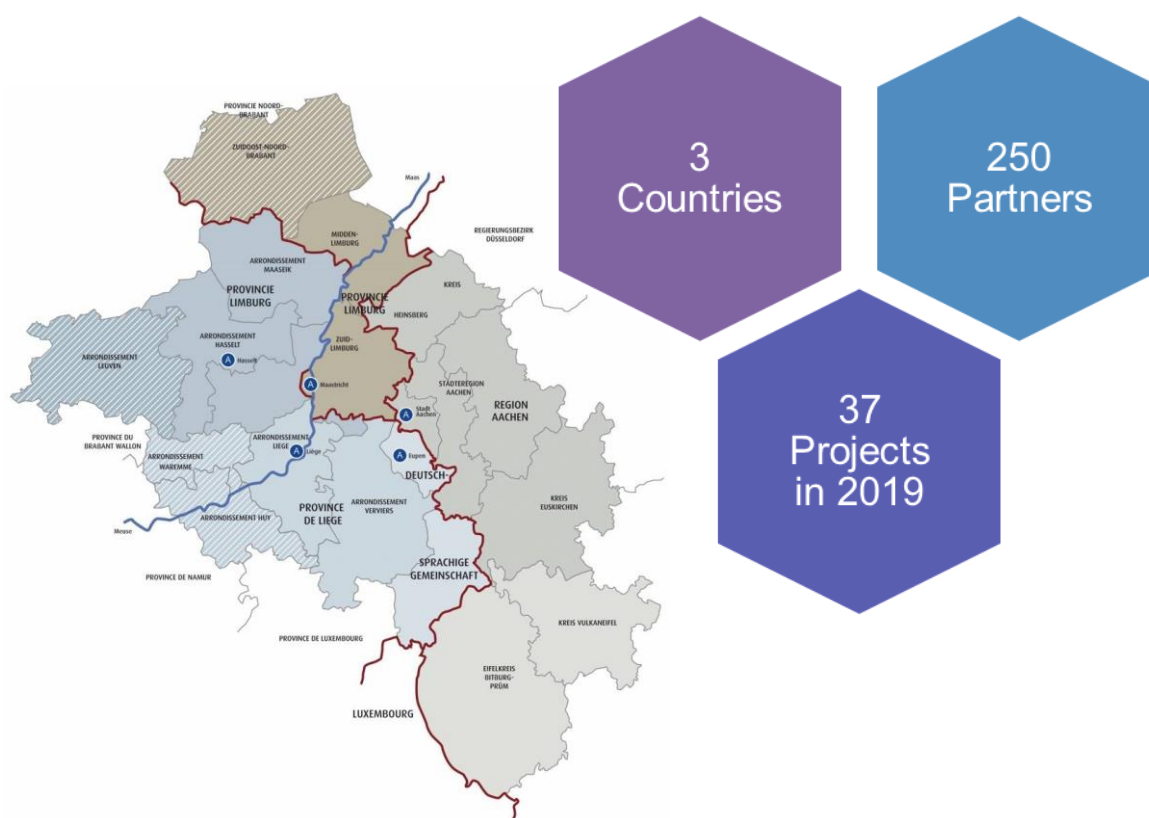


Annual Implementation Report 2019 CITIZENS' SUMMARY

The Annual Implementation Report of the Interreg Euregio Meuse-Rhine programme (Interreg EMR) for 2019 provides detailed insight into the programme's activities between 1 January and 31 December 2019. This Citizens' Summary presents **key points and highlights** from the year.

The European Union strives to reduce disparities in the levels of development, growth and quality of life in and across Europe's regions. Interreg Euregio Meuse-Rhine contributes directly to this objective by supporting cross-border collaboration between the **Netherlands, Belgium and Germany**.

