

JUNE-JULY 2014

CROSS BORDER NEWS



P. 2

Events
The TransParcNet meeting of
European cross-border
protected areas
In brief

P. 3

Network news
MOT news

P. 4

Press review

Jean Peyrony

Director General of the MOT



The MOT is today publishing the 100th issue of its monthly newsletter! Since the first issue in 2004, this represents 10 years of reporting on concrete actions in cross-border territories. In a context in which the European project lacks visibility, the role of our newsletter is to publicise the cross-border initiatives that have been implemented in these territories and that are constructing Europe on the ground close to its people. By promoting our members at the European level, the newsletter attests to the reality and diversity of cooperation. The exchange of experiences and dissemination of the network's activities have thus, over the past ten years, forged a practical tool aimed first and foremost at cooperation practitioners.

On the occasion of this anniversary issue, I would therefore like to warmly thank all those who have contributed to it since *Cross-Border News* is above all a collective enterprise. And to review ten years of milestones that have marked the history of cross-border cooperation - from the first partnerships to the EGTCs as well as national and European developments - the MOT is today putting online a [retrospective of the first 100 issues](#).

Let us now turn to the future. Our conference-debate on 18 June sketched out the route to follow: innovating in services to cross-border territories, with reaffirmed support from States/governments and the EU. The MOT will contribute to this with revised statutes and a new work programme for 2015-2017.

The adventure is not over and the 100 next issues should be just as fascinating. Long live *Cross-Border News*!

The MOT network's annual conference

Nearly 130 participants gathered in Paris on 18-19 June for the MOT's annual general meeting and the conference it organised on this occasion on the topic "Cross-border networks: mutualising public services and experimenting with Europe on each border".

The conference discussions highlighted the importance of cross-border issues in a political context marked by the renewal of European institutions, the reform of territorial public action and the revision of the Europe 2020 strategy at the halfway point.

Christian Dupessey, Vice-President of the MOT and Mayor of Annemasse, pointed out that this "critical moment" linked to the results of the recent European elections has revealed the worries of many citizens, who are tempted to turn in on themselves in the face of the economic crisis. "Our role is to open up perspectives so as to persuade local populations. We need clear and common direction from elected representatives on either side of the border to persuade people that the solutions will come from more Europe and more cooperation."

In concrete terms, in order to respond to the increasing flows of people and goods

across borders, cross-border territories are putting in place coordinated public services and, in a context of pressure on public spending, they need to seize the opportunity that borders can represent to "pool" resources and infrastructures with the aim of delivering better services at lower cost.

Two very concrete examples were highlighted: energy and health. Jean Christophe Delvallet, Head of Development - ERDF Méditerranée (Electricity Network Distribution France) illustrated this first theme with examples of the cross-border supply of electricity*, the creation of a cross-border transmission line (the underground Menton-Ventimiglia transmission line) and cross-border "Smart Grids", such as the "Green Me" ... [Continued on page 3](#).

* A French-Italian interconnector in a valley in the Briançon area and a French-Spanish interconnector near the hospital in Puigcerda.



EVENTS

EUROPEAN COOPERATION DAY

European Territorial Cooperation and neighbouring programmes are celebrating European Cooperation Day on 21 September 2014. Under the motto "Sharing borders, growing closer", hundreds of local events will be held across Europe. On this occasion, INTERACT is launching a video contest 'border issues, border solutions'. [More info.](#)

OPEN DAYS 2014

In the framework of the Budapest Platform, the MOT is organising a workshop during the Open Days 2014: "New generation cross-border cooperation support at national level to overcome obstacles", on 8th October 2014, 9:00. Code: 08C01. To register online: [click here.](#)

14TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE BRIT

The BRIT* 14th international conference will be held from 4 to 7 November 2014 on the France-Belgium border on the topic "The border, a source of innovation". MOT is organising 4 sessions on: Employment, education and training in cross-border contexts (session 74); Cross-border territories and innovation (session 73); Cross-border public services (session 71); Representations of the border: from violence to integration (session 72). [More info.](#)

* "Border Regions In Transition"

[The other events](#)

The TransParcNet meeting of European cross-border protected areas



The TransParcNet meeting of European cross-border protected areas took place this year on the French-Belgian border. An initiative of the EUROPARC Federation, this annual gathering brings together managers of protected areas from across the whole of Europe all of whom are faced with cross-border issues.

