

European Cooperation Day

Territorial cooperation programmes and projects celebrated European Cooperation Day for the second consecutive year on 21 September 2013. The aim of this campaign, supported by the INTERACT programme, the European Commission and the Committee of the Regions, is to highlight the results of the cross-border projects funded by the European funds. This year more than 150 events were organised for the general public in some thirty countries. The objective: show the benefits of territorial cooperation.

For MEP Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid, who supports this day, "the border is still regarded as an area of competition and fracture: neither the

citizens, nor the public authorities, nor the political decision-makers know or appreciate the potential and the added value of cross-border cooperation, despite the fact that since 2007 Europe has allocated more than 8.5 billion euros to such cooperation to help local authorities meet their common challenges. In these times of crisis and cutbacks in public spending, cross-border cooperation generates economies of scale and sources of competitiveness. Thus, it enables, for example, the implementation of joint clusters and facilities in the fields of health, employment, culture, transport, risk management and the environment."

www.ecday.eu



Preparation of the France Partnership Agreement 2014-2020

In the context of the programming of European funds for the period 2014-2020, each Member State is required to draw up a Partnership Agreement. This national document defines the strategic guidelines for the use of European funds.

Following a national consultation and a number of thematic seminars held between March and May 2013, an initial draft of the Partnership Agreement was produced, coordinated by the DATAR.

The first draft of this agreement¹ takes cross-border cooperation into consideration and includes strategic and diagnostic elements that have an impact on cross-border territories. It has been communicated to the Member States neighbouring France in order to ensure coordination with them on these issues.

The final draft of the Partnership Agreement is due to be prepared by the end of October 2013, and will include information provided by the managing authorities of the 2014-2020 European

programmes, which are also in preparation.

Note that, linked with the Partnership Agreement, a study commissioned by the DATAR on integrated territorial approaches has been posted on line². Drawing on an analysis of the mechanisms implemented during the 2007-2013 period, the study explores the procedures for implementation of the ITI and CLLD instruments proposed in the new 2014-2020 regulations, including in the cross-border context.

¹ Read this draft: [click here](#).

² [Click here to read this study](#).

EVENTS

OCTOBER

The MOT is organising five seminars of information about the setting up of cross-border projects on French borders. Further information elsewhere on this page (column on the right).

Closing event of the France-Wallonia-Flanders Interreg IV programme, 8 October, Mons (Belgium).

OPEN DAYS - MOT-CECICN workshop, 9 October, Brussels: "Territorial cooperation and the single market - How to generate tangible added value for the citizens". Organised by the CECICN, the workshop (Code 09B02) will be followed by a joint networking event with the EGTC Platform workshop.

International conference on "Borders, walls and security", 17 and 18 October 2013, Montreal.

IBA Basel congress: "Cross Border Planning and Cooperation", 17 to 19 October 2013, Basle (Switzerland).

The Euro-Institut celebrates its 20th anniversary!, 21 October 2013, Strasbourg (France).

Conference on "Prospects for the European Union: Borderless Europe?", 25 and 26 October 2013, Budapest (Hungary).

NOVEMBER

AEBR annual conference, 7 to 9 November 2013 in the Euregio Meuse-Rhin.

Final conference of the CAMIS project, 21 November 2013, Rouen (France).

Further information - Other events: www.espaces-transfrontaliers.eu

Legal seminar on the French-Spanish-Andorran border

Nearly 70 French, Spanish and Andorran practitioners took part in a seminar on the legal instruments for cross-border projects, organised by the MOT on 16 September in Toulouse at the Midi-Pyrénées regional council building.

The objective of the seminar was to raise the awareness of local participants in cross-border cooperation and inform them about the available instruments: cross-border cooperation agreement, association, EEIG, consorcio, EGTC. The event also encouraged the sharing of good practices concerning the use of the instruments.

