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## ***b-solutions***

### **FINAL REPORT BY THE EXPERT**

**Advice Case:** Tackling cross-border obstacles regarding E-bike sharing infrastructure

**Advised Entity:** Ministry of the German-speaking Community, BE

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## 1. Introduction

In recent years, the interest in the development of (cross-border) mobility in the German-speaking Community of Belgium (also known as the *Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft Belgiens*, [www.ostbelgieninfo.be](http://www.ostbelgieninfo.be)) has increased. In 2018 an extensive study on multimodality in rural areas in the German-speaking Community was performed, in the form of a Master's thesis. This study showed that there are many opportunities for further mobility development. Furthermore, a cross-border INTERREG V A project "EMR Connect" (Euregio Maas-Rijn Connect), between the border regions of Belgium (including the German-speaking Community), Germany and the Netherlands, treating the development of (cross-border) mobility, is carried out.

Within the context of 'b solutions', a study was carried out for the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) considering "Tackling cross-border obstacles regarding e-bike sharing structure" in the border region of the German-speaking Community and Aachen. The German-speaking Community comprises nine municipalities, four are located in the north and five in the south (see figure below). This study focused on the four northern municipalities: Eupen, Kelmis, Raeren and Lontzen. This Advice case is constructed mainly based on the data that are generated through interviews with representatives of regional and local authorities and other stakeholders.



*The area of the German-speaking Community in Belgium (in red) with the 4 northern and the 5 southern municipalities.*

The German-speaking Community is known as the Ostbelgien region ([www.ostbelgienlive.be](http://www.ostbelgienlive.be)), an area with a rural character, containing 77,000 inhabitants. The region works closely with the neighbouring French-speaking community in Wallonia on various themes, such as tourism. The German-speaking Community also works closely with the urban region (Städteregion) of Aachen. The Städteregion Aachen contains about 250,000 inhabitants, of which about 55,000 are students.

Considering walking tourism, the cross-border cooperation between the German-speaking Community and Städteregion Aachen proceeds very well: a cross-border area walking hub (flächendeckendes Wanderknotenpunktesystem) has been set up, with a corresponding app, the Charlemagne app ([www.charlemagne-grenzregion.eu/euregio-grenztouren-app-ist-online](http://www.charlemagne-grenzregion.eu/euregio-grenztouren-app-ist-online)). For bicycle tourism, infrastructure of cycle paths and secondary roads suffices ([www.ostbelgien.eu/de/fahrrad](http://www.ostbelgien.eu/de/fahrrad)). Mobility



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between the two regions is stimulated by the demographic development in and around Aachen; housing is expensive and the first 500 houses for students from Aachen have already been built in Vaals (NL)

([www.wohnenundlebenivaals.de/de/haufig-gestellte-fragen/studentisches-leben/welchen-wohnraum-bietet-vaals-fur-studierende](http://www.wohnenundlebenivaals.de/de/haufig-gestellte-fragen/studentisches-leben/welchen-wohnraum-bietet-vaals-fur-studierende)). Many students already live across the border, e.g. in Raeren.

Formally, projects regarding mobility and transport are decided upon by the government of Wallonia and the federal government; the German-speaking Community cannot provide input in this area and can only indirectly be active in this area, through related themes (tourism and partial competences in the field of energy). Moreover, consultation on mobility and public transport (ÖPNV) between the German-speaking Community and Wallonia has been at a standstill for several months, during this phase Wallonia did not have a government. However, since mid-September 2019 Wallonia has a new government. Contradictory to the authority of the German-speaking Community, the individual municipalities have the opportunity to develop their own mobility plans.

In addition, the European INTERREG program offers possibilities for co-financing cycle routes, e.g. the Vennbahn and Ravel cycle routes have been realised in this way ([www.ostbelgien.eu/de/fahrrad/vennbahn/vennbahn-ravelstrecken](http://www.ostbelgien.eu/de/fahrrad/vennbahn/vennbahn-ravelstrecken)). As of January 1, 2020, the tasks and competences for spatial planning and urban development will be transferred from the Walloon government to the government of the German-speaking Community. Yet this will not directly increase the German-speaking Community's involvement with mobility either, as it affects mobility to a limited extent.

In the area of the German-speaking Community Fahr mit is an agency financed by the LEADER program, that focuses on enhancing of the mobility for the inhabitants of the German-speaking Community through various actions and campaigns. Currently, all nine municipalities of the German-speaking Community are involved in a bicycle concept (Radverkehrskonzept) that focuses on daily (non-tourist) mobility (Alltagsmobilität). Velocity, a company from Aachen, is currently making plans together with the German-speaking Community to set up a cross-border e-bike rental system, that should promote bicycle traffic between Aachen and the four northern municipalities of the German-speaking Community. The cooperation between the German-speaking Community and Velocity focuses on commuting (Berufsmobilität) and multimodality, in which the e-bike is proposed as an alternative to the car and as addition to the public transport. Given the topography of the area and the relatively large distances, it is assumed that the introduction of a cross-border e-bike rental system offers good opportunities to reduce car traffic (especially commuting). Since some of the current roads (Regionalstraßen), including the Eupen - Aachen connection, are not suitable for (intensive) bicycle traffic, appropriate solutions should be sought when implementing a cross-border e-bike sharing infrastructure.