This year, it was the Scarpe-Escaut Regional Nature Park (France) and the Plaines de l'Escaut Nature Park (Belgium), linked together as the Hainaut Cross-Border Nature Park, who hosted the sixth TransParcNet meeting. More than 60 participants from 15 European countries gathered from 3 to 6 June in

the French-Belgian nature park. Traditionally bringing together parks that have received EUROPARC's "Transboundary Parks" certificate of quality, this year the meeting was opened up to French and Walloon regional nature parks, which hitherto had been absent from this network.

The topics that were addressed during the four days of exchanges related to the prospects offered by the new INTERREG V programmes, the suitability of the EGTC structure to structure cross-border protected areas and the role of international certification schemes such as the "Biosphere Reserve" to link

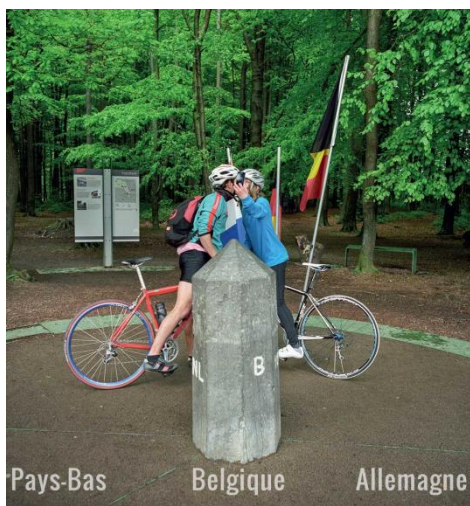
parks separated by a national border.

Thematic workshops looking at cross-border actions in areas such as tourism development and habitat management gave participants, some of whom are in the middle of designing projects liable to be financed by INTERREG, valuable ideas.

The MOT took part in the TransParcNet meeting, where it notably helped to reactivate the cross-border working group of the Fédération des Parcs naturels régionaux de France.

More info: www.transparcnetmeeting2014.eu

Or contact: jlloret@plainesdelescaut.be



The exhibition "BORDERLINE: the frontiers of peace" in Paris

The European Commission's representation in France and France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development are presenting, within the framework of their strategic partnership, the exhibition "BORDERLINE: the frontiers of peace" by the Italian photographer Valerio Vincenzo. This exhibition has been

displayed since the start of May on the outer railings of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Convention Ministerial Conference Centre (in Paris's 15th arrondissement).

For more info:
- the Commission's representation in France
- the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website

Workshop of the EGTC platform

On 26 June, within the framework of the EGTC platform, the Committee of the Regions held a workshop, chaired by Herwig Van Staa, President of the Tyrolean Parliament and the platform's coordinator, on the implementation of the new European regulation on EGTCs (1302/2013), which has been applicable since 22 June 2014.

[More info](#)

Continued from page 1.

Study day on the "cross-border prefect"

On 20 June, CHEMI (Centre for High-Level Studies of the Ministry of the Interior) hosted a day of discussions on the "cross-border prefect". The 20 or so prefects and senior civil servants from the ministry who attended were able to discuss with representatives of the MOT, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the DG REGIO and the CGET, the issues relating to cross-border territories, the new 2014-2020 cohesion policy, the redefinition of the State's role with respect to them (already called for by the parliamentary report of 2010) and the support that the MOT can give to the decentralised departments of the State. The need to provide training to civil servants who take up posts in border regions was reaffirmed; in this respect, the MOT also contributed to a training session of sub-prefects on cross-border cooperation on 11 June. [More info](#)



[...] project that aims to cover the provinces of northern Italy as far as the Spanish border in order to prepare the networks of the future to support new forms of renewable production and consumption.