Opening the seminar, Marc Carballido, vice-president of the Midi-Pyrénées Region, was pleased to note that the whole length of the Pyrenees was represented in the attendance. He stressed the strong cross-border commitment of the region, at the heart of the mountain range and equidistant from the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

After a MOT presentation comparing the legal instruments, the participants shared their experiences in two workshops.

- In the first workshop, on instruments for operational investments and cross-border services, the discussion started with the examples of the Cerdagne hospital EGTC and the Bihartean EEIG (cross-border Chamber of

Commerce).

The discussions covered the practical questions relating to the selection, setting up and operation of legal instruments in the service of projects. The participants also underlined the impact of differences in legislative frameworks on cross-border organisations. Consequently, the need to anticipate these differences and conduct multi-level talks in order to work on the interoperability of national systems was emphasised.

- The second workshop, on instruments for territorial governance and development (with the examples of the Basque Eurocity EEIG and the Consorcio of the Pyrenean Working Community) foregrounded the issue of time: political impetus is necessary for a territorial project, but political time, driven by the elections on either side of the border, is not the same as that of the project participants. This means that territories must set up stable governance, with an appropriate legal framework, requiring initial support from the cooperation programmes in terms of technical assistance.



This seminar was the first in a series of five, each focused on one or two borders (to download the programmes and to register online, please visit the website of the seminar concerned):

- [France-Spain-Andorra](#), 16th September in Toulouse
- [France-Switzerland](#), 3rd October in Annemasse
- [France-Italy](#), 10th October in Genoa
- [France-Germany-Luxemburg](#), 17th October in Sarreguemines
- [France-Belgium-UK](#), 29th October in Lille.

Following these events, the MOT will develop information documents and decision-making support materials for the benefit of actors on the border, to guide cross-border project leaders in the choice of legal form most adapted to their needs.



* Project co-funded by the European Union. Europe is committed in France with the ERDF.

Apprenticeship in the Upper Rhine



Invited by Philippe Richert, president of the Alsace Region and former minister, and Urs Wüthrich-Pelloli, president of the Upper Rhine Conference, on 12 September

in Saint-Louis, 28 French and German institutions signed an outline agreement on cross-border apprenticeship in the Upper Rhine. This agreement is intended to encourage the cross-border mobility of apprentices. It defines the framework and the conditions of cross-border apprenticeship, which is opening up to all levels of training in Alsace, Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate.

[Further information](#)

Water without borders URBACT consultation

On 25 and 26 September the first edition of Aquaterritorial* took place in Mulhouse: a forum for discussion and sharing on issues of the management of water and habitats. The MOT moderated a seminar at the event, under the title "What management for cross-border waters?".

* Organised with the Mulhouse district SIVOM, the Mulhouse Alsace conurbation and Mulhouse city council, and supported by the Rhine-Meuse water agency, the Haut-Rhin department council and the Alsace regional council.

www.aquaterritorial.com

The MOT network has contributed to the consultation launched by URBACT on the preparation of the new URBACT programme for the period 2014-2020. The objective for the MOT network is to affirm and strengthen the place of cross-border conurbations in this programme intended to promote the networking of cities.

To download the MOT contribution: [click here](#).

www.urbact.eu

Budapest Platform seminar

The Budapest Platform¹ organised a seminar on 2 July at the Union Benelux headquarters in Brussels on the role of the national level in supporting cross-border cooperation. This first public event since the formation of the Platform was a success. The participants were able to obtain a better understanding of the experiences of four countries, France, Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands, and hear the points of view of the DG REGIO, the Council of Europe and the Committee of the Regions.



The MOT in Africa

Mandated by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the MOT is providing guidance for the LOBI (Local Cross-Border Initiative) programme in West Africa. The aim of this programme is to support the local development of West African cross-border territories. To this end, MOT director Jean Peyrony, accompanied by Jean Rubio and Jonathan Boudry (MOT), took part in July 2013 in a meeting of local, national and regional participants in African cooperation, in Dakar (Senegal), location of the UNCDF West Africa regional office. A pilot experiment will cover Ivory Coast, Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso. The African mayors attending expressed in strong terms their need for exchanges with European local and regional authorities.



