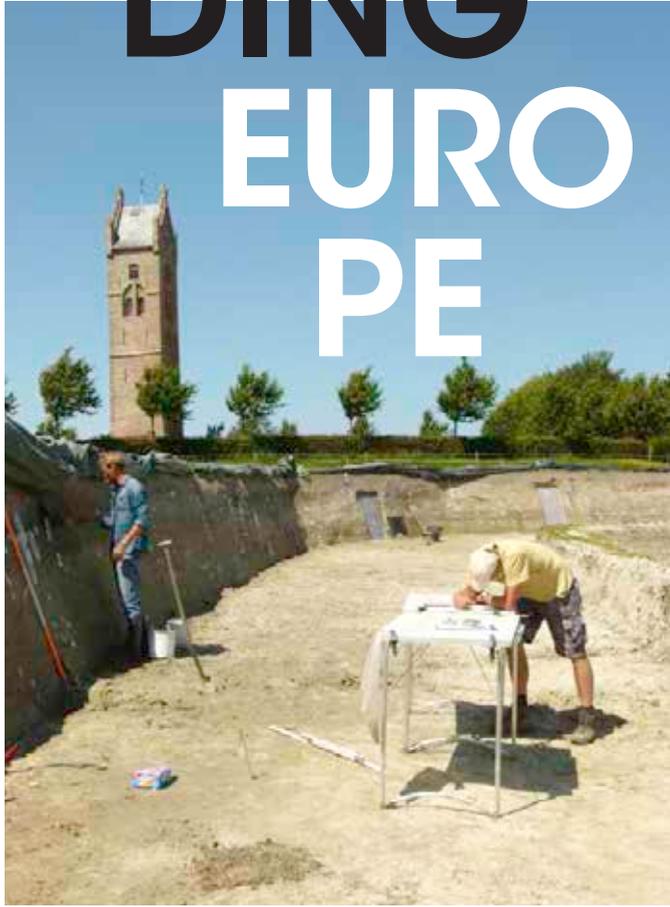


BUILDING EUROPE



26
CROSS-
BORDER
INTERREG
PROJECTS



European Union

Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Energie,
Industrie, Mittelstand und Handwerk
des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen



Ministerie van Economische Zaken



Niedersächsische
Staatskanzlei

provinsje fryslân
provincie fryslân



provincie Drenthe



PROVINCIE FLEVOLAND



provincie
Gelderland

provincie limburg



Provincie Noord-Brabant



euregio

rhein-maas-nord rijn-maas-nord

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Integration and society

‘Each project was supported by people’.

Dear reader,

The INTERREG IV A programme Germany-Netherlands is coming to an end. In the last seven years, we truly made advances in the border region between Germany and the Netherlands with the financial support of the EU and the programme partners: 125 cross-border projects with an investment volume of more than EUR 310 million and more than 1,500 organizations and institutions showing commitment as project partners in cross-border cooperation. Be it biodegradable surfboards, self-propelled harvesters, medical computer games, cross-border natural parks, concerts, or exhibitions: the range of projects is as varied as the region and its inhabitants. This brochure will give you a colourful selection of 26 INTERREG projects. They serve as examples of the many innovative ideas implemented as part of the INTERREG IV A programme Germany-Netherlands in the last few years.

Regardless of whether it was a major high-tech project or a regional student exchange, each project was supported by people willing to cross borders day after day and in every meaning of the phrase. As a programme partner, we are grateful that this region has so many committed individuals. During the finishing of the INTERREG programme, they contributed to the further development of the border region between the coast of the North Sea and the Lower Rhine while also creating closer human relationships.

It is very encouraging that the cross-border cooperation of the INTERREG programme Germany-Netherlands will also continue in the coming years. The new programme will offer even more opportunities to further develop our border region. I am hoping that as many people as possible will take this opportunity and allow their cross-border ideas to become a reality.



Best regards
Josan Meijers

Chairman of the Steering Committee
of INTERREG Germany-Netherlands
Representative for the Gelderland province

INTERREG – Cooperation with tradition

As far back as the late 1950s, the first border communities and organisations along the German-Dutch border recognised the significance of cross-border cooperation for the region. The Germans and Dutch came together around a table at various levels, coordinated their interests, and implemented the first joint projects. Gradually, the cooperation developed into institutions known as the Ems Dollart Region, the EUREGIO, the Euregio Rhine-Waal and the euregio rhine-meuse-north.

In the early 1990s, the member states of the European Community decided to provide financial support to cross-border cooperation on the continent with the community initiative INTERREG. The purpose was to support the development and integration of the border region. In the first phase (1991-1993), the INTERREG programme was primarily focused on bringing together people, companies, and organisations from both sides of the border and improving cross-border infrastructure. At that time, there were four separate

programme areas in what is now the current INTERREG programme area Germany-Netherlands. In INTERREG II (1994-1999), the emphasis was on supporting the continued anchoring of cooperation and improving the quality of the projects. Meanwhile, intensive contacts emerged in many industries and sectors. The time was ripe to fully implement projects together. For INTERREG IIA (2000-2006), the four separate programme areas were merged into two programme areas. The projects became broader in scope and took on an increasingly innovative character.

INTERREG – one programme for the border region

The outgoing INTERREG IV A programme for Germany-Netherlands (2007 onwards) followed on from this. There was now just one joint programme from the North Sea coast to the Lower Rhine. Innovative projects with interregional appeal with partners from along the entire German-Dutch border region were implemented in so-called ‘majeuren’ projects.

Overall, the EU Commission provided 138.5 million euros of funding for cross-border projects in the German-Dutch border region between 2007 and 2015. The INTERREG IV programme Germany-Netherlands was supported structurally and financially by 14 programme partners, including the Netherlands, the German federal states of North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony, seven Dutch provinces and four EUREGIOs. In recent years, under the stewardship of the North Rhine-Westphalia ministry for economy, energy, industry, SMEs and trade – as the managing authority – 125 cross-border projects have been implemented with a total investment of more than

Programme area

INTERREG IV A

Deutschland-Nederland



310 million euros. All activities were of direct benefit to the border region, its people and businesses. The INTERREG IV programme has, therefore, made a significant contribution to the positive economic and social development of the border region.

In all, 58% of the EU funding was focused on the priority of „Economy, Technology, Innovation“. The goal here was to develop and consolidate a cross-border, innovative economic area, and thereby securing and further developing employment opportunities in the region. Universities, secondary schools, and academic institutes worked on a total of 56 innovative projects in close collaboration with private companies.

In particular, the integration of small and medium-sized companies as part of the cross-border cooperation proved to be a success factor. More than 8,000 companies benefited from the INTERREG projects; almost 2,000 measures were introduced directly in the companies.

Under the banner „Sustainable Regional Development“, approximately 18% of the funding was made available for renewable energy, conservation, and cross-border infrastructural facilities, among others. Across a total of 31 projects,

numerous public and private organisations from both sides of the border made their contribution to sustainable regional development to improve the quality of life in the border region, and to meet one of the preconditions for economic growth. In the INTERREG programme for Germany-Netherlands, there was also a focus on the development and improvement of social integration in the border region – and not least to strengthen the cross-border identity of citizens. 18% of EU funds were also made available to this end. Across 33 projects, project partners tackled subjects such as cross-border health and consumer protection, the cross-border labor market, culture, and education. Through such projects, it is hoped that the view across the border will be taken for granted by the coming generations.

Some examples of successful projects from all three priorities can be found on the following pages.

HEALTHY GREENHOUSE FOR A HEALTHY CROP

GEZONDE KAS

The INTERREG project Gezonde Kas (Healthy Greenhouse) focuses on the development of an innovative crop protection system for modern greenhouse horticulture. According to project manager Carolien Zijlstra, this system is the latest in the field: ‘The most modern greenhouses in the world are found in the Netherlands and Germany, and we want to make an innovative impact in the field of crop protection there. The greenhouse structures are becoming larger, making it more difficult to notice diseases and pests in crops. We have developed machines that can detect stress in plants. Using sensitive DNA techniques, we can then see if they are sick even before the symptoms become visible to the naked eye. By using this technique, we can detect the problem early enough and, therefore, the solution often remains simple. It is not always necessary to apply a chemical crop protection product. The disease, for example, can be treated with a biological agent or by adjusting the temperature. That is better for the environment and costs less in the long run.’ Education also forms an important part of the project.



'We create innovations in state-of-the-art greenhouses in the Netherlands and Germany.'

Carolien Zijlstra

AN IMAGE SENSOR IN A GREENHOUSE IN STRAELEN, GERMANY DETECTS PLANT DISEASES WHICH ARE INVISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE



Consumers can see for themselves how the latest technologies effectively guard their tomatoes, cyclamen, or other greenhouse crops. Gezonde Kas is an ideal cross-border project, which involves 32 partners, including 10 research institutes and 22 companies. Both sides of the border provide specific knowledge and technology: climate computers come from Germany and the moving platforms that scan the crops come from the Netherlands. Zijlstra: 'At the same time, we automatically collect all the data in greenhouses, which leads to a specific alarm – and a recommendation system for the grower.' The results of the project speak for themselves: the greenhouses use half the pesticides that were needed previously, and an increasingly smaller part of the harvest fails, resulting in great economic benefits.