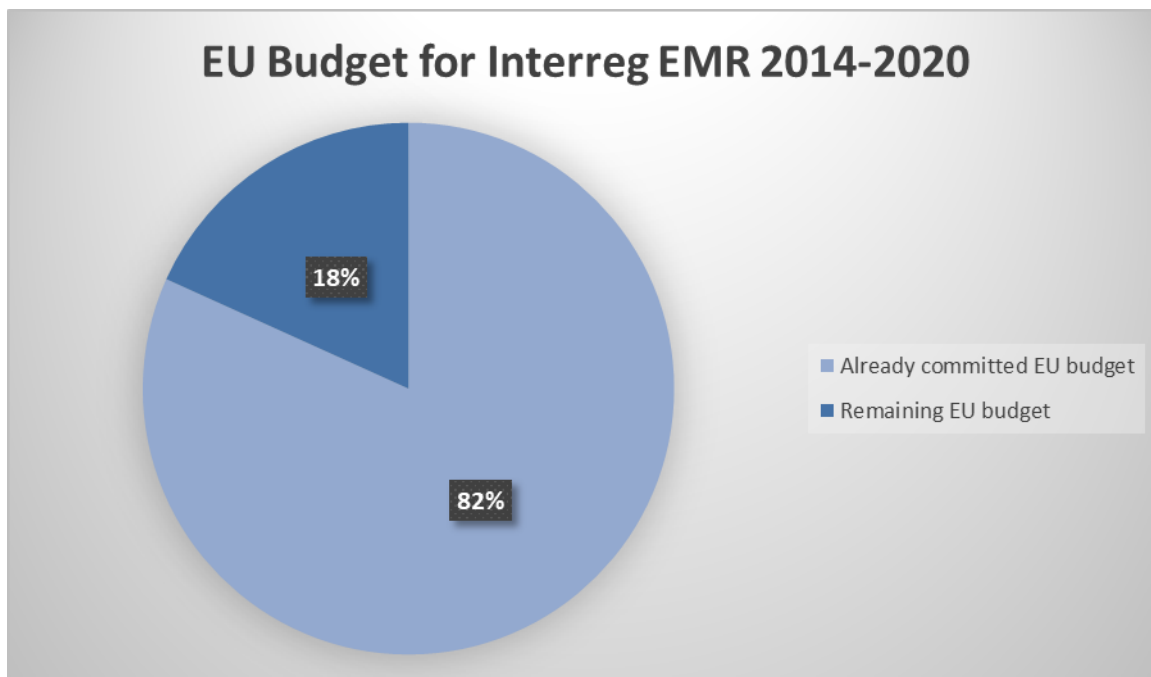
Cross-Border Cooperation in Areas and Numbers



In 2019, 37 cooperation projects saw **250 partners** in Germany, the Netherlands

and Belgium work on shared goals and building **long-lasting networks and partnerships**.

The European Union invests **EUR 96 million** from the **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)** into cross-border projects in our region from 2014-2020. Furthermore, **EUR 44 million** are envisioned to be invested in Interreg EMR projects by other means of funding (e.g. regional or private funding) within the programme period.



Until the end of 2019, almost **EUR 78.5 million** of the European Union funding have been committed. The remaining 18% will be available during calls for projects in 2020.

Objectives of Interreg EMR

The objectives of Interreg EMR are to support innovative ideas, boost the economy, support educational projects and as well as removing barriers between the three countries. We aim to create a favourable cross-border atmosphere, to encourage people to seek and also build business opportunities and other forms of cooperation beyond their national limitations.

In 2019 we have supported projects in each one of the **priority areas**. You can find a breakdown of the number of projects in the different focus areas below:



