



VIEWPOINT



Alain Pirat
CEVA project
manager,
Geneva State Council

What will be the contribution of CEVA at local cross-border level?

By connecting two networks that at present operate as dead ends in the France-Vaud-Geneva cross-border area, CEVA will enable new public transport interchanges. CEVA has already strengthened cross-border cooperation by establishing a common legal framework, coordinated service provision and fare harmonization. By acting as a structuring element for the area, it will remove obstacles between public transport and developments. CEVA will link the stations of Cornavin and Annemasse in 17 minutes at 15-minute intervals, thus enabling a modal shift from road to rail. The completion of this rail link forms part of a consistent transport policy, built around mode complementarity. Access to Cointrin airport and Cornavin station will be facilitated for the whole of the Haute-Savoie department. This service will benefit not only the inhabitants of Haute-Savoie but also businesses working for export and the many tourists who visit the department's resorts and towns such as Evian and Annecy.

What advances does this project represent for the France-Vaud-Geneva cross-border conurbation as it undergoes metropolization?

On one hand CEVA meets the demand for urban development generated by the demographic growth of the France-Vaud-Geneva region, and on the other it combats urban sprawl. Its implementation involves the construction of five new stations and stops, which have been designed by the architect Jean Nouvel. These future multimodal hubs are going to change the face of the conurbation. The present unattractive areas around the CEVA station sites are going to be completely rehabilitated. These are industrial, brownfield sites such as Eaux-Vives, Praille and the district around Annemasse station. The redefinition of these spaces will, among other factors, enable the housing shortage to be reduced. Furthermore, CEVA operation, mainly underground, will lead to a marked improvement in the quality of life by reducing pollution and noise, while meeting people's needs.

Agglomération franco-valdo-genevoise
(France-Vaud-Geneva conurbation)

Start of work on the CEVA railway line

Work on the CEVA (Cornavin - Eaux-Vives - Annemasse) railway line was officially launched on 20 September 2005. This new link will connect Geneva international airport and the city centre to Annemasse station, thus linking the whole of the Swiss and French networks.

The work that has just been started will last for more than a year. It includes the building of a new platform at Cornavin (Geneva's central station) and various civil engineering works prior to the construction of the line itself. Tunnel boring will not begin before 2007, with full opening tentatively scheduled for 2010-2012. Of the 16 km of link planned, 2 km are located in France, from the border to Annemasse station. The centre of Geneva and the Haute-Savoie town will then be only 20 minutes apart.

This project falls within the framework of the development of the entire France-Vaud-Geneva region. CEVA is effectively the backbone of a transport plan for 2020 defined in the DTPR (regional public transport development) charter, signed in July 2003 by the Vice-Chairman of the Rhône-Alpes region and the Geneva State Council. The objective of this charter is to provide a lasting response to the travel needs of the France-Vaud-Geneva conurbation. CEVA is thus the "missing link" enabling services to be provided for the whole of the Geneva basin. Cross-border links will be greatly facilitated within this conurbation of more than 700,000 inhabitants, which is forecast to expand by more than 25% by 2030 and in which the population flows on either



side of the border are particularly high. Of the 300,000 daily border crossings between the Canton of Geneva and France, only 3% use public transport, because of the lack of efficient infrastructure.

CEVA will also enable "a new interpretation of the urban area", according to Robert Cramer, State Councillor in Geneva: "with the building of five new stations and stops, the transport system will be modified fundamentally thanks to the setting-up of multimodal hubs. The programme also includes development projects around these stations and stops in neighbourhoods that will gain improved access." This is the case of the "Étoile Annemasse Genève" project, currently under study and backed by the Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière, which plans the rezoning of a 35-hectare railway brownfield site in the heart of Annemasse for development as an urban and economic interchange centre mixing housing, tertiary services, and commercial, cultural and public facilities.

Further information:

<http://www.ceva.ch>
<http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org>

France/Spain

New technologies at the service of rural development

"Ticaderu" (information and communication technologies applied to rural development) is an Interreg IIIA project, launched officially on 26 August 2005. It covers the territory of the Syndicat mixte du Plateau de Lannemezan et des vallées Neste-Barousse-Baronnies (21,439 inhabitants) in France and, on the Spanish side, the territory of the Comarca de Los Monegros, a community of municipalities with 21,641 inhabitants, between Huesca and Saragossa.

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen cohesion and solidarity within an area threatened by the ageing of the population and rural exodus. It aims to develop technical opportunities at the same level as urban areas by developing multimedia interchange networks.

Between 2005 and 2008 the programme plans to set up an e-learning system so that a range of training schemes can be provided for the

population, the administrative personnel of local authorities and the economic sector: professional training, Spanish-French joint training, French and Spanish language courses, use of ICTs and IT, training programme to encourage business startups, introduction to electronic trading and to business on Internet, etc.

Many other actions are planned: establishment of a Spanish-French professional monitoring agency in the areas involved, networking of the tourist offices, establishment of a French-Spanish virtual shopping centre, etc.

The other partners (in addition to the Syndicat mixte on the French side and the Comarca de Los Monegros) are the Midi-Pyrénées region and the Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes (adult professional training association) in France, and the Aragon government and the INAEM (national professional training centre) in Spain.

