

EUREGIO IN PRACTICE



An overview of different cross-border services
and networks in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine



For reasons of legibility, the male form was chosen in the text. The information refers nevertheless to members of both genders.



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Preface



The EGTC Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR) is one of the oldest Euregios in Europe. Instead of an abstract concept, the cross-border cooperation represents here an everyday reality, based on networks and people working and delivering services at the benefit of the Euregio's citizens. The EMR office supports and coordinates their efforts. It helps to create an euregional offer and to link local services efficiently together.

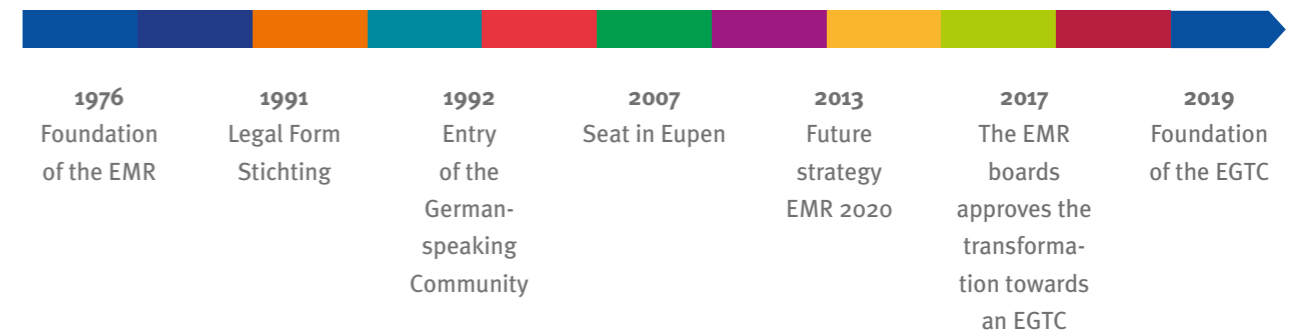
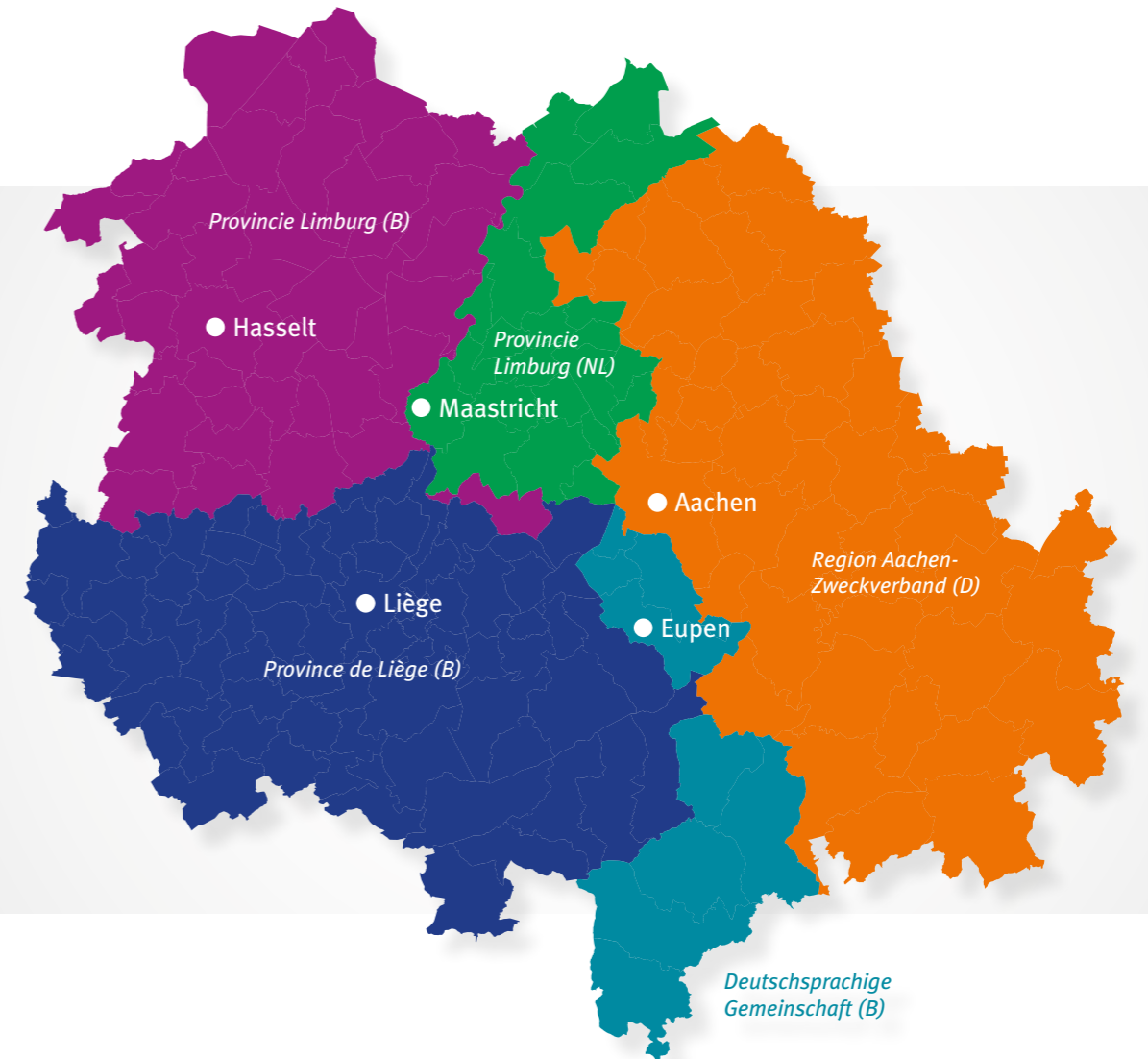
The EMR looks back to a long tradition of working for and with the five partner regions from three countries.

The EMR2020 strategy guides all efforts and initiatives, defining the focuses and goals for the structure of cooperation. As the structures in the partner regions and in the cross-border cooperation are subject to permanent change, the EMR has to continually adapt itself. The EMR is currently in the process of introducing a new

legal form which is going to allow the service providers and networks described within the following of the present document to cooperate even closer together.

These networks organise the practical cooperation between stakeholders, each in their respective thematic fields. They act moreover as contact point for everyone who demonstrates cross-border needs and interests. The intention of this publication is to provide the visibility and recognition due to them, to thank them for the great work already done in the past and hopefully going to continue in the future.

Gisela Walsken
President of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine



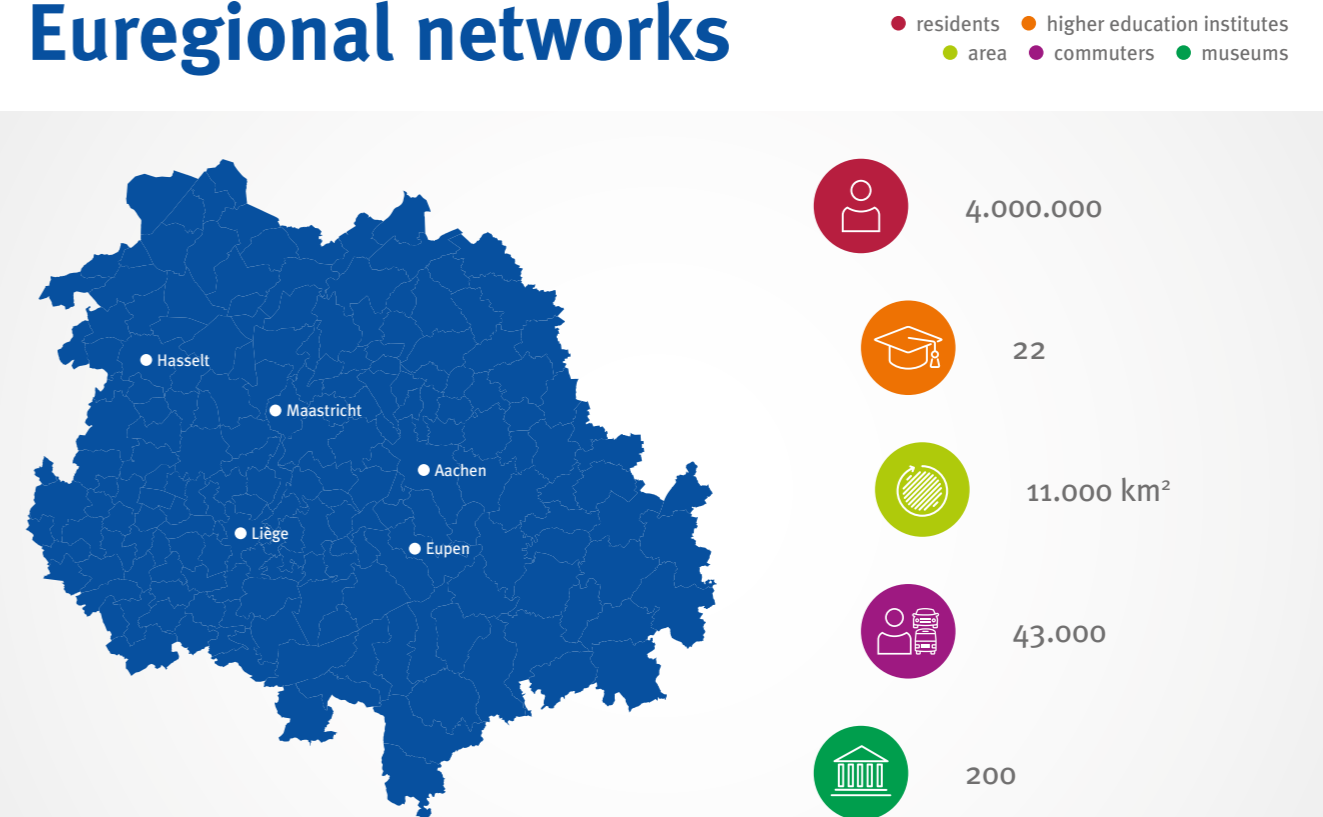
Objective

Economy and innovation	Labour market, education and training	Culture and tourism	Health care	Security
Mobility and infrastructure				
Sustainable development				
Territorial analysis				
Advocacy and regional promotion				

The main mission of the EGTC EMR is to promote cross-border cooperation. The EMR acts moreover as central point of contact, as intermediary and information point for citizens, civil society and local as well as regional authorities. The EMR initiates projects and gathers relevant stakeholders. Its main tasks include removing obstacles, developing innovative solutions, networking and coordinating. Backed by former achievements and many years of experience, the Euregio Meuse-Rhine intends to promote the region both internally to its territory and at international scale. The EMR supports actively the interests of citizens, companies, organisations and municipalities within the border region, helping them to make optimal use of the opportunities at hand on either side of the border

and contributing to increase the prosperity as well as well-being of people in the region, while taking at the same time into account their cultural differences. The aim of this brochure is to present some of these initiatives and projects, contributing thereby to the transparency of the EMR's work and highlighting some of its concrete achievements. The following pages present and describe partner networks active in a range of different core and cross EMR areas. This will allow readers to gain an overview and comprehensive understanding of the euregional cooperation initiatives and projects.

Euregional networks



The networks described on the following pages fulfil key functions in the cross-border cooperation within and outside the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. With very different tasks and structures, three types of euregional networks are to be distinguished:

- **Networks to exchange information and to adopt local and regional resolutions** (Example: Aebr)
- **Networks to elaborate common offers** (Example: EURES Meuse-Rhine)
- **Focal contact points for specific cooperation projects** (Example: Cross-border Information Points or EPICC)

Besides these networks, several other projects are set up via funding instruments such as Interreg V-A EMR, EasI/ EURES or Horizon2020. One specific goal of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine is to establish a sustainable financing for these structures and the relevant networks as well as service providers.

Did you know?
The Euregio Meuse-Rhine supports stakeholders to obtain project funding. Over the past 18 months*, the EMR submitted project funding applications worth for a total of EUR 28 million.

* As of August 2018

The Euregio Meuse-Rhine does not represent the only organisation established and led by policymakers from its territory. Whereas the EMR links the regional level, the organisations and structures presented

on the following pages often connect other governance levels. As there prevails a close cooperation with such networks, these former ones can be considered as related organisations“.



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Related organisations





Charlemagne Border Region



Description

The Charlemagne Border Region was founded in 2012 and stands for the (further) development of a common economic area in the border region of Parkstad Limburg, Städteregion, Stadt Aachen and in East Belgium.

The primary topics of concern:

- Labour market
- Economy
- Infrastructure and Mobility

The Charlemagne Border Region cooperation structure serves as an important information platform.

