

MOT general assembly in Strasbourg

Invited by the Strasbourg Urban Community, the MOT held its 16th general assembly on 25 April in Strasbourg, attended by nearly 120 participants.

In the current crisis context, all the participants, elected and technical representatives of cross-border territories, the European Commission (EC) and the European Parliament, affirmed the need to reinforce territorial cohesion and to promote cross-border cooperation in a 'citizen' approach, addressing local populations directly. According to Ivanka Lakova, head of unit at the DG REGIO, "the EC, when preparing operational programmes, bears in mind the question of the bottom-line benefit and the tangible results for the citizens".

In this European Year of Citizens, narrowing the gap between the citizen and European projects was the subject of lively discussions between the participants at the MOT conference, also celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty*. According to Jacques Bigot, president of the Strasbourg Urban Community, "today cross-border policy is facing

substantial issues (turning inwards, scepticism about Europe). But, in our border regions, we know that the future of our territories in fact depends on more Europe and more cooperation."

In this context, the role of the MOT in terms of lobbying, networking and European actions federating territories was highlighted. Stressing the importance of territorial cooperation as "spearhead of European integration", MOT president Michel Delebarre reaffirmed that in this process the commitment of local protagonists is indispensable: "Although the Europe 2020 strategy was defined at European level, it is at local level that it is applied and that its results will be observed by the Europeans". Marking his commitment to this idea, Jacques Bigot emphasized the role of the cross-border metropolitan areas: "Building metropolitan areas on borders generates local and cross-border influence, not new borders: partnership is the future!"

[*Further information on the conference on page 3.](#)



Five new members!

During the general assembly, the MOT had the pleasure of welcoming to its network five new members, for which cross-border cooperation has become a priority:

- **Pôle emploi**, the French national employment service, which is developing its cross-border action at local level, through its border region services (refer to the article on page 2);
- **Electricité Réseau Distribution France (ERDF)**,

which aims to establish cross-border "smart grids" and balance electricity distribution between European countries through cooperation;

- **the Alsace Regional Council**, joining its Alsace partners in the network and reaffirming its cross-border commitment;
- **the Agglomération Alzette-Belval**, recently forming a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC), which wants to use the

sharing of experiences and the expertise of the MOT to boost its wide-ranging project for a cross-border "new town";

- **the Agglomération Sud-Pays Basque**, formerly the Communauté de Communes Sud Pays basque, which has been given new powers regarding cross-border cooperation.

[Download the MOT network map.](#)

EVENTS

JUNE-JULY

Transparcnet meeting: annual meeting of cross-border natural spaces, 4 to 7 June in Roermond (Netherlands)

Cross-border days on the future France-Switzerland Interreg programme 2014-2020
5 and 6 June in Besançon (France)

Seminar on renewable energies MOT network working group, in partnership with the Eurodistrict Regio Pamina, 27 June in Paris

European Border Studies Conference : "Mapping Conceptual Change in Thinking European Borders"
3 to 5 July in Bergamo (Italy)

50th regional sciences conference: "Culture, heritage and knowledge"
Worth noting: a special session on borders. 8 to 11 July 2013 in Mons (Belgium)

OTHER MOT EVENTS

Five seminars on cross-border operational arrangements
Between September and December 2013 on the French borders

Seminar "Businesses and cross-border economic development"
Last quarter of 2013

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

First cross-border *Cité des métiers**

On 8 April in Annemasse, an associate centre of the Geneva *Cité des métiers* was inaugurated, in the presence of the leaders of the Annemasse district and the Canton of Geneva. With this ceremony, the *Cité des métiers* became the first cross-border Institution of its type, under the new name of "*Cité des métiers du Grand Genève*" (Greater Geneva *Cité des métiers*). It should be remembered that Greater Geneva has a population of almost 900,000 persons, generating a number of flows of workers crossing the border every day.



Three questions to Grégoire Evequoz, president of the Greater Geneva *Cité des métiers*

What is the Greater Geneva *Cité des métiers* for?