Lead partner

› Stichting Dienst Landbouwkundig Onderzoek, Wageningen

Projectpartner

- › Hochschule Osnabrück
- › Landwirtschaftskammer NRW, Kleve
- › Innosieve Diagnostics B.V., Wageningen
- › Nsure BV, Wageningen
- › UP GmbH, Ibbenbüren
- › Wireless Value, Emmen
- › ISIS-IC GmbH, Wesel
- › Rometron, Doesburg
- › Berg Hortimotive, De Lier
- › and other companies and research institutions

Total costs

› € 10.163.600,34

EU-contribution

› € 3.966.037,23

Project period

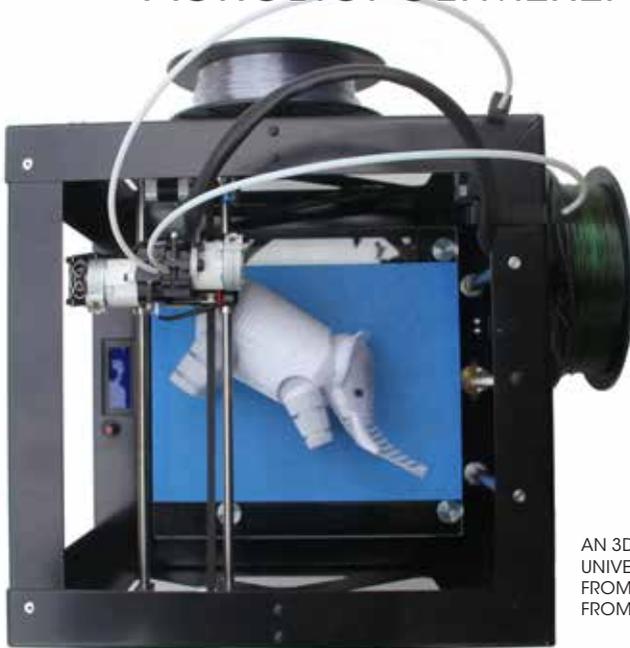
› 09/2010 - 06/2015

Website

› www.gezondekas.eu

NATURAL NOT SYNTHETIC

AGROBIOPOLYMEREN



AN 3D-PRINTER FROM STENDEN UNIVERSITY, WHICH PRINTS OBJECTS FROM BIOPOLYMERS, VIEWED FROM ABOVE

Polymers are used for anything and everything. Many of the plastics that are common today – from soda bottles to nylon shirts, from tubes and pipes to carpets – are made from polymers. Anita Buijs, Project Manager at Agrobiopolymers, explains why it is so important that synthetic polymers are replaced by natural ones. ‘Currently, synthetic polymers are often derived from petroleum. Hazards for the environment are one reason to encourage the use of natural resources. We do our utmost to convince companies to take measures towards a transition to doing business in a

socially responsible manner.’ In the long term, natural materials such as hemp fibre, beet leaf and wood fibre should replace crude oil. The INTERREG project ‘Agrobiopolymers’ operates across national borders in order to collect and share specific knowledge and expertise wherever and whenever possible. Buijs: ‘One good example is our highway guardrail project. We are investigating whether guardrails can be developed, made from biocomposites derived from sweet pepper plant fibres. Such a guardrail would be lighter, more environmentally friendly and ultimately cheaper.



IN THE FUTURE, STENDEN UNIVERSITY WANTS TO MAKE OBJECTS SUCH AS THIS ENTIRELY OUT OF BIOPOLYMERS, USING A LASER CUTTING MACHINE

The development of this new type of guardrail will take place in its first phase as a collaboration between a number of Dutch SMEs and a production facility in Germany. Subsequently, the guardrail will be tested by a company in the Netherlands. That way, it crosses borders, both in terms of research and during the manufacturing process.'

Other examples of products produced from natural polymers are exhibition carpets, yarns, and cheese packaging. 'We involve the agricultural sector and small and medium-sized enterprises on both sides of the border intensively in this development.

In addition, we provide information to generate public support. Acceptance among consumers is essential, so that it will soon be standard for products to be made primarily from natural polymers.'

'We involve the agricultural sector and SMEs on both sides of the border intensively in our work.'

Anita Buijs

Lead partner

› Ems Dollart Region, Bad Nieuweschans

Projectpartner

› NOM, Groningen

› 3N, Werlte

› API, Emmen

› Naffex GmbH, Großefehn

› HempFlax Deutschland GmbH, Döttingen

› Kiem Innovations, Onstwedde

› Stichting Dienst Landbouwkundig Onderzoek, Wageningen

› Rodenburg Biopolymers BV, Oosterhout

› Landbouwbedrijf Dun, Oude Pekela

› Stenden Hogeschool, Emmen

› and other companies and research institutions

Total costs

› € 4.924.477,00

EU-contribution

› € 2.151.464,10

Project period

› 07/2011 - 06/2015

Website

› www.agrobiopolymere.eu

SMALL TECHNOLOGY LARGE PROJECTS

DIAMANT

‘Little things, that’s what we develop,’ says Barry Peet. He is project manager of DIAMANT, specialising in the application of micro- and nano systems technology. *Micro* means that it is just visible to the naked eye, while *nano* is already so small that it is not perceptible to humans. Peet emphasises that although it might be very small technology, such as the microchips industry, it is very important nonetheless. Micro- and nanotechnologies are widely used in a range of applications. Within the framework of the DIAMANT INTERREG project, German and Dutch companies and research institutions collaborate on the development of smart systems for combined solar panels and heat exchangers, as well as on a system for the optimal use of batteries in scooters.

‘Another great example is the development of a blood pressure measuring device that is no larger than a wristwatch,’ says Peet. ‘Now, patients who require continuous blood pressure monitoring, are attached to all kinds of cables while lying in their hospital bed. We are developing a system so small that the patients might not even be aware that they are carrying it with them. The patients are hardly hindered in their daily activities. If someone is tested in their natural environment, the results obtained will be closer to the ‘real’ values. This gives you better scientific results.’



‘Contacts have been made. Companies on both sides of the border want to continue to work together.’

Barry Peet

Lead partner

- › Oost NV, Arnhem

Projectpartner

- › innos-Sperlich GmbH, Göttingen
- › Cluster NanoMikro+Werkstoffe.NRW, Düsseldorf
- › C2V BV, Enschede
- › IVRA Electronics BV, Arnhem
- › Ionovation GmbH, Osnabrück
- › Kema Nederland BV, Arnhem
- › Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster
- › Use-Lab GmbH, Steinfurt
- › HyET Solar bv, Arnhem
- › and other companies and research institutions

Total costs

- › € 7.924.041,25

EU-contribution

- › € 2.974.367,56

Project period

- › 12/2010 - 03/2015

THE NEWLY-DEVELOPED BLOOD PRESSURE MEASURING SYSTEM, SO SMALL THAT THE PATIENT ALMOST FORGETS THEY ARE CARRYING IT WITH THEM

Cross-border cooperation is very important in this sub-project. Dutch companies are responsible for the technology, and a German company tests the applicability and user-friendliness of the product. ‘In this way, companies and parties on both sides of the border get in touch with each other,’ says Peet. ‘I regularly notice that companies and new partners plan to continue their collaboration for many years ahead.’

BORDER REGION **IN FOCUS**

TOURISMUS-MARKETING
GRENZREGION



THE NORTHERNMOST BREEDING COLONY OF FLAMINGOES IN EUROPE, THE ZWILLBROCKER VENN

‘We want Germans who like to go on holiday to the Netherlands to look beyond Zeeland, Zandvoort, or Texel. Conversely, we want to show the Dutch the various hidden treasures of their neighbours to the east, such as beautiful gardens, castles, and historic city centres.’ This, in a nutshell, is the purpose of Tourism-Marketing Grenzregion, according to project manager Heike Rieger. ‘We want to encourage day trippers and tourists who want a weekend away to take a look across the border. We want to put the border region on the map.’

To achieve this, the INTERREG project cooperates with governments, regional tourist offices and SMEs in the tourism sector. Rieger: ‘We disseminate information via traditional channels, such as brochures and flyers at holiday fairs and in city centres, and of course online. A number of popular websites arising from the project contain special offers and tips, whether it is an active holiday or a shopping trip that you are after.’

‘The tourist infrastructure along the border has improved visibly in recent years, which will benefit SMEs.’

Heike Rieger

Tourismus-Marketing Grenzregion isn't limited to providing information and promotional activities. ‘We support SMEs, wherever possible. For example, we help Dutch campsites to create German-language websites. We also help connect neighbouring countries, quite literally. We managed to convince governments that cycle paths shouldn't stop at the border, resulting in many of them being extended. Cyclists, therefore, no longer need to turn around once they reach the border.’

According to Rieger, clear results have been achieved. ‘The tourist infrastructure along the border has improved visibly in recent years. The number of guests from across the border at campsites and hotels is on the rise. This in turn benefits, for example, local bakeries or canoe rental companies.’

Lead partner

› EUREGIO, Gronau

Projectpartner

- › Münsterland e.V., Steinfurt
- › Tourismusverband Osnabrücker Land, Osnabrück
- › Grafschaft Bentheim Tourismus, Nordhorn
- › VVV Achterhoek, Zutphen
- › Veluws Bureau voor Toerisme, Apeldoorn
- › Twents Bureau voor Toerisme, Enschede
- › MarketingOost, Zwolle
- › Touristikverband Emsland, Meppen
- › Niederländisches Büro für Tourismus & Convention, Köln

Total costs

› € 7.702.780,00

EU-contribution

› € 3.245.000,00

Project period

› 07/2008 - 06/2015

Website

› www.geheimoverdegrens.nl

IN A SIMULATION TRUCK THROUGH THE ALPS

EU-BERUFSFAHRSCHULE



LOW-LYING SUN OR HIGH MOUNTAINS, IN A MOBILE DRIVING SIMULATOR
THE DRIVER CAN PRACTICE ALMOST ANY SITUATION

Since 2009, every truck driver in the European Union is required to take a continuing education course. This sounds like a good idea with the added advantages of increased road safety. The only problem is that transportation companies cannot afford to let their drivers be away from work for a few days, and it is certainly not environmentally friendly and is a major waste of time to let them drive around 'empty'.

The solution is as simple as it is spectacular: a mobile driving simulator, called Simutruck. The Professional Driving School of North Rhine-Meuse Association has developed a driving simulator in collaboration with two other driving schools *Verkeersopleidingen Zuid* (VOZ) and *Bildungszentrum* (BZ). Robert Stoelinga, employee at VOZ, tells us how transportation companies on both sides of the border benefit from the INTERREG project called 'EU Berufsfahrschule'. "This unique project was launched, and successfully started operations in cooperation with ten project partners including the Dutch and German Chambers of

just design a wide variety of situations, we also practice in various types of vehicles", Stoelinga adds. In addition, the simulator truck is used as a promotional tool for people interested in the profession, and fire departments on both sides of the border are eager to use the multi-purpose mobile cabin. Stoelinga: 'It's not desirable to practice stressful situations on the road, and to drive around with sirens wailing just for training. The form and scope of the project are new, and I would be surprised if it is not continued.'



