Alongside the joint initiatives to manage the crises, what are the obvious imbalances they have revealed? To answer these questions, the MOT is publishing a summary of one year of reflections by its "Territorial Solidarities" working group. Focused on the role of local players in the management of the crisis in cross-border areas, and with the involvement of ten or so participants, the working group has looked in detail at the specific issues relating to the impacts and management of the border crisis. Among the main findings are the need to put in place crisis coordination systems with the help of players on the ground, and the importance of better documenting the major structural imbalances (political, economic, social, tax-related, etc.) identified in these areas, with the aim of strengthening the public authorities' responses to them.

[Download the summary.](#)

Meeting between the MOT's President and the Minister Clément Beaune



The MOT's President, Christian Dupessey, met the Minister Clément Beaune on 25 August to discuss the issues facing cross-border living areas and the MOT's role in supporting them. Let's put cross-border territories at the heart of the goals of France's presidency of the EU!

MOT partner in a global network for border studies

Following on from the "Borders in Globalization" (BIG) project, this new network, "21st Century Borders: Emergent Challenges Among and Within States", brings together nine intergovernmental and transnational organisations including the MOT, as well as leading universities (from 15 countries). Led by researchers at the University of Victoria (Canada), it has just received funding of over \$9 million. [More info](#)

Special report of the European Court of Auditors on Interreg

In early July, the European Court of Auditors published a report on the implementation of Interreg programmes. It highlighted that "the programmes have clear strategies for addressing the challenges facing the cross-border regions", but that they are "limited [in their ability] to unlock the potential of these regions". They set out a number of recommendations to programme authorities and the Commission to better focus programmes, and to prioritise and support projects based on merit, as well as to define indicators that capture the cross-border effect of projects. [More info](#)

New report by the Commission:

"EU border regions: living labs of European integration"

This European Commission report, published on 13 July, looks at the lessons of the Covid crisis and the initiatives carried out since the publication of its 2017 Communication "[Boosting growth and cohesion in EU border regions](#)".

It recalls the need to strengthen cross-border cooperation to make these regions more resilient and develop their potential in the face of persistent obstacles. The 2017 Communication highlighted the remaining obstacles to cross-border cooperation. Ten actions were proposed to address them. These actions are reviewed in the Commission's new report with a view to strengthening

the role of cross-border territories as major drivers of European integration.

The report sets out the progress made over the past few years through examples of good practices and the setting-up of initiatives such as the b-solutions initiative launched in 2017, which has helped to identify the main causes of legal and administrative obstacles and to put forward solutions to tackle them.

The actions proposed to strengthen cross-border cooperation are grouped into four main clusters:

1) **Resilience** through deeper institutional cooperation



2) More and better **cross-border public services**

3) Vibrant **cross-border labour markets**

4) Border regions for the **European Green Deal**

For each area, the report sets out the current situation, the actions carried out by the Commission to tackle the obstacles and the future actions planned.

[More info](#)

Conference on the Future of Europe: a network of local councillors

In order to involve the greatest number of citizens in the Conference on the Future of Europe, the Committee of the Regions (CoR) has initiated the setting-up of a "European network of regional and local councillors for the EU". It is inviting regional and local authorities across Europe to nominate one of their members as a councillor in charge of European affairs, and is proposing to work closely with them to make the voice of territorial authorities heard within the Conference on the Future of Europe. [More info](#)

Resolution of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR):

"On a vision for Europe: the future of cross-border cooperation"

Adopted on 1 July, this resolution constitutes an official contribution from the CoR to the Conference on the Future of Europe. It sets out the concrete proposals of the CoR and the European Cross-Border Citizens' Alliance (AEBR, MOT and CESCO) to put cross-border cooperation back at the top of the EU's policy agenda after a year disrupted by the pandemic.

The resolution calls on the European Commission to present a proposal for maintaining land and maritime cross-border cooperation and cross-border life in the event of an EU-wide or regionalised crisis.