Highlights from our Projects in 2019

JANUARY

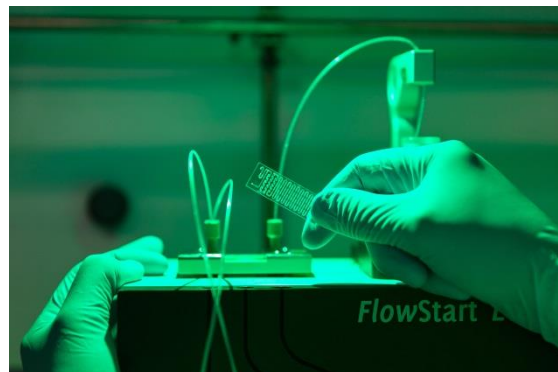
Flexible energy sources

At the Eindhoven High Tech Campus, Regional Minister of the Dutch Province of Brabant Bert Pauli opens **ROLLING SOLAR**. Led by TNO, **ROLLING SOLAR** develops a business case for flexible, easy-to-apply solar panels. They can be fixed on 'ugly' infrastructure such as noise barriers and sidewalks. With the need for new locations for renewable energy, **ROLLING SOLAR** is the right project at the right moment.



Flow chemistry

IN FLOW kicks off in Liège. **IN FLOW** – an acronym for 'innovation' and 'flow chemistry' – will support the uptake of flow chemistry among SMEs. This cutting-edge production method allows them to produce new and innovative health and personal care products. The project plans various pilots and an open platform where companies will share know-how. Ultimately, the participating SMEs should be ready for market testing. Find **IN FLOW** at www.inflow-emr.eu



Cross-border crisis response

Floods, a nuclear disaster or the outbreak of a virus: disasters and crises do not halt at borders. This means that the police, fire brigades, ambulance services and other emergency services from Belgium, Germany and The Netherlands should work together. Led by Maastricht University, **IKIC Public Safety** will train emergency services, public servants and citizens to improve such cross-border response. **IKIC Public Safety** started in Aachen and launched their website: www.ikic-publicsafety.eu.





Healthy lifestyles

'Drinking beer is part of watching football'. 'A daily glass of wine is healthy'. Sometimes, unhealthy behaviour is based on false assumptions and becomes the 'social norm'. A good example is excessive drinking among university freshmen or daily drinking in the age group above 55. Our project **euPrevent Social Norms Approach** develops campaigns and invites citizens to reflect critically on their lifestyle. Regional Minister Hans Teunissen opens the project at the kick-off event in Maastricht. More information:

www.euprevent.eu/project-social-norms-approach



FEBRUARY

Dexter, the robot

Our project **I2-CORT** installed a remote-handling robot at the Adelante Zorggroep in Hoensbroek (NL). The robot, which was given the name Dexter, lets his operator feel what he is handling. This is called 'feeling at a

distance'. While originally used in the nuclear power sector, i2-CORT introduces 'remote handling' in health-care. Dexter will train patients who, after a stroke or paralysis, are unable to move their arm or hand. 'Feeling at a distance' will be part of their rehabilitation practice. www.i2-cort.eu



Rare diseases

Every year, World Rare Disease Day is held on the last day of February. Our project **EMRaDi** organised a conference in Maastricht to raise awareness about the 300.000 patients in the Euregio that are afflicted with a rare disease.



MARCH

Cross-border travel

German students can travel to Maastricht for free. Thanks to our project **EMR Connect**, they can use their semester ticket on multiple train and bus lines operated by Arriva. 45.000 students of RWTH Aachen can make use of the offer; 15.000 students from FH Aachen join later in 2019. Hans-Peter Geulen of project leader Aachener Verkehrsverbund calls it 'a milestone on the way to a cross-

border semester ticket.' www.emr-connect.eu



Find more information at www.n-powerinterreg.eu.



APRIL

500 kg of waste

Our project LIVES organises a litter clean-up at the banks of the Meuse. In Kinrooi, Belgium, 70 volunteers pick up 500 kg of waste. **LIVES**, led by Provincie Limburg (NL), starts collaboration with partners from Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands to reduce the 'plastic soup' in rivers and streams.



Co-creation: get down to work

Municipalities need new ways to revive urban areas that are in decline, such as poor neighbourhoods and former industrial sites. **N-POWER** will offer training, test new financing approaches and will involve citizens in 'co-creation' projects. Genk Mayor Genk Wim Dries opens the project: 'Citizen participation is not just a hype. It means that together you have to get down to work.' The project plans pilots Aachen, Genk, Eupen, Heerlen, Liège, Seraing and Verviers.