The Aachen urban region is currently working on a bicycle traffic concept (Radverkehrskonzept) as well, which offers opportunities for the German-speaking Community's bicycle concept. However, due to the different procedures involved with the two concepts, Aachen and the German-speaking Community were unable to collaborate on setting up the framework of these concepts.



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Various governments and stakeholders point out that the number of tourist cyclists seems to be increasing and that an increase in car traffic is observed as well. However, these findings have not been tested in practice in the German-speaking Community; bicycle and car traffic are only monitored in a limited way. Nor has any research been carried out into the willingness of car drivers to switch to alternative means of transport, such as e-bikes. However, Aachen did recently carry out a mobility study in which 1200 households were surveyed ([www1.wdr.de/nachrichten/rheinland/mobilitaet-studie-aachen-100.html](http://www1.wdr.de/nachrichten/rheinland/mobilitaet-studie-aachen-100.html)).

This Advice Case focuses on "Tackling cross-border obstacles regarding e-bike sharing". It examines the current state of the art, provides further background information and discusses the (outcomes of the) study using the AEBR format.

## **2. Cross-border e-bike sharing structure, state of the art**

In 2018 the German-speaking Community and Velocity started to explore the possibilities of extending Velocity to Belgium. This meant a possible extension of inter-municipal connectivity and for Velocity an expansion from the urban working area to more rural areas.

Velocity ([www.velocity-aachen.de](http://www.velocity-aachen.de)) was founded in 2011 as a start-up from the RWTH Aachen University and currently the company owns 50 bicycle stations (with a growth towards 140 bicycle stations with 1000 bicycles in the city area of Aachen). Velocity has 5000 private customers in Aachen, who are active in Kerkrade (NL) and Belgium as well. Furthermore, the company has many business customers in Aachen.

The expansion to East Belgium requires the establishment of an 'operating company', Velocity Belgium; Velocity Belgium will take the form of a public-private partnership, set up between the German-speaking Community and Velocity under Belgian law. Velocity Belgium will be primarily responsible for the bicycle stations in East Belgium and will contract Velocity Aachen for building these stations. In addition, the German-speaking Community will finance the (as yet) 22 bicycle stations and Velocity Belgium will rent 130 e-bikes from Velocity in Aachen. Further consultations on financial agreements are to take place still, after which this public-private partnership is officially set up in the course of 2020. The Minister President of the German-speaking Community has explained this in public at a press conference in May 2019.

As a response to the traffic developments in the Aachen region, there is increasing pressure on politicians to take action and tackle the mobility issues. The "Aufbruch Fahrrad" initiative is putting politics in North Rhine-Westphalia under pressure ([https://www.aachener-zeitung.de/nrw-region/initiative-aufbruch-fahrrad-setzt-nrw-politik-unter-druck\\_aid-46239219](https://www.aachener-zeitung.de/nrw-region/initiative-aufbruch-fahrrad-setzt-nrw-politik-unter-druck_aid-46239219)). The city of Aachen spends € 48 million in 7 years on cycling infrastructure.

### **Information on Velocity**

*Many of the bicycle stations were built in the start-up phase by means of a subsidy (€ 300,000) from the City of Aachen.*

*The prospects for a business case are good: when renting out a bike 4 to 5 times a day there already is a healthy financial basis. The cost of renting an e-bike is € 1.50 per 30 minutes, though this rate will be increased slightly. With a "Velo 30" membership (€ 12 / month), the user has the right to use a bike for up to 30 minutes consecutively, without limitation.*



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After those 30 minutes, a stop at a bicycle station is required after which the new 30 minutes can start. The comparable annual membership costs € 78.

The need for an e-bike sharing system is great; not only students use the bikes, the elderly do as well. Primarily, Velocity reaches the public transport traveler (and not so much the "real cyclist"). There is a lot of cooperation with AVV, the Aachener Verkehrsverbund (<https://avv.de/de/>) and Cambio, provider of carsharing ([www.cambio-carsharing.de/aachen](http://www.cambio-carsharing.de/aachen)).

There are 25 companies that have built a bicycle station (either for 6 or 12 bicycles). These companies finance the construction of the station and receive advertising in the app or on the bicycle in return.

Velocity did not consider a "free floating" system (a dockless bike hire system in which the bicycles can be left in one place at will), but requires that e-bikes are delivered to a bicycle station. This creates larger user commitment and reduces the risk of damage.

The latest development in Aachen are the so-called "e-cargo-bikes", that will soon be launched at supermarkets. With respect to the hilly landscape, the swap bike is not seen as a competitor. Finally, the city of Aachen occasionally tries to "obtain" some of the financial success of Velocity.