THE SIMUTRUCK IN FULL USE, WITH ON-SCREEN PROJECTORS

'New project to train for every situation in an environmentally friendly manner.'

Robert Stoelinga

Commerce, governments and traffic safety institutions", according to Stoelinga.

"The main advantage over traditional training is perhaps that situations are created, which are normally difficult to bring into practice. Here's an example: if a driver wants to practice driving in the mountains, he would normally have to go to the Alps. The Simutruck recreates this situation almost perfectly.' "But we do not

Lead partner

› Europese Beroepsrijkschool Rijn-Maas Noord, Venlo

Projectpartner

› VerkeersOpleidingen Zuid, Venlo
› BZ Bildungszentrum, Tönisvorst
› IHK Mittlerer Niederrhein, Krefeld
› Kamer van Koophandel
› Gemeente Venlo

Total costs

› € 1.464.552,75

EU-contribution

› € 667.396,69

Project period

› 07/2010 - 02/2014

Website

› www.simutruck.de

SMART ROBOTS OPEN BORDERS

SMARTBOT

‘We develop a new generation of robots,’ Yvonne van den Berg, from INCAS⁵, Lead partner of SmartBot explains. ‘Robots that can perform various complex operations autonomously and are flexible and very precise. They are smaller and mobile; a new addition to the current generation of robots that are dedicated to mass production.’

SmartBot develops intelligent robots for the maritime industry, agriculture and manufacturing industry, using knowledge from the Netherlands and Germany. ‘A good example of what we have developed is a robot that can inspect ballast water tanks. Large ships use such tanks to regulate the stability. These tanks are small, become filthy after a voyage, as well as hardly accessible by people. We have made a platform on rails with a robotic arm that can inspect the entire tank, even the places that are hard to reach. People no longer have to do this relatively difficult work. The inspection can also be done at sea in the future.’ An intensive collaboration between Dutch and German partners took place to achieve the goal of this INTERREG project. The University of Twente has a lot of knowledge in the field of robotics, mechanics and IT. DFKI, the German

Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence, developed the robotic platform. The project involves companies from both countries, such as Imotec in the area of the smart rails production and Xsens for sensor technology. The German *Meyer Werft*, one of the largest builders of cruise ships, expressed interest in the use of the robot. Van den Berg: ‘We obtain very specific knowledge from both sides of the border. This leads to an innovative end product and also opens up a new global market for numerous Dutch and German companies.’

‘Knowledge opens up a global market for German and Dutch companies.’

Yvonne van den Berg



INSPECTIONS IN THE HARD-TO-ACCESS BALLAST WATER TANKS OF SHIPS -
A JOB WHICH IN THE FUTURE WILL BE DONE BY ROBOTS

Lead partner

› INCAS³, Assen

Projectpartner

- › DFKI, Osnabrück
- › Stichting STODT, Hengelo
- › Meyer Werft, Papenburg
- › Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
- › Xsens Technologies BV, Enschede
- › Grimme Landmaschinenfabrik, Damme
- › Westfälische Hochschule, Bocholt
- › Amazonen-Werke, Hasbergen-Gaste
- › Hochschule Osnabrück
- › and other companies and research institutions

Total costs

› € 8.429.825,00

EU-contribution

› € 3.718.073,00

Project period

› 04/2011 - 12/2014

Website

› www.smartbot.eu

NO SUPERFICIAL BUSINESS

TKV FUNKTIONALE
OBERFLÄCHEN



COLOURED TONER PEARLS ON PRINTED TEST FABRIC

Surfaces. At first, this might not sound like the most exciting topic, but it is no less important because of that, given that virtually all industrial sectors work with surfaces in one way or another. The INTERREG project TKV FUNKTIONALE Oberflächen, a network of 41

partners from science and industry, focuses on research and innovation of various types of surfaces, such as those with self-cleaning and antibacterial properties. It is further categorised into six main sub-projects, including the development of a sustainable adhesive solution

and a navigation system for powder coating. Project Manager Dr Joachim Schick: 'We bring together SMEs and scientists from both countries, who are looking for technical solutions. Our goal is threefold: technology improvement along with a broader applicability, cost effectiveness, and sustainability.'

A tangible example of a sub-project is the development of a new inkjet printing technology for the textiles and clothing industry.

This is more than cute prints on dresses.

The technology is widely used in sectors such as advertising, architecture, decoration, and store interiors. Because of the diversity of the materials, a large number of different dyes and printers are currently still required.

TKV is working with its partners on a universal, high-quality printing machine; a machine that is widely applicable, and partly because of that, durable and cost-saving. In short, it will be a printer that can help many companies to make their production even more efficient with lower costs. 'Many companies get to know each other during the course of our project, and reap the benefits of it,' says Schick. 'In this way, for example, large businesses benefit from the specific knowledge of small businesses. Conversely, the smaller partners benefit immensely from their larger partners' contacts. Cultural differences exist, but they are largely overcome by the common goal.'

'Companies get to know each other during our project and reap the rewards.'

Dr Joachim Schick

Leadpartner

› Hochschule Niederrhein, Krefeld

Projectpartner

- › Fachhochschule Münster
- › wfk Forschungsinstitute, Krefeld
- › Voig & Schweitzer, Hagen
- › Zincoat BV, Veenoord
- › Océ-Technologies bv, Venlo
- › cph Deutschland GmbH, Essen
- › Jonkman Coatings bv, Hengelo
- › and other companies and research institutions

Total costs

› € 7.536.879,30

EU-contribution

› € 2.996.324,83

Project period

› 04/2011 - 03/2015

Website

› www.tkvfo.eu

A HELPING HAND WITH FOOD INNOVATIONS

FOOD FUTURE

The Netherlands and Germany are among the most innovative countries in the world in many fields, and that certainly applies to the food industry. Why not be even more innovative by joining forces on both sides of the border? The INTERREG project 'Food Future' aims at improvements in the broad line of food production in the border region. It starts with small businesses. They come up with new ideas about a wide range of issues. How can the existing conditions of the greenery be improved? Can we develop a machine that will make sure that eggs are broken hygienically and efficiently? Can we use by-products as high-quality ingredients or cattle feed? So far, some 180 SMEs submitted their ideas or requests for subsequent assessment by the Food Future panel, bringing together experts from industry and universities from both countries. These experts take a close look at the idea: is it a good idea? A positive assessment leads to a feasibility study, which often initiates the development of a new product. 'The economic aspect is of prime importance', the Food Future project manager Dr Helmut Steinkamp of the *Deutsches Institut für Lebensmitteltechnik* emphasises. 'We don't encourage doing science for science's sake, but always consider



the economic benefits for business. This is accomplished through meetings, workshops, and seminars, as well as through concrete collaborative projects. This regularly leads to the long-term cooperation of up to five or six companies. We want to provide a framework that offers long-term assistance to small businesses in the food industry. Possible obstacles

THE EGG-BREAKING MACHINE ENSURES THAT EGGS ARE BROKEN AS HYGIENICALLY AND EFFICIENTLY AS POSSIBLE



because of the differences in language or culture are easily overcome, simply because companies pursue what is best for them,' said Steinkamp.

'The project often leads to long-term collaborations involving multiple companies.'

Dr Helmut Steinkamp



PREPARING FOOD WITH NITROGEN

Lead partner

› Deutsches Institut für Lebensmitteltechnik, Quakenbrück

Projectpartner

- › Investerings- en ontwikkelingsmaatschappij voor Noord-Nederland, Groningen
- › Food-Processing Initiative, Bielefeld
- › Oost NV, Arnhem
- › NV Industriebank LIOF, Maastricht
- › and more than 100 companies in the food sector

Total costs

› € 10.974.353,00

EU-contribution

› € 4.938.459,00

Project period

› 01/2010 - 12/2014

Website

› www.food-future.eu

STUDENTS LEARN THE FINE ART OF WELDING IN HBZ MÜNSTER



WORKING ON INNOVATIVE NETWORKS

NETZWERK
GMA

As a company, how are you able to compete with low-wage countries in, for instance, Eastern Europe? Thomas Melchert, project manager of Netzwerk GMA helps small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with this challenge. The INTERREG project provides cross-border support to some 2,300 companies. Most companies are in the metal and plastics industry, and employ between 30 and 250 people. Melchert: 'We try to modernise companies in many areas. First, we think about the marketing. How can a company promote itself, also on the other side of the border? At trade shows our companies are often the only stand that presents itself as a Dutch/German partnership. Companies visit each other, the management methods are compared and an exchange about individual strengths takes place.'

Netzwerk GMA is also engaged in product improvement and/or innovation. How can companies produce quickly and efficiently without waste? Research centres and laboratories in both Germany and the Netherlands are actively involved in these issues and provide practical tips. Modernisation is partially made possible by supervising staff in the area of e-learning and automation processes, Melchert adds. 'In addition, we set up entrepreneurial clusters, which are small business networks on both sides of the border. Usually, these companies are approximately of the same size and are in the same industry, without being direct competitors. Therefore, their needs are similar and they can be of service to each other.'

'We set up entrepreneurial clusters: small business networks on both sides of the border.'

Thomas Melchert

Lead partner

› Handwerkskammer Münster

Project partner

- › Stichting Stodt, Hengelo
- › Verenigde Maakindustrie Oost, Enschede
- › Handwerkskammer Osnabrück-Emsland, Osnabrück
- › Stichting Syntens, Enschede

Total costs

› € 7.783.355,00

EU-contribution

› € 3.502.510,00

Project period

› 07/2008 - 12/2014

Website

› www.netzwerkama.de

TACKING TOWARDS CLEAN SHIPPING MARITIM



'Convinced of the value
of cooperation in the
future too.'