Henri Lewalle, a specialist in French-Belgian cross-border healthcare, went on to set out the history and legal framework of this very complex area of cooperation. The French-Belgian border, with an

initiative launched more than two decades ago, stands as an example with respect to the organisation of cross-border healthcare services: cross-border access to treatment, coordination of social security systems for the reimbursement of patients, and the organisation of emergency medical care, etc. Today, with six organised zones of access to healthcare, nearly the whole of the French-Belgian border territory is covered.

Following these presentations, a political roundtable showed that in order to foster this cooperation it is necessary to act at several levels: the cross-border organisation of public services for the local population and businesses is first of all the responsibility of local and regional public authorities, but the complexity associated with borders (the meeting of several different legal, political and administrative systems, etc.) means that very significant account needs to be taken of the issues involved at national and European levels.

Regarding the first of these levels, Philip Cordery, Member of the French Parliament for French citizens abroad in Benelux, presented the activities and role of the study group "Border regions and workers" that he chairs at the



Assemblée Nationale. He underscored three major challenges for border regions in the future:

- Territorial reform in France and the question of competences: "It is crucial to take account of the specific nature of cross-border issues in this reform in order to facilitate the cooperation of territorial authorities on either side of the border".

- The French government's administrative simplification initiative: "Here too, it is vital to include the cross-border dimension so that the administrative procedures for citizens and businesses in cross-border settings are simplified".

- European issues also remain at the heart of concerns: the creation of EGTCs, access to regional funds, regulations on social security, the end of roaming charges, etc.

José Palma Andrès, Director in the DG REGIO, recalled the European Commission's role as a facilitator but pointed out that it is first of all the responsibility of governments to remove persistent obstacles on each border. The participants also stressed the need to strengthen the EU's role in giving impetus to Member States.

Jean-Claude Sinner, representing

the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, set out the objectives of the IT/LV/LU trio*. One of the priorities will be cross-border cooperation and the putting in place of experimental cross-border integration schemes by governments, notably in the area of public services.

The issues of competences and the need to facilitate governance to enable "pooling" and produce economies of scale were at the heart of the discussions.

Jean-Marie Belliard, representing the Alsace Region, summed them up as follows: "sharing one's sovereignty does not mean losing it". He called for an overall vision for cross-border territories and for a shift in public action to develop cross-border synergies.

Laurence Girard of the CGET - Commissariat général à l'égalité des territoires (General commission for territorial equality, FR) confirmed that the CGET places cross-border cooperation at the heart of its action. She concluded by recalling the strategic role of observation in enabling appropriate cross-border policies to be implemented.

More info

* *Eu Presidency, which starts on 1 July with Italy's presidency and ends in the second half of 2015 with that of Luxembourg.*

Meetings of the MOT's bodies and the technicians' platform

The MOT's conference was followed on 19 June by the meetings of its board of directors, general assembly and the technicians' platform, hosted by the Caisse des Dépôts. Chaired by Michel Delebarre*, the general assembly opened with the presentation of the new members**. Following the adoption of the 2013 financial and activity reports and of the 2014

work programme, the assembly validated the cancellation of the project to turn the MOT into a GIP (public interest grouping); this decision came in the wake of in-depth deliberations with government and Caisse des Dépôts departments that revealed significant legal and administrative obstacles to this change of status. A working group comprising

members of the network will be set up in the autumn to work on the revision of the MOT's statutes for 2015 and to draw up the 2015-2017 work programme. As a consequence, it was decided to postpone till 2015 the appointment of new representatives to the organisation's governing bodies. In the afternoon, the platform of technicians was focused around

three thematic sessions on economic development/innovation/jobs, public services/smart cities and representation of border regions/territorial observation.