### 3. Specific background information about the four northern municipalities and Fahr mit

As the initiative of the German-speaking Community and Velocity for a cross-border e-bike rental system concerns the four northern municipalities, providing some background information is necessary. Fahr mit will also be discussed in this chapter.

Currently, some of the four municipalities are in the process of drawing up their own mobility plans, only accounting for the area within the borders of the municipality. The representatives of the municipalities emphasized that cross-municipal coordination is desirable because mobility often does not stop at the municipal boundaries.

The municipalities in Belgium do not have to pay for the service of public transport. Therefore, municipalities often refer to a higher tier of governance or to volunteers who are active in the field of mobility. The technical services and building commissions of the four municipalities in particular, are focused on the car as a means of transport and are therefore sometimes insufficiently open to mobility alternatives. This is gradually changing, for example in Eupen.

A particular point of attention for the four municipalities concerns the subsidy relationship with Wallonia: as a result of the long-term change of government, no subsidy decisions for new projects have been issued for a longer period of time, forcing projects into a (temporary) stoppage. In addition, Wallonia has very strict subsidy conditions, which means that relatively little money has been spent on projects in the German-speaking Community. It is assumed that this is not the case for the French-speaking community in Wallonia.

A negative consequence for the four municipalities of transferring tasks to the German-speaking Community and the corresponding increase in demand for qualified staff, is that the knowledge and experience of municipalities diminished, as staff goes from the municipalities to the German-speaking Community.

A point of attention is the financial situation of the four municipalities: Raeren and Eupen are doing well financially, but the for the financial management in Kelmis and Lontzen there is room for



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improvement. Their current financial situation prevents these municipalities from making an active contribution to the mobility issues.

**Eupen**, with about 20,000 inhabitants, is developing a mobility study and, together with the city of Liège, is conducting a car-sharing study, by means of a survey. Consultations with inhabitants are taking place in order to realize a car-free city at weekends.

In Eupen the bus network is being expanded. In addition, on a short-term bus traffic will no longer pass through the city and there will be a connection to the train station. Despite initial hesitations, Eupen has had positive experiences with the construction of an expensive railway tunnel (costs of € 1 million), which has become a great success and is widely used by cyclists and pedestrians; investing in alternatives to promote mobility appears to be worthwhile.

In **Raeren**, several smaller projects are in progress to improve cross-border mobility towards Aachen; covering a distance of 3 to 5 km. Furthermore, Raeren works on its own mobility plan as well.

The challenge for **Kelmis** is to create a good connection with the N3 road, as well as with Eupen, Raeren and the adjacent Walloon area. Many German employees and students live in Kelmis. The municipality of Kelmis also has to deal with goods traffic for the local entrepreneurs as a result of which streets are sometimes blocked. In the German-speaking Community, the issue of the north-south traffic is most challenging, while east-west traffic goes relatively well.

Interviewees from **Eupen**, pointed out that the population growth (with 700 - 800 new houses for the coming years), leads to an increase in car traffic; many roads deal with traffic jams during peak hours. The city currently considers car-sharing alternatives as well as further measures. In many of the 1,000 parking spaces in Eupen, parking spots are occupied not by tourists or commuters for long periods of time.

As far as **Lontzen** is concerned, it is particularly important to set up a Velocity cycle station at Welkenraedt station, which is located in the French-speaking Community ("across a border"). This location is important in terms of local and regional mobility.

Recently, the Mobility Week took place in the German-speaking Community, focusing attention on bicycle traffic. In Raeren, for example, attention was drawn to safe bicycle traffic for commuters ([http://www.vivreici.be/videos/detail\\_woche-der-mobilitat-raeren-fordert-sichere-radwege?videoId=944972](http://www.vivreici.be/videos/detail_woche-der-mobilitat-raeren-fordert-sichere-radwege?videoId=944972)).

The implementation of the Velocity e-bike rental system in **Eupen** and **Raeren** is expected to proceed well, though some attention should be paid to the bicycle infrastructure and road safety. In fact, Raeren is a front runner in this area: the municipality wants to set up a bicycle station on the border, at the Köpfchen border crossing, by pre-financing Velocity. This location is important as this is the point at which a direct and alternative cycling route to Aachen begins.

Critical questions from the municipalities regarding Velocity in East Belgium concern maintenance, service and the collection and delivery of the e-bikes from and to the stations. Are these tasks performed by a local SME within the German-speaking Community, or is it organised from Aachen? In this process, local and regional anchoring is essential.



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## Fahr mit

Fahr mit ([www.fahrmit.be](http://www.fahrmit.be) and [www.facebook.com/fahrmit.be](https://www.facebook.com/fahrmit.be)) was founded by the social sector of the four municipalities in 2006, as a non-profit oriented association. The aim, in view of the limited public transport in East Belgium, is to provide mobility solutions for people who do not own a car. Since 2014, Fahr mit has received funding from LEADER twice. Fahr mit has an advisory function with regard to mobility issues, organises information meetings and runs a free "lift centre". Next to this, the organization is involved in projects considering "pick-up parking spots" (Mitfahrzentrale), "communal village cars" (Dorfautos) and cycle paths. In the end Fahr mit wants to achieve sustainable mobility, including cycling, especially for those groups in society who do not have a car and/or a driving licence. Many activities of Fahr mit are performed by volunteers.