MAY

Virtual heritage

Our project Terra Mosana turns Euregional history and cultural heritage into digital presentations, including through Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality. This benefits conservation, monitoring, the acquisition of scientific data, and playful learning. At the Europe Day festival in Düsseldorf, **Terra Mosana** offers visitors a virtual tour through the Belgian Renaissance castle Jehay. Immersed in the experience, some visitors forget they're actually sitting on chair at the Marktplatz in Düsseldorf.

www.terramosana.org



Tailored healthcare innovation

Technology in Healthcare Education presents the results from the academic year 2018-2019 in Hasselt. The project brings healthcare and technology together through co-creation between product designers,

healthcare staff and students. The project develops over 30 case studies. Find more information at www.technology-in-healthcare-education.eu



Cross-border traineeship: 'You'll benefit from this in your career'

At a ceremony in Eupen, 22 trainees receive a certificate for their traineeship elsewhere in the Euregio, in another language. **EUR.friends** organises cross-border vocational training for hundreds of young people. While working in sectors such as accountancy, technology, construction and hospitality, they acquire work experience and language skills.

Pierre-Yves Jeholet, Minister of Economy of the Walloon Region said: 'This responds to the needs of the needs of companies. Young people are flexible and creative.' He congratulated the trainees for having made this choice. 'You will benefit from this in your future career'.



JUNE

Natural Park High Fens-Eifel

Three different authorities in Belgium and Germany manage the Natural Park High Fens-Eifel. With the support from Interreg's People to People fund, they intensified their cooperation. In five workshops they discussed future concerns and objectives. Input from 80 participants resulted in joint projects and a mission statement for future cross-border collaboration.



A win-win situation

While the healthcare sector faces staff shortages, refugees are eager to work. Our project IDZ-UDZ brings the two together and arranges work placements. At a seminar in Limbricht (NL), **IDZ UDZ** held a seminar where it shared its expertise with municipalities and refugee and healthcare organisations.

Some participants shared hands-on experience, including Taha (45) from Syria: 'In our culture we find it important to take good care of old people.' More information: www.idz-udz.eu.



Willkommenskultur

Attracting international talent is a priority for the Euregio. **youRegion** invests in a region that offers an attractive place to work, live and do business. Such a climate should help retain newcomers, expats, employees and companies. **youRegion** kicked-off with a conference in Maastricht. The project will harmonise and expand Euregio-wide advisory and placement services for newcomers and will invest in a Euregional 'Willkommenskultur'. More info: www.youregion.eu



AUGUST

Walking and cycling

The app **Euregio Grenstochten** offers 60 walking and cycling routes in the Euregio. The app is developed with support from Interreg's People to People fund. It offers detailed information, maps and sightseeing tips for tours around the tri country point. Users receive instructions in German, English, French and Dutch.

SEPTEMBER

Euregional summer school

36 students attend the summer school of our project **EMR Connect**, 'Improving inclusive Mobility in the Digital Age'. Together with professionals, they study and discuss the future of mobility at six different locations: Hasselt, Liège, Aachen, Kerkrade, Maastricht and Spa-Francorchamps.



Dementia

On World Alzheimer Day (21 September), the World Health Organisation Europe recognises our project **euPrevent Senior Friendly Communities** as a best practice. The project develops a local, multi stakeholder approach to address dementia and old-age depression. The World Health Organisation published two factsheets on the project.



OCTOBER

Dementia harp

Technology in Healthcare Education is given the CERA Award, a Belgian annual prize for young talent in social profit-driven innovation. The project receives the prize for the 'dementia harp'.

Developed for the elderly home Toermalin in Genk, the dementia harp is a typical example of tailor-made healthcare innovation. The device triggers 'sensory stimulation: it encourages patients to feel, see and hear. Music, sounds and images from the patient's youth evoke memories of the past and activate the long-term memory. This creates clear moments and enables interaction with family and other residents. More information at www.technology-in-healthcare-education.eu



Plastic soup

LIVES launched its project with a kick-off event in Kerkrade. The project aims at reducing litter in the Meuse by 50%. Along its course through France, Belgium and The Netherlands, waste from industry, agriculture, shipping and households gets into the river, of which 84% plastic. **LIVES** will test different 'waste-catchers' that filter litter from the water. Laboratory tests were able to remove 90% of the litter from the water.