* *The MOT's President, former Minister of State, Senator of the Nord Region.*

** *The Greater Geneva LGCC, the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict, the Picardie Region, the Doubs Conurbation, the Cross-Border Jura Arc Forum and the Transjurassienne Conference.*

PRESS REVIEW

▲ Cross-border relations are becoming more professional

La Gazette des Communes, 23 June

“Why? Cross-border practitioners are simplifying the lives of the inhabitants of border regions who in their daily lives come up against administrative, social and tax differences between countries. For whom? Cross-border cooperation involves organisations established in the vicinity of the country’s borders. It is often managed by territorial authorities or inter-municipal bodies.”

▲ A new power link between France and England via the Channel Tunnel

Nordlittoral.fr, 16 June

“Eurotunnel’s fortunes are looking up again. The project to create a new link between the French and British electricity networks via the Channel Tunnel has reached a new milestone with a view to it being operational by the end of 2016. Agreements have been signed with RTE, the operator of the French high-voltage grid, and with its British counterpart National Grid.”

▲ Saarland wants to become bilingual

Le Temps, 14 June

“The Land is seeking to stimulate its economy by using French in Saarbrücken, road signs will soon be in both French and German. [...] The regional government has unveiled the main aspects of an action plan called ‘Strategy France for Saarland’.”

▲ Cross-border professional training

Le Républicain lorrain, 22 June

“The Minister-President of Saarland, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, the President of the Lorraine Region, Jean-Pierre Masseret, and their partners in the area of training have signed two agreements for cross-border professional training. Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer declared: ‘The necessary conditions for genuine cross-border professional training will be put in place this summer.’”

▲ Deux Rives - housing alongside a garden in Strasbourg

Le Moniteur, 17 June

“Due for completion this autumn, the Jardin des Deux Rives (‘Garden of the Two Riverbanks’) housing complex is at the cutting edge of the redesign of the Rhine port quarter of Strasbourg.”

▲ Switzerland: quotas for cross-border workers

Le Monde, 24 June

“The implementation plan for the anti-immigration vote is calling into question relations with the EU. There is no question of playing with language or looking for a legal solution: the legislation that the Swiss citizens endorsed [...] will be implemented practically word for word. Quotas will be set for all foreigners who take up residence in Switzerland for four months or more. Even the number of cross-border workers will be limited.”

▲ Car parks, transport, housing: the Swiss aren’t playing ball

Le Messenger, 5 June

“The Swiss are increasingly reluctant to finance facilities in France which are supposed to limit disruption on their side. On 18 May, the citizens of Geneva voted against the loan of €2.5 million aimed at financing five park-and-ride car parks on the French side.”

▲ Enertic, the first smart building in the Basque Country...

Donostia San Sebastian, 5 June

... is welcoming its first smart businesses. “This business centre is one of the initiatives that have been developed as part of Donostia’s smart programme run by Fomento de San Sebastian. [...] The marketing process has, in the cross-border area, focused on pioneering businesses in what is known as the new economy or SmartBusiness.”

▲ Enhanced cooperation with Spain after the floods in the Pyrenees

Le Moniteur, 18 June

“One year after the floods that hit the south of the Haute-Garonne and Hautes-Pyrénées Departments, Henri-Michel Comet, Prefect of the Midi-Pyrénées Region and the Haute-Garonne Department, has taken stock of the repairs carried out.”

The Observatoire des Territoires* publishes a thematic dossier on cross-border regions

The Observatoire des Territoires of the Commissariat Général à l’Égalité des Territoires (ex DATAR, France) has put on line a thematic dossier devoted to the study of the cross-border regions that France shares with its neighbours.

In this first posting, the pages present the results of the work carried out by the DATAR since 2006, in partnership with the MOT and the Fédération Nationale des Agences d’Urbanisme (FNAU). The dossier makes available the methodological and statistical elements of a study which was completed at the end of 2011. [More info](#)

*Territorial Observatory



CROSS-BORDER NEWS

Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière
38 rue des Bourdonnais
75001 Paris France
Tel: +33 (0)1 55 80 56 80
www.cross-border-territories.eu

Director of publication: Jean Peyrony
Production: Domitille Ayrat

Photos: all rights reserved, Vincent Vincenzo

To subscribe to the newsletter:
www.cross-border-territories.eu

