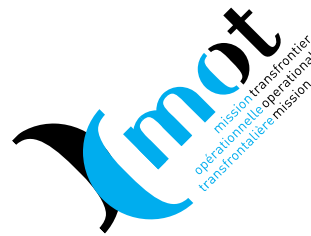


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Proceedings of the seminar on cross-border rail links

Towards better mobility in cross-border living areas

The conference on cross-border rail links organised in June 2021 by the MOT and the PAMINA Eurodistrict, with the support of the Committee of the Regions, brought together nearly 200 participants. Taking place within the framework of the European Year of Rail, this event was an opportunity for local, national and European players to share experiences, and to discuss the challenges and obstacles with respect to mobility in cross-border territories.

Today, the MOT is publishing a booklet that reports the conference discussions. It highlights concrete recommendations to ensure that better account is taken of mobility needs in cross-border living areas.

[The booklet – more info](#)



Small border towns: the MOT is involved alongside the ANCT

As an “action partner”, the MOT is playing an active role in the “Small Towns of Tomorrow” programme being led by the ANCT (Agence Nationale de la Cohésion des Territoires – National Agency for Territorial Cohesion). On 25 October, it took part in the programme’s national conference, aimed at the 1600 participating towns. Bringing together no fewer than 600 participants, it provided an opportunity for numerous political and technical discussions between all of the stakeholders.

The ministers Jacqueline Gourault, Joël Giraud and Brigitte Bourguignon recalled the fundamental aspects of the framework of

intervention, notably the “bespoke” aspect of the programme: the means used are tailored to meet the needs identified by the recipient towns and groupings of municipalities. One of the main measures currently available is technical support to local authorities, with subsidies to help recruit “Small Towns of Tomorrow project managers” in the target territories.

In parallel with the plenary sessions, a forum of the partners took place, a space that enabled representatives of the recipient towns to meet the associations and public bodies that are partners in the programme. This forum gave the MOT the opportunity to present to

more than ten border towns the possibility available to them to request technical assistance from the MOT and support in drawing up their regeneration projects in order to incorporate cross-border issues and actions into them.

More info:

- [ANCT website: the programme and national conference](#) [FR]

- [MOT website: material published by the MOT within the framework of the programme \(issues for small border towns and inspiring project-factsheets\)](#) [FR]

Events

Annual conference on higher education and research in the Greater Region, 30 November 2021, online. [More info](#)

Workshop on cross-border public services run by the MOT at the 42nd Urban Planning Conference, 1-3 December 2021, in Dunkirk and online. [More info](#)

First European Citizens' Space, organised by the Agency of the Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai, 8 December 2021 in Kortrijk. [More info](#)

Launch of a new MOT working group: "Cross-border ecological transition", 14 December 2021, online [More info](#)

MOT general assembly, 9 February 2022, online.

[All the events](#)

Towards a cross-border circular economy?

On 18 November, the PAMINA Eurodistrict, in partnership with the MOT, held a seminar on the circular economy in the cross-border setting.



With contributions from regional institutions (the Grand Est Region, Baden-Württemberg Landtag, Land of Rhineland-Palatinate and Canton of Basel-Country), national institutions (Luxembourg Ministry of Energy and Spatial Planning) and European ones (the Commission, DG Environment and DG REGIO), the day was an opportunity to highlight the cross-cutting approach and different levels of action that the circular economy is based on.

While studies and initial cooperation initiatives can be supported by the forthcoming Interreg programme cycle, this will not be sufficient to deal

with all of the issues of research and development, or of convergence of processing and transformation infrastructures that the circular economy in a cross-border setting requires. To address this, players need to formulate effective common strategic commitments.

The challenge is a major one, as is illustrated by the initial work carried out across the Greater Region to align in the cross-border setting objectives with respect to conservation of soil and resources, cohesion and employment, economic development and agriculture. The representatives of the European Commission reaffirmed

Europe's commitment to expand its work in this area, within the framework of the Green New Deal.

The MOT's President, Christian Dupessey, concluded the discussions by highlighting the usefulness of the MOT's network and [the pioneering work of Greater Geneva on this issue](#). He underlined that "the circular economy isn't a fashion, it's a different way of seeing development", and emphasised the need to support economic players in order to foster the implementation of cross-border approaches for the sector. This initial series of discussions will thus be the first of many!

Franco-Luxembourg ICG

Progress notably in the areas of transport and teleworking

Following the sixth Franco-Luxembourg Intergovernmental Commission (ICG) that took place on 19 October in Belval in the presence of the Minister of State Clément Beaune, agreements between the two countries were reached notably with respect to transport and teleworking.