It has a number of objectives:

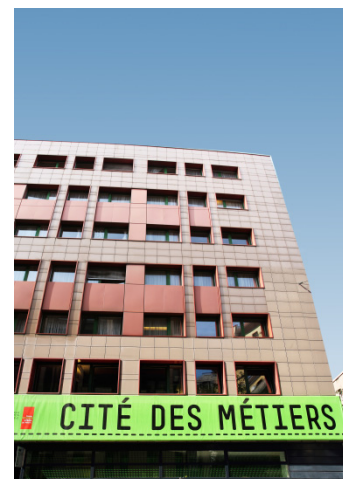
- facilitate public access to advisory services;
 - meet the needs of the population for information on employment, continuing education, re-integration in the work place, starting a business;
 - become a resource centre for everyone who has questions about the management of their professional career.
- The Greater Geneva *Cité des métiers* is a great opportunity to make it easier to find your way around all the existing sources of information and guidance in the region, and there are many of them, both on the Swiss side and on the French side.

It is the first cross-border centre of its type. What are the issues at this level?

First of all, the establishment of this associate centre, within the scope of the Geneva *Cité des métiers*, is enabling the inauguration of the first truly cross-border *Cité des métiers*, notable for having a site in one country and an associate centre in the other. A cross-border centre has the capacity to meet the needs of the population living on both sides of the border with regard to information on training programmes, mutual recognition of qualifications, training system, employment, etc.

What was the process of establishment, and what collaborations were already in place?

For a number of years, in particular within the framework of the French-Genevan regional committee, collaborations have been set up to boost vocational training in the region. A continuing education portal was opened a year ago, describing all the continuing education courses accessible on both sides of the border. This means that climate of confidence and



cooperation which is conducive to the development of innovation. That is why, four years after the establishment of the Geneva *Cité des métiers*, agreement was reached on the decision to extend the scope of the label to Greater Geneva with an associate centre in Annemasse. The associate centre is not a sub-centre or a mini-centre, it is a fully-functional reception structure, its dimension defined by the territory covered.

www.laciteenligne.org/
www.ghs74.fr/citedesmetiers

* Vocational education and training information centre.

Pôle emploi becomes involved in cross-border action

As part of the MOT collaboration with Pôle emploi1, a one-day workshop for the international correspondents of the border region services was run by the MOT on 29 April. Objective: prepare the action programmes of these regional services for the coming years. The purpose of the MOT contribution was to share its expertise, its knowledge and its tools for the development of partnerships with the employment

services of the neighbouring countries.

The presentation of the two regional surveys on cross-border mobility conducted by the MOT on the PACA-Piedmont-Liguria and Champagne-Ardenne-Wallonia borders2 illustrated the MOT missions regarding employment, as well as its cross-border territory diagnostic and monitoring tools.

These analyses were an opportunity

to identify the issues and the protagonists of employment and vocational training and the obstacles to, and the typology of, cross-border cooperation encountered in these surveyed territories in order to initiate a collective discussion on the cooperation options to be implemented locally.

The latter part of the day was spent reviewing the European context as

defined at present: European and national employment policies, priorities by topic, overview of European Community funding and cooperation project arrangements.

1 The national level of Pôle emploi joined the MOT network in 2012.

2 Available for MOT members in the Members' space.

For cooperation at the service of the citizens

MOT position statements

The two latest MOT position statements at European level are on:

- **Border workers**, in the context of a Committee of the Regions opinion in preparation concerning "Frontier workers – Assessment of the situation after twenty years of the Internal Market: problems and perspectives". A consultation took place in Brussels on 11 March 2013 on the draft opinion, for which the rapporteur is Karl-Heinz Lambertz, member of the Committee of the Regions, minister-president of the German-speaking Community of Belgium and president of the AEFR.

[Further information](#)
[MOT contribution](#)

- **Assessment of territorial impacts**: consult the [MOT contribution](#) communicated to the Committee of the Regions.



In honour of the European Year of Citizens, the MOT devoted its annual conference to the crucial issue of cross-border cooperation for the citizens of border regions and to the importance of better involving them in the projects. Held on 24 April on the topic "2014-2020: cross-border cooperation serving citizens", the conference was labelled an "official event of the 50th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty".