Further information: <http://www.ticaderu.com>



SPECIAL REPORT

NEWS IN BRIEF

Recent legal changes in cross-border cooperation

Extension of the Karlsruhe Agreement to the whole of the France-Switzerland border (2005) and coming into force of the French-Belgian agreement* on cross-border cooperation

These two agreements put forward the same cooperation instrument, the local cross-border cooperation grouping or GLCT, a public law entity with legal personality. Five GLCTs have been established since the Karlsruhe agreement came into force: Hardt Centre-Upper Rhine (Hartheim-Fessenheim) (1998), Wissembourg-Bad-Bergzabern (2001), Kehl Euro-Institute (2003), Regio Pamina (2003) and Vis-à-vis (Erstein/Orbena/Baden) (2004).

The European District

This procedure, initiated by the MOT network and promoted by the MOT chairman Pierre Mauroy, introduced this new instrument into French domestic law as part of the Freedoms and Local Responsibilities Act of 13 August 2004. The European District system is that of the open

"syndicat mixte" (mixed association) under French law. As such, it can include other public legal entities, for example local and national public-sector establishments, alongside French and foreign local authorities and their groupings. The Act provides for a wide-ranging scope. The European District has the capacity to undertake any task that is of interest for its members, on condition that it falls within their respective areas of competence, but also to establish and manage the services and facilities necessary for the accomplishment of such tasks. The provisions of the Act enable the establishment of integrated cross-border entities in order to set up and manage area projects jointly. The Act also provides for the establishment of European Districts through transformation of an existing open mixed association.

Eurodistricts within the framework of French-German cooperation (40th anniversary of the Élysée Treaty)

This initiative was launched in January 2003 by the French and German governments in order to encourage the "development of cross-border cooperation and inter-municipality relations [...] and to explore new forms of cooperation". Since that date, four areas on the French-German border have submitted applications: Strasbourg-Ortenau, Saarbrücken-Moselle East, Regio Pamina and the Freiburg/Centre and south Alsace region. These experimental approaches do not constitute new legal instruments like the European district, but are intended to be based on existing provisions while proposing new forms of cooperation.

The European Grouping of Cross-border Cooperation

A proposal for a Community regulation on a new trans-European cooperation instrument, applicable with effect from 1 January 2007, was submitted by the European Commission on 14 July 2004. This instrument is intended to be versatile (management of cross-border, inter-region or transnational cooperation projects or programmes) and will bring together all the competent partners (the entity is open to states, local authorities and other local public bodies). It will have "the legal capacity accorded to legal entities" by the laws of the member states. Its legal system will depend on the law of the place where the headquarters of the entity is located.

*Brussels Agreement of 16 September 2002, in effect since 1 July 2005

■ "Le travail frontalier : parcours d'obstacles ?" (Working at the border: an obstacle course?)

New publication on the obstacles to mobility in the France-Belgium border region, produced by Eures Channel (Hainaut, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, West-Vlaanderen.Kent).

Further information and document download: <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org>

■ Strategic guidelines for cohesion 2007-2013

Adopted by the European Commission in July 2005, all language versions of this text establishing priorities for the next generation of cohesion policy programmes are available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy

■ "Effective Management of Interreg IIIA programmes"

This document, published in May 2005 by the Qualification and Transfer Point of the INTERACT programme, is available in French and in English. It comprises a set of information sheets on the implementation of Interreg cross-border programmes.

Further information and document download: <http://www.interact-eu.net>

SPOTLIGHT ON A SITE

<http://www.tourismtrirhena.com>

The tourist offices of Bâle-Ville, Bâle-Campagne, Colmar, Fribourg, Mulhouse and EuroAirport have set up an Internet site intended to promote the marketing of tourism in the three-nations region (northern and western Switzerland, Baden region and Haut-Rhin) on the theme "Three countries, one destination".

In the press in August

■ Gamsheim-Rheinau - The cross-border tourism project is all set, *DNA*, 12 August

"This cross-border tourism development project has been prepared in parallel with the construction of the largest fish pass in Europe by the municipalities of Gamsheim and Rheinau [...]. A cross-border association for the development of tourism at the Rhine site [has been established]..."

■ Rhine-Rhône area: towards an association of towns, *DNA*, 21 August

"Bourgogne, Alsace and Franche-Comté regional councillors say that they are particularly satisfied that their three regions have been selected—along with 14 others, including the Strasbourg-Ortenau eurodistrict—within the framework of the call for cooperation between towns issued by the minister of the Interior and Regional Development, but they are not going to stop there. [A joint release announces] the setting-up of a 'support association'."

■ Signature of three agreements for the connection of Switzerland to the French high-speed railway network, press release from the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure, Tourism and the Sea, 25 August

"Dominique Perben, minister of Transport, Infrastructure, Tourism and the Sea, today, Thursday 25 August, with his counterpart Moritz Leuenberger, Swiss federal councillor responsible for Transport, signed three bilateral agreements on the connection of Switzerland to the French high-speed railway network. These agreements confirm the principle of a financial contribution from Switzerland..."

■ The CARF establishes a bus route between Ventimiglia and Menton, *Le Petit Niçois*, 4 August

"A project for a public transport link between the towns of Menton and Ventimiglia will be put into effect in September..."

■ Les Aldudes - The valley draws closer to Elizondo, *Sud Ouest*, 3 August

"After several years of waiting, the Baztan municipal council has voted for the projected cross-border road over the Eiharza pass..."

■ The border is eliminated in the LE PERTHUS multilingual school, *L'Indépendant*, 31 August

"For the first time in France, a cross-border school has opened its doors [...] by welcoming pupils from La Junquera and Le Perthus for a new school year that opens up officially to bilingualism, French-Catalan!"

Don't hesitate to send us your suggestions for articles to appear in future issues.

Contact: +33 (0)1-55-80-56-86 - Subscriptions: domitille.ayral@mot.asso.fr

Photos: MOT, AEBK

