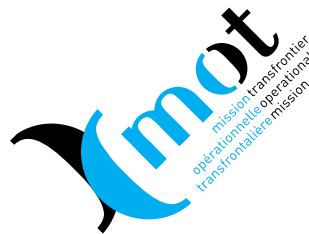


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# CROSS BORDER NEWS



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## Christian Dupessey

Mayor of Annemasse,  
President of the  
Metropolitan Pole of the  
French Genevois, re-elected  
the MOT's President



"It is a great honour for me to be re-elected President of the MOT, and to be able to continue to champion with you the cross-border and European cause.

Over the past year, I have appreciated the value of our association, its network and its technical team.

The pandemic put back certain deadlines, but it has also given us an opportunity to review our working methods, and the MOT has reinforced its value added and continues to be a major reference point with regard to cross-border issues.

The crisis has highlighted the importance of the cross-border dimension in the lives of our fellow citizens, and the ability of our elected representatives to invent new solutions.

Cross-border identity has been strengthened, but the obstacles encountered by "cross-border living areas" remain. France's presidency of the EU must put cross-border issues at the heart of the European project. National coordination points need to be designated that function as a network along each border and across Europe, as is advocated by the proposed ECBM regulation on the resolution of cross-border obstacles.

It is by continuing to work together at all levels that we will succeed in giving local players what they need to implement their projects, to overcome obstacles and to build in each territory cross-border governance capable of meeting the needs of citizens."

## In Morteau, the MOT network calls for greater recognition of "cross-border living areas"



In the presence of Joël Giraud, Minister of State for Rural Affairs under the Minister for Territorial Cohesion and Relations with Local Government, more than a hundred participants from all of France's borders gathered for the MOT's general assembly on 21-22 September in Morteau and La Chaux-de-Fonds, at the invitation of the Doubs Urban Conurbation.

"I know your commitment and the MOT's missions: to support cross-border territories and to promote their collaboration as a network and their recognition. This is crucial work. Your role should be better recognised," the Minister of State underlined in his speech.

Indeed, the discussions highlighted the need of players on the ground to see better account taken of their cross-border issues, and their wishes with respect to the "3DS" bill – an opportunity that the network has not failed to seize by putting forward

concrete proposals, like explicitly mentioning "cross-border living areas" or designating "national coordination points".

The location in which the assembly took place the field visits organised for the participants illustrated the concrete reality of the Franco-Swiss Jura Arc shared living area. The four roundtables highlighted the experience of other cross-border territories with respect to the issues that they have in common. The first asked the question of how to reconcile residential attractiveness and preservation of natural resources; the second that of the economic recovery: can it be cross-border and mutually supportive?; while the third, which elicited many questions from the audience, was devoted to cross-border citizens' and territorial inclusion. The fourth roundtable addressed mountain-related issues, and took place in the presence of the Doubs MP, Annie Genevard. [Continued on page 2.](#)

# EVENTS

**7<sup>th</sup> Greater Region Forum "Social and Territorial Cohesion in the Greater Region"**, 4 November 2021, online. [More info](#)

**Workshop "What job market for the Greater Region post-Covid-19?"**, organised by the IBA · OTE, 16 November 2021, online. [More info](#)

**Seminar on the circular economy in a cross-border setting**, organised by the PAMINA Eurodistrict in partnership with the MOT, 18 November 2021, online. [More info](#)

**Trinational congress "Pandemic in the Upper Rhine: What solutions for a metropolitan region?"**, 26 November 2021 in Bruchsal (DE) and online. [More info](#)

**42<sup>nd</sup> conference of urban planning agencies**, 1-3 December 2021, in Dunkirk and online, **with a workshop organised by the MOT on cross-border public services**. [More info](#)

**Launch of a new MOT working group: "Ecological transition and mobility"**, 14 December 2021, online. [More info](#)

[All the events](#)

## Two Franco-German "Planspiele" devoted to border regions



Concrete expressions of the Aachen Treaty, two MORO<sup>1</sup> pilot projects on the Franco-German border aim to strengthen the cross-border dimension of territorial development practices, using an innovative method that has been widely tried out in Germany – the "Planspiel"<sup>2</sup>:

- **In the Upper Rhine region**, the work of the Planspiel is focused on the "design of a cross-border multi-site hub for businesses". The aim is to draw on integrated development of the territory to strengthen the economic attractiveness of the border region and take advantage of the Upper Rhine's specific development potential. Its authorised representative is the Grand Est Region.

- **In the Greater Region**, the work took place on 7-8 September and 4-5 October in the SaarMoselle Eurodistrict. It focused on "the development of an integrated cross-border conurbation". The aim was to devise a process to enable the drawing-up of a cross-border coordination strategy for the conurbation, which, although it has been structured as an EGTC since 2010, currently does not have any such strategy. Its authorised representative is the Saarbrücken Regionalverband.