One of the greatest successes of Fahr mit in east Belgium is the creation of the "blaue Bank" (Ostbelgian Mitfahrbank), ([www.wochenblatt-reporter.de/c-lokales/mobil-durch-die-mit-fahr-bank\\_a70948](http://www.wochenblatt-reporter.de/c-lokales/mobil-durch-die-mit-fahr-bank_a70948)). This Mitfahrbank is an addition to public transport, as this point is introduced as the location from which people in need of regional transportation can be picked up by other cars; active neighbourhood support contributes to solving mobility issues ([https://www.aachener-zeitung.de/lokales/aachen/blaue-bank-wirbt-fuer-nachbarschaftliche-hilfe-beim-fahren-von-a-nach-b\\_aid-32846649](https://www.aachener-zeitung.de/lokales/aachen/blaue-bank-wirbt-fuer-nachbarschaftliche-hilfe-beim-fahren-von-a-nach-b_aid-32846649)). The success of the Mitfahrbank is based on people's own experience and observed positive experiences with the "blaue Bank" in Flensburg and the Eiffel, among others. No monitoring is carried out so far and no statistics are kept.

Fahr mit has indicated that they should do more marketing, to increase the success of the concept even more.



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#### 4. Format with questions

For this Advice Case, in the context of 'b solutions', the AEBR has developed a format with specific topics. These topics (I to VI below) are discussed separately.

- I. Description of the obstacle**
- II. Indication of the (legal/administrative) dispositions causing the obstacle**
- III. Description of a possible solution / Roadmap**
- IV. Pre-assessment of whether the case could be solved with the ECBM**
- V. Other relevant aspects to this case**
- VI. Appendix**

##### **I. Description Of The Obstacle**

The obstacle regarding the e-bike sharing infrastructure for this cross-border cooperation between the German-speaking Community and Velocity has been discussed in detail in the previous chapters. It can be described as follows: *how can the German-speaking Community and Velocity, with the involvement of the municipalities, set up an organisational structure in the region of the four northern municipalities in order to achieve a well-functioning cross-border e-bike system, that meets the demands of potential users and thus contributes to sustainable cross-border development and boosts cross-border socio-economic development?*

##### **II. Indication Of The (Legal/Administrative) Dispositions Causing The Obstacle**

The challenges of the realization of a cross-border e-bike sharing infrastructure do not lie in legislation and regulations. The division of competences between the German-speaking Community and Wallonia may play a role (the German-speaking Community has no formal competences in mobility, traffic and transport), but this only has a relatively small impact. The various practical matters that need to be set between the German-speaking Community and Velocity (and possibly the four municipalities) in a legally sound manner, e.g. matter concerning the establishment of Velocity Belgium, are not expected to lead to any difficulties. The alignment of local mobility plans of the municipalities and the connection of these plans to the cycling concept of the German-speaking Community is also more a matter of communication and awareness than a legal issue. The reason for this is that the municipal mobility plans are introspective and do not directly affect areas outside of the municipal boundaries. The German-speaking Community has an important role to play with regard to mobility concepts in an area with 77,000 inhabitants.

In view of the current infrastructure and the limited financial possibilities, it is not feasible to build a 20 km long cycle path along the current north-south main road; it would be the optimal variant but is far too expensive.

Though challenges do not lie in legislation and regulation, various other aspects might play a role, such as area characteristics, cooperation, involvement and communication between the authorities involved and awareness.

The most important aspects are as follows:





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- The distances within the German-speaking Community are relatively large, advocating the car as the main mode of transport and thus the car is a major competitor to other modes of transport.
- Irregular frequency of buses.
- The (bicycle) infrastructure and safety for cyclists should be improved and is therefore an important point of attention. Herein the creation of non-main roads as an alternative is essential.
- Good signage is necessary.
- INTERREG and other subsidy programs do not finance of the actual construction of infrastructure (asphalt and concrete). Perhaps so-called missing links can be financed by these subsidy programs.
- With regard to the participation of companies, employers should raise awareness of the bicycle as a means of transport.
- Awareness must also arise with car users; moreover, the use of the bicycle fits well in the context of healthy aging and employee fitness and is beneficial for the environment and climate.
- Car users must become aware of a larger number of cyclists on the (relatively narrow) roads.
- Bicycle parking boxes for storing e-bikes safely are required.
- Consultations regarding the financial participation and financial distribution key for the four municipalities in the establishment of Velocity Belgium have to take place.
- A change in mentality, a new attitude towards the means of transport, is needed: from "owner of a car" to "someone who has a car or bicycle (on call) available".