The representatives of the countries took it in turns to present their experiences of cross-border cooperation:

- for Hungary, Bence Rétvari, Secretary of State for Public Administration and for Justice, reviewed the essential role played by his ministry in the coordination of the various cross-border cooperation instruments, with support from the CESCOI²;

- for the Netherlands, Tom Leeuwestein, unit head at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, explained that the Dutch government has set up a technical unit tasked with settling cross-border disputes involving the national level;

- for France, Jean-Luc Frés, DATAR desk officer, explained that France wished to reinforce its coordination with neighbouring countries (coordination of the partnership agreements on each border, cross-

border statistical monitoring), supported by the MOT;

- for Germany, Dr Gerd Hager, executive director of the Regionalverband Mittlerer Oberrhein, described the role of the BBSR (Federal Institute for Spatial Planning) in monitoring cross-border questions and its support for the emergence of IMEG, the German network of cross-border metropolitan regions.

Colin Wolfe, for the European Commission, stressed that the territorial approach must be implemented at the political level and that the Member States must work with their neighbours on ensuring consistency in the planning of their border regions.

The conclusions of the seminar:

- the multi-level approach is necessary for satisfactory operation of cross-border cooperation;

- an integrated territorial approach

must stimulate the conventional project-based approach in the border areas;

- the integrated strategies must be based on local cross-border data (cross-border flows, etc.) which are not available at the moment;

- border regions are confronted with specific problems, caused for example by the differences between the legal systems across the border.

The objective for the Budapest Platform is to reduce the frequency of these problems, which arise at local level but can be resolved only at State level, through better coordination between neighbouring States, supported by the European Union.

1 The Budapest Platform was formed in December 2010 between the representatives of organisations involved at national level in cross-border cooperation.

2 Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives - www.cesci-net.eu

Further information and the presentations on line: [click here](#).

Territorial conference and affirmation of metropolitan areas in French

legislation

Three articles of the bill on the modernisation of public action and the affirmation of metropolitan areas, which has so far passed its first reading in the Senate and in the National Assembly, contain texts relating to cross-border cooperation:

- Article 4, on the territorial

conference on public action, following an amendment from the MOT: "It can be utilized in the coordination of cross-border relations with foreign local and regional authorities located in the neighbourhood of the region."

- Article 9 bis: "A local or regional authority, or a grouping of local or regional authorities, may not conclude an agreement with a foreign State, except in the cases

stipulated by the legislation or in the case of an agreement intended to enable the formation of a European grouping of territorial cooperation, a Euroregional cooperation grouping, or a local cross-border cooperation grouping. In the latter case, the signature of the agreement is approved previously by the representative of the State in the region."

- Article 31, on the metropolitan

area: "A metropolitan area bordering on a foreign State draws up a cross-border cooperation plan involving the département, the region and the municipalities concerned."

The bill will undergo its second reading in the Senate early in October.

<http://www.senat.fr/dossier-legislatif/pjl12-495.html>

PRESS REVIEW

▲ The environment without borders

Special report in *Environnement Magazine*, September 2013

"Cross-border cooperation > Water resources, biodiversity network, air quality or mobility: cross-border territories share an identity and common environmental protection challenges. Dealing with subjects that pay no attention to borders, French participants and their neighbours already have a long experience of cooperation. Today this is evolving towards more structured interactions."

▲ Towards a revision of the structural fund envelopes

Localtis, 10 September

"Only just negotiated, the 2014-2020 European budget is already the subject of further bargaining. [...] the commissioner for the cohesion policy has announced that the regional appropriations would be revised in 2016."