The Charlemagne Retail Forum for instance assembles as annual advice and discussion forum politicians and experts coming from the retail sector.

At the Charlemagne business meetings (Charlemagne interactive), participants from the sector of economy and politics get trilateral information on specific topics during workshops organized twice a year. Charlemagne Border Region provides also information on cross-border topics at the MKB Limburg's annual "Dag van het MKB" event.

Charlemagne Border Region's partners present themselves together at several trade fairs, such as the Aachen job fair called "Nacht der Unternehmen", for

which the Charlemagne Border Region organises a joint booth with Dutch and Belgian companies.

Structure and organisation

The Charlemagne Border Region is a cross-border association of municipalities and regional authorities in the border region of Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Its members are:

- the German-speaking Community of Belgium/East Belgium
- the Municipality of Heerlen (NL)
- the Municipality of Vaals (NL)
- Parkstad Limburg
- Stadt Aachen
- Städteregion Aachen

The Board of Charlemagne Border Region is in charge of the cooperation. It is composed of the mayors of the municipalities, the presidents of metropolitan regions (Aachen, Limburg), the chairperson of the Städteregion, as well as the prime minister of the German-speaking Community of Belgium (East Belgium) and a mayor from eastern Belgium.

During monthly committee meetings, relevant topics to the Charlemagne Border Region are discussed and further developed, events are planned and initiatives are driven forward. This committee is supported by the management structure, secretariat, based in Aachen. The secretariat is also responsible for handling the internal organisation. Politicians are involved in this structure of cooperation as members of the annually gathering advisory board.

Funding

The total budget of the Charlemagne Border Region amounts to EUR 155,000. 50% of the financing is provided by the Stadt Aachen and the Städteregion Aachen, 35% by Parkstad Limburg and the Municipality of Vaals, and 15% by the German-speaking Community of Belgium.

This budget covers the cost of the management staff, public relation activities and the implementation of projects. Moreover, there is the possibility to obtain additional contributions from partners through funding programmes.

Results

A particularly important achievement represents the establishment of regular trilateral business meetings and retail forums. These promote cross-border networking activities and international exchange between important economic actors within the region in a sustainable way. In addition, the organisation takes part at prestigious trade fairs (EXPO Real Munich, Provada, Nacht der Unternehmen, etc.) and is involved in important activities such as the implementation of a cross-border electro-mobile public transport bus connection (Aachen-Heerlen). Furthermore, the working group participated in 2016 at a pilot project of spatial observation (MORO) pursuing the objective of a harmonised and comprehensive understanding of the current situation and developments in the border area as it concerns the population, area, housing and economic data.

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MAHHL



Description

- The cooperation between the cities of Maastricht, Aachen, Hasselt, Heerlen, Liège represents a structural consortium by and between five university cities established in 1989. It was institutionalised in 2001 when a joint resolution was adopted meant to support this policy.
- The consortium serves as a platform for the exchange of know-how and experience on various topics as well as to network and lobby in the interest of the euregional cities.
- This cooperation results into activities designed for political leaders (mayors and members of the

Director's Board) but also civil servants from the various cities. The concrete achievements from projects concern moreover the citizens from these different cities.

- A structural consultation between mayors takes place three to four times a year depending upon the EMR-Board-meetings.
- The main reason for existence of this structure and organisation goes back to the emphasis on cross-border cooperation and at the same time the interest of carrying out cooperation projects and exploring possibilities for European co-financing.

Structure and organisation

- The agreement foresees a consultative meeting in between the mayors – usually three to four times a year – where working guidelines are drawn and new opportunities assessed.
- An official consultation is planned between coordinators in order to implement the decisions made by the meeting of the mayors and to supervise ongoing or new projects.
- Ad hoc workgroups meet on regular terms to launch projects or to prepare consultation meetings (e.g. on security, culture and mobility).

Funding

No specific budget for cooperation is foreseen between the MAHHL cities. Any particular project is carried out based upon the clustering of available budgets from partners and/or following an inquiry investigating the possibility to rely upon European financing.

The cooperation between the MAHHL cities sets also the ground to establish partnerships in view of submitting files for obtaining subsidies from European institutions.

Results

- MAHHL security conference: security experts from the five cities organise every year a one-day event to discuss about a specific security topic. The event in 2018 dealt with radicalisation. A focus group from three countries was set up following the decision to approach this issue jointly and to investigate different ways for preventive action and information sharing.
- MAHHL Council Conference: Its members are involved in cross-border cooperation aimed at knowledge exchange and the establishment of a network.
- MAHHL masterclasses were held in the past. Five cities focused for two days on a challenge faced by one of the cities.

- A workgroup has currently been set up in order to investigate how synergies can be created as to mobility issues, and more specifically on cross-border public transport.
- Preparatory work is conducted as to the cultural cooperation organising a cultural triennial and promoting cross-border events aimed at reinforcing the image of the cities.
- Intense cooperation was pursued for the designation of Maastricht 2018 as European cultural capital; a strong workgroup has been set up which resulted into an intensive structural cooperation between cross-border cultural partners.
- The MAHHL cities also supported the Candidature of Liège Expo 2017.

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Eurode



Description

The main aims of the Eurode cooperation are to promote border contacts in the economic field and to develop cross-border initiatives which offer added value for the populations concerned. It is also important to take cross-border cooperation in social and cultural areas into account in this context. The Eurode 2000+ foundation is concerned above all with the organisation of joint cultural activities and events and the promotion and pooling of local history relating to the “Rode region”. The association supports these activities by means of annual subsidies.

Eurode is keen to promote its identity and image among other working groups along the Dutch-German border and other internal and external borders of the European Union.

The offices of the Eurode association are located in the Eurode Business Centre. The office building is unique in that it straddles both sides of the national border between Germany and the Netherlands. This building houses a joint police station, the border info point (GIP) and the cross-border employment service (SGA). These institutions were established as a result of cooperation with the Eurode association and provide inspiration for other border communities.

Initiatives were also introduced a number of years ago for cross-border cooperation between emergency services (EMRIC).

Various smaller cross-border projects such as the Eurode music day at the Baalsbrugger Mill are subsidised and financial support is offered to foundations such as the Eurode 2000 foundation and the Euriade e V. foundation among others. However, events such as the “Companies without borders” networking event are also actively organised and the walking booklet “Walks in Eurode” has been compiled and published for the tourism sector. A major event known as Europafest (Eurodedag) is organised every two or three years for the local communities so that they can be made aware of the specific characteristics of border regions. The motto of Eurodetag 2018 was “At Home in Europa-Thuis in Europe” with the main focus being the “Day of the Open Heritage Site”.

Structure and organisation

The Eurode association is the first corporation under public law to be located between two communities and two different European states.

The joint articles of association of the Eurode association are based on council orders issued in September 1997 by the councils of the community of Kerkrade and the city of Herzogenrath. Formal cooperation was enforced on 1 January 1998.

The association comprises two administrative bodies: the association assembly and the executive board. The association assembly, which is also known as the Euroderat, is made up of 8 members from each of the city councils of Kerkrade and Herzogenrath. The mayors of Herzogenrath and Kerkrade take it in turns to chair the assembly alternating every two years according to the rotation principle. The resolutions adopted by the Euroderat must first be confirmed by the corresponding city council before they are considered binding.

The board is made up of 4 city councillors from each of the communities of Herzogenrath and Kerkrade. The board is chaired by the mayor of one of the communities and the first deputy or secretary of the partner community. The chair changes every two years.

The communities each dispatch one employee to the offices.

Funding

The association covers its own budget thanks to contributions from the city of Herzogenrath and the community of Kerkrade. The contributions are set forth in the articles of association (0.50 EUR per inhabitant / rounded up to 100). The 2019 budget amounted to 46,400 EUR.

Public grants are requested for certain projects.

Results

The construction of the EBC Eurode Business Centre on the state border was a major project. This building will be celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2021. The border info point (GIP) and the joint police station were established in this building at the initiative of the association. The cross-border employment service (SGA) was developed with the support of the Eurode association and is also based in the EBC.

Advantages of the Eurode association include its central position within the border triangle and the direct cooperation between the communities of Herzogenrath and Kerkrade. This cooperation can be tested and organised in many different areas so that it can be publicised when successful and extended to other border regions, e.g. cooperation between emergency services, etc.

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Various studies show that the EMR is a sleeping giant as to its potential economic growth. Each partner region would experience a substantial growth if taking the EMR as a whole, without borders.

This strong statement explains why the thematic field of economy and innovation gets an important focus

among our cross-border cooperation. As to the potential for development, initiatives in this field are often financed via the Interreg A EMR programme. Besides the networks presented on the following pages, sustainable tools such as “The Locator” or the “Euregiolocator” have been created.



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Did you know?

With the Interreg V-A EMR program, an amount of EUR 55 Mio from ERDF will be invested in economy and innovation projects!

Economy and innovation





Chambers of Commerce Euregio Meuse-Rhine



Description

The Euregio Meuse-Rhine Chambers of Commerce operate as a recognised independent Chamber of Commerce and Industry, acting as a catalyst and facilitator for trade, industry and investment in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. Developing their own initiatives and supporting regional and local authorities, they support companies, provide services and offer opportunities for cooperation, thereby boosting the competitiveness of companies in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and rendering their actions more sustainable.

Vision

The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany belong to the world's most advanced economies. Due to their economic complementarity, it is fairly easy to strengthen their commercial ties. Responsible investment, trade and other commercial activities lead to stronger growth, a higher standard of living and new business opportunities.

Core business

The Chambers of Commerce and Industry constitute a dynamic information and (initial) counselling centre for trade and industry, representing all sectors and all segments and working as a transparent, independent and reliable organisation.

To achieve their targets, the Chambers of Commerce and Industry organise (digital) networking events, workshops and all kind of other activities, such as factfinding / trade missions and visits to / participation in trade fairs.

The internationalisation of their business is of major importance, as it improves the competitive position and innovation power of the companies, and in particular small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Cross-border cooperation is playing an increasingly important role.

Structure and organisation

The Euregio Meuse-Rhine Chambers of Commerce operate as a foundation under Dutch law. Its members are the IHK Aachen, the IHK Eupen-Malmedy-St.Vith, the CCI Liège-Verriers-Namur, the Voka Chamber of Commerce Limburg and the "Structuurversterkende Projecten Zuid-Limburg" Foundation. The management structure is made up of a board, an advisory board and a "Trade Promotion" working group.

Funding

Financing is currently provided by the founders.

Results

The Euregio Meuse-Rhine Chambers of Commerce Foundation has been in existence for a number of years. It organises seminars, workshops and networking events. It also provides advice and assistance to companies, always in cooperation with its founders and with their support.

Contact

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The Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR) has always been committed to better coordinating information, counselling and intermediary services for citizens, potential cross-border commuters and companies in our region, especially as the EMR symbolises

European freedom of movement, a daily reality for thousands of people. To fully enjoy this freedom of movement, knowledge of the neighbouring languages and culture is essential a firther key focus of the EMR.



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Did you know?

Every year, some 7,000 citizens get support in the GIPs!

Did you know?

There are around 60 Euregio Profile Schools!

Labour market, education and training





EURES



Description

The main purpose of this network is to get people into work, secure jobs and thus contribute to increased employment. Employees and jobseekers should be able to make best use of their right to free movement within the border regions.

The transparency of the “euregional” labour market is to be strengthened through optimal coordination of the supply and demand of jobs and apprenticeships in the border region. Obstacles to mobility are to be reduced through broader cooperation with the authorities responsible for taxes, social security and labour laws.

Promoting and supporting cross-border job placement is to be achieved in a sustainable and efficient manner

through bilateral cooperation between job centres, greater efficiency and much faster reactions to current problems and bottlenecks in the regional labour market.

In addition, a further expansion of the one-stop-shop approach, digital services and the social media offering, cross-border skill development and regular exchanges between EURES advisers is to be the subject of innovative measures. Greater cooperation with experts and increased EURES visibility are further objectives.

The target group consists of people in the border region joining Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. In particular, current and potential cross-border commuters, job- or apprenticeship-seekers, as well

as the companies and employers in the region, are to be addressed.

The network consists of 21 partners from a wide variety of fields (public and private employment agencies, Euregios, social partners, municipalities), all of whom - despite diverging aims and target groups - have committed themselves to common objectives and targeted, coordinated measures.

Structure and organisation

The cooperation agreement, renewed each year and signed by the competent authorities of each partner organisation is the steady basis of the network.

A steering group, in which each partner has a voice, ensures the coherence of the partnership. The steering group monitors the correct implementation of the measures in consultation with the coordinator and according to the work plan. This group meets four to five times a year.