Inter-municipal cooperation on mobility needs to be improved, in the sense that there should be coordination on a global level of the municipal mobility plans that are currently developed by Eupen, Raeren, Kelmis and Lontzen. The priorities must be jointly formulated and based thereon, each municipality can elaborate their own plans, emphasizing the themes that are most important in that municipality.

Besides (strategic) planning, the German-speaking Community and Velocity will realize approximately 22 bicycle stations. The fact that the four municipalities do not formally participate in Velocity Belgium, but may contribute to the costs, requires more attention. Intensified communication between the involved parties may offer a solution as the municipalities are interested in participating in the project. The German-speaking Community and Velocity have planned bicycle stations for all municipalities.

When the four municipalities join forces, they might be able to formulate and carry out their wishes and ideas stronger to partners as the German-speaking Community and Aachen. It is important for municipalities to become more involved with regional mobility issues and to look beyond the municipal boundaries (and perhaps also cross-border), whereby local issues may be resolved regionally.

The legal (private law) aspects concerning the construction of the bicycle stations are discussed below.



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### III. Description Of A Possible Solution

The preparations for a cross-border e-bike sharing infrastructure are well advanced. The two initiators, the German-speaking Community and Velocity, are working closely together and have a common goal and implementation trajectory in mind. The four municipalities are enthusiastic; in view of the large number of commuters, there is a great need in which the experiences of Velocity, gained in the German rural area, can play an important role.

An inventory and analysis of the mobility potential should be carried out; the number of commuters is known, but information on the demand for alternatives for these commuters is required, as well as an indication on the willingness to change. By obtaining this information, a product that suits the target group best can be developed.

The initiatives within the German-speaking Community on Business Mobility Management ("betriebliches Mobilitätsmanagement") and carsharing can play a role towards a possible solution. Also campaigns aimed at car drivers can be developed. In addition, the German-speaking Community's Energy and Climate Plan can set impulses ([www.ostbelgienlive.be/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-6015//linkid-32008/catid-1502](http://www.ostbelgienlive.be/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-6015//linkid-32008/catid-1502)).

For optimal use and accessibility, a region-wide network of e-bike stations using secondary roads is needed. As mentioned before, road markings and lines for cyclists on the roads are also needed.

Specific legal requirements apply to the bicycle stations:

- A permit to build a bicycle station (establishment permit) from the municipality or the Velocity Belgium.
- A license concerning the operation of the bicycle station.
- Electricity supply to the station from the electricity grid, with a permit and a contract.

The implementation of the e-bike sharing infrastructure, assuming the project will start in 2020, contains multiple steps:

- Establishment of the Velocity Belgium under Belgian law (by the German-speaking Community and Velocity).
- Establishment of the business case and financing (including consultation and agreement with the four municipalities).
- Construction of the bicycle stations.
- Purchase or rental of the bicycles at Velocity in Aachen.
- Marketing.
- Establish rental conditions (set the price and answer questions such as 'can someone living in Aachen also enter into a contract with the Belgian Exploitation Company?').
- Start the "first rent" (the user enters into a contract with the Belgian Exploitation Company).
- Good communication with the four municipalities.



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It is assumed that the acceptance of e-bikes on public roads in Germany and Belgium is similar (note: this was not the case for the admission of Dutch swap bikes in Germany).

The remaining points of attention are as follows:

- The allocation of VAT.
- The interest of and decision making by politicians (the German-speaking Community and the four municipalities).
- The involvement of Proma AG and the possible participation of Ostbelgien Invest (<http://ostbelgieninvest.be>).

In addition, matters relating to accidents and liability and related insurance questions must be discussed (e.g. a single German insurance policy that also covers all bicycles hired and moving in Belgium).

#### **IV. Pre-Assessment Of Whether The Case Could Be Solved With The ECBM**

The European Cross-border Mechanism (ECBM) is hardly known to the representatives of various authorities and stakeholders. In view of the current development and cross-border cooperation concerning the implementation of a cross-border e-bike sharing infrastructure, it is not considered necessary to directly apply this new EU instrument. It is considered ineffective to apply German law to this project within the German-speaking Community, as the primacy of mobility in terms of legislation and regulations lies with Wallonia (or Belgium). The extent to which the ECBM could have been used in setting up a cross-border mobility plan is not included in this study.