Katja Baumann

THE LAUNCH OF THE SIROCCO, THE FIRST LNG-POWERED INLAND VESSEL IN THE NORTHERN NETHERLANDS

The ships of tomorrow. That sums up MariTIM's goal. 35 Dutch and German partners work together intensively to develop modern ships. The partnership includes a wide range of actors, from universities and colleges to shipyards and smaller specialised companies. MariTIM is divided into three main sub-projects that have the development of innovation in ship propulsion as a common denominator. Katja Baumann, project manager, is closely involved in the INTERREG project. 'We have developed the very first passenger ship that sails in the Wadden Sea, powered solely by liquefied natural gas (LNG). Feasibility studies and analyses for all our projects are conducted by our Dutch and German partners.' MariTIM's focus is not limited to innovations for passenger ships, but other types of vessels are also evaluated for environmental safety while sailing. Recently, the first inland barge using LNG propulsion was put into service.



'That's good for the environment,' says Baumann. 'It saves the cost of conventional fuel. For coastal shipping, we look at the possibilities of sailing with sails at least part of the time. For that purpose, we are developing a wind sail system with aerodynamic working rotors.'

Research institutions and maritime businesses exchange information by visiting each other regularly. MariTIM organises workshops, conferences, and practical excursions on both sides of the border. Baumann: 'We systematically compare propulsion systems both in theory and in practice. The starting point is always: Is there a clean alternative that doesn't cost more or can we make it even cheaper?' The project manager is convinced of the value of cooperation: 'I will do my utmost to ensure the continuation of this collaboration, even after the completion of the project.'

Lead partner

› Maritimes Kompetenzzentrum, Leer

Projectpartner

- › Koedood Dieselservice, Hendrik Ido Ambacht
- › Wärtsilä Netherlands, Drunen
- › LAIS Nord, Leer
- › Cofely West Industrie, Roden
- › Hochschule Emden/Leer, Leer
- › MFH Marine- und Faserverbundtechnik Haring, Emden
- › BOMA Maschinenbau, Borken
- › NHL Hogeschool, Leeuwarden
- › DST, Duisburg
- › and other companies and research institutions

Total costs

› € 8.767.417,00

EU-contribution

› € 2.959.989,00

Project period

› 01/2011 - 03/2015

Website

› www.maritim-de-nl.eu

OVERCOMING BARRIERS, WIDENING HORIZONS

MECHATRONIK FÜR KMU

‘There is often no immediate need for companies to look across the border for external expertise. After all, expertise is always available in one’s own country. But once a company dares to take that step, the payoff is high. However, you do have to start somewhere. We try to encourage SMEs to broaden their range and horizon.’ Angelika van der Kooi, project manager at Mechatronics for SMEs, talks about breaking down barriers in the areas of innovation, but also in linguistic and intercultural fields. The INTERREG project offers a helping hand to about 250 SMEs in the regions along the full length of the Dutch/German border. The participating companies have a very diverse background. Some of them produce machines for the food industry or the agricultural sector, while others make end products such as a detection device to discover cracks in eggs, or electronic bicycles for the disabled. Van der Kooi, ‘Intermediaries play an essential role in the establishment of the co-operation. These intermediaries include the Dutch Chamber of Commerce, the German *Wirtschaftsförderer* (business support organisations) and colleges. They form

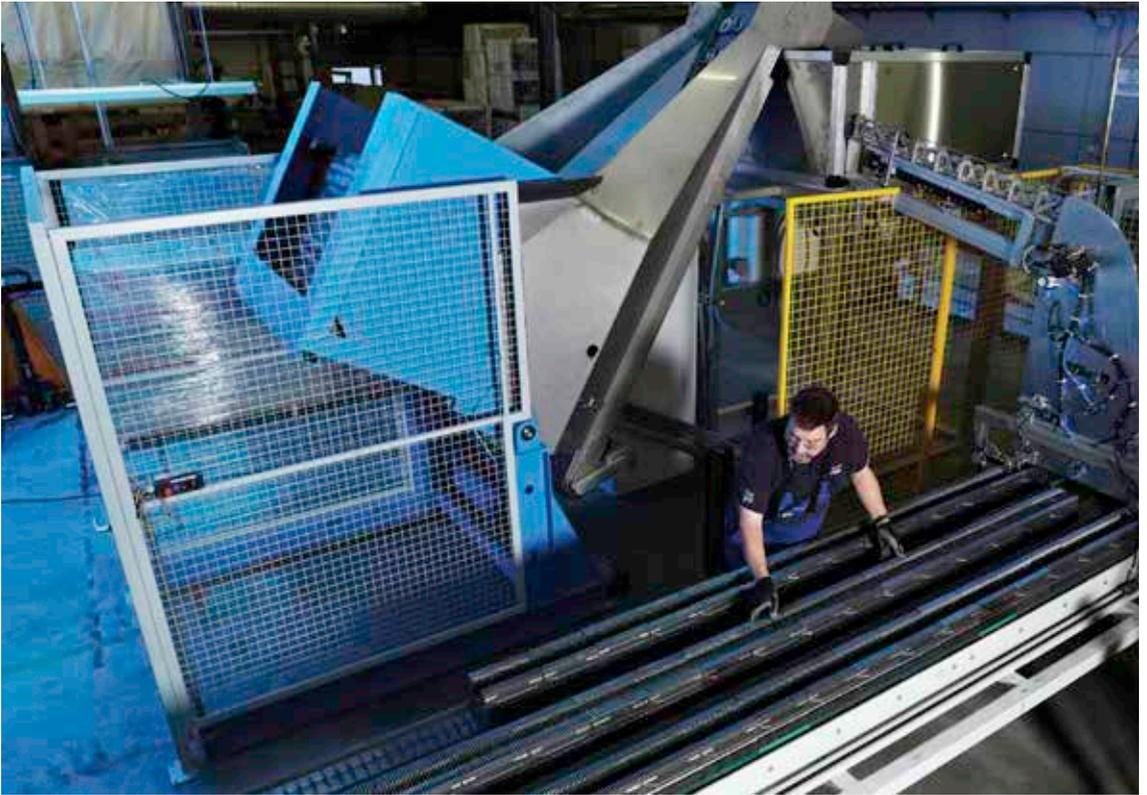
the link between SMEs and knowledge centres or economic development agencies. As an intermediary they have the contacts and – importantly – enjoy the trust of businesses. Business people and entrepreneurs also do not want to give an advantage to their competitors. The added value of the Mechatronics project is to bring together the strong points of the Netherlands such as flexibility and openness

‘Joining the Dutch
and Germany’s
strengths.’

Angelika van der Kooi

with the German strengths of careful planning and precision. When companies are open to this, the cooperation is usually successful. Contacts are made that continue for a long time.’

DEVELOPMENT OF A PROTOTYPE SYSTEM FOR THE PRODUCTION
OF ALUMINIUM HEATING TUBES AT REVENTA IN HORSTMAR



PROTOTYPE FOR AN INNOVATIVE SALMON
CUTTING MACHINE IN MEPPEN

Lead partner

- › EUREGIO, Gronau

Projectpartner

- › Kamer van Koophandel, Den Haag
- › Stichting STODT, Hengelo
- › TechnologieCentrum Noord-Nederland, Groningen
- › Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft für den Kreis Borken, Ahaus
- › Fachhochschule Münster
- › Universiteit Twente, Enschede
- › Gesellschaft für Wirtschaftsförderung im Kreis Warendorf, Beckum
- › Emsland GmbH, Meppen
- › Westfälische Hochschule, Bocholt
- › Universität Duisburg-Essen, Duisburg
- › Landkreis Grafschaft Bentheim, Nordhorn
- › and more than 100 Dutch and German SME

Total costs

- › € 18.371.790,00

EU-contribution

- › € 7.277.395,00

Project period

- › 03/2009 - 06/2015

Website

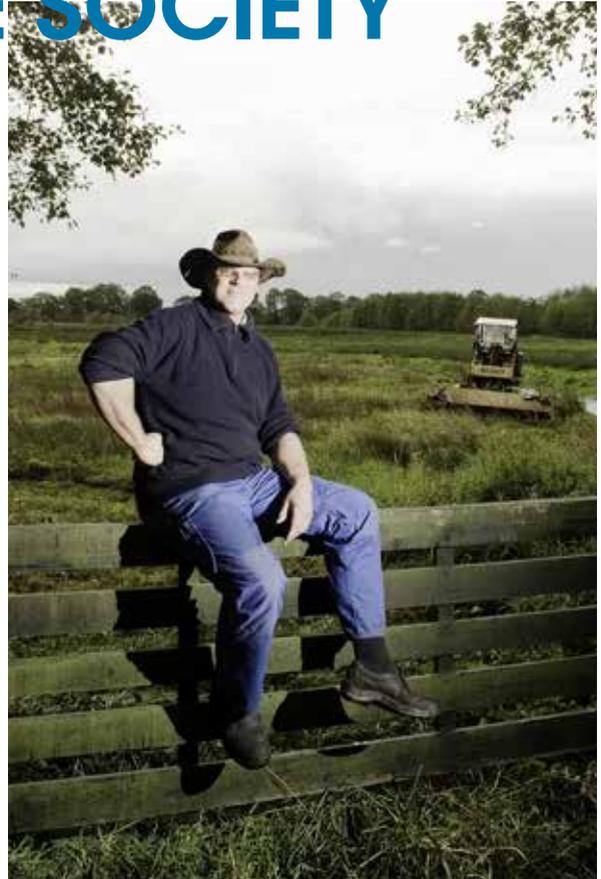
- › www.mechatronik-kmu.eu

DURABLE RELATIONSHIPS, DURABLE SOCIETY

NEND

Hemp as insulation material. Extracting biomass from wet peat lands. A house made entirely of solar panels. Capturing CO₂ and converting it to natural gas.