Christian Dupessey, MOT vice-president, introduced the conference by reaffirming that the border should be considered as "a means of meeting the day-to-day needs of the inhabitants regarding housing, employment or infrastructure". Moving in the direction of this drive to integration, a large number of projects and structures in the areas of employment, health and economic development, or projects intended to answer the day-to-day questions of border residents directly, were presented:

- **The European Consumer Centre France**, established with the opening of the single market, was presented by its managing director Martine Mérieau as "a tool at the service of the European citizens". For example, it is the lead partner in innovative consumer information projects such as "Jeunes Consom'acteurs" and "IT2Rhine 2020 E-Commerce".

- **The Cerdagne cross-border hospital** is a pioneering project in healthcare and is, in the words of MEP Marie Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid, "a response to the expectations of the citizens" on both sides of the French-Spanish border on this major topic of cross-border healthcare.

- **The Infobest structures**, the main task of which is to provide guidance

for dealing with formalities. Spreading rapidly, they provide free-of-charge local services for the cross-border questions and formalities of the citizens.

- **The Groupement transfrontalier européen**, which has been representing and defending the interests of cross-border workers on the French-Swiss border since it was established in 1963.

Initiatives have also been taken at European level to generate this "social" growth, a pillar of the Europe 2020 strategy. Olivier Girard, Deputy head of unit at the DG Internal Market and Services, gave as examples the tools made available to the citizens to boost the single market, such as the "Your Europe" web portal providing information on the rights of EU citizens, the digital one-stop shop concept, and the "Solvit" tool. Citizens can also be involved directly in the cross-border governance system of a territory: for example, the "Civil Society" pillar of the Upper Rhine Metropolitan Region involves citizens in cross-border public forums.

The usefulness and the necessity of boosting the [micro-project funds](#)* were also stressed.



According to Jean-Luc Fres, representing the DATAR, "citizen participation is a key to success of the future 2014-2020 programmes both in their preparation and in their implementation". Referring to the objective of matching the European strategies and the specific needs of the territories, MOT president Michel Delebarre called for a guarantee of "the consistency of the public policies at all levels, across the borders, and in priority at the service of the citizens".

Following these discussions, the participants were invited to the inauguration of the exhibition "De Gaulle-Adenauer: the builders of the French-German friendship", currently on show in Strasbourg, co-organised by the Fondation Charles de Gaulle.

* *Support for small projects sponsored by civil society. Further information: [Regio Pamina](#).*

The presentations are available in the Members' Space of the MOT website.

COTER Commission seminar

The Territorial Cohesion Policy Commission (COTER) organised a seminar held in Porto on 19 April on "European territorial cooperation as a driver of regional development". Jean Peyrony, attending on behalf of the MOT

and the CECICN, took part in the discussions which showed the role of cross-border cooperation between cities and regions as a "pillar" of European integration. [The presentations of the participants.](#)

Technicians' Platform

The Technicians' Platform, an opportunity for discussion between MOT network members, met on 25 April following the general assembly, with three topical workshops on energy, economic development and training for

actors.

[Note: The Renewable Energies working group will meet in Paris on June 27th, and a seminar on cross-border economic development will be organised in autumn 2013.](#)

PRESS REVIEW

Place Delors, a new symbol

La Voix du Nord, 12 April

"Three hundred years to the day after the signature of the first Treaty of Utrecht, Jean-Luc Deroo, mayor of Halluin, and Martine Fournier, burgomaster of Menin, yesterday unveiled the plaque of the European cross-border space, which will tomorrow become the place Jacques Delors."

They make use of the borders

Le nouvel Observateur, 2 May

Special report "Mulhouse Border workers – How it works" with more than ten pages on cross-border cooperation!

"Nearly 9000 Mulhouse residents work in Switzerland or Germany. A practice encouraged by the city, which is surfing on the good economic health of its neighbours."

The SaarMoselle newsletter is launched!



EDITORIAL

Après avoir lancé son nouveau site internet www.saarmoselle.org, l'Eurodistrict SaarMoselle souhaite désormais développer ses outils de communication. La conception d'une newsletter électronique destinée à l'information d'un large public, voilà donc l'un des axes de notre espace transfrontalier. Fait l'ensemble, autour politiques, administratifs, économiques ou associatifs, citoyens... présentement discutés, nous nous sommes par le biais de cet outil périodique moderne aux contours de l'Eurodistrict. Il s'agit par là d'offrir cette newsletter au sein de vos propres réseaux, afin de porter encore davantage à la connaissance de tous notre engagement en faveur de la coopération franco-allemande. Bonne lecture!