Funding

The network is financed through measure-related grants from the European Commission, awarded to each partner within the framework of the funding programme “EaSI” (Employment and Social Innovation) for cross-border partnerships, and to support the cooperation on intra-EU mobility for EEA countries.

The budget for the year 2018 amounts to a total of EUR 943,545.68.

Results

In addition to consulting services, training courses, seminars, and events such as job fairs, speed dating and other placement campaigns, information on working and living in neighbouring countries is regularly published and updated.

The one-stop-shop approach is aimed towards citizens' needs, as reflected in the setting-up of cross-border information centres (GIP) in the border regions and the creation

of two service centres for cross-border job placement (SGAs), where employees of the German and Dutch labour administrations work together on finding candidates for vacancies in the neighbouring countries.

This has helped to position the “EURES” brand as a quality product and to increase its visibility. Freedom of movement is thus no longer seen by the local population as an abstract European right, but as everyday reality. This freedom of movement - especially the free movement of workers - is a key concern for the citizens of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine!

One particular quality feature of the partnership is that the Euregio Meuse-Rhine does not focus - due to the size and number of partners and their different interests - on a specific group of people, but on measures set out to encompass the requirements of the region as a whole!

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GIP



Description

The Cross-border Information Points (GIP) in Aachen-Eurode and Maastricht offer free, personalised information and advice on working, living and studying in the neighbouring country. Employees, employers, jobseekers, apprentices, students, pensioners and retirees can ask questions at the Cross-border Information Points and receive individual, independent and objective advice. Depending on the needs of citizens and companies, advice can be given online, over the phone or in person. Regular cross-border commuter consultation days, with the participation of financial administrations, pension insurance institutions, the Chambers of Commerce and other institutions such as health insurance funds, labour administrations and unions from

Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands, provide the opportunity to clarify issues in direct discussions with experts of these institutions. For cross-border commuters, entrepreneurs and creative professionals, some twenty cross-border commuter consultation days take place each year in the EMR. German-Dutch and German-Belgian issues are the focuses of the advice given at the Cross-border Information Point in Aachen-Eurode. The Maastricht Cross-border Information Point focuses on Belgian-Dutch issues. In addition to individual advice, the Cross-border Information Points continually develop and update their website (www.grenzinfo.eu), as well as flyers and brochures that are made available to citizens and companies free of charge.

Structure and organisation

The Cross-border Information Points are embedded in the Europe-wide EURES and EaSI network. There is intensive cooperation between the Cross-border Information Points in six further Euregios along the German-Dutch-Belgian borders, from which the joint website www.grenzinfo.eu was developed. In the context of consultation services, the Cross-border Information Points have for years been working successfully with tax authorities, employment agencies and services, health insurance funds, pension insurance institutions, unions and business development agencies in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany.

The cooperation within the GRENZNETZ network offers the opportunity to exchange knowledge and experience with institutions on the border of Denmark, Luxembourg, France and Switzerland, and thus to develop solutions to remove obstacles to mobility.

In intensive cooperation with the ITEM Institute of the University of Maastricht, the problems faced by cross-border commuters are inventoried and analysed. Possible solutions are then integrated into the consultation.

Funding

The financing of the Cross-border Information Points is based upon the resources of the umbrella organisations such as the Region Aachen-Zweckverband and the city of Maastricht. These are contributions from the euregional partners, namely organisations, municipalities and provinces of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, agreed upon in the co-operation agreement, as well as EU funds (EaSI/EURES).

Results

In Aachen and Maastricht alone, the efforts of the GIP have resulted into 7,000 consultations per year, 20 consultation days for cross-border commuters and entrepreneurs, 30 lectures, a joint website of the Cross-border Information Points in the Belgian-Dutch-German border region and the expansion of the Cross-border Information Points according to the one-stop-shop approach. The Cross-border Employment Service (SGA) and the Cross-border Information Point Aachen-Eurode under one roof in the Eurode Business Centre serve in this regard as best practice example.

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EuregioKultur e.V.



Description

The aim of **The Euregio Reads** is to awaken the joint reading pleasure of an entire region - across language and national borders. Six books are available each year: two French, two Dutch and two German novels by contemporary authors, each available in all three EMR languages.

The works nominated for **The Euregio Reads** contest will be made available to more than 80 participating libraries and bookstores. The six authors go on a reading tour in the EMR. These readings are always multilingual. Respective translators are also invited.

Established especially for students, the **Euregio Student Literature Prize** is also held as part of **The Euregio Reads**. Young adults aged between 15 and 20 years from the entire Euregio read the nominated works, have the opportunity to attend readings by the authors, take part in discussions with literary critics and choose their favourite author from the nominated works. Particular emphasis is put on cross-border encounters and exchanges. All events are multilingual and aimed at getting to know each other and working together with students from other language areas.

The project **NXT-TXT: Award for Young Authors of the EMR** is aimed at talented young authors from the EMR, aged between 15 and 25 years. A panel of experts

selects three prize-winners per language, whose texts are then translated into the other two languages by professional literary translators and finally published in a trilingual book. The project promotes youth literary talents and is the first multilingual literature prize to contribute to cultural understanding across borders and languages between the regions of the EMR.

Structure and organisation

The Euregio Reads is organised by EuregioKultur e.V., which is responsible for the annual selection of the nominated books and for the planning of the authors' reading tours. It is supported by its partners in the regions - the Bibliothèque Chiroux in Liège, the Medienzentrum in Eupen, the Centre Céramique in Maastricht and the Stadt Aachen Library.

They contact other participating bookstores and libraries within their regions, and organise as well as coordinate the various activities. The patronage of **The Euregio Reads** is traditionally assumed by the chairperson of the EMR.

For the **Euregio Student Literature Prize**, EuregioKultur e.V. works closely together with schools in the three countries.

EuregioKultur e.V. is also responsible for the organisation of **NXT-TXT**, supported on the Belgian side by the Maison des Langues in Liège and on the Dutch side by the Letterkundig Centrum Limburg.

Funding

All projects are financed through public funds (including those of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, the German-speaking Community of Belgium, the Province of Limburg (NL), the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, the Province of Liège, the Region Aachen-Zweckverband and the EGTC Euregio Meuse-Rhine), private funds (including the F. Victor

Rolf Foundation, the Kunststiftung NRW and the Nederlandse Taalunie) and through donations and contributions from its members.

Results

The Euregio Reads has established and consolidated a network of euregional libraries, operating a permanent cross-border and cross-linguistic cooperation between libraries in the Euregio. At regular meetings, joint project ideas are produced with a focus on literature projects that raise awareness of multilingualism in the Euregio.

Since the first edition, the **Euregio Student Literature Prize** has mobilised more than 5,000 students to study intensively contemporary European literature. Some of them have now found their own place in the literary world, haven taken benefit from their participation in the project. In addition, the project has succeeded in becoming a permanent fixture in the promotion of cross-border cultural exchanges. The project has eventually brought over a hundred high-profile authors to public readings in the region, which represents a considerable cultural enrichment for the region.

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Culture and tourism

“If we had to do it again, we would start with culture” *. European integration was designed on the basis of the economy. Regulating a common market, however, does not create a feeling of belonging and solidarity. Citizen commitment is based on culture. Citizens need to explore our common foundations and

differences, creating a new solidarity, promoting integration and giving substance to the EU. This is why the EMR enthusiastically supports cross-border exchange processes between creatives, those working in the creative world and citizens.

* Quote inspired by Jean Monnet



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Did you know?

The Euregio Meuse-Rhine supports small-scale projects through its unbureaucratic funding schemes. Ask us for more details!



CHE



Description

Based on the joint application for the European Capital of Culture VIA 2018, a new, creative working group has been developed in February 2015 on the initiative of the various cities/regions of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR). The aim of CHE is to identify the real needs of the cultural and creative industries in the EMR and to promote its bottom-up development (from the population). A regular exchange between the local network partners (“connectors”) produces efficient solutions for the various needs of the EMR cities and Regions and their Creatives. This creates a professional network between creative entrepreneurs, the economy, politics and various institutions (peer-to-peer, same mindset).

- New avenues for cooperation arise, information about job offers, tenders etc. are shared across the EMR.
- The ground for start-ups is prepared, the visibility of existing companies in the creative industry is enhanced.
- The knowledge about potential suitable project partners supports the crossborder cooperation.
- Cultural and creative professionals receive professional advice on possible financial support, especially EU funding.
- Mediation of cheap, creative, common workspaces, studios and “co-working spaces” in, among other places, unused vacancies.

Structure and organisation

“CHE - Creative Hub Euregio” was originally conceived as a two-year pilot project. The following cities are participating or already have an agent in the project: Maastricht (NL), Eupen/East Belgium (BE), Genk (BE), Hasselt (BE), Liège (BE), Aachen (DE) and Heerlen (NL). The cities/regions and partners are represented by the following CHE agents:

- Maastricht:** Jessica Capra & Joep Vossebelt
- Eupen/East Belgium:** Benjamin Fleig
- Genk:** Lies Serdons
- Hasselt:** Lies Serdons
- Liège:** Julie Hanique
- Aachen:** Patricia Yasmine Graf & Fabian Seibert
- Heerlen:** Jean-Michel Crapanzano
- SMartBE:** Jörg Zimmermann
- Coordinator:** Martijn Smit (Maastricht)

Funding

Since summer 2016, CHE has been financed by the authorities and foundations/cooperations of Maastricht, East Belgium, Hasselt, Genk and Liège with around EUR 5,000 annually. Each CHE agent works eight hours per month. CHE uses the existing structures and contacts of the individual agents. This keeps administrative expenses low and makes more effective use of working hours. For individual, concrete projects (see also sub-item **Results**), additional project funds are applied with the respective cooperation partner (e.g. via subsidies, sponsorships, etc.). In future, CHE financing should be based on a solid long-term basis. This would be conceivable either within the framework of an existing Interreg funding project, by a network partner or possibly by submitting an application on its own.

Results

Through the cross-border network CHE, a large number of actors from the most diverse areas of the creative

industries (graphic design, product design, theatre, fashion, photography, architecture, etc.) have already been successfully networked with politics, the economy and the broader public. Cross-border cooperative exhibitions were organised. These include the “LuForm - Design Department” for international art in Aachen, various festivals such as the “Hello Designer Tour” (a decentralized design festival in the Euregio) and network events such as “How I met my idea” in Eupen.

The mediation of artist-in-residence contacts, exhibition possibilities and studio space; the organisation of “Creative Speed Dating” in cooperation with “The Artists and the Others - Maastricht”; and “Hotel Total - Aachen” are further examples.

Once a year, an all-over meeting takes place, during which the CHE agents present the entire annual output to the administrative staff of the participating EMR cities. The details of the work are recorded following a documented protocol.

Contact

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CHE Coordinator

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SMart



Description

Founded by artists for artists, SMart (Société Mutuelle des Artistes) has developed into a cooperative, that aims to offer self-employed workers the best possible protection and to support professionalisation through consulting, training, networking and other community resources. The intention of SMart is to rethink and redevelop the labour world. Operating in nine European countries, Smart also exists in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR) where it is trying to promote better cross-border cooperation. Familiar with the administrative hurdles, it

can support artists and others working in the cultural field in carrying out their projects.

One of its goals is to support and advise creative people in better implementing their projects. Mobility is an important issue in the EMR. Over the years, a lot of experience in this field were gathered and an international network has been built up. Supported by European colleagues but also cooperating with with the Institute for Transnational and Euregional cross border cooperation and Mobility / ITEM, the EMR and above all

the Cross-border Information Points, it has put together a strong offer of counselling. A good example of this network is the letter of recommendation to the European Commission, which was prepared jointly with ITEM and the Task Force Cross-Border Culture of the Association of European Border Regions T4CBC-AGEG and submitted to the Commission and the Member States. SMart is also a permanent partner of the CHE (Creative Hub Euregio) network, where it provides contacts and administrative support by giving the structure a legal home.

Structure and organisation

SMart is a European cooperative that enables professionals to set up and develop their business activities within a single company. As a “holding”, this company is set up in common and managed democratically between the creative professionals as “shareholders”. It allows these professionals to benefit from employee status and the accompanying social protection.

Every year, more than 35,000 employees use SMart’s services in France and eight other European countries, generating almost 200 million euros in annual turnover.

Funding

The SMart cooperative is at 98% financed by its own resources. These are the share certificates that members acquire in the structure and a fixed percentage that each member deducts from its turnover (6.5%). This allows it to pre-finance projects and offer a guarantee of salary.

In addition, these deductions contribute to a solidarity fund, so that the structure experiences internal

solidarity. The Smart community covers any difficulties in paying customers.