These are just a few examples of projects under the collective name NEND that intends to make the northern regions of the Netherlands and Germany more sustainable. Project Manager Peter Schouwstra says that he and his colleagues always consider the latest developments in the field of sustainability and durability. 'The INTERREG project has built up a large cross-border network. Many SMEs are heavily involved in our projects. Large companies often get by without subsidies. However, it is precisely those small businesses that are vital to the success of a project, because the durability then settles within the very fabric of society.' According to Schouwstra, subsidies are essential, especially around the energy issue. 'As a government – regional, national or European – you are setting an example. Governments should develop, push, boost, stimulate and encourage. This leads to spin-offs in many areas.'



MARCEL OOMEN IN THE AREA HE WORKS IN. HARVESTING WATER REED IN NATURAL WETLAND IN APPINGEDAM

'Exchange of knowledge,
products, and culture.'

Peter Schouwstra

WOUD VAN WOUDEBERG FROM THE KNOWLEDGE CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY, NHL UNIVERSITY, LEEUWARDEN



The identity of the parties involved on both sides of the border creates common denominators, says Schouwstra. ‘Cultural differences are interesting. In general, you can say that the Germans show a little more ambition in the long term and that the Dutch are a bit more pragmatic, especially when dealing with direct contacts. I don’t see these differences as barriers, but rather as something positive. Aside from the exchange of knowledge and products, the cultural difference is very instructive.’

Lead partner

› Provincie Groningen

Projectpartner

› Provincie Drenthe, Assen
› 3-N Dienstleistungen GmbH, Werlte
› TechnologieCentrum Noord-Nederland, Groningen
› Technische Universiteit, Delft
› Mirolux Anlagenbau GmbH, Dersum
› Noordelijke Hogeschool Leeuwarden
› Hochschule Ostwestfalen-Lippe, Detmold
› Hanze University Groningen
› two German counties (Aurich, Emsland)
› three Dutch municipalities (Haren, Hoogezand-Sappemeer, Leeuwarden)

Total costs

› € 7.542.108,00

EU-contribution

› € 3.393.949,00

Project period

› 07/2009 - 03/2014

CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH CARE

TELEMEDICINE & PERSONALIZED CARE

Diabetics no longer have to use a hypodermic to figure out when and how much insulin they need to administer. Instead, a tiny sensor, placed in the eye of a diabetic will automatically measure their glucose level. The sensor was developed by Telemedicine & Personalised Care, the umbrella name for nine cross-border sub-projects that have to do with health care. Another project is a computer game that was developed to help rehabilitate children with equilibrium problems. The hardware of the game was developed by intensive cooperation between Dutch and German companies. The game and hardware have been tested in a Dutch rehabilitation centre. Both children and therapists were involved in the test phase. These are just two examples. What all these sub-projects have in common is that Dutch and German parties participated, and optimal use was made of each participant's specialisation. 'The intellectual exchange between the two countries is an important requirement in these projects,' says Evelien Dijk, Project

Manager at the development agency *Oost NV*, the lead partner of the INTERREG project Telemedicine. 'The project also focuses on long-term collaboration between the project partners. Sometimes that entails bridging a number of cultural differences. In order to let entrepreneurs experience that difference, a bus tour was organised where German entrepreneurs visited Dutch companies and Dutch entrepreneurs visited German companies. During the bus ride, the business people were given an explanation of the *do's and don'ts* of doing business in both countries. In short, what should you be on the lookout for when you are at the neighbours?' This is also important when it comes to collaboration across the border.'

‘Bridge cultural differences to accomplish long-term collaboration.’

Evelien Dijk



CHILDREN WITH EQUILIBRIUM PROBLEMS ARE REHABILITATED WITH THE AID OF A COMPUTER GAME

Lead partner

› Oost NV, Arnhem

Projectpartner

- › NovioTech BV, Nijmegen
- › MobilHealth, Enschede
- › Gewinet, Osnabrück
- › Zorginnovatieforum, Groningen
- › Mecon Engineering, Doetinchem
- › Grendel Games, Leeuwarden
- › Indes BV, Enschede
- › QC1 GmbH, Münster
- › Fachhochschule Münster
- › and other companies and research institutions

Total costs

› € 10.122.296,16

EU-contribution

› € 3.884.810,57

Project period

› 07/2010 - 05/2015

Website

› www.telemedicineandpersonalizedcare.eu

FIGHTING ALLERGIES TOGETHER

UNIHEALTH

It is estimated that at least 100 billion euros are lost every year in the European Union as a result of missed work due to allergic reactions to everyday things like household dust, animal hair, food and chemicals. UniHealth is working hard to make the lives of these people healthier and thus bring down costs for employers. The INTERREG project is developing a sensor system that can detect allergens and biomarkers to track what is going on in people's bodies. Dr Andreas Goehlich is project leader of UniHealth. Goehlich is an expert in the field of semiconductors and works at the Fraunhofer Institute of Microelectronic Circuits and Systems, which leads the project. Other large Dutch partners are Radboud University Nijmegen and Wageningen University. Some 20,000 substances can cause an allergic reaction. In conjunction with SMEs, UniHealth is developing a compact device for the rapid analysis of air, chemical or food product samples. This may help allergy-sensitive people to make an early diagnosis or to avoid these substances. Goehlich:

'We're at the beginning of the chain. At the micro level, we look at how we can make people's living and working environments safer and cleaner. We are also working on things like improving the quality of drinking water in developing countries.'

According to Goehlich, cooperation is very good. 'Our knowledge is synergistic: we complement each other well. Not only do German and Dutch scientists meet at conferences, but they also conduct actual experiments together in research centres.' Goehlich is convinced the project will be continued. 'The SMEs have responded positively. Normally, competition plays a role, but because we are involved, cooperation doesn't stop once the first goal has been achieved.'





IN THE FRAUNHOFER MST-LAB IN DUISBURG THEY DEVELOP
A SENSOR SYSTEM THAT CAN DETECT ALLERGENS AND BIOMARKERS

‘German and Dutch
scientists share knowledge
and conduct experiments
together.’

Dr Andreas Goehlich

Lead partner

› Fraunhofer IMS, Duisburg

Project partner

- › Radboud Universit t Nijmegen
- › Wageningen Universiteit
- › ModiQuest BV, Nijmegen
- › Nanosens, Zutphen
- › Tweehuysen BV, Nijmegen
- › SoliMateS, Enschede
- › Surfix BV, Wageningen

Total costs

› € 4.890.850,00

EU-contribution

› € 2.224.254,00

Project period

› 01/2009 - 04/2014

Website

› www.unihealth.info

STORIES, LEAVE TRACES VIEW



‘Things of cultural and historical significance often benefit nature and the environment.’

Dietrich Cerff

‘People generally associate cultivated landscapes with agriculture, but forests too have been strongly influenced by humans over the years. Think of fish ponds, hedgerows, avenues, star-shaped forests, etc. These are often traces that were left behind by people centuries ago.’ These are the words of Dietrich Cerff, project coordinator of VIEW, which aims to show these traces in the forest landscape to

the public, while managing our historical heritage – from the Veluwe to Duisburg. A forest has countless stories to tell, says Cerff. ‘For example, do you know why there are often pine forests in former mining areas? This is because pine is the only wood that cracks before breaking. It was therefore the ideal wood for building mine gallery support beams because, apart from being strong, the wood



HEDGE BANKS AND HEDGEROWS HAVE BORDERED THE REICHSWALD FOR 500 YEARS

also warned the miners if a support was about to break.’

VIEW is a collaborative INTERREG project between major Dutch parties such as Vereniging Natuurmonumenten (Society for the Preservation of Nature in the Netherlands), Staatsbosbeheer (National Forest Service in

the Netherlands) and Stichting Huis Bergh, and the German Niederrhein Regionalforstamt (Niederrhein District Forestry Office). Through excursions, walking and cycling routes, brochures, fold-over cards, a website, theme trails and a book series about landscapes, people are introduced to the stories behind the forests. The interest in culture and history goes hand in hand with the respect for nature, says Cerff. Beetles, woodpeckers and mushrooms thrive best in forests with dead wood. This can be seen in old avenues or hedgerows in production forests.

‘In Germany, forest history and a scientific approach to forestry has a long and rich history. In the Netherlands, it is now starting to be integrated into management practices. Apart from the fact that some forests quite literally cross the border, the added value of cross-border cooperation lies in learning about the various different approaches to forest management.’

Lead partner

› NABU-Naturschutzstation Niederrhein e.V., Kranenburg

Projectpartner

- › Vereniging Natuurmonumenten Gelderland, Arnhem
- › Vereniging Natuurmonumenten Noord-Brabant en Limburg, Eindhoven
- › Regionalforstamt Niederrhein, Wesel
- › Stichting Huis Bergh, 's-Heerenberg
- › Staatsbosbeheer Regio Oost, Deventer