The two pilot projects are structured around a common schedule and timeframe, which ensures the comparability of their findings and makes possible their mirroring.

### "Towards the setting-up of a spatial observation system for Germany and its neighbouring regions"

On 14 September, the MOT presented "France's activities in the area of cross-border observation" at the final conference of the MORO spatial planning demonstration project "Towards the setting-up of a spatial observation system for Germany and its neighbouring regions" organised by the BBSR.

[More info](#)

<sup>1</sup> "Demonstration Projects of Spatial Planning" (MORO) conducted by the BBR/BBSR (German Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning).

<sup>2</sup> The "Planspiel" is a kind of role play that uses "flash mob" methods to involve a large number of players around two sessions each lasting two days.

## Continued from page 1

[...] These discussions can be (re)watched on the MOT's YouTube channel, as can the meetings of its bodies, which presented an assessment of the past year, approved the activity and financial reports, and elected the new representatives on the association's Board. [More info \[FR\]](#)



The visit around Lac des Brenets, which straddles the two countries, with a presentation of the issues relating to the preservation of water resources between France and Switzerland, then the Brenets border crossing point.

## The MOT took part in the fifth European conference on participation

The European conference on participation, organised by the "Décider Ensemble" network, took place in Amiens from 13 to 17 September. The MOT made a contribution at a workshop co-organised by the French National Coordination of Development Councils and Democratic Society entitled: "Is it possible for cross-border civil society to form part of a collective narrative?". Designing public services, involving citizens in the ecological transition and strengthening the European Union's representative institutions and democratic legitimacy were among the themes spotlighted at this conference of participatory democracy players. [Continued.](#)

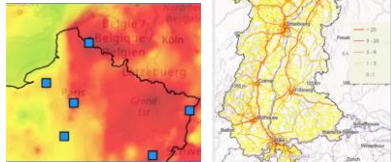
## Development of healthcare cooperation in the Greater Region

On 31 August 2021, the Belgian and Luxembourg Ministers of Health signed a declaration of intent with a view to negotiating a framework agreement on cross-border healthcare cooperation between the two countries. The aims of this cooperation comprise: improving access to high-quality healthcare for residents in border areas and continuity of care for these residents; improving the performance of both healthcare systems by pooling the treatments on offer [...]. [Continued.](#)

## EURegionsWeek – "Breathing without borders": the MOT's workshop

At a time when environmental health is a growing concern for citizens and the Commission is launching its ambitious "Zero-pollution action plan" within the framework of the European Green Deal, the MOT and its network decided to organise a workshop entitled "Breathing without borders: challenges in improving air quality in cross-border regions" during the European Week of Cities and Regions.

[More info and presentations online.](#)



NB: the MOT also took part in the workshop of the TEIN network: "Citizens at the forefront of the development of cross-border living areas". [More info](#)

## AEBR, MOT and CESCI sign the "Strasbourg Declaration"

"Maintaining cross-border cooperation at the heart of the European project" is the ambition of the "Strasbourg Declaration", signed on 7 October 2021, in Strasbourg, by the three founding partners of the European Cross-Border Citizens' Alliance. Placed under the auspices of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, this signature aims at affirming the commitment of AEBR (Association of European Border Regions), MOT (Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière) and CESCI (Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives) to establish "ever closer cooperation [...] to preserve what has already been achieved along the internal



and external borders of the EU and to facilitate their further development". As set out in the first article of the Declaration: "The unprecedented outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led national governments to apply certain measures with a view to protecting their citizens. These measures lacked coordination and had a devastating impact on the primary achievement of the EU: free movement. These measures had a particularly harmful effect on the lives of border citizens, many of them cross-border commuters, and on the health and social institutions in which they worked." This signing took place on the sidelines of the research

seminar entitled "The model of the Franco-German border – Reconciliation, cooperation, integration", organised by the Jean Monnet FRONTM network, the aim of which was to study the Franco-German border as a place of reconciliation and a model for European integration. The MOT contributed actively to it. [More info](#)

### Publication of a Franco-German manifesto

At this research seminar organised by the FRONTM network, a "Manifesto on the future of cross-border cooperation in Europe", addressed to France's presidency of the EU, and to the Conference on the Future of Europe, was published. [More info](#)

## In France, the cross-border dimension in the Conseil d'Etat's proposals to improve the use of the "state of emergency"

The use of the state of emergency in three of the past six years has led the Conseil d'Etat, in the context of its 2021 annual study, to analyse the lessons learned from this exceptional measure. It is proposing to establish principles of use with 15 proposals for improvement. Among them is the inclusion under France's presidency of the EU in the first half of 2022 of an "action plan drawing on the lessons of the terrorist crisis and the health crisis", including as "the main points: [...] stepping up cooperation around the issues affecting cross-border workers; and the signature of bilateral or multilateral agreements on administrative cooperation between the administrations of border countries in areas useful in the management of major crises." [More info](#)