Across borders and sectors

At the Liège Theatre, IMPACT organises a festival on the crossroads of the performing arts and new technology. That makes **IMPACT**'s not only a project across borders, but also across sectors. IMPACT has delivered 50 shows, 25 workshops and 18 prototypes.



NOVEMBER

Immigrants and refugees

At a dissemination event in Liège, **TREE** selects the first results of a study into status of and needs for asylum and integration policies in the Euregio. Led by Volkshochschule Aachen, TREE offers training to social workers, teachers, medical staff and interpreters as a basis for the integration of immigrants.



Project showroom

HYPEREGIO – a cooperation between the projects **EarlyTech**, **BuSyBee** and **Innovation2Market** – organises its

'Project Showroom'. The ending projects EarlyTech and Innovation2Market attracted some 4.500 participants at over 80 events. 25 SMEs and 11 knowledge institutes received 18 vouchers of a total worth of EUR 129.000. www.hyperegio.eu.



DECEMBER

Cycling

In Beringen, **Cycling Connects** organises its kick-off event. The project will connect cycle routes in the Euregio to provide comfort, information and security for the cyclist. Across the routes, they will be able to experience a diversity of languages, cultures and landscapes.



'Rare diseases are not rare'

Successful examples from Interreg projects deserve the attention elsewhere in Europe. In the European Parliament, **EMRaDi** delivers recommendations on how to help patients with rare diseases. The Belgian Members of the European Parliament Frédérique Ries and Pascal Arimont host and endorse the project.

300.000 in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine are afflicted by a rare disease. Due to the difficult diagnosis, most patients go through a long ordeal before they even know what disease they have. They often look across borders to find the right healthcare professional. EMRaDi improves cross-border cooperation between patients, healthcare organisations and insurance schemes.



The art of growing older

Like elsewhere in Europe, the Euregio has an ageing population. This raises the prevalence of dementia (about 2%) and old-age depression (about 25%). Our project **euPrevent Senior Friendly Communities'** established a local approach to address the two. The project organised over hundred cross-border activities in cooperation with 31 different municipalities.

At the closing event in Stolberg, Germany, the project released the book 'The Art of Growing Older'. The book gives an artistic view on old-age depression and addresses the taboo that growing old happily is not evident for everyone. Find out more about euPrevent Senior Friendly Communities at www.euprevent.eu/senior-friendly-communities-the-kick-off.



Healthcare innovation

Technology in Healthcare Education becomes the runner-up in Zorgvinding 2019, a healthcare innovation competition. The project receives EUR €7.500 for the dementia harp. Developed for an elderly home in Genk, the device activates patients with dementia.

Currently a prototype, the makers see opportunities for large-scale application in other nursing homes. The project team is currently forming a team to prepare bringing the dementia harp on the market.



New Projects Approved in 2019

In 2019, Interreg Euregio Meuse-Rhine concluded the 5th call for projects. This resulted in 6 new projects starting early 2020.

The 5th call opened in October 2018 and closed on 11 June 2019, receiving 15 project submissions. Earlier, 20 projects were provided feedback on their draft proposal. In November 2019, The Monitoring Committee selected 6 projects.

Call 5 offered funding under our priorities Innovation, Economy, and Education and Social Inclusion. A total of EUR 33 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was made available. Close to EUR 16,3 million of means from the European Regional Development Fund was allocated to the 6 new projects.



Innovation

Three new projects address our priority investment Innovation. A total of EUR 11.9 million from the European Regional Development Fund was allocated to the following those three projects.

AACOMA

Innovative material design and advanced manufacturing provide large opportunities for SMEs. New materials such as composites can make their way to a wide array of sectors like transportation, especially automotive, building and infrastructure, consumer products and machine tool industry.