Among the advances made:

- 34 days of tax exemption instead of 29 for French teleworkers employed in Luxembourg;
- improvements in mobility and an additional €110 million invested by Luxembourg in its rail links;
- improving cross-border security;
- extension of the area of free transport;
- agreements regarding the training of healthcare professionals, as well as in the area of scientific and academic cooperation.

[More info \[FR\]](#)

Health crisis: a tool to facilitate cross-border movements between France, Germany and Switzerland

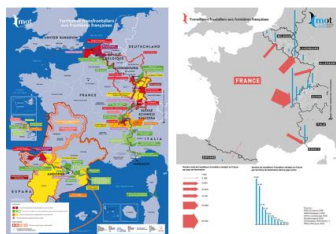
At a time when the pandemic is on the rise again in Europe and health measures are being strengthened on both sides of the Rhine, the European Territorial Authority of Alsace and the Grand Est Region, in cooperation with the Centre Européen de la Consommation (European Centre for Consumer Protection) and the INFOBEST network, have made available a digital tool to aid with crossing borders. Comprising a web form, it is designed to inform the user about the rules to be complied with when going to the neighbouring countries, depending on the reason for their journey. The aim is to make travel in the Franco-German-Swiss area easier. [More info](#)

A new strategy for the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Euskadi Navarra Euroregion

On the 10th anniversary of its creation on 27 October, the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Euskadi Navarra Euroregion presented its new strategic plan. This plan, which covers the period 2021-2027 marked by the beginning of the exit from the health crisis, incorporates an approach based on a territorial model of resilience to crisis situations. Its priorities are aligned with the European agenda, the goals of ETC and the major current issues: energy-environment, new technologies-digital and demography-social action. Drawn up with input from a large number of citizens, it aims to remove obstacles to the development of the cross-border area and to turn them into opportunities. [More info](#)

New – with #lundicarto, every Monday the MOT presents a cross-border map

Starting from this November, every Monday the MOT is publishing on social media a map illustrating the reality of flows and cooperation in cross-border living areas. [The first two maps published show for example that more than 38 million people live in the cross-border territories along France's borders, and that nearly 430,000 people live in mainland France and work in a neighbouring country.](#)



All of the maps can be viewed on the MOT's website [by clicking here](#).

Conference on the Future of Europe:

The MOT's proposals to promote cross-border issues



The Conference on the Future of Europe, launched on 9 May 2021, is an unprecedented exercise in participatory democracy open to all the citizens of the 27 Member States. [An interactive and multilingual digital platform](#) enables everyone to take part in the discussions, express ideas and organise events.

In order to highlight cross-border issues in the challenges for tomorrow's Europe, the MOT has published four proposals there:

- [To foster more ambitious cooperation in the area of higher education and research in cross-border regions](#)
- [Air pollution: setting up a single European system of](#)

[environmental display stickers for all vehicles](#)

- [Greater investment to create a genuine "Europe of rail" in order to connect up border regions](#)
- [To develop places to inform European citizens about cross-border public services and to listen to their border-related difficulties.](#)

The Committee of the Regions has also highlighted a number of proposals from its [resolution on the future of cross-border cooperation up to 2050](#), which constitutes its official contribution to the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Many other citizen-initiated proposals relating to cross-border issues are online in the platform's thematic sections.

The MOT is inviting players involved in cross-border cooperation to take part in it and to support these proposals.

It wishes to ensure that account is taken of cross-border cooperation in these discussions and, to this end, it is advocating cross-border citizens' consultations.

The Conference on the Future of Europe will deliver its conclusions during France's presidency of the EU in the first half of 2022.

- [Note on the Conference on the Future of Europe \[FR\]](#)

- [Note on France's presidency of the EU Council \[FR\]](#)

Publication of the proceedings of the MOT's annual conference

The four roundtables held during the MOT's annual event on 21-22 September gave rise to rich discussions among the 200 participants present in Morteau and La Chaux-de-Fonds. They focused on:

- RT#1 The ecological transition: "Towards cross-border sobriety?"
- RT#2 Co-development: "Can the economic recovery be cross-border and mutually supportive?"
- RT#3 Citizenship: "How can cross-border citizens' and territorial inclusion be promoted?"
- RT#4 Resilience: "The Jura mountains: what are the (re)sources of recovery and adaptation?"