Results

In the last three years, SMart has established and expanded its office in Eupen and has seen the number of members in East Belgium increased by 30%. SMart is part of the CHE network and works closely together with East Belgium. Striving to provide solutions and assistance in cross-border work, it participates in the advisory services offered by the Cross-border Information Points and is in close contact with ITEM. Furthermore, it works together with the T4CBC during conferences and provides solutions transferable to other border regions. In 2017, SMart was awarded the ICT Enabled Social Innovation Prize by the European Commission and participated in the development of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Contact

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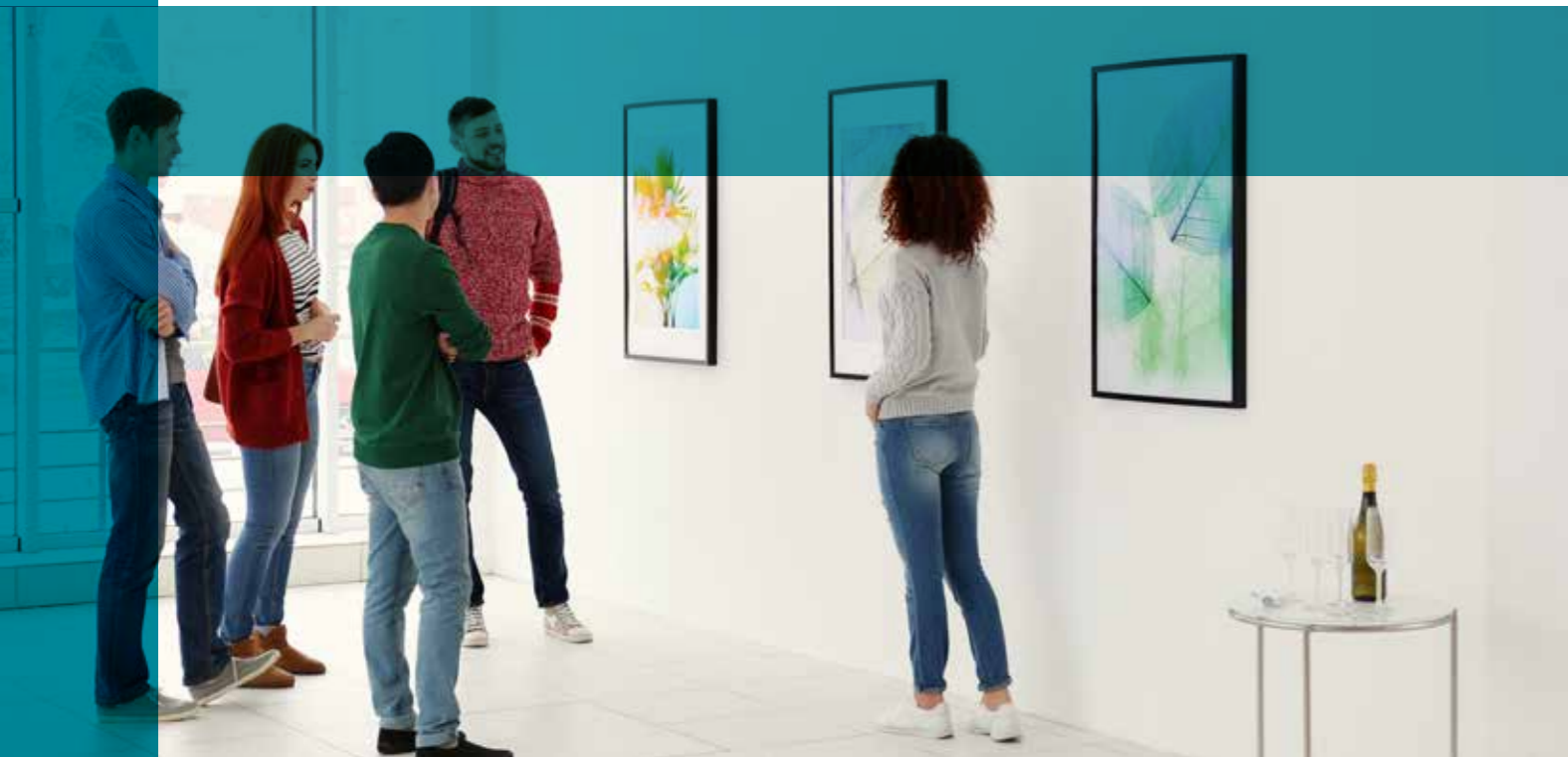
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www.smartbe.be



Space - Collecting people



Description

Launched in 2002 by the Belgian artist Alain De Clerck, SPACE Collection is building a network of European cities linked by a trans-border collection of contemporary art. The works are acquired thanks to interactive sculptures set up in public spaces. Whenever a visitor inserts a coin into a SPACE machine, they animate the sculpture and get a poetry ticket or a cultural prize. The concept of “cultural prize” is to encourage the exchange and discovery of the culture of others, by offering the possibility of choosing a cultural gift in a neighbouring city, in Liège or in Maastricht (shows, museums, theatres, musical events, operas, etc.). The money is collected, boosted by sponsorships and transformed into works of art. First in Liège and then in Maastricht, the

two first culture machines (SPACE and Minckelers 2.0) already allowed the collection to grow gradually richer with new acquisitions and now includes 107 pieces. Mixing genres, material supports, techniques and more or less renowned artists guarantees the increasing aura and radiance of the SPACE Collection. By exhibiting the collection in different places and cities, SPACE diversifies its fields of action. On loan from the City of Liège, the SPACE office is located within an old apartment, which has kept its touch of the sixties. Appreciated as a friendly place for experimentation, it functions as an art centre, and regularly hosts conferences, events and solo or group exhibitions, directly or indirectly related to SPACE Collection. Currently established in its offices at En Féronstrée, 116 (Liège), SPACE Collection

continues to expand itself in Liège. To fulfil its ambitions, a new exhibition space of 500m² is going to be opened. This is a great step forward for SPACE Collection, which will now be able to set up even more consequent exhibitions and events in the field of Plastic Arts. A former warehouse is transformed into an atypical space for the exhibition of art, offering new and unexpected possibilities for scenography. As for its industrial aspect, the New SPACE aims to transform itself over time through its appropriation by artists, while jealously guarding its crude cachet. SPACE Collection pursues the goal of making contemporary art accessible to all, by involving citizens as active participants, public authorities, companies and cultural operators. In the wake of developing its field of activities, SPACE wants to strengthen its presence in Belgium as well as expand into Europe, giving priority to Euregios.

Structure and organisation

- The non-profit organisation In Cité Mondy manages the SPACE project (Liège). It consists of a three-member board and has three employees (a project manager, a collection manager and a communication and administration manager). The non-profit organisation cooperates with the non-profit organisation SPACE Maastricht, a Dutch association. It is managed by In Cité Mondy, Anne Van Aalst and Izzi Wudka from SAM's (Stitching Ateliers Maastricht).
- For the choice of works of art from the SPACE collection (which is euregional), there are two selection committees: one in Liège and one in Maastricht.
- “SPACE Collecting people” is its goal and its slogan. Its name is: SPACE Collection.

Funding

The network is financed by the earnings resulting from sold sculptures (SPACE and Minckelers 2.0), by sponsors (Uhoda SA and SF) and by subsidies: Wallonia, the

Wallonia-Brussels Federation, the National Lottery, the Province of Liège, the City of Liège.

Results

- The network has bought 107 works of art from the Euregio which are promoted through exhibitions in Liège and Maastricht.
- The network has two interactive sculptures and is currently working to establish new ones in the Euregio in order to collect art and connect people through art.
- The network found an agreement with the Wallonia-Brussels Federation which testifies the great recognition of its role and work.
- The network organises on average ten exhibitions per year as well as on average two conferences and a few other events.

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Very Contemporary



Description

Very Contemporary (VC), the Euregio Meuse-Rhine network of contemporary art institutions, has developed into a cultural flagship initiative within the EMR over the five years of its existence. Operating on a collective basis and conducting joint projects, Very Contemporary enhances the efficiency of the eleven individual partner institutions and helps to boost the profile of the EMR as a modern knowledge region as well as increasing the attractiveness of the region itself.

The development of innovative strategies for long-term, cross-border cultural planning and organisation in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine makes it easier for visitors to

move between countries and visit museums, art galleries and art associations.

Due to the geopolitical border location, an important number of excellent contemporary art institutions are to be found in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. Cooperation between art institutions within Very Contemporary has led to the creation of a networking method, which promotes the quality and originality of the local scene and highlights its strengths.

Structure and organisation

The key elements involved in the approach of the VC network are pragmatism and self-organisation:

Very Contemporary promotes close cooperation and exchanges between different institutions on three administrative levels. Directors and managers meet on a regular basis with press and public relations employees and the art mediators of VC partners. An external project management team deals with coordination.

Funding

The VC network is based on the equal treatment of all partner institutions, which is clearly reflected in its financial status. All VC partners contribute the same amount to the project each year. This basic budget is then supplemented by additional project resources obtained from the EMR partners. VC is supported annually by the Fund for “Regional Cultural Policy” of the Ministry of Culture and Science NRW.

Results

The VC brochure is published twice a year and provides information on programmes run by associated institutes. It describes the regions surrounding the institutions and their accessibility. The Website www.verycontemporary.org provides an overview of the exhibitions and events organised by the VC institutions and a monthly newsletter is sent to over 3,600 subscribers. With around 4,000 views per contribution, the VC Facebook fan page provides up-to-the-minute information on all the activities of VC partners.

As public transport links are difficult in this border region, the Contemporary ART bus tours have played a significant role in offering over 1,000 individuals the opportunity to visit a wide range of exhibitions in the Euregio. The Contemporary art buses leave from every town within the VC network and allow passengers to visit three or four partner institutions on the other side of the border within a single day offering activities and guided tours corresponding to the exhibitions and possibilities available.

Over the past five years of cooperation within the VC network, three structural challenges have been analysed which are making the expansion of the cultural potential of the EMR more difficult:

- **Content:** diverging interests, aims and art scenes in the three countries;
- **Transport:** limited accessibility of VC institutions by public transport;
- **Language:** difficulties due to language barriers and different bureaucratic systems.

The VC partners hope to overcome these hurdles within the next three years and to create an experimental field characterised by a community feeling and a common culture in the border area between Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands.

Contact

Current dates for events can be found under:
www.verycontemporary.org
www.facebook.com/verycontemporaryart

Fiscal administration

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Project management

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Women in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine



Description

“Women in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine” is the oldest civic association in this border region. The association was founded during the international women’s year in 1975 with the idea to enhance mutual exchange and to reduce cultural and social prejudices. The association aims to break down common barriers still in people’s minds and cooperate across borders within the EMR. This leads in practice to the implementation of a monthly-based cultural programme including activities taking place within the territory of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. It needs to be emphasised that these women-led cross-border initiatives became a matter of course and contribute largely to the cooperation beyond national borders. The association deals not only with social and cultural issues but also with security, the transport system and

tourism within the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. “Women in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine” plays also an important role in supporting women’s interests within the region. The association is particularly on to encourage exchanges and mutual cooperation with other organisations, maintaining in consequence permanent contacts with these former ones.

Structure and organisation

The “Women in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine” association assembles more than 200 members from across the borders.

The association is headed by three presidents (one representing each country) supported by coordinators.

The presidents and coordinators constitute the Board of the association.

The mission of the “Women in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine” association covers a wide range of aspects:

- The development of a six-monthly programme in the three languages of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (German, French and Dutch);
- The planning of study trips;
- The establishment of contacts with EMR citizens and public figures;
- The organisation of common activities such as conferences within the EMR;
- Meetings and excursions on social and cultural matters.

Funding

The association is self-financed on the basis of well-defined contributions by its members.

Results

The work of the “Women in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine” association is characterised by its engagement for EMR citizens and in particular by its strong, cross-border commitment to women’s interest in the EMR.

The work of the “Women in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine” has contributed to break down barriers and mutual prejudices by citizens, reshaping the national mindset in many areas thanks to a more Euregional approach.

The association continues to develop itself launching constantly new ideas and initiatives to improve the cross-border cooperation. All these results were achieved thanks to an enduring interest in other cultures.

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Kunstroute Weser-Göhl



Foto: ©Karl-Heinz Oedekoven, Baelen/Stolberg

Description

The international interest group “Kunstroute Weser-Göhl” has existed since 2012 and, under the direction of Karl-Heinz Oedekoven, links sixteen art sites with museums, studios, galleries and foundations in the “Eupener Land”.