At the same time, such innovation poses risks to SMEs. They should invest in expertise, skills, human resources, demonstrations and testing.

AACOMA will support advanced composite manufacturing in close cooperation with companies and research institutes. To demonstrate feasibility, quality and productivity, it will use advanced technologies in material's systems development and integrative lightweight manufacturing.



Lead Partner: CENTEXBEL

Support from European Regional Development Fund: € 1.478.453,06

E-TEST

The Einstein Telescope will provide new insights into the beginning of the universe. Its infrastructure will be buried 300

meter below the surface to reduce human-, wind- and ground-induced vibrations and movements. E-TEST is an important component of Einstein Telescope. It will run an underground study to map and model the geology of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. This should help identify the optimal design and location of the Einstein Telescope. E-TEST will also build a prototype - a large mirror suspended at cryogenic temperature - to validate the telescope's technology.



Lead Partner: Liège Interface Entreprises

Support from European Regional Development Fund: € 7.498.398,10

GYM – Generate Your Muscle

GYM is an acronym is 'Generate your Muscle'. Maintaining the muscle mass and muscle strength are essential to a healthy life. Unfortunately, diseases and ageing cause the loss of muscle mass. Until now, no methods are available to treat muscle breakdown.

However, recent discoveries have shown that muscle stem cells can encourage the production of healthy muscle fibres. Generate Your Muscle will test such muscle stem cells therapy. Specifically, it will address the therapy's safety and effectiveness for patients with muscle disorders. Ultimately, the project wants to scale up muscle stem cell production in a new spin-off company. This should make the therapy affordable and broadly available.



Lead Partner: Maastricht University

Support from European Regional Development Fund: € 1.422.888,23

Economy

The 3 projects - DigitSME, QRM4.0 and ST@EAM - receive funding under the investment priority Economy. They were assigned almost EUR 4,4 million of subsidies from the European Regional Development Fund.

DigitSME

SMEs need an international and digital mind-set. DigitSME will strengthen SMEs in those fields. The project will first map their digital and international maturity levels. Then, in cross-border clusters and with the help from experts, the companies will improve their digital and international competences. Finally, the entrepreneurs will receive coaching to shift towards digital marketing and successfully enter markets abroad.



Lead Partner: IHK Aachen

Support from European Regional Development Fund: € 761.282,35

ST®EAM

The scarcity of natural materials calls for a circular economy that uses sustainable materials. New materials do not only require fewer resources; they also bring about opportunities in innovative product development and product design. ST®EAM

brings together scientific and technological expertise on new sustainable materials. The project coaches and guides SMEs in this transition. In a co-creation process, it will develop 40 prototypes of innovative circular materials. While capitalising on the latest developments and insights from the design sector, ST®EAM will encourage new forms of entrepreneurship.



Lead Partner: UC Leuven & Limburg

Support from European Regional Development Fund: € 1.947.073,07

QRM4.0

Customers expect fast delivery times and highly customized products. This forces SMEs to transform their production processes to a new way of manufacturing. Speeding up manufacturing requires human-centred process innovation ('Quick

Response Manufacturing') and innovative digital technologies ('Industry 4.0').



QRM4.0 will support SMEs in their Quick Response Manufacturing journey through coaching, training and the sharing of expertise and best practices. Participating SMEs will receive practical know-how and will learn from hands-on workshops, company visits, demonstrations and interactions with innovation leaders. Through a voucher system, they will receive support and coaching to transform and digitize their production process. A learning network of manufacturing SMEs and IT solution providers will serve as a platform to exchange best practices.

Lead Partner: SIRRIIS

Support from European Regional Development Fund: € 1.682.154,27

You want to know more about Interreg EMR?

... Please do not hesitate to contact us!

On our **website**, www.interregemr.eu, you can find out more about us as well as all of the projects that we support. If you are interested in applying for **funding** yourself, please refer to the menu item "funding" on our website.



Would you like to receive more information about a call and the application process? Please get in touch your regional contact person.

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