Charlotte Bittz
Vice-Présidente
Maire de Saarbrücken
Vice-Présidente
Oberbürgermeisterin der
Landeshauptstadt
Saarbrücken

Nach Fertigstellung seines neuen Internetauftritts www.saarmoselle.org möchte der Eurodistrict SaarMoselle seine Kommunikationsmittel weiter ausbauen. Die Herausgabe eines elektronischen Newsletters zur Information eines breiten Publikums entspricht dem Willen der politisch Verantwortlichen in unserem Grenzraum. Künftig können Akteure aus Politik, Verwaltung, Wirtschaft oder Vereinen, Bürgern und Bürger sich dank des neuen Kommunikationsmittels im Eurodistrict. Design über unsere Aktivitäten auf dem Laufenden halten. Gerne können Sie den Newsletter in Ihre eigenen Netzwerke geben und damit unser Engagement für die deutsch-französische Zusammenarbeit noch bekannter machen. Angenehme Lektüre!

A cross-border 'green corridor'

DNA, 12 April

"It's a first in the region: a cross-border green corridor is going to be set up between the districts of Saint-Louis, Lörrach (Germany) and Basle (Switzerland). The idea is to establish continuity between the 'biodiversity reservoirs' formed by forests and nature reserves. The project, supported by European funds, brings together 22 partners..."

Michel Charrat targeted by the Geneva populist party

Le Dauphiné libéré, 5 May

"The new poster of the Mouvement des citoyens genevois (MCG) is a clear attack on cross-border workers. A poster for the upcoming campaign for the election on 6 October. It shows a photograph of the president of the Groupement frontalier européen (GTE), Michel Charrat, taken in October 2009."

Jean-Jack Queyranne visits the site of the Cité des savoirs

La Voix de l'Ain, 26 April

"[...] the president of the Region came to visit the future site of the Cité des savoirs in Ferney-Voltaire, which will be the very first building to be erected within the framework of the strategic development project (PSD), a stone's throw from the international airport and close to the major international organisations."

Ventimiglia-Cuneo-Turin: the battle of the rails continues

Tribune Bulletin Côte d'Azur, 3 May

"Faced with the increased risk of closure of the line, a joint report has been requested from the French and Italian chambers of commerce (Cuneo and Turin) to demonstrate the values of the socioeconomic relations between our cross-border regions. Which depend on good links... Jean Icart says that he is prepared to send it to the ministers concerned if necessary."

New France-Spain electricity transmission line: the tunnel is bored

AFP, 22 April

"Boring of the 8.5 km tunnel under the Pyrenees through which the new Franco-Spanish electricity transmission line will run, doubling the electricity interconnection capacity between France and Spain, has been completed, announced Inelfe, the company responsible for the project, on Monday."

Introduction of a cross-border master's degree in healthcare

Le Journal du Pays Basque, 23 April

"A cross-border distance learning master's degree course on health promotion and social development will be inaugurated at the beginning of the next academic year, run jointly by the Isped (Institute of public health, epidemiology and development), part of the Bordeaux-Montaigne University, and the Health Studies School of the Public University of Navarre."

The Treaty of Bayonne extended to Andorra

The procedure for the Principality of Andorra to accede to the French-Spanish treaty on cross-border cooperation of territorial authorities (Treaty of Bayonne, 10 March 1995) was completed in April. The Principality of Andorra can now participate in cooperation actions with French and Spanish territorial authorities and groupings of authorities through an organisation formed for this purpose, the "Andorran cross-border cooperation organisation", which operates under the same conditions as the territorial authorities mentioned above. This extension of the Treaty of Bayonne is, among other benefits, going to enable Andorra to become a member of the Consorcio of the CTP, the managing authority and joint technical secretariat of the POCTEFA (French-Spanish-Andorran Interreg IV territorial cooperation operational programme).

<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000027326963&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id>



CROSS-BORDER NEWS

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Director of publication: Jean Peyrony
Production: Domitille Ayral, Loreline Merelle

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