The localisations of the art sites stand for the diversity of the border region in the tri-border region of the trilingual Euregio Meuse-Rhine. The merger of the sixteen art sites represents four regions: Southlimburg/NL - Province of Liège - DG (German-speaking Community - East Belgium) and the StädteRegion Aachen. The current

cultural offerings in the sixteen art locations are presented on their own website, on Facebook and by sending an electronic newsletter in the three national languages - German/Dutch/French.

The current partners are:

- Kulturzentrum Alter Schlachthof Eupen
- Skulpturenhügel Birgitta Lancé Aachen-Lemiers
- Kloster Garnstock Baelen
- Göhltalmuseum Kelmis
- Atelier I.S. Inge Sauren Walhorn
- Zentrum für Kunst und Kultur de Kopermolen Vaals

- KuKuK e.V./VoG Aachen/Raeren
- Fondation Peter Paul J. Hodiament Baelen
- Atelier im “Grundhaus Aachen” Aachen
- Atelier Stephanie Binding-Püsche Eupen-Kettenis
- Maison art Pütz Montzen
- Ramírez-Máro-Institut Raeren-Hauset
- Galerie vorn und oben Eupen-Nispert
- Atelier Wolfgang Binding Raeren-Eynatten
- Atelier Schoenen Berlott-Eynatten (new as of 8.2018)

Every first Sunday of the month, between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m., these art places open their doors free of charge, thus bringing local artists and art places closer to the interested visitor.

Currently, the Weser-Göhl Art Route is supported by sponsors inside. At present, these are Mr. Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of Parliament, for the German-speaking Community, and Ms. Sabine Verheyen, MEP, for the Aachen region.

Structure and organisation

Karl-Heinz Oedekoven will be responsible on a voluntary basis for the organisation and promotion of the Kunstroute Weser-Göhl and will represent the interests of the informal community as a public relations representative. The French translation of the newsletter texts will be provided by Sylvie Fabeck from Göhltalmuseum in Kelmis. The Dutch translation will be provided by André Amkreutz, a former guest artist of the Hodiament Foundation. The Website will be produced by a Webmaster on a fee basis. The design of the flyer and previous printed documentation were dealt with in the past by Wolfgang Püstow from Stolberg at a preferential rate. The programmes for the 16 art spaces were coordinated with the following representatives each month by email or by telephone:

Inge Sauren (Atelier I.S.) – Rafael Ramírez Máro – Sylvie Fabeck (Göhltalmuseum) - Dieter Schlusche (Maison art pütz) – Ton Ooms (Stichting Kopermolen) – Dr. Gerlind Binding (Atelier Wolfgang Binding) - Helga Sacher-Ramakers (Klosterkapelle Garnstock) - Benjamin Fleig (Galerie vorn und oben) – Stephanie Binding - Christiane Ponßen-von Wolff (Grundhaus) - Alice Loo (KuKuK) – Birgitta Lancé (Skulpturenpark Lemiers) – René Janssen (Alter Schlachthof

Eupen) – Britta Schoenen (Atelier Schoenen) – Karl-Heinz Oedekoven (Fondation Hodiament)

Funding

The Kunstroute Weser-Göhl receives financial support from the Euregio Maas-Rhein and therefore from the German speaking community of East Belgium. Sponsors such as Capaul S.A., Christliche Krankenkasse Eupen/Verviers, CBC, Assurco F. Heuschen, community of Plombières have been obtained for specific projects such as the design and printing of flyers and brochures. New partners receive a contribution for the reprogramming of the Website. The Kunstroute Weser-Göhl has been represented for the past two years in the Auf zur KUNST! ROUTEN group in the Aachen region WWW.AUFZURKUNST.DE and as a result receives a small financial subsidy.

Results

Art enthusiasts from the Euregio and beyond are delighted to be able to visit artists easily in their living and working environments. Kunstroute partners can benefit from simple practically free advertising for their artistic activities.

Contact

IG Kunstroute Weser-Göhl im Eupener Land (B/NL/D)

Initiator and public relations representative

Karl-Heinz Oedekoven

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www.kunstroute-weser-goehl.eu

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Diseases do not stop at borders. Supply bottlenecks, language barriers or long journeys to outpatient or inpatient health services can be eliminated through cooperation in border regions. To this end, citizens, doctors and health facilities must also get cross-border access to information on prevention measures and health services. The EMR has been involved in all these areas for 40 years.

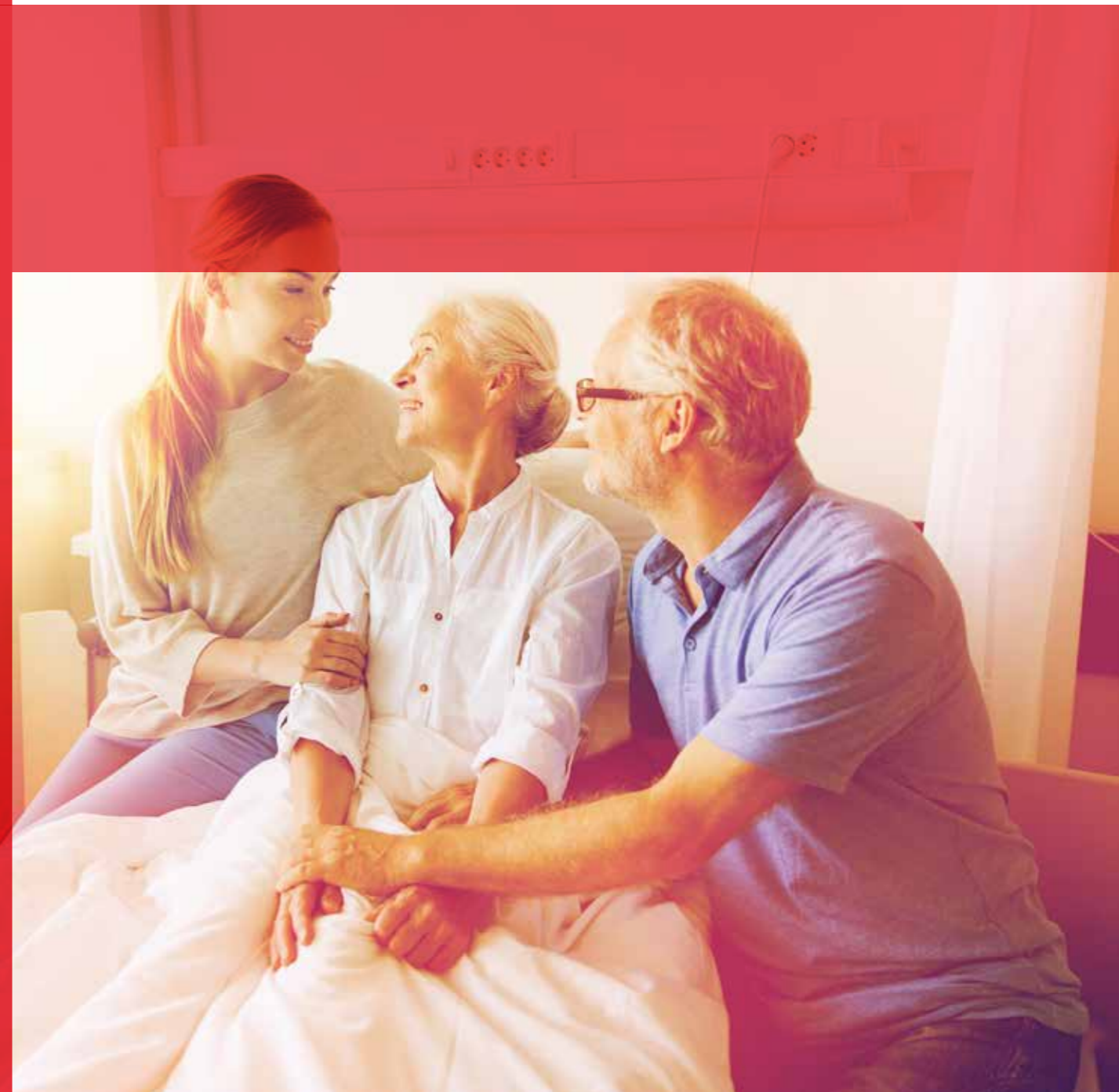


Rudolf Godesar
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Did you know?

Due to its good healthcare cooperation, the EMR is recognised as the only international “health region” by the WHO!

Health care



euPrevent



Description

The euPrevent | EMR Foundation supports cross-border cooperation between professionals and organisations enlisting themselves for the preservation, promotion and recovery of public health in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR). euPrevent initiates, stimulates and facilitates cooperative relationships and activities between health organisations. The activities and partnerships focus primarily on care and prevention institutions.

euPrevent works within two frameworks: “positive health”, developed by Machteld Huber (NL) and “Health in all Policies”, developed by the World Health Organization (WHO). Both frameworks give direction to euPrevent’s work. The actual work originates from the

so-called programme lines: these are concrete, substantive topics to which several partners have committed themselves. euPrevent covers six programme lines: Addiction, Overweight, Mental health, Infectious diseases, Environmental medicine and Patient power.

All types of concrete, substantive projects and activities are derived from these programme lines.

Structure and organisation

euPrevent is organised according to a bottom-up approach. This means that the Foundation is a support structure for the programme lines. The contents of the programme lines are filled in by partners. They indicate which topics are of interest and have potential for

euregional cooperation. Each specific topic is addressed by a particular project. The partners decide about:

- The exact content of a project.
- Which working structure they want to use within the specific programme line.
- How they intend to work together within an euregional framework and what they aim to achieve.

The partners are supported in this task by the foundation’s support office. The support office ensures among other things that:

- The networks come together regularly.
- Subsidies are applied upon request.
- Training sessions are organised.
- Prevention projects are implemented sustainably.

The support office represents moreover for many partners a link to new developments within the Euregio and in Europe in terms of substantive topics. euPrevent also supports its partners in their own specific euregional and European ambitions. The board of euPrevent takes also care of the political mandate so that the foundation has actually the opportunities to support its partners.

Funding

euPrevent’s activities and projects are financed in different ways:

- Through regional, euregional and European project grants.
- Through an annual contribution from its 35 partners and contacts who joined euPrevent.
- Through the partners’ own personnel deployment.

Results

euPrevent has achieved many concrete results during recent years. These results can be found on the timeline of the euPrevent website. Several projects have been realised for both citizens and professionals. euPrevent ensures that achievements in the field of public health in the EMR are communicated to the WHO and the European Union, as ultimately the EMR is known as “Europe in miniature”. Some examples of what euPrevent has achieved in recent years:

- The play ‘Forgotten and immersed’ was developed and performed in the theatre. This play aims to break the taboo surrounding dementia and ageing depression.
- The initiation and implementation of the euPrevent project “Senior Friendly Communities” (SFC). In this project, 32 communes are supported in becoming senior-friendly communes with a focus on dementia and ageing depression.
- The writing of an official WHO publication, “Scaling up projects and initiatives for better health: from concepts to practice”.
- The development of various online tools for organisations, such as “capacity assessment”.

Contact

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Safety and security are among the top priorities for our citizens. No matter where they live.

No longer obstacles, borders even offer opportunities for criminals. Disasters don't stop at the border either. All this requires the strong cooperation as described on the following pages. Police, judicial and administrative cooperation has to be

strengthened in order to stop criminals. Firemen and paramedics need to work together to make sure that citizens get the fastest help possible, no matter on which side of the border they are.

In the EMR, permanent structures have been established to ensure strong cross-border cooperation for our security and safety!



Michael Dejozé
Director

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Thomas De Vos
Policy Officer
Representative of the Province of Liège

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Did you know?

Every year some 1,300 cross-border operations are registered!

Security





BES



Description

The Bureau for Euregional Cooperation in criminal matters (Bureau voor Euregionale strafrechtelijke Samenwerking, BES) is a tri-national institution of the public prosecutors' offices of the Public Prosecution Service in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and Rhine-Maas-North. It focuses on the initiation and improvement of judicial cooperation covering the three-country border area of Belgium, the Netherlands and North Rhine-Westphalia known for its high crime rate.

The BES enables the members of the Public Prosecution Service (but also the police authorities) in the Euregio and far beyond to benefit of the assistance and

expertise at hand in the BES and/or the use of the network in form of:

- Response to questions concerning cross-border investigation and prosecution.
- Advice on drawing up complex requests for mutual legal assistance and/or "reinvigoration" of flagging legal assistance.
- Organisation of coordinating meetings among members of the Public Prosecution Service and police involved in specific investigation proceedings within the Euregio.
- Provision of support and expertise in establishing Joint Investigation Teams.

- Provision of solutions for language problems and strengthening and/or boosting the efficiency of cooperation through the development and tri-national implementation/introduction of innovative working methods.
- Monitoring cross-border crime on the basis of open sources, alerting about developments in this respect, informing and advising the competent judicial actors within the Euregio.
- Organisation of training for the members of the Public Prosecution Service within and outside the Euregio.