[The proceedings are available \[FR\].](#)

#EWRC "Breathing without borders": the MOT publishes three project factsheets

Following on from the MOT's workshop "[Breathing without borders](#)" held on 13 October during the EURegionsWeek, the MOT has published three project factsheets corresponding to the examples of good practices presented during the workshop:

- [The project "Atmo-VISION: strategies for better air quality in the Upper Rhine" \[FR\]](#)
- [The project "TransfAIR: improving air quality across the cross-border area" \[FR\]](#)
- [The project "B-solutions: recognition of anti-pollution vehicle stickers" \[FR\].](#)

A ESPON Policy Brief demonstrates the relevance of a "pan-European" approach to cross-border observation



The policy brief "[Cross-border monitoring and observation in Europe](#)" explores the main takeaways from research studies done at EU level, compiling the most relevant EU documents, and aims to support the upscaling of good practices for cross-border monitoring and observation to pan-European level. Extract of the report:

"So far, research has underlined that access to relevant data sets for cross-border regions is still limited, 'as transnational, national and regional data referring to cross-border territories is not structurally available for several organisational and methodological reasons. Nevertheless, as this is a growing need, and some good examples are already set in place, the opportunity to scale up and build up a comprehensive, pan-Europe cross-border observation and monitoring approach is being supported at many levels, from European to local, as it could play an important role in removing obstacles and enhancing cohesion." [More info](#)

PRESS REVIEW

Water for Tomorrow: a project to guard against droughts in France and England

Actu-environnement, 19 October

"Improving the short-term response to episodes of drought, better planning of investment and long-term management of water for regions are the goals set by the project [...]."

Luxembourg – an Eldorado with a bitter taste for North Lorraine

Le Figaro, 15 November

"Higher wages, generous welfare benefits... Luxembourg siphons off the skills and social security contributions of 112,000 cross-border workers who live in the Grand Est Region, without giving any compensation in terms of tax to the French municipalities that are penalised by what they call 'pillaging'."

Unvaccinated people from Germany: a negative test within 24 hours

Républicain lorrain, 14 Nov.

"A decree published in France's Journal Officiel requires travellers who have not been vaccinated against Covid from eight European countries, including Germany, to show a negative PCR or antigen test obtained within 24 hours to enter France, as against 72 hours. This measure came into effect on Saturday."

Those Germans who now live across the border from their own country

Républicain lorrain, 16 Nov.

"Many Germans live in the Moselle municipalities close to the border: Merten, Spicheren and Alsting. Several factors are at play (property prices, the appeal of these locations). But tax considerations are a major factor in their choice."

Grand Est: more progress needed in cross-border apprenticeships

Le Quotidien de la formation, 8 November

"The Upper Rhine Council has recently sent to French, Swiss and German elected representatives two resolutions to promote cross-border apprenticeships and the recognition of qualifications on all sides of the borders."

Michel Charrat envisages tough actions if toll-free status removed

Le Messenger, 18 November

"It's like a bad penny! That was Michel Charrat's first reaction. [...] The President of the European Cross-Border Grouping is a fierce opponent of removing the toll-free status of the section of motorway between Annemasse and Saint-Julien."

Five ideas to save the Nice-Cuneo train line

Monaco Matin, 2 November

"Pulled between France and Italy, the Nice-Breil-Cuneo train line that goes through the Roya Valley has known jolts and technical problems for nearly a century. Political tensions, inadequate services, railway reforms on both sides of the border [...]."

"It's ridiculous": anger mounts over blocked roads on the Franco-Spanish border

LCI, 27 October

"For nine months, crossing points between France and Spain have been obstructed by blocks of concrete to enable tighter checks. There is as yet no date for their reopening."

The Euroregion presents its climate pact in Glasgow

L'Indépendant, 11 November

"Because it is one of the territories most impacted by global warming, the Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion [...] is very ambitious in terms of adaptation."

The MOT's documentary portal: latest publications online

- **Citizens' awareness and perception of EU regional policy**, *Flash Eurobarometer 497, European Commission, October 2021.*
- **L'impact du Covid-19 sur les relations transfrontalières européennes : focus sur la Région Grand Est**, *professional dissertation for a master's in European and international studies, Aix-Marseille University, Amélie Vigneau, September 2021.*
- **Impacts de la crise de la Covid-19 sur l'Arc jurassien franco-suisse**, *Jura Arc Cross-Border Statistical Observatory, 2021.*
- **Frontières, entre histoires et géographies**, *Michel Foucher, Les Editions de l'Oeil, August 2021. Catalogue of the exhibition in La Roche-Guyon (19 May/20 November 2021).*
- **Zoom sur... Le travail détaché, une activité de premier plan au Grand-Duché**, *North Lorraine Urban Planning and Sustainable Development Agency (AGAPE), September 2021.*



Find all of the publications on cross-border cooperation listed in the MOT's documentary portal.

CROSS-BORDER NEWS

Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière
38, rue des Bourdonnais
75001 Paris France
Tel: +33 (0)1 55 80 56 80
mot@mot.asso.fr

Director of publication:
Jean Peyrony

Production: Domitille Ayral

Photo page 3: European Union / Dati Bendo

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