Total costs

› € 1.282.560,00

EU-contribution

› € 602.488,00

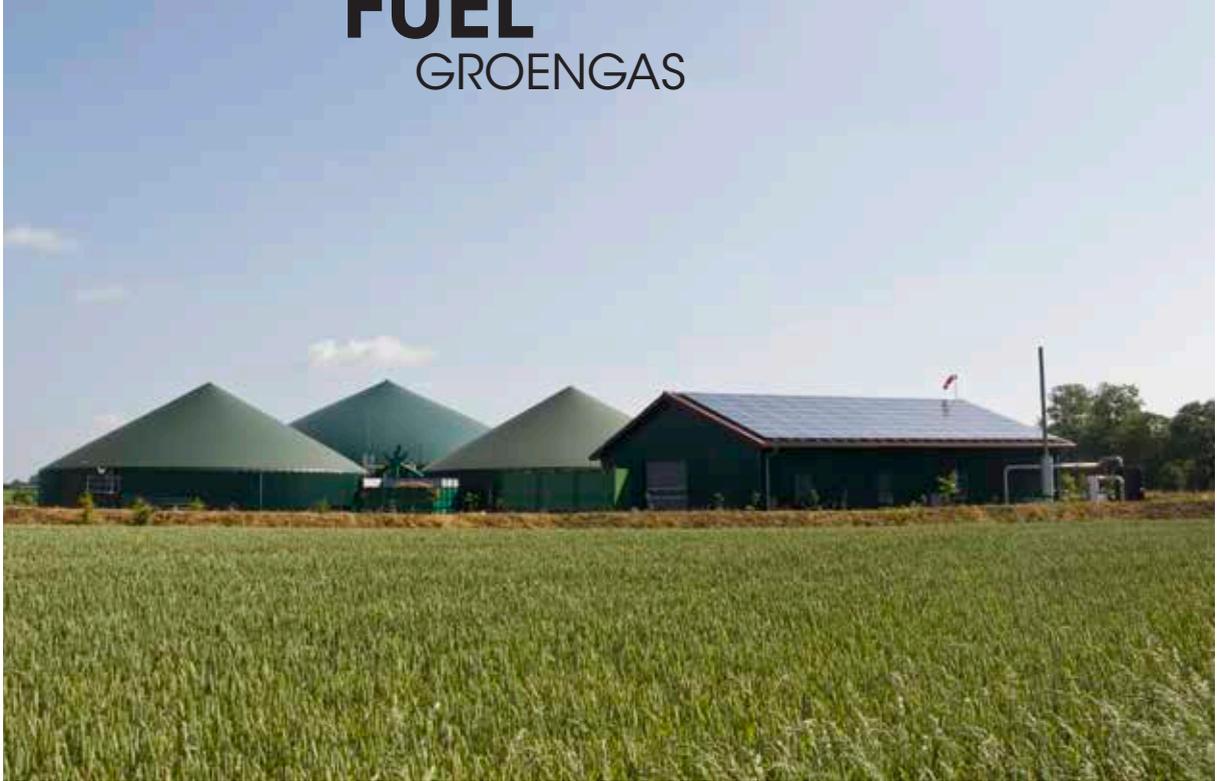
Project period

› 01/2011 - 03/2014

Website

› www.waldgeschichte-euregio-rheinwaal.de

FUTURE FUEL GROENGAS



A FERMENTATION PLANT ON A FARM IN LOWER SAXONY

‘Parties from several countries are explicitly seeking each other out and will continue to do so.’

Johan Scholte

Johan Scholte of the province of Drenthe describes GroenGas – a comprehensive INTERREG project involving cooperation between governments, industry and research institutes aimed at getting the most out of biogas – as follows: ‘Someone once aptly said that you can compare the production of biogas with a car from the 50s. It looks nice and is moving in the right direction, but there is still a world of possible improvements. We are working on exactly these improvements!’ Scholte continued, ‘We are involved in the entire process, from research and logistics to actual use.’

For example, one major challenge is to make it possible that trucks can also run on biogas. To achieve this, filling points will need to be created, matters will need to be discussed with the transport sector and trucks converted.’ According to Mr Scholte, cooperation between the Netherlands and Germany is turning out very well. ‘The dialectics of progress applies to the differences between the two countries. The Germans have more experience with the fermentation of crops into biogas since there has been more political support in Germany in recent years, including in the form of structural funding. There are a lot of relatively small anaerobic digesters in Germany. In the Netherlands, we are developing expertise particularly in the area of larger plants’, says Scholte. Despite the differences, gas is actually a European issue. ‘This is shown by the fact that Scandinavia is also interested in the topic. Parties from several countries are explicitly seeking each other out, and I’m certain they will continue to do so in the future.’

Lead partner

› Provincie Drenthe, Assen

Projectpartner

- › Provincie Groningen
- › Provincie Fryslân, Leeuwarden
- › Fachhochschule Münster, Steinfurt
- › Orgaworld BV, Drachten
- › HoSt, Enschede
- › 3N, Wertle
- › Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg
- › Groot Zevent Vergisting BV, Beltrum
- › Raiffeisen-Warengenossenschaft Emsland-Süd eG, Lünne
- › KWS SAAT AG, Einbeck
- › and other companies and research institutions

Total costs

› € 9.746.100,00

EU-contribution

› € 9.903.180,00

Project period

› 02/2011 - 12/2014

Website

› www.groengasproject.eu

LARGE BIOMASS FERMENTATION PLANT IN GRONINGEN



CROSS-BORDER BRIDGE- BUILDING

NPR
MEINWEG

Nature and culture don't stop at the border. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the Nationaalparkregio Meinweg (MeinWeg national park region), where natural beauty and cultural history on both sides of the Dutch/German border have been reunited. According to project manager Silke Weich, the area has a long common history: 'In the Middle Ages, the villages already shared the use of the area for logging and sheep farming. We have now literally joined the two sides through the construction of a wooden bridge over the Boschbeek, which separated the two countries.' But there's more to this INTERREG project. By connecting endangered habitats, nature is able to develop across the border. The area is special because of the terraced landscape that was formed in the Ice Age by the Rhine and the Meuse. 'These terraces are unique in the Netherlands. You basically walk upwards as you cross the border from the Netherlands into Germany.'

Walkers and cyclists can get to know the region better through themed routes. Bilingual guides tell visitors about the cultural history of the region. People are shown a nice overview of the landscape from various lookout towers. According to Weich, the project is also paying off on a personal level: 'We have trained people working in the area (for example, people working in the hospitality industry)

'Involvement in the area and cross-border encounters.'

Silke Weich

as ambassadors of the MeinWeg region. This creates involvement in the area and many interesting encounters take place. Visitors, employees and residents – they all come together in this beautiful area, on both sides of the border.'





BRIDGE FOR WALKERS OVER THE BOSCHBACH, THE NATURAL GERMAN-DUTCH BORDER IN DE MEINWEG NATIONAL PARK



MORNING MIST OVER ELFENMEER
IN DE MEINWEG NATIONAL PARK

Lead partner

- › Deutsch-niederländischer Naturpark
Maas-Schwalm-Nette, Roermond

Projectpartner

- › Gemeente Roermond
- › Gemeente Roerdalen
- › Stadt Wassenberg
- › Stadt Wegberg
- › NABU-Naturschutzstation Haus Wildenrath, Wegberg
- › Staatsbosbeheer Regio Zuid, Tilburg
- › Overlegorgaan Nationalpark De Meinweg,
Randwijck-Maastricht
- › Landesbetrieb Wald und Holz, Wesel

Total costs

- › € 950.000,00

EU-contribution

- › € 475.000,00

Project period

- › 04/2009 - 06/2013

Website

- › www.npr-meinweg.eu

FROM DIRTY GRASS TO CLEAN GAS

ENERGIELAND BIORES

'Science and business
on both sides of the
border complement
each other perfectly.'

Frederik Wanink

STRIP TEST TO EXAMINE THE PERFORMANCE POTENTIAL
OF INTERMEDIATE CROPS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF BIOGAS



Biogas is a clean and high-quality alternative to natural gas, which could eventually even partly replace it in time. But until then, a lot of research needs to be done on the various possibilities. Energieland BIORES is a cross-border INTERREG project, focused on the research and application of biogas. Project manager Frederik Wanink explains how he goes about producing biogas as cheaply and sustainably as possible. 'For example, we use roadside grass to generate biogas. An advantage of this method is that you are using a material that would otherwise simply have rotted away. That is, you're producing a gas that normally wouldn't have been formed. A disadvantage of using roadside grass is that it contains substances that interfere with fermentation, and therefore yields relatively little gas. It is therefore necessary to pretreat the grass in order to increase the percentage. What we do is test which machine is most suitable for this.'

Maize lends itself very well to conversion into biogas and is therefore used a lot, particularly in Germany. But isn't it better to use maize to feed animals? This is a social issue Energieland BIORES must take into account. Wanink: 'We are therefore looking for other crops that can be converted into biogas. We prefer to use

intermediate crops. These are crops that are grown when the soil isn't being used. For example, we are testing sunflowers, barley and rapeseed.'

According to Wanink, the cross-border nature of the project is definitely a plus. 'Sustainability is a big industry in Germany. The Netherlands, in turn, is good at agricultural research and developing business models. Thus, science and the business community on both sides of the border complement one another.'

Lead partner

› Landwirtschaftskammer NRW, Münster

Projectpartner

- › Fachhochschule Münster, Steinfurt
- › PlanET Biogastechnik GmbH, Vreden
- › Kreis Steinfurt
- › DNL-contact, Steinfurt
- › Landwirtschaftskammer Niedersachsen, Meppen
- › Bioenergiecluster Oost-Nederland, Enschede
- › Biogasvereniging Achterhoek, Aalten
- › AOC Oost, Almelo

Total costs

› € 1.666.674,00

EU-contribution

› € 833.337,00

Project period

› 01/2009 - 11/2012

Website

› www.biores.info

CROSS-BORDER DIGGING

2013 -
LAND DER
ENTDECKUNGEN



‘Political boundaries don’t exist in archaeology, so it is only natural that this collaborative project came about. This can also be seen in the fact that what is dug up hardly differs on either side of the border. We merged these objects in exhibitions, books, catalogues and scientific articles, in order to paint an even clearer picture of the history of the region. Creating this overall picture is the actual purpose of the project.’ says Dr Jan Kegler, project manager and co-founder of ‘Land der Entdeckungen’, the archaeological INTERREG project covering the entire Frisian coastal region, from the Dutch Friesland to the German Ostfriesland.

The treasures that are dug up can be anything, from dugout canoes to coin treasures, and from shards to golden dishes. The treasures include domestic utensils from the Stone Age to the present time, with most of the objects

Lead partner

› Ostfriesische Landschaft, Aurich

Projectpartner

- › Rijksuniversiteit Groningen - Groningen Institute of Archaeology
- › Groninger Museum, Groningen
- › Fries Museum, Leeuwarden
- › Drenths Plateau, Assen
- › Ostfriesisches Landesmuseum, Emden
- › Niedersächsisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, Oldenburg
- › Ev.-Luth. Kirchengemeinde Dornum
- › Marschenrat zur Förderung der Forschung im Küstengebiet e.V., Wilhelmshaven
- › Drenths Museum, Assen
- › and the provinces Fryslân, Groningen and Drenthe

Total costs

› € 983.540,00

EU-contribution

› € 491.770,00

Project period

› 09/2010 - 06/2014

Website

› www.land-der-entdeckungen.de



16TH CENTURY LEATHER JERKIN FROM GRONINGEN



"SOLAR DISC" FROM MOOR-DORF (1500-1300 BC)

originating from the Middle Ages.