Structure and organisation

The BES cooperation is based on a Memorandum of Understanding concerning The Bureau for Euregional Cooperation in criminal matters, signed by the Ministers for (Security and) Justice of Belgium and the Netherlands as well as the State Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection of Germany.

The Steering Group is composed of:

- The Federal Prosecutor in Brussels, on behalf of Belgium.
- A representative of the NRW Ministry of Justice in Düsseldorf, on behalf of North Rhine-Westphalia (in consultation with the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection) and
- The Limburg District Chief Public Prosecutor in Maastricht.

The BES is staffed by:

1.0 Full-time equivalent (FTE) contact person-prosecution legal expert for Belgium, 1.0 FTE contact person-Public Prosecutor for North Rhine-Westphalia, 1.0 FTE contact person-policy adviser for the Netherlands and 0.6 FTE secretarial support.

Funding

Each of the national regions cooperating in the BES bears the costs of its own contact person assigned to the BES. The Limburg District Public Prosecutor's Office also bears the costs of the secretarial support. The material costs incurred in the BES context are shared by the partners.

Results

BES Practice

This project led to a meeting in the Euregio where judicial and other issues related to cross-border criminal justice cooperation were discussed and solutions proposed. A report was drafted as final delivery with recommendations for the European Commission and competent national government authorities.

Digitalisation of the mutual exchange concerning requests for legal assistance in criminal matters

BES set up a tri-national working group of legal experts and IT specialists who undertook the implementation. The national legal assistance systems were linked to the European digital high-speed way, rendering it possible in 2016 to launch a successful pilot project in the Euregio; example of the Euregio as a testing field for European cooperation.

CIDaR (Criminal Information Data Referral)

This assignment focused on the development of a digital system rendering it possible, when registering a criminal case against a suspect at a public prosecutor's office in the Euregio, to detect whether pending criminal cases have already been registered against the same suspect within the Euregio.

CrossBES (CrossBorder Execution of Sentences)

The project focuses on improving cooperation between the three countries in the field of (cross-border) execution of sentences.

BES Practice 2.0 Perfecting the skills of the EIO practitioner

With the introduction of the EIO, the previous legal assistance system is replaced by the mutual sending of European Investigation Orders. Its implementation was enhanced through trainings sequences thanks to the BES-Practice 2.0 project.

ECOM (Euregional Public Prosecution Service Conference)

The aim of this conference is to promote the network and the involvement in cross-border issues as well as to enhance the sense of belonging.

Contact

Bureau for Euregional Cooperation in criminal matters

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NeBeDeAgPol



Description

The NeBeDeAgPol represents a consortium of police chiefs in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, established 35 years ago as a police initiative to promote cooperation on a trilateral level in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine.

The partnership includes besides the Limburg police unit also the national police of the Netherlands, the federal and local Belgian police services in the provinces of Liège, Limburg and the German-speaking Community of Belgium and the police authorities in the Aachen region.

The consortium promotes cross-border police cooperation on the basis of the Schengen Convention and its

related agreements. Its aim is to guarantee the security of citizens within the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. Particular emphasis is placed in this context on the development of future models as well as the reinforcement of its cooperation with neighbouring regions, to be achieved through language training, the creation and support of structural measures as well as the collaboration with other committees working on euregional cooperation such as the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and the office for euregional cooperation in criminal matters (BES).

The objective is to improve and promote cross-border cooperation between police forces in the region in order to guarantee the security of its citizens.

EPICC, the joint centre of police cooperation in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, was set up by the NeBeDeAgPol. This important institution is presented on the following pages.

Structure and organisation

The consortium is organised on basis of a steering committee, a general assembly (security conference), expert's task forces, the Euregional police information and cooperation centre (EPICC) and its administrative secretariat.

The steering committee is composed by the head of the police authority, the Limburg police unit, the national police of the Netherlands, a senior police officer of the Belgian police authorities in charge of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and the chief of police of Aachen representing the German police authorities in charge of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine.

The expert's task forces are made up of staff members from the responsible divisions/departments with the authority to make decisions. The following expert's task forces meet on a regular basis:

- Expert's task force on crime
- Expert's task force for intervention and traffic.
- Expert's task force on extremism and terrorism.

The expert's task forces guarantee the cooperation within their respective areas.

In addition to the expert's task forces, the consortium may also establish permanent teams or working groups for a pre-defined period in order to fulfil its mission.

The secretariat supports the steering committee and guarantees a permanent connection between the NeBeDeAgPol structure and police organisations both within the consortium as well as with external institutions.

Funding

The consortium provides the necessary financial and material means through the national budget and euregional and European subsidies. No membership contributions are requested.

Results

The creation of the EPICC centre, projects such as the Euregio Fietstocht and the broader cross-border cooperation between police authorities within the EMR are to be considered as main achievements.

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EPICC



Description

The Police Cooperation Centre in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, called “EPICC” (Euregio Police Information & Cooperation Centre), is composed of around thirty Belgian, German and Dutch police officers as well as representatives of the Dutch judiciary. Founded in 2005 on the initiative of the NeBeDeAgPol (Police Cooperation within the Euregio Meuse-Rhine), these police officers cooperate directly in the fight against cross-border crime and the prevention of crimes and threats to public policy and security, especially in the border region.

Features

- **Cross-border exchange of police information:** EPICC addresses information requests from the Belgian

(local and federal), German and Dutch police services within a very short time. These requests concern the identity and address of the vehicle’s owners and/or holders, the history of the vehicle and/or number plates, identity checks, personal backgrounds, the place of stay and of residence, persons sought or missing, etc. All shared information are recorded within a common database in order to meet the requirements of various national and international legal provisions and to hasten the search for the shared data.

- **Support for the coordination of cross-border operational measures:** Its specific expertise, the relevant information at hand and its mixed set-up allow EPICC

to provide an efficient assistance to the preparation and if needed coordination of cross-border investigation or surveillance operations and/or measures; such as transnational monitoring or pursuits, the organisation of joint patrols, large-scale cross-border controls, events/situations requiring coordination on both sides of the border (sport events, manifestations, hostages, natural disasters, etc.).

- **Transnational crime analysis:** EPICC collects and uses police information available in the border region to provide on its own initiative or upon request - relevant operational information. In this context, EPICC also aims to detect, describe and monitor cross-border security problems.

Structure and organisation

Current workforce:

- **Belgium:**
10 Federal Police: 1 CP, 1 INPP and 7 INP
(among whom two detached)
- **The Netherlands:**
5 Politie eenheid Limburg
1 Koninklijke Marechaussee (KMar)
- **Germany:**
6 Polizeipräsidium Aachen
3 Landeskriminalamt (LKA) Nordrhein-Westfalen
3 Bundespolizei

Funding

EPICC was financed in 2005 through European funds (Interreg) amounting to almost EUR 500,000. This funding covered only the set-up of the organisation (for a duration of three years). The operational costs are covered by the respective police services since its foundation in 2008. The distribution of costs between the three partners foresees that costs as to infrastructure and common equipment (furniture, PC, fax, etc.) are covered by the Dutch authorities; own costs (staff, proper equipment, etc.) are covered by the respective delegations; costs due to public relation are shared among the three partners.

Results

EPICC received over 15,000 requests for information in 2016 from the Belgian, German and Dutch police services. These requests deal mainly with small and medium-sized transnational criminal actions, but affect also sometimes – directly or indirectly – organised crime. The exchange of information is handled very fast as police officers work together in a PCCC (Police and Customs Cooperation Centre), using in this way a common platform and relying on a on-the-spot access to most databases of their respective countries. Most requests addressed to the PCC Kerkrade are answered within four hours. An inquiry can be processed immediately in particular matters of urgency.

In 2016 EPICC has:

- disseminated 46 EPICC information sheets (operational information sheets intended to police officers in the border region).
- drafted 136 information reports and 68 hit-reports (positive links are established between different requests addressed to EPICC).
- participated in 172 meetings/task forces/trainings; in seven cross-border operations, including the “Grand Prix” of the Spa-Francorchamps Formula 1 race with a supervision undertaken by German, French, Dutch and Luxembourg police officers during this world-class event.

Contact

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The Netherlands Coordinator
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EMRIC



Description

“Euregio Meuse-Rhine Incident control and Crisis management” (EMRIC) is a unique collaboration of public services responsible for public safety, involving fire services, technical assistance and emergency medical care in their respective territories. In a region with many borders, such as the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, foreign emergency services might often be faster at the scene of an incident than national ones. As every second counts, rapid assistance is vital. The collaborating partners at EMRIC are the fire brigade of Aachen, the Ordnungsamt from Kreis Heinsberg and the Städteregion Aachen in Germany, the Province of Limburg and Liège in Belgium and the Veiligheidsregio and GGD Zuid-Limburg in the

Netherlands. These organisations support the collaboration and so-called EMRIC office financially.

Besides these seven partners, over 30 services and governments are involved in the EMRIC collaboration. Although it remains difficult, EMRIC guarantees that cross-border collaboration is possible. Operational and legal systems among the three countries differ to such extent needing complicated administrative agreements before an ambulance or fire brigade is allowed to cross the border. In the Euregio Meuse-Rhine characterised by various borders, working, recreating and studying abroad became self-evident, which however turned out not being the case for assistance in emergencies. Much has been achieved over the years, often in collaboration

with other governmental levels (national, federal, provincial and municipal). Around 900 ambulances and 300 fire brigades are currently ready to cross the border in case of alert to deliver fast and adequate emergency assistance.

Structure and organisation

The collaboration takes shape through the EMRIC steering group, three focus groups and multiple working groups as well as project groups. The focus groups include not only EMRIC partners but also other organisations providing know-how, expertise and competence from their respective fields. The EMRIC steering group is composed by the managing directors of the partner organisations who determine the strategic goals within the collaboration, agreed upon every five years via a multi-year plan. The EMRIC office ensures the follow-up so that all goals are pursued and activities implemented within the pre-defined period of a multi-year plan.

Funding

The EMRIC partners agreed at the Worriken II conference to bear the costs of the cooperation in a jointly manner. This reflects the sustainable nature of the partnership since 2014. The decision was made at Worriken III to continue covering the costs of the cooperation together by partner’s own resources for the period 2019-2024.

Results

A programme office was set up under the management of the steering group. Strong thematic networks were furthermore established by stakeholders from the different regions; a fire brigade focus group, an EUMED focus group (Acute Care: Ambulance and Hospital Care), a fighting infection and disease focus group and a surveillance working group came into being. Working agreements were concluded and joint initiatives launched within these focus groups which are also entitled to constitute task forces;

an option often pursued during the current period 2014-2019. These focus groups work on current matters based on thematic grounds. The most important added value provided through these networks represents the sharing of knowledge so that involved stakeholders are able to improve and further develop their proper medical emergency assistance. Cross-border cooperation agreements in case of disasters and crises are translated into EMRIC’s and EUMED’s euregional assistance plans as well as into the euregional information exchange plan so that a basis for cooperation is defined for the services in all concerned regions and operating procedures are coordinated. Monitoring centres are equipped with trilingual forms to manage the requests for information and exchange of data. Contracts under public and administrative law were updated if needed. The partnership was given finally face through a proper website, a factsheet and Facebook as well as LinkedIn pages.

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Mobility and infrastructure

Cross-border mobility and infrastructure plays an important role for all stakeholders presented in this publication. But even if the EMR has already an extensive transport network and a wide range of transport modes, there is still room for improvement.

The EMR supports stakeholders in creating new offers associated to new infrastructures or new ticketing schemes.



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Director

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Did you know?

With the Euregoticket, you can use the entire public transport offered in the EMR!



Euregional Coordination office



Description

The Aachener Verkehrsverbund (AVV) includes the City of Aachen, Städteregion Aachen and the districts of Düren and Heinsberg. The AVV covers 35 towns and municipalities in an area spanning 2,276 km².

To ensure the successful development of public transport in the region, to continually improve its economic efficiency and to further increase the attractiveness and use of buses and trains, the AVV is working within four main areas:

- Tariff and ticketing
- Public transport planning and infrastructure
- Customer information and marketing

- Cross-border related topics:
 - creation of cross-border tariffs
 - integration of cross-border public transport
 - provision of real-time passenger information

AVV is also home to the Euregional department for cross-border transport, which has a coordinating function for cross-border public transport in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. AVV is currently working on several EU projects; for example, on the EMR Connect project, where AVV is the lead partner and is responsible for the cooperation of 14 partners in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, who are working on five work packages to improve cross-border public transport. In addition, AVV is currently working within the European Travellers Club

project with partners from Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg on the development of a solution for cross-border interoperable e-ticketing.