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#### **European cross-border mechanism (ECBM)**

*The European Commission proposed a regulation for a mechanism to resolve legal and administrative obstacles in cross-border regions as part of the legislative package for EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027. The mechanism is known as ECBM, or European Cross-border Mechanism. The regulation will allow one Member State to apply their legal provision in another Member State for a concretely defined case. This proposal is particularly interesting as it does not give further competence to the European level, but changes how Member States may interact with one another, yet, it raises critiques as regards to its compliance with constitutional, international and European law. This paper outlines the main elements of contention, which are legal justification, state sovereignty, compliance with the subsidiarity and proportionality principle, thematic and territorial scope, voluntariness and the administrative burden. The paper concludes that the assessment of the voluntariness of the regulation will be crucial in examining the regulations compliance with EU principles, and suggest that a more nuanced reading as to which parts of the regulation are voluntary is needed. The legal text will likely change substantially during the legislative procedure, in particular in regard to the thematical scope and the bindingness. This piece summarises the debate currently held in the European Council and the European Parliament in a structured way to an interested readership. Examining the proposed regulation and the arguments for and against it offers the opportunity to review the main arguments that will be raised in any future debate on legal proposals on territorial development initiatives.*

[www.researchgate.net/publication/328770964](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328770964) The European Commission's proposal for a cross-border mechanism to resolve legal and administrative obstacles in cross-border regions

#### **V. Other Relevant Aspects To This Case**

Governance actors and politics in the four municipalities in the northern part of the German-speaking Community are very interested in starting up this e-bike rental system, based on the Aachen model. To this end, a financial investment and billing model (in which a municipality gets also delivered some revenues) between the German-speaking Community, Velocity and the four municipalities is in development. Revenues at this moment will go to the German-speaking Community and Velocity.

So far the e-bike sharing structure in rural parts of Germany has delivered good experiences, for example in Ravensburg (where the concept is more focused on tourism) and in Oberforstbach, south of Aachen, where there is a large industrial area, where 5,000 people work.

For cyclists in Ostbelgien there has been a cross-border cycling hub for over 10 years. The user can relatively easily cross the former railway line from Aachen Main Railwaystation (Hbf.) to Raeren and take a secondary road to Eupen from there.

Velocity has not conducted any surveys yet, but received already positive reactions from potential customers. For companies in Ostbelgien, active promotional material will be developed as soon as "Velocity Ostbelgien" is formally established.

The possible implementation of the e-bike sharing structure in East Belgium takes place with participation of Proma AG, the development agency of East Belgium. The purpose of



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this agency is to provide support for planning, development, implementation and operation of all kinds of activities related to the regional development of East Belgium ([www.ostbelgieninfo.be/fr/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-5345//linkid-30394/catid-1445](http://www.ostbelgieninfo.be/fr/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-5345//linkid-30394/catid-1445)).

## **VI. Appendix**

See the annexes hereafter:

1. Identifying obstacles to cross-border cooperation with 'b-solutions' second call for proposals
2. Velocity Projektentwurf für die Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft
3. Velocity: Calculation of operational costs (Kalkulation Betrieb)
4. EMR Connect, INTERREG V A Project
5. Masterthesis "Konzeption eines nachhaltigen Mobilitätskonzepts für die Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft Belgiens", Andreas Graff

*Jan Oostenbrink*



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## **Annex 1 Identifying obstacles to cross-border cooperation with 'b-solutions' second call for proposals**

The second call for proposals for the selection of thirty-five advice cases under the pilot initiative *b-solutions* closed on 12th April 2019. 44 cases have been submitted, being most popular topic “institutional cooperation” followed by “public transport of passengers” and “employment”. 35 winning cases will be granted an expert support in legal/administrative matters to elaborate a possible solution. We also explore how b-Solutions cases can provide arguments to support the Commission’s proposal of a European Cross-Border Mechanism (ECBM).

The second call for proposals for the selection of thirty-five advice cases under the pilot initiative *b-solutions* closed on 12th April 2019.

Promoted by DG Regio, the initiative is aimed at tackling legal and administrative border obstacles along EU internal borders. To do so, cross-border practitioners have been offered the possibility to describe real and documented obstacles experienced while cooperating with the neighbouring country. The objective of the project is to document obstacles to cross-border cooperation which are identified bottom-up so to increase knowledge on CBC and to formulate innovative policy recommendations addressing the needs of border regions.

The call envisaged eight different thematic areas, according to the communication “Boosting Growth and Cohesion in European Border Regions” adopted by the EU Commission on 20th September 2017, namely: eGovernment, Employment, Evidence and Data, Health, Information Services, Institutional Cooperation, Multi-lingualism, Transport.

Among the forty-four cases submitted during the second call for proposals, the most popular topic is “institutional cooperation” followed by “public transport of passengers” and “employment”.

EGTCs, regional authorities, municipalities and other euroregions from fifteen European countries participated in the call. Difficulties to cooperate have been detected on twenty-one different internal borders and two EFTA countries, stretching from Portugal to the eastern borders of the Union, from Norway to Italy and Greece.

The thirty-five winning cases that will be identified by the Selection Committee will be granted an expert support in legal/administrative matters applied to cross-border regions in order to elaborate a possible solution for the obstacle described.

AEBR will announce the list of successful applications soon and will share all the future updates on the platform “[Boosting EU Border Regions](#)” put at disposal by the European Commission.