[More info](#)

PRESS REVIEW

▲ The Commission launches a €785 million call for proposals to fund cross-border energy infrastructure projects

Agence Europe, 7 September

"Coming from the 'Connecting Europe Facility' (CEF), this €785 million in subsidies will make it possible to co-finance projects that appear on the European Union's fourth list of projects of common interest (PCIs)."

▲ Luxembourg: teleworking for cross-border workers extended

La Semaine, 9 September

"The 110,000 French cross-border workers are going to be able to continue working from home without risk of being removed from the Luxembourg social security system."

▲ France-Germany: towards a new cross-border rail offer

La Vie du Rail, 18 August

"Following an agreement signed in January 2020 by the Grand Est Region and the Länder of Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland, from 2024 all of the cross-border regional train services between France and these German regions will be run by a single operator."

▲ Jean Castex approves the creation of the Watchmaking Doubs Regional Nature Park

L'Est républicain, 5 September

"After years of waiting, it's happened! The Watchmaking Country is officially going to become the Watchmaking Doubs Regional Nature Park. It will cover a larger area, and politically will have major ambitions for the territory."

▲ A series of educational books to give the territory a shared identity

Le Pays gessien, 2 September

"[...] 'Providing a history that really transcends borders.' Giving that 'common something' to the children of Greater Geneva and 'a shared identity to our cross-border territory.'"

▲ The ecological transition will be citizen-based and cross-border

Le Dauphiné, 7 septembre

"Getting to carbon neutral by 2050 and a 60% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 – this is what Geneva committed to in the spring. To achieve this, a call for citizens' involvement across the cross-border region has been launched with the 'Greater Geneva in transition' project."

▲ Modane is working on the framework agreement of the "Small Towns of Tomorrow"

Le Dauphiné, 1 September

"The Mayor of Modane, Jean-Claude Raffin, gave a progress report on the 'Small Towns of Tomorrow' programme in Modane."

▲ High-level visit to the Cerdanya Cross-Border Hospital

L'Indépendant, 9 September

"France's Ambassador, Philippe Voiry, and its Consul, Olivier Ramadour, visited the Cerdanya Cross-Border Hospital. The management took the opportunity of their visit to talk about the difficulties encountered by this institution that is unique in Europe."

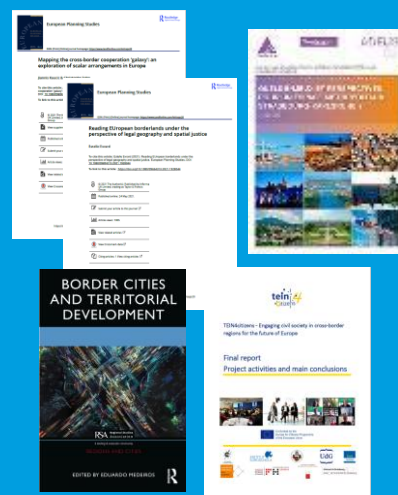
▲ Pau-Canfranc: Europe is waiting

L'Eclair des Pyrénées, 6 September

"The 'Connecting Europe Express' stopped in Hendaye on Saturday: an opportunity to talk again about projects for rail links between Spain and France."

The MOT's documentary portal: latest publications online

- **Mapping the cross-border cooperation 'galaxy': an exploration of scalar arrangements in Europe**, *Jiannis Kaucic, Christophe Sohn, European Planning Studies, May 2021*
- **Reading European borderlands under the perspective of legal geography and spatial justice**, *Estelle Evrard, European Planning studies, May 2021*
- **Border Cities and Territorial Development**, *Eduardo Medeiros, Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2021*
- **Quels enjeux et perspectives pour un espace métropolitain Strasbourg-Karlsruhe ?**, *ADEUS, City of Karlsruhe, Strasbourg Eurometropolis, June 2021*
- **Engaging civil society in cross-border regions for the future of Europe**, *final report of the TEIN4citizens project, Transfrontier Euro-Institut Network, July 2021*



[Find all of the publications on cross-border cooperation listed in the MOT's documentary portal.](#)

CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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