The project's results aim to contribute to a significant improvement of the situation in cross-border public transport for the inhabitants of the EMR.

Structure and organisation

As part of the EMR Connect project, 14 partners from the Euregio work on cross-border public transport issues. Transport companies, public authorities and universities are involved. The Euregional department for cross-border transport and the voluntary cross-border working group AG TTM (Working group - Ticketing, Tariffs, Marketing) structure the cross-border cooperation.

All euregional transport companies and public authorities are involved in the AG TTM and meet four times per year for a joint meeting.

Funding

AVV is currently involved in projects belonging to the EU's INTERREG and Horizon 2020 programmes. The resources thus made available allow a close cooperation between the euregional stakeholders in the transport sector and constitute essential requirements for implementing measures intended to strengthen cross-border public transport.

Results

The Euregoticket exists since 1998. With this ticket, passengers can use all means of transport within the entire Euregio Meuse-Rhine. Further tariffs have been created, such as the cross-border tariff with Heerlen, the cross-border tariff with Roermond and the Region-3-Tariff. Apart from that, Aachen's central railway station became a Belgian tariff point. Through the close cooperation of the partners in the

Euregio Meuse-Rhine, the AG TTM was established, dealing with topics in the areas of ticketing, tariffs and marketing in the field of cross-border local transport. Within the framework of various projects such as EMR Connect, structured and continuous cooperation among the partners involved is furthermore guaranteed. There is also an intensive cooperation between the relevant partners on their respective sides of the border in project-independent topics, such as the preparation of tenders for public transport services. An example of this is the Limburg regional concession. The requirements for cross-border regulations were developed jointly.

Contact

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Sustainable development

Sustainable development is a cross-cutting task of great importance for a liveable and future oriented Euregion. In this context, not only do people from three countries but also three dimensions of sustainability – the ecological, the social and the economic dimension - need to be brought together. The natural diversity and beautiful landscape characterising the Euregio Meuse-Rhine do not stop at its country borders. Hence in 2013, the EMR took over the lead partnership of the Three Countries Park project, setting an example about how to preserve and develop nature and the landscape as boundless euregional capital.



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Did you know?

Nature does not stop at borders. The Euregio Meuse-Rhine hosts several transborder nature parks.





Three Countries Park (3CP)



Description

The Three Countries Park (3CP) is the platform for open space, nature and landscape in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and a cooperation of 13 partners responsible for spatial and landscape planning, as well as environmental protection and nature conservation in the four regions: Flanders and Wallonia with East Belgium (B), the city-region Aachen (GER) and South Limburg (NL). It encourages contacts, exchanges and cooperation across borders.

Its activities are primarily addressed to the numerous organisations and actors involved in matters related to the environment, landscape, nature and cultural heritage of the EMR, and also to interested citizens.

3CP organises international conferences, sets up task forces, initiates and supports projects in various thematic areas such as green infrastructure, water quality, sustainable agriculture, cultural landscape and recreation. The relationship between the city and its countryside is another one of its sphere of interest.

3CP aims to maintain and develop the quality of the landscape as a living environment for the inhabitants of the EMR, as a habitat for plants and animals and as a location for economic activities. It contributes in this way to the sustainable development of the Euregio.

Structure and organisation

3CP emerged from a cross-border spatial planning initiative in 1993 and an Interreg project in 2003. A multi-year cooperation agreement constitutes the organisational structure of this transnational landscape partnership where partners from four regions, three nations and several administrative levels committed themselves to cooperate. The Euregio Meuse-Rhine acts as the lead partner of the 3CP. It manages the budget and employs the project managers.

The cooperation agreement includes a strategic plan defining the thematic working areas of the Three Countries Park. Individual partners of 3CP as well as other nature, environmental and landscape organisations from the EMR and from other sectors are involved in its activities.

The strategic plan is available for download from the 3CP website.

Funding

Each of the partners provide a contractually agreed (maximum) contribution for a phase of two years to the budget of the Three Countries Park. Some partners provide equipment such as premises, secretarial or printing services. The total budget is divided equally between the four partner regions to cover the functional costs of the Three Countries Park. Extra funding is raised for projects wherever possible.

Results

with its cross-border network, the Park conducts various activities and projects, such as the project forum “Agriculture creates landscape”, a GIS-viewer for the integration of geographical data or the European ESPON project “LP3LP - Landscape Policy for the Three Countries Park”. It takes moreover part in various initiatives within the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, aimed at cross-border cooperation in its specific thematic areas. The results of these projects, task

forces and events create a common framework and provide inputs and orientation for activities in the partner regions. These are incorporated into the politics and administration of 3CP partners and offer a new starting point for cross-border cooperation and project development.

Contact

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For a long time now, the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR) has been facing a major challenge in collecting cross-border data. The project “E.I.S” (Euregional Information Service) was a first big step towards “international data collection”. However, due to different national

definitions (e.g. in the labour market), collecting such data proved difficult. At the end of 2017, important data on business, education, innovation, culture and leisure were collected.



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Did you know?

A lot of statistical data on the EMR territory can be found on our infographic. Ask us about it!

Territorial analysis



ITEM



Description

The “Institute for Transnational and Euregional cross border cooperation and Mobility” (ITEM) was established to support and stimulate the cross-border and international functioning of the euregional and transnational society.

ITEM provides a scientific contribution to and supports, for example, front offices confronted with fundamental and structural problems. ITEM’s target group are the professional, governmental or non-governmental actors dealing with cross-border mobility of citizens or companies, or seeking to engage in cross-border cooperation. ITEM manages a casuistry in which the institute studies real-life examples or issues, with a view to resolving

them through the application of scientific research. In addition, this casuistry allows ITEM to prioritise further in-depth research directions that are relevant and matter to society. ITEM represents “Knowledge for policy and knowledge for practice”.

ITEM proposes solution-paths and thus stimulates cross-border cooperation and mobility. It is also responsible for raising governmental awareness of certain obstacles and for putting critical questions to governmental actors at the central, regional or local level.

Interdisciplinary, fundamental and applied research, case studies and the annual cross-border impact assessment are combined to investigate obstacles preventing

transnational mobility. Furthermore, ITEM conducts fundamental research through projects and contract research, all dealing with cross-border mobility or cooperation.

Structure and organisation

ITEM is an initiative of Maastricht University (UM). Its partners are the (Dutch) Province of Limburg, the City of Maastricht, Zuyd University of Applied Sciences, NEIMED and the Euregio Meuse-Rhine.

ITEM consists of a team of research scientists from four different faculties within Maastricht University (FL, SBE, FHS, and FASoS) and from the Zuyd University of Applied Sciences who systematically conduct research and present practical and fundamental approaches to resolve problems. ITEM states cross-border cooperation and transnational mobility at its core. ITEM strongly believes that cross-border cooperation and mobility should be done in cooperation with other institutes across Europe and the world. ITEM works therefore closely together with cross-border information points (GIP), regional authorities, national ministries and the European Commission.

Funding

ITEM is established with funding and support from Maastricht University, Province of Limburg, Euregio Meuse-Rhine, Maastricht Municipality, Zuyd University of Applied Sciences and NEIMED.

ITEM receives also specific funding for assigned research and subsidies for specific research projects.

Results

ITEM’s main goal is to provide policymakers with research results, with a view to improve legislation, reducing obstacles and stimulating cross-border mobility. ITEM informs furthermore professionals, companies and, to a lesser

extent, citizens about certain legalisations and developments regarding cross-border cooperation and mobility. ITEM suggested 39 improvements for cross-border workers, resulting into questions from the House of Representatives addressed to the Dutch Minister of Interior and Kingdom relations. ITEM has moreover been mentioned as good practice by the European Commission in their communication to the European Parliament and Council, “Boosting growth and cohesion for EU border regions”. ITEM researched more than 100 real-life questions from front-office professionals and several topics in its annual cross-border impact assessment. ITEM conducts research in over ten PhD projects and created the cross-border portal; a knowledge-base for professionals where legal background information can be found.

Contact

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The Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR) develops regularly important projects to support the quality of life in the border region. The main challenge for the future represents the raising of awareness among society about the activities by the EMR and its potential as institution and region. The

EMR promotes cross-border initiatives with a view for a joint branding and marketing - focussing on the EMR as an innovative and creative border region. The organisation and participation at European events in the heart of Europe represents an important task in this respect.



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Did you know?

The EMR welcomed around 400 citizens as part of 14 visitor groups in 2017!

Advocacy and regional promotion



European networks



Joining forces and learning from each other are also important at euregional level. Border regions encounter often similar problems so to address these by comparable solutions. Euregios have furthermore a stronger voice when joining forces

in order to negotiate with European authorities.

A lot is to gain here at the EMR if we cooperate with our strong European partners presented on the following pages.



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Aebr



Description

The Aebr (Association of European Border Regions) is the only Europe-wide organisation representing border and cross-border (CB) regions and is the oldest European regional association. The Aebr has as its aims:

- to highlight the particular problems, opportunities, tasks and projects of cross-border regions and make them understandable;
- to represent their overall interests towards national and international parliaments, as well as other authorities and institutions;
- to initiate, support and coordinate their cooperation throughout Europe;

- to exchange experiences and information in order to formulate and coordinate common interests stemming from the various problems and opportunities of border regions, and to offer solutions;
- to promote cross-border cooperation structures, projects and programmes;
- to assist in the preparation of cross-border cooperation events and other activities.

As a cross-border organisation, the EMR benefits from all components of Aebr's activities; as for instance the participation in a Europe-wide network and representation in an organisation defending the specific interests and needs of border and cross-border regions. Members of Aebr are entitled to use the services offered by

the Aebr and to benefit from the experiences and know-how of other border and cross-border regions. The Aebr might be used as a platform to search new project partners or to discuss solutions as to specific cross-border problems.

Structure and organisation

The **General Assembly** is the highest body of the association. Its functions include, among others, the election of the president and the executive committee, the admission and exclusion of members and the determination of annual contribution fees.

The **Executive Committee** is elected for a two year term including: the president, at least seven vice-presidents, the treasurer and at least 20 members representing border and cross-border regions, taking into account a regional balance. Its tasks are: the passing of basic statements of the Aebr, the collaboration with European and national institutions, organisations and associations, and the appointment of the Secretary General.

The **President** is the most senior Aebr representative and represents the association externally. He has the right to make decisions, in agreement with the **Secretary General**.

The Aebr organises Task Forces and working groups on different issues of interest to European border and cross-border regions. The following Task Forces are currently active: TF Interreg, TFEB (External Borders), T4CBC (Cross-Border Culture), TF Labour Market, TF Data & Innovation, TF Water Management, TF Schengen, TF Gender and TF Finances.

The **“Advisory Committee for Cross-border Cooperation”** consists of experts and researchers from all over Europe and its role is to advise Aebr in all related cross-border cooperation issues and to put forward solution proposals.

Funding

Aebr is funded by the fees paid by its member regions. Additionally, Aebr implements projects and receives financial support for the management of those projects. Its main projects are currently Interreg Volunteer Youth (IVY) and bsolutions, both of which are co-financed by the European Union. Most projects with Aebr's involvement are financed by the European Union.

Results

Thanks to the lobbying efforts of Aebr, both on its own initiative and in collaboration with other institutions and organisations, the regular meetings with high representatives

of the European Committee of the Regions, the European Parliament's REGI Committee and the DG Regio of the European Commission, cross-border cooperation and cohesion policy are main themes on the European Agenda.

Since Spring 2017, Aebr manages, thanks to support from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional & Urban Policy, the “Interreg Volunteer Youth” (IVY) initiative within the European Solidarity Corps. More than 100 young volunteers have already been deployed in different European countries, with the aim of continuing to grow, and therefore promote, the values of the European Solidarity Corps within the Interreg family, as well as making this more visible.

Since the beginning of 2018, Aebr has been implementing the bsolutions initiative, which will help to tackle legal and administrative border obstacles and difficulties along EU internal borders and has been promoted by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO).

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Task Force Cross Border Culture (T4CBC)



Description

The Association of European Border Regions (Aebr) is the umbrella organisation of the Euregios working towards cross-border cooperation. Among its working groups, it also maintains a Task Force “Cross-Border Culture” (T4CBC), which is dedicated to cross-border cultural exchange.

Different cultures meet in the border regions. Thus, for the T4CBC, the cultural actors of the European border regions, as well as their projects and networks, are at the centre of its initiatives.

The T4CBC aims to create a new dynamic for European cultural networks and actors, going beyond the usual

meetings and conferences to implement and integrate concrete European projects.