Also, while the second call was open, AEBR invited the representatives of two pilot projects selected with the first call for proposals of *b-solutions*, currently under implementation, to a workshop organised in Saarbrücken (Saarland, Germany) on 5 April 2019, to explore how b-Solutions cases can provide arguments to support the Commission’s proposal of a European Cross-Border Mechanism (ECBM). This mechanism is the result of an early proposal presented by Luxembourg during their Presidency of the European Council in 2015, and a process of analysis with a variety of stakeholders during 2016 and 2017 promoted by Luxembourg and France and including other Member States. The MOT coordinated this working group, and the overall approach has been integrated by the Commission in its proposal from 29 May 2018.



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### Annex 3 Velocity Projektentwurf für die Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft (B)



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Velocity Aachen ist seit 2016 ein stetig wachsendes Projekt: E-Bike-Sharing für alle Menschen und alle Wege im urbanen Raum.

Kerkrade (NL)

Velocity Aachen

- + 144 % Nutzungen in 2018 (>25,000 Fahrten)
- + 106 % Stationen in 2018 (35 Stationen)

Seite 3

Mit aktuell 35 Stationen betreiben wir neben der weiteren Verdichtung des Netzes die Ausdehnung in den ländlichen Raum.

Kerkrade (NL)

Herzogenrath

Aldorf

Baarsweiler

Würselen

Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft (B)

Velocity Aachen

- + 144 % Nutzungen in 2018 (>25,000 Fahrten)
- + 106 % Stationen in 2018 (35 Stationen)

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## Velocity Aachen GmbH

### MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Dennis Brinckmann**  
Vertrieb und Marketing,  
Key Account Management

**Tobias Meurer**  
Finanzen, Software,  
Unternehmensentwicklung

**Dr. Johannes Trieb**  
Technische Entwicklung,  
Produktion und Betrieb

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Projektmanager Aachen

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Executive Vice President E-Mobility  
of Deutsche Post DHL Group

**Dr. Christoph Deutskens**  
Managing Director at PEM Motion  
GmbH and PEM Consulting  
Mexico S.A. de C.V.

**+ 24 Mitarbeiter**  
Software- und Hardwareentwicklung, technischer  
Betrieb, Kundensupport, Marketing und Vertrieb, Business-  
Development und Projektmanagement

Seite 5

## Potenzielle Ausdehnung in der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft

- Gemeinde Eupen
- Gemeinde Kelmis
- Gemeinde Lontzen
- Gemeinde Raeren

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## Standorte Eupen

- Bushof, Aachener Straße
- Bahnhof, Bahnhofstraße
- Rathaus, Rathausplatz
- Röltzenbahn/Dospertsstraße
- Haasstraße/Scheiblerplatz
- Robert-Schuman-Institut, Vervierser Straße
- Krankenhaus St. Nikolaus, Hufengasse
- Autonome Hochschule der DG, Monschauer Straße
- Parlament der DG, Kehrweg
- Rue des Herbesthal, Höhe Industriestraße
- Rue des Herbesthal, Höhe Hochstraße
- Stockbergweg, Sportzentrum
- Nispert, Ostpark
- Kettens, Aachener Straße/Talstraße


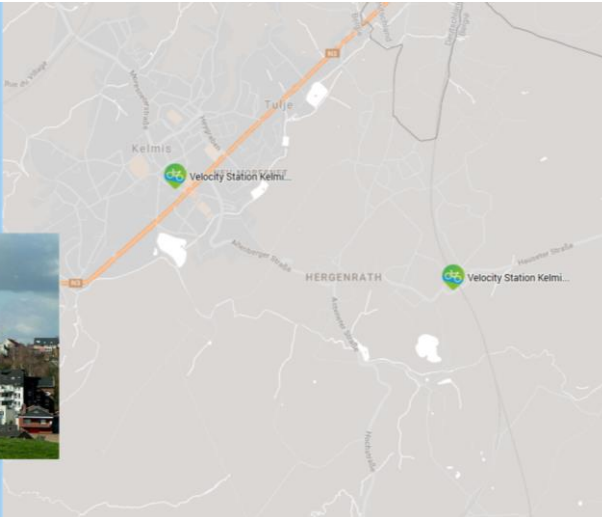



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### Standorte Kelmis


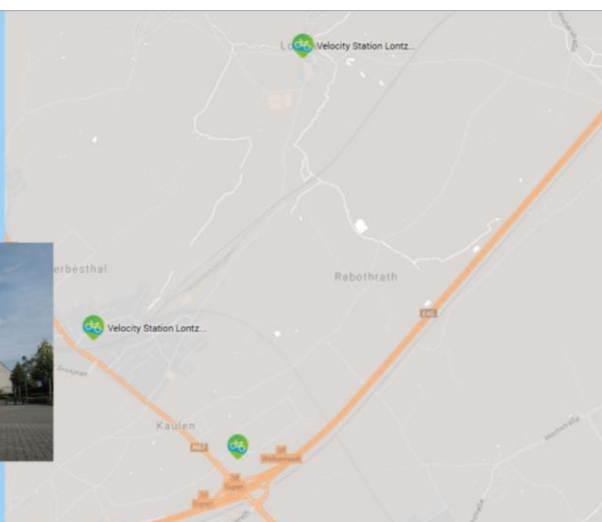

- Bahnhof Hergenrath, Bahnhofstraße  
Im Bereich der Grünfläche vor dem Bahnhof
- Gemeindefeuerhaus, Kirchstraße  
Im Bereich des Kirchplatzes