‘The next target should involve Dutch and German archaeologists actually getting their hands dirty together, says Kegler. ‘We also want to get the public more involved in the excavations, for example, by calling in the help of amateur archaeologists. In general, the population in the Netherlands is more involved in archaeology, in the form of foundations and associations. In Germany,

‘Political boundaries don’t exist in archaeology, so collaboration is only natural.’

Dr Jan Kegler

an amateur with a metal detector isn’t allowed to just start scouring the countryside; he or she will first need a licence. On the other hand, I often hear Dutch people say that everything is so well organised in Germany. The clichés are thus confirmed, but this is a good thing. In this way, we still have a lot to learn from each other in the future, hopefully also in practice.’

CARE WITHOUT BORDERS - CAREFREE SECURITY

EURSAFETY
HEALTH-NET

Diseases caused by hospital-acquired infections are a major problem. This is true pretty much anywhere, and therefore also in the Netherlands and Germany. The INTERREG project 'EurSafety Health-net' aims to ensure patient safety in the border region. The emphasis is on the prevention of diseases caused by hospital-acquired infections resulting from antibiotic-resistant bacteria. As project manager, Prof. Alex Friedrich is closely involved in EurSafety Health-net. 'Although the Dutch/German border is open to patients in theory, this isn't always true in practice. This is due to the large differences in quality of care in hospitals and nursing homes. For example, there are thirty times the amount of hospital bacteria in Germany. From that perspective it is less safe for Dutch patients to go to a hospital in Germany. On the other hand, German patients visiting the Netherlands often end up waiting in quarantine. Conversely, there are for example three times as many surgical site infections in the Netherlands.'

To ensure patient safety, EurSafety Health-net has created a certificate which 149 hospitals have currently obtained. Friedrich: 'An international quality mark in the field of hospital bacteria of this kind is unique in Europe. The differences in specific areas between Germany and the Netherlands should be reduced, and in order for this to happen, the average quality must of course increase.' An additional advantage is that hospitals are able to serve a larger group of patients, allowing them to specialise more highly without having to hand over such specialisation to, for example, a hospital in the Randstad that does have enough patients with a particular syndrome. 'In the future, patients who are on the waiting list in Groningen should be able to easily visit Oldenburg or Leer, without having to worry about potential new risks,' says Friedrich. 'The national border that still exists in the field of care must be removed. Everyone will benefit from this. However, safety must of course always come first.'



PROF. ALEX W. FRIEDRICH, PROJECT MANAGER OF EURSAFETY HEALTH-NET¹
AND HEAD OF THE MICROBIOLOGY AND HOSPITAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT AT UMCG

‘Although the Dutch/
German border is open
to patients in theory,
this isn’t yet true in
practice.’

Prof. Dr Alex Friedrich

Lead partner

› Universitair Medisch Centrum Groningen, Groningen

Project partner

- › Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster
- › Landeszentrum für Gesundheit und Arbeit, Münster
- › Niedersächsisches Landesgesundheitsamt, Hannover
- › Kassenärztliche Vereinigung Westfalen-Lippe, Münster
- › Universiteit Twente, Enschede
- › Universitätsklinikum Düsseldorf
- › Gesundheitsamt Rhein-Kreis Neuss, Grevenbroich
- › Canisius-Wilhelmina Ziekenhuis, Nijmegen
- › and other companies and health care facilities

Total costs

› € 8.107.550,00

EU-contribution

› € 4.053.775,00

Project period

› 11/2008 - 06/2015

Website

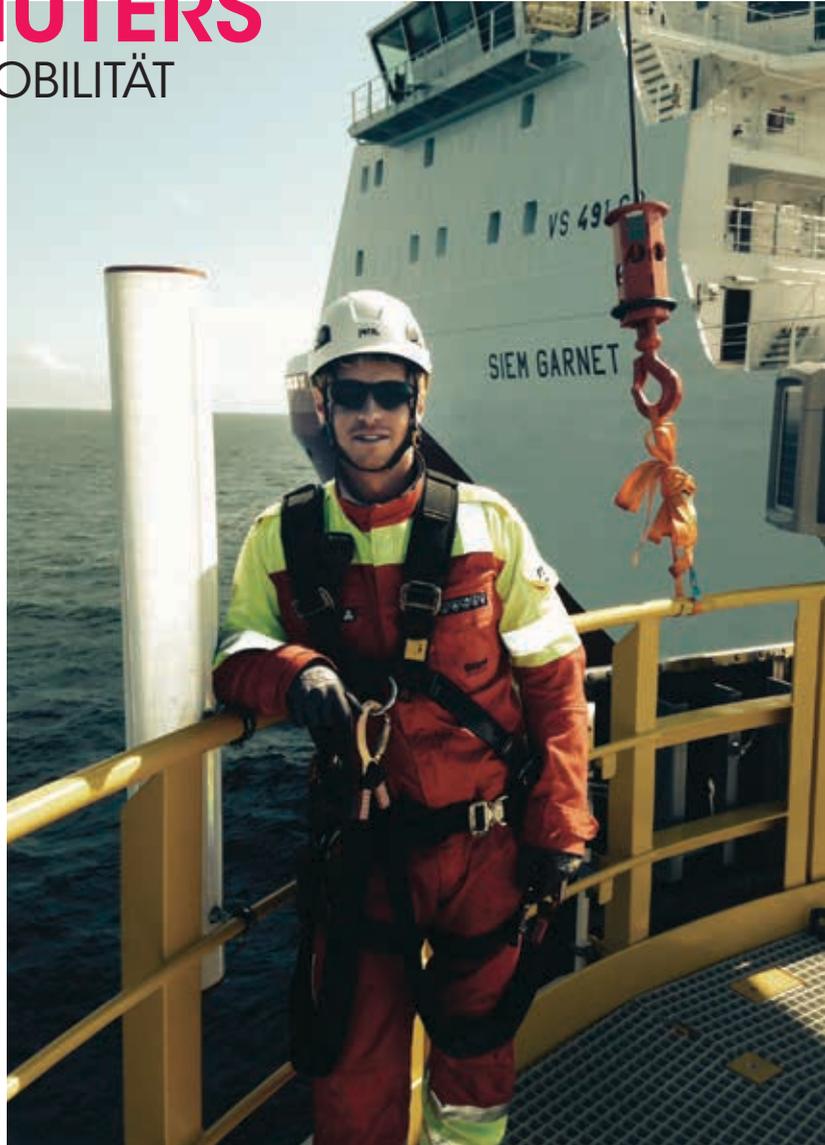
› www.eursafety.eu

TURNAROUND FOR BORDER COMMUTERS

MOBILITÄT

'Working in the neighbouring country should not be an end in itself, but it can be a lot simpler.'

Hinrich Kuper



JAMES MADDEN LIVES IN THE NETHERLANDS AND WORKS IN GERMANY AS AN OFF-SHORE CABLE FITTER

'If you move from Groningen to Vlissingen, about 350 kilometres, you stay within the same system. Rules change if you work 60 kilometres to the east.'

Hinrich Kuper of the INTERREG project *Mobilität in Nieuweschans* gives advice to people who live in Germany and work in the Netherlands or vice versa. Despite the opening of the borders, these so-called cross-border commuters still have to deal with many changes in the areas of taxes, social security, and residential law. 'Politicians often say: Borders no longer exist. The reality is, however, that those borders definitely still exist. You will notice little of it during a one day shopping trip, but if you work or live in the neighbouring country, then the term "emigrate" is still appropriate. That's why I'm here. To give people customised advice and to answer those questions that the government websites do not address.' Kuper makes about 3,500 contacts

per year. One third of those mail exchanges and conversations are with employers and two-thirds with employees. Both groups find that there are more opportunities on the other side of the border. In this way, part of the labour shortages and requirements are solved by the border commuters.

There are many things that people do not know because the laws and regulations in the two countries differ quite a bit. As a Dutchman who works in Germany you may be entitled to German child benefits, which is three times as much. Conversely, you can apply for mortgage interest deduction in the Netherlands. German employers reimburse travel expenses three times less than their Dutch counterparts.

Examples abound. Kuper: 'It's a personal calculation for everyone. People want to know where they stand, and that makes sense.'

The most important thing, according to Kuper, is that rules become more harmonised, and that the government agencies become more accessible to the public. 'Working in the neighbouring country should not be an end in itself, but it can be made a lot simpler. This will broaden the range of action for the border residents, and it will bring people from the countries closer together, and is, therefore, good for European integration.'

Lead partner

› Ems Dollart Region, Bad Nieuweschans

Total costs

› € 624.280,00

EU-contribution

› € 312.140,00

Project period

› 01/2011 - 06/2015



NURSE LUZIA CHRISTIANS HAS BEEN COMMUTING FOR NINE YEARS FROM GERMANY TO WINSCHOTEN

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOORS

SAFEGUARD

Animal diseases do not respect borders. It is therefore only logical that the Netherlands and Germany, both major players in the European food and agricultural sector, work together very closely. This is even more understandable when you consider that the border region is one of the regions in Europe with the highest livestock density. The SafeGuard project aims to improve animal health and food safety as well as to fight epizootic diseases and zoonosis. According to project manager Dr Oliver Breuer, we should look at what the sector itself needs. The consequences of vaccination are also considered. Another important component of the project is the testing of animal disease scenarios. Breuer: ‘This means mapping out and actually practising theoretical scenarios, from worst to best case. In the event of a crisis it is important to act as quickly and efficiently as possible, and there are often many parties involved. Which Dutch and German authorities work together at which time? Or in other words: who should call whom? This might seem simple, but there



‘Getting to know your neighbours so you can work as efficiently as possible during crises.’