▲ Cross-border Atlas: the territory seen from the sky of Insee's statistics

Croix du Nord, 13 September

"A diagnostic and decision-aid tool for entrepreneurs and public authorities. [...] Northerners are looking increasingly across the border! French, Flemish, Walloon, we are assuming both our similarities – a common history and culture – and our differences – linguistic and economic. The statisticians of the INSEE don't say anything different in the second volume of the Cross-border Atlas that they have just published in a new edition."

▲ Care without borders

20 Minutes, 18 September

"On Tuesday, dignitaries of the Eurodistrict, Kehl and the CUS attended the inauguration of the cross-border addiction treatment medical centre, at 5 Bankstrasse in Kehl. 'It's the first health project completed by the Eurodistrict,' said a pleased Alexandre Feltz, Strasbourg city councillor."

▲ Health insurance: the ambassador reassures

La Tribune de Genève, 11 September

"According to Michel Duclos, the decision will take specific regional aspects into consideration. The dossier is a hot potato in French-Swiss relations. Particularly in the Greater Geneva area. The health insurance system for border workers could change completely."

▲ The Doubs urban conurbation takes a major step

La Voix du Jura, 12 September

"The local cross-border cooperation grouping has just been formed in Morteau, at château Pertusier. Its members are nine authorities: the State, the Franche-Comté regional council, the Doubs departmental council, and the six member municipalities of the Doubs conurbation (AUD)."

▲ Iraty, hikers' paradise

Sud Ouest, 2 September

"On both sides of the border, the 27 000 hectares of the Iraty forest and its hundreds of kilometres of hiking trails now form part of a single tourism entity. With some 400 kilometres of marked trails for mountain bikes on the two sides of the border, in Soule and in Navarre."

▲ The Geopark inaugurated

Alpes et Midi, 6 September

"Throughout the whole day of 30 August the elected representatives of the Briançon, Guillestre and Queyras districts were called upon for the inauguration on their respective territories of the Cottian Alps Geopark. The project of a cross-border territory. The Briançonnais, Guillestrois and Queyras communities of municipalities, the municipalities of L'Argentière-la-Bessée and St Martin de Queyrières, the Pays de la Maurienne and the whole of the Italian side as far as Pinerolo are involved in this Geopark project through integrated cross-border plan of the High Valleys."

▲ The Poles have crossed the Oder

Le Monde, 12 September

"Suspicious at first, the Germans of the eastern Lander are finding certain advantages in this invasion. In the small village of Blankensee in north-eastern Germany, a few kilometres from the Polish border, the Polish-German inn Gospoda has become the centre of social life."

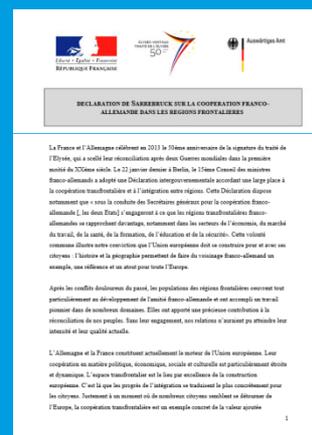
The Saarbrücken Declaration

In Saarbrücken on 15 July 2013, Thierry Repentin, French Minister Delegate for European Affairs, and his German counterpart Michael Georg Link signed a joint declaration on French-German cooperation in the border regions. On the same day they chaired a conference on French-German cooperation, which provided an opportunity for discussion of the prospects and the challenges of cross-border cooperation.

The Saarbrücken declaration stipulates that "The particularly close cooperation and the intensive exchanges between cross-border regions have reached high levels. However, this results in new tasks that should be tackled." It puts forward several working topics for the future of French-German cross-border cooperation: Education and vocational training, labour market, police cooperation, cross-border transport, energy, cross-border healthcare, tax questions, Upper Rhine region and Greater Region.

To download the declaration:

http://www.allemagne.diplo.de/Vertretung/frankreich/fr/___pr/nq/2013-07/2013-07-22-repentin-link-pm.html



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