T4CBC promotes cultural cooperation within and between Europe’s border regions and strengthens cooperation between creative professionals and cultural institutions through annual colloquia, each year in a different border region, within the framework of cross-border and trans-European projects. This is done in cooperation with the border regions, the European Capitals of Culture and European cultural networks.

Based on the needs of local cultural actors, networks, stakeholders from other border regions as well as

international networks are invited to exchange knowledge and jointly initiate new projects.

Structure and organisation

Since its foundation in 2012, the T4CBC has been operated by the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (BE-DE-NL).

Funding

These multi-day conferences are financed partly by the host border region, by the partner regions and networks mentioned as well as through sponsorships from interested public institutions. The support of the T4CBC is mainly secured by the human resources of the EMR, but also by the EGTC European Region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino and other Euregios.

Results

Previous main topics include: the role of culture in economy, health and research; the mobility of creative and patchwork workers; the financing of art projects; cultural and spatial development; co-working spaces, fab labs and artist residences; waterways and culture.

A variety of projects have been launched at these conferences, such as advising cultural professionals on mobility issues and, regarding this, recommendations to the Member States, the Committee of the Regions and the EU Commission, or networks of artists’ residences and co-working

spaces across Europe and the strengthening of culture in international health policy.

The activities of the T4CBC have also allowed international networks such as SMart, LIKE or the SHF to be consolidated in the EMR. Their implementation also benefits other networks of the EMR, for example Creative Hub Euregio (CHE), Three-Country Park (3CP), as well as the cultural actors through individual consultations.

Contact

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Grenznetz



Description

The advice centres and information points in the European border regions are sufficiently familiar with the relevant problems for border commuters in the fields of tax, social and labour laws. But despite the best professional knowledge, the individual advice centres and information points are often limited in their work to only solving the analysed problems or effectively implementing the solution approaches (in addition to providing advice to citizens).

As the mobility problems and obstacles in the respective border regions are often similar and have the same structural or legal causes, the border network Grenznetz was established in Aachen in 2009. This

innovative cooperation network between the border regions is based on two clear objectives:

- The competences of experts in the border regions are pooled and the exchange of knowledge deepened. At the same time, joint solutions for removing obstacles to mobility are being developed.
- The needs and solutions submitted to national governments and European institutions are given greater political weight when supported by joint action.

The organisation is convinced that its cooperation is a further step forward, towards more Europe in its border regions!

Structure and organisation

The informal network currently consists of representatives from the cross-border information point Aachen-Eurode, the Regionskontor & Infocenter in Padborg (DK) and the Task Force commuters, as well as the Saarland Chamber of Employment and INFOBEST Kehl/Strasbourg. The seminars are held on a regular basis, with each partner bearing its own costs. The Cross-border information points' online forum is used for the exchange of information.

Funding

Each partner contributes its expertise in the form of working hours as much as possible. Depending on the amount, material costs are covered by the partners themselves.

Results

Due to the close cooperation, specialized knowledge has significantly been increased. The professional networks open the opportunity to clarify cases and answer questions quickly, effectively and unbureaucratically.

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LIKE Culture



Description

LIKE - European Cities and Regions for Culture is dedicated to the development of local cultural policies at the crossroads of the needs of local and regional authorities, the demands of civil society and of actors in the cultural field and towards forward-looking debates in the EU and Greater Europe. LIKE works mainly with elected representatives and local and regional government departments (at all levels of governance) and includes representatives of cultural structures to develop a unique platform in Europe for cooperation, discussion and action in the field of culture.

LIKE promotes cultural cooperation at the same time as the culture of cooperation through several tools: digital networking tools, organisation of regular events, support for decentralized cooperation projects (communication, dissemination, partner search) and influential communication (“plaidoyer”).

Structure and organisation

Organisation of decision-making bodies

LIKE is organised around a circle of members who meet once a year during the General Assembly where they elect a committee - a political body that determines the strategic orientations of the network.

Every three years, the committee elects an office/desk - an executive body that decides on an annual programme of actions in consultation with LIKE’s management team, while respecting the network’s strategic orientations.

Organisation of the network

All LIKE members can take part but also contribute to all network actions: thematic meetings and conferences, think-tanks, publications and brochures, trainings and co-operation actions.

Funding

The functioning of the network (team, premises, and travel) is financed by members’ subscriptions (110 members, whose contributions are calculated according to the level of governance and administered population) and a few subsidies renewed each year by its main partners (European Commission and Ministry of Culture France). LIKE has chosen to maintain a very low level required of contribution, rendering it for all local authorities and cultural structures possible to join and to make European cultural cooperation accessible to as many of them as possible. This is why LIKE’s team is responsible for finding alternative financing for a large part of the network’s actions (events, projects, publications, studies, etc.), in particular by means of punctual grants from collectivities, valorisation, European co-financing, crowdfunding, donations or sponsors.

Results

LIKE network has an impact on three different levels:

- **Among its individual members:** LIKE actively advocates for the development of qualitative local cultural politics in terms of governance, culture of cooperation and sustainability. To this end, the network succeeds in uniting very different collectivities within its ranks in terms of the development of local cultural politics, and

in creating an environment favourable to mutual emulation and European territorial solidarity.

- **Between its members:** LIKE has succeeded in laying the foundations for a culture of cooperation through the development of effective networking and communication tools (impact of newsletters, impact of social networks, quantity of publications, adherence of LOGIN - the digital platform for cooperation and dissemination of member information, participation in seminars and conferences, etc.).
- **At the global level:** the concentration of the network’s message around strong values (cooperation, social change, local cultural democracy) strengthens the deployment of its sphere of influence. In recent years, LIKE has forged solid partnerships with cultural civil societies at European level (other European cultural networks) and has obtained the attentive ear of European institutions, local and national governments on many issues (culture and the future of Europe, European Capitals of Culture, arts and cultures in cohesion policies, etc.).

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WHO - RHN



Description

The organisation “Regions for Health Network” (RHN) was created in 1992 and was linked to three trends: the growth of WHO networks; the growing importance of regions within European countries and the conclusion of institutional agreements, to support them. Since its establishment, the RHN has aimed to exchange promising practices and know-how and develop synergies to promote health and reduce inequities at the subnational level. In 2012, soon after the endorsement of Health 2020 by the 53 member states of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the RHN formulated the Göteborg Manifesto. Both the Göteborg Manifesto and Health 2020 mark a clear shift in the essence of the network; from a group of people looking to share experiences and best

practices, to an alliance of regions striving to promote health and reduce health inequities, keeping Health 2020 as reference policy. RHN activities can now be mapped out around five pillars:

Participation (by enhancing collective dialogue), **Documentation** (by producing a number of publications on specific topics), **Inclusion** (by inviting contacts from new areas to learn about the network and consolidating regional profiles), **Communication** (by showing all network members the media potential of their stories), and **Diversity** (by innovating the portfolio of activities offered to network members and providing it with new and thought-provoking learning opportunities).

Structure and organisation

The network has a Steering Group, which includes the WHO RHN focal point and five representatives selected by the member regions during annual RHN meetings. The Steering Group is chaired by a representative of one of the member regions, elected by consensus, for a 12-month period on a rotational basis. The WHO RHN focal point co-chairs the Steering Group on a permanent basis.

The RHN is administered by WHO through the WHO European Office for Investment for Health and Development in Venice, Italy (the Venice Office). It is a mechanism to facilitate collaboration between the interested parties, including RHN member regions and WHO. The operations of the RHN are administered in accordance with the Constitution and the financial and staff rules and regulations, eManual provisions and applicable policies, procedures and practices of the WHO.

Funding

Each RHN member region is responsible for meeting its own expenses in relation to the RHN. All activities undertaken by the RHN, as opposed to those undertaken by RHN members in their individual capacities, including day-to-day operations and RHN Secretariat support, are subject to receipt by the RHN Secretariat of adequate funds for the purpose. In this regard, RHN members pay an annual fee to the RHN Secretariat. WHO may raise funds from other sources to support the work of the RHN, in accordance with the established policies and principles of the organisation.

Results

The RHN is increasing its visibility in the European Public Health arena by organising initiatives such as: **SCI publications**, **Capacity-building** activities, **Giving a voice to the subnational level**, and **Communication** activities (newsletter, social media).

Important milestones achieved in the 2016-2017 biennium:

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): from global to local. The 24th RHN Annual Meeting held in Kaunas was very innovative. The programme of the meeting was structured in such a way as to reflect how the Sustainable Development Goals could be implemented at all political levels.

Study visits: understanding how outstanding practices are born. Two study visits took place in 2016-2017: Wales and Lower Austria.

RHN Regions - pioneers in many ways. The RHN series of case stories is very well received among public health professionals, far beyond the “borders” of the RHN.

RHN: getting the subnational experience in ministerial fora. Thanks to the RHN, the subnational level of governance now has access to ministerial fora in which it was previously unable to participate.

RHN: expanding collaboration. RHN has intensified collaboration with the Healthy Cities network.

RHN: an authoritative voice in the international public health arena. The RHN successfully expanded its presence during the European Public Health Conference, the largest technical forum on public health in Europe. In Vienna (2016) and in Stockholm (2017), the RHN organised thematic workshops on innovative themes such as the subnational implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and on gender stereotypes.

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Economy and innovation



Mobility and infrastructure



Sustainable development



Labour market, education and training



Culture and tourism



Territorial analysis



Advocacy and regional promotion



Health care



Security



European networks

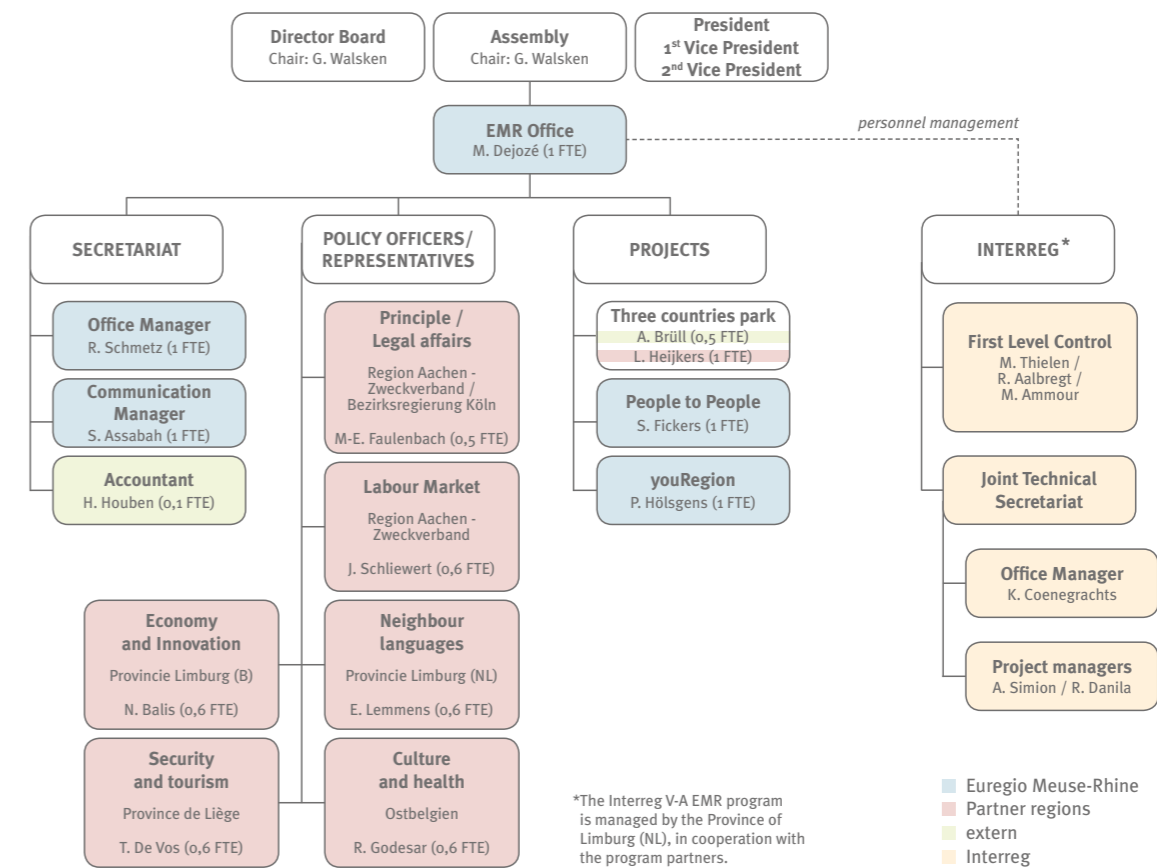


An overview of different cross-border services and networks in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine

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The Euregio Meuse-Rhine



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