Dr Oliver Breuer



RESEARCH STARTS WITH THE BASICS; BACTERIA IN A PETRI DISH

is actually a lot to consider. The complexity of the subject will play a role, but also the differences between the two countries, explains Breuer. ‘In Germany, a person needs to have done a job for ten years before they will be considered an expert at it. In the Netherlands, this will take much less time, because people are expected to frequently change jobs in order to maintain a fresh view. Conversely, there is a greater hierarchical structure in Germany. During such scenario testing – but also during workshops and seminars – people get to know their neighbours, which can come in very handy in times of crisis. Together, we try to learn from the past and anticipate potential future scenarios.’

Lead partner

› GIQS e.V., Kleve

Projectpartner

- › Wageningen Universiteit
- › Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster
- › Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
- › Institut für Tierwissenschaften, Bonn
- › Kreis Borken
- › CVUA, Münster
- › JZ Investments, Elst
- › Gezondheidsdienst voor Dieren, Deventer
- › Nds. Landesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit, Oldenburg
- › and other companies and research institutions

Total costs

› € 9.348.020,00

EU-contribution

› € 4.674.010,00

Project period

› 07/2008 - 10/2014

Website

› www.safeguard.giqs.org

CROSS- BORDER INSPIRATION

AKTIV ÜBER DIE GRENZE 2.0



COOKING CLASS IN THE TRAINING KITCHEN OF THE THEODOR BRAUERHOUSE IN KLEVE

The 'Aktiv über die Grenze 2.0' project aims to broaden the horizon of jobseekers in the border region. Or, as project leader Bernd Pastoors says: 'We want to promote the mobility of the unemployed, both in their perceptions and physically. This INTERREG project aims to increase the opportunities of jobseekers by taking a look across the border.'

How does this work? In cooperation with local authorities on both sides of the Dutch/German border, around fifty jobseekers followed a five-week course to learn the language and culture of their neighbours and thus increase their chances of finding a job. The course members were given tips by a work coach, practical information and were offered an internship.



REFRESHING SKILLS IN THE WOOD WORKSHOP

Although the labour markets of the two countries might have a lot in common, there are still many things that are done quite differently across the border. Dutch companies generally pay better because there is a legal minimum wage, but it is often easier to get a longer-term contract in Germany. Dutch and German jobseekers also got together to share experiences. Companies, too, responded enthusiastically, says Pastoors. 'Companies can benefit from hiring a person from across the border in order to serve their customers in the other country better. We hope to expand this project and develop it further.'

'Increasing the opportunities of jobseekers by looking across the border.'

Bernd Pastoors

They were also taught how to write a letter of application, because this is done quite differently in the two countries, says Pastoors: 'In Germany, a good application can easily run up to twelve pages, complete with diplomas and certificates, while things are a lot less formal in the Netherlands, where a single A4 is more than enough. We help the students to apply this in practice.'

Lead partner

› Theodor-Brauer-Haus, Kleve

Projectpartner

- › Kreis Kleve
- › Gemeente Overbetuwe, Elst
- › Regionale Sociale Dienst de Liemers, Zevenaar

Total costs

› € 50.345,00

EU-contribution

› € 25.000,00

Project period

› 08/2013 - 01/2014

CAROTTS DON'T GROW IN JARS

GK GK



CHILDREN PRACTICE THEIR COORDINATION SKILLS WITH THE BALL

'Gesunde Kinder in Gesunden Kommunen' (GKGK) lives up to its name. The INTERREG project focuses on creating the healthiest possible living environment for children aged six to ten. 'GKGK stands out from similar projects by targeting multiple aspects,' says project manager Prof. Roland Naul. Exercise and diet are central, but a great deal of attention is also paid to reducing the use of games consoles or TV, and the improvement of environmental factors. Coordinators or coaches sit down with parents, schools, sports clubs and local authorities to make concrete agreements. Some forty schools on both sides of the border have been involved in the project now for over three years, and the results speak for themselves. For example, the BMI (Body Mass Index) of virtually all children participating in the project dropped significantly. But other things have been also been achieved, says Naul. 'Overweight children are losing weight, having more fun while doing sports and improving their motor skills and are feeling more as a part of their class or year group.' One of the achieved targets is making sure the children get sixty to ninety minutes of exercise a day. In addition, children also receive one hour

'Fit Children feel more a part of the group.'

Dr Roland Naul

a week of nutrition lessons at school, including cookery classes and 'taste lessons'. According to Naul, 'lifestyle lessons' might actually be a better name for these classes. 'We teach children from the cities that cows aren't purple, and that carrots don't grow in jars.' Children also attend school sports tournaments across the border. 'This creates a cross-border dialogue between children, PE teachers and sports clubs. An additional advantage is that young children take the first steps towards getting to know each other's language and culture.'

Lead partner

› Willibald Gebhardt Institut e.V., Essen

Projectpartner

- › Europäische Akademie des Sports, Velen
- › Nederlands Instituut voor Sport en Beweging, Bennekom
- › Gelderse Sportfederatie, Arnhem
- › Sportservice Noord-Brabant, Goirle
- › Unfallkasse Nordrhein-Westfalen, Münster
- › Betriebskrankenkasse Landesverband Nordrhein, Essen
- › Landessportbund Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg
- › and various Dutch and German municipalities

Total costs

› € 1.880.070,00

EU-contribution

› € 940.035,00

Project period

› 09/2008 - 09/2013

Website

› www.gkgk-online.de

'POLITIE' EN 'POLIZEI': ON DUTY TOGETHER

GRENZÜBERSCHREITENDES POLIZEITEAM

'Cooperation has become a lot easier since the Treaty of Enschede in 2005,' says Martin Piepmeyer from Bad Bentheim, the headquarters of one of the first cross-border police teams in Europe. Before that, there was no legal basis for German and Dutch police forces to form a team. Criminals don't respect borders, or in fact do, by thinking that they can use them to escape more easily. In both cases, the specially trained team springs into action. 'A total of twenty policemen and women received refresher training in the field of international law and culture and were given language classes. They do police work specific to border regions, such as combating human trafficking, drug trafficking and illegal migration. They of course also do regular police work such as theft and daily patrols.' These patrols are usually done in pairs consisting of a Dutch and a German officer. Who's in charge will depend on which side

of the border they're on. This usually changes several times a day. 'When they are in the Netherlands, the Dutch officer will be in charge. When they are in Germany, the German officer will take over. However, they have the same rights.' The *Grenzüberschreitendes Polizeiteam* can count on citizens' understanding. 'We've never had any problems, even when making arrests with a German police car in the Netherlands.'

The team works together with local police forces and the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary (Koninklijke Marechaussee). There are no fundamental differences in mentality between Dutch and German officers, notes Piepmeyer. 'There is mutual respect and trust. The Dutch officers are sometimes jealous of the German cars, and Germans sometimes look with envy to the communication technology of the Dutch forces. However, much can be learnt from these small differences.'



‘Working as
one team,
through
mutual respect
and trust.’

Martin Piepmeyer

Lead partner

› Polizeidirektion Osnabrück, Osnabrück

Project partner

› Politieregio Twente, Enschede
› Kreispolizeibehörde Borken
› Staf district Kmar Noord-Oost, Zwolle
› Bundespolizeidirektion Hannover

Total costs

› € 867.059,00

EU-contribution

› € 416.188,00

Project period

› 06/2008 - 03/2014

Website

› www.de.g-p-t.eu

IN THE BORDER REGION, INHABITANTS MAY COME
ACROSS BOTH GERMAN AND DUTCH POLICE HATS

LEARNING FROM YOUR NEIGHBOURS

GRENZENLOS LERNEN



SCHOOLCHILDREN ENJOYING THEIR BREAK IN FRONT OF THE VALUASCOLLEGE IN VENLO

Young people benefit from a safe environment, both at home and at school. As project manager of 'Grenzeloos Leren' (Learning without constraints), Ilse Dewael of the Valuascollege in Venlo is working on ways to offer young people a learning environment that is as safe as possible. Her work isn't focused exclusively

on her own school as she also works with two German schools, the Maximilian-Kolbe-Schule and Hermann-Gmeiner-Schule, both in the city of Neuss.

The INTERREG project is extremely varied. Drug and alcohol misuse prevention are on the agenda. Students receive lessons in internet safety and social media. Workshops and lectures are designed to teach teachers and students about safety inside and outside the classroom. In addition to these serious issues, there is also a circus project, says Dewael. 'Young people from schools on both sides of the border who normally might not come into contact with theatre have put together and performed a complete circus programme.' Another example is the new, clear signposting at the Valuascollege. Dewael: 'It might seem like a small thing, but it's a huge improvement. Not only new students and parents, but also emergency services visiting our school for the first time have really benefited from this. It's simple and effective.'

'A strong, cross-border network has been created, which is simple and effective.'

Ilse Dewael

External aid agencies will also have a bigger role. If there are problems with a student in the Netherlands, authorities such as the Youth Care Office (Bureau Jeugdzorg) and the school attendance officer are called in. 'This has been partly taken over by the German schools, who have their own system for dealing with such problems. The result of 'Grenzeloos Leren' is that a strong, cross-border network has been created, taking the form of, for example, an intensive form of collaboration between the Dutch and German police in the area of education. We heard rumours that schools from outside the region are going to start a similar programme.'

Lead partner

› Valuascollege, Venlo

Projectpartner

- › Politie Limburg-Noord, Venlo
- › Maximilian-Kolbe-Schule, Neuss
- › Hermann-Gmeiner-Schule, Dormagen
- › BCO Onderwijsadvies, Venlo
- › Kreispolizeibehörde Neuss

Total costs

› € 369.155,00

EU-contribution

› € 184.577,50

Project period

› 01/2010 - 05/2013



125 cross-border projects,
more than 1500 German and
Dutch project partners,
more than 310 million euro
invested in the border-region,
1 programme – INTERREG IV A
Deutschland-Nederland



INTERREG - Grenzregionen gestalten Europa
Europäischer Fonds für Regionale Entwicklung der Europäischen Union

INTERREG - Grensregio's bouwen aan Europa
Europees Fonds voor Regionale Ontwikkeling van de Europese Unie