## EGTCs meet in Innsbruck

You're part of it! It was under this motto that the 11th EGTC Platform meeting opened on 30 September, hosted by the Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino Euroregion (Austrian-Italian border), on the occasion of its 10th birthday. The MOT took part in this event that showcased the initiatives implemented by the EGTCs, whether in terms of pioneering approaches (CLLD<sup>1</sup> within the framework of Interreg, the role of an EGTC as coordinator for a candidacy for "European Capital of Culture"), or in the area of crisis management or economic recovery, with the example of the two Franco-Spanish Euroregions. [Continued](#)

<sup>1</sup> Community-led local development

## Conferences in Budapest and Visegrad

Jean Peyrony, the MOT's Director-General spoke at two conferences: -> "Conference on CBC" co-hosted by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CESCI and the Council of Europe, on 9-10 September in Budapest. [Continued.](#) -> "Legal accessibility among the Visegrad countries", hosted by CESCI on 14-15 September in Visegrad, on the occasion of Hungary's presidency of the Visegrad Group (V4). [Continued](#)



# PRESS REVIEW

## ▲ The rise of 'cross-border cooperation strategies'

Localtis, 14 October

"An obscure invention of the Maptam Act, 'cross-border cooperation strategies', which officially only concern three metropolises – Lille, Strasbourg and Nice – are all the rage."

## ▲ France and Belgium work hand-in-hand to drain water into the sea

La Voix du Nord, 2 October

"Water doesn't stop at the border! The Dunkirk area and the Belgian province of West Flanders – a land of polders – have understood this for a long time, but they had to follow this logic through to its conclusion to limit future flooding on both sides."

## ▲ Mmust scrutinises movements in Luxembourg, Belgium and North Lorraine

Innovapresse, 4 October

"Led by the North Lorraine urban planning agency Agape, the Interreg project Mmust [...] published in late September a preliminary harmonised survey of the some 5 million daily journeys in a territory encompassing the whole of Luxembourg, Wallonia and part of Lorraine including the Metz, Thionville and Longwy areas."

## ▲ Homeworking for cross-border workers: local elected representatives campaign for 47 days

Le Républicain lorrain, 7 October

"The pandemic has opened up interesting prospects for homeworking for cross-border workers employed in Luxembourg. To enable this mode of working to continue beyond this exceptional period, 19 local elected representatives are calling on the French government to raise the ceiling on days that can be worked from home from 29 to 47."

## ▲ After Covid, strengthening cross-border economic relations

DNA, 14 October

"The Economy and Labour Minister of Baden-Württemberg (Germany), Nicole Hoffmeister-Kraut, is making a visit to Alsace."

## ▲ Flight of nursing staff to Switzerland: Annie Genevard wants a bonus to compensate for the 'cost of living' in border regions

L'Est républicain, 18 Sept.

"Together with her colleague Virginie Duby-Muller, the LR deputy for Haute-Savoie, Annie Genevard has requested a meeting with the private office of the Minister of Health to raise the alarm about 'the very tight situation in terms of medical demographics' in border regions. 'The proximity of Switzerland and pay and working conditions that are seen as more attractive are indeed attracting many nurses [...] and thereby weakening French hospitals.'"

## ▲ Rescue workers in the Mont-Blanc mountain range share their expertise

Le Dauphiné, 5 October

"For the trilateral mountain rescue meeting, French, Swiss and Italian rescue workers operating in the Mont-Blanc mountain range gathered in Chamonix."

## ▲ Closer collaboration between Eusko Ikaskuntza and the seven universities in the Basque Country

Mediabask, 7 October - "Eusko Ikaskuntza and the seven universities of the Basque Country Autonomous Community, Navarra and the Northern Basque Country signed a new framework agreement on collaboration on 7 October in Bilbao."

## The MOT's documentary portal: latest publications online

- Policy Brief: Cross-border monitoring and observation in Europe, ESPON Programme, August 2021
- Public consultation on overcoming cross-border obstacles - Summary report, European Commission, DG REGIO, May 2021
- L'Europe et ses territoires, Jean-François Drevet, in Futuribles 2021/5, No. 444, pp 91-98, caim.info, May 2021
- Quand les mécanismes de coopération sont mis à l'épreuve. L'épidémie du Covid-19 et la fermeture de la frontière franco-allemande au printemps 2020 comme stress test pour la coopération transfrontalière, ENA research papers, Public Administration and Management Collection, June 2021
- Guide pratique - Les fonds européens au service des projets communaux et intercommunaux, AMF (Association of France's Mayors), 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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