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### Standorte Lontzen


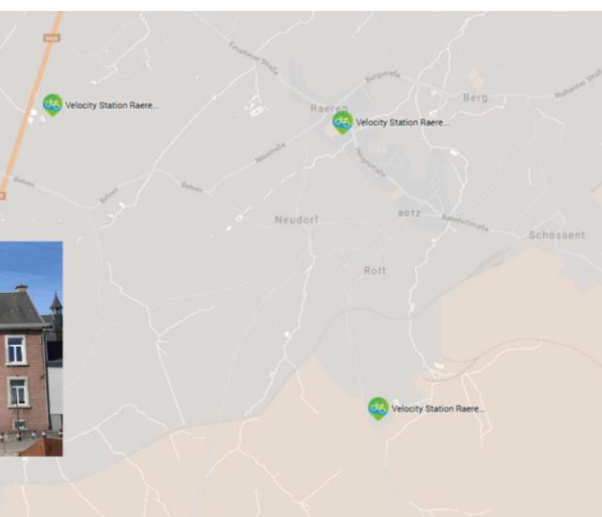

- Eastium Belgium Park  
Jean-Jacques-Dony-Straße
- Herbsthal  
Kirchstraße
- Schlossstraße/Bergstraße  
Im Bereich des Platzes der Hubertushalle

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### Standorte Raeren

- Gemeindeverwaltung, Hauptstraße  
Im Bereich des Platzes vor der Schule
- Firma Hydro Extrusion, Waldstraße  
Auf dem Firmengelände
- Firma NMC, Eupener Straße  
Auf dem Firmengelände

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## Realisierungsmöglichkeiten

Modell / Beschreibung	Kauf der Komponenten durch die DG und Betrieb durch die DG	Kauf der Komponenten durch die DG und Betrieb durch Velocity Aachen	Kauf der Dienstleistung durch die DG bei Velocity Aachen	Gemeinschaftsunternehmen "Velocity DG"
Aufgaben Velocity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lieferung von E-Bikes, E-Cargo-Bikes und Stationen</li> <li>Lieferung, Bereitstellung und Wartung der Software (CMS, Website, Apps, Customer Control Panel, Kundenservice Ticket System)</li> <li>Bereitstellung von E-Bikes, E-Cargo-Bikes, Stationen</li> <li>Projektmanagement</li> <li>Aufbau der Stationen</li> <li>Vertrieb und Marketing</li> <li>Technischer Service (Betrieb und Wartung)</li> <li>Kundenservice-Dienstleistung</li> <li>Durchführung der monatlichen Abrechnung</li> <li>Evaluation und Monitoring</li> </ul>		
Aufgaben DG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bereitstellung von E-Bikes, E-Cargo-Bikes, Stationen</li> <li>Projektmanagement</li> <li>Aufbau der Stationen</li> <li>Vertrieb und Marketing</li> <li>Technischer Service (Betrieb und Wartung)</li> <li>Kundenservice-Dienstleistung</li> <li>Durchführung der monatlichen Abrechnung</li> <li>Evaluation und Monitoring</li> </ul>			
Aufgaben Velocity DG				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bereitstellung von E-Bikes, E-Cargo-Bikes, Stationen</li> <li>Projektmanagement</li> <li>Aufbau der Stationen</li> <li>Vertrieb und Marketing</li> <li>Technischer Service (Betrieb und Wartung)</li> <li>Kundenservice-Dienstleistung</li> <li>Durchführung der monatlichen Abrechnung</li> <li>Evaluation und Monitoring</li> </ul>

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We create valuable time.

Seite 14

Picture Placeholder 5

### Kontakt

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## Annex 4 Velocity: Calculation of operational costs (Kalkulation Betrieb)



### Inhalt



1. Ausgangssituation
2. Voraussetzungen und was wir betrachten
3. Annahmen
4. Leistungen im Bereich Betrieb
5. Ertrag
6. Ergebnisrechnung

### Ausgangssituation



- Interesse der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft
  - Interesse der Velocity Aachen GmbH
  - Ziel: gemeinsame Realisierung
- Bekannt:
- die initialen Kosten für die Errichtung der Stationen und Beschaffung der E-Bikes und E-Cargo-Bikes
  - Varianten, Realisierungsmöglichkeiten
- Anfrage DG: laufende Kosten



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## Annex 5 EMR Connect, INTERREG V A Project

### Projektüberblick

#### Eckdaten des Projekts

<b>Prioritätsachse</b>	4: Territoriale Entwicklung - Développement territoriale - Territoriale ontwikkeling	
<b>Programmspezifisches Ziel</b>	SO 4.1 Decrease border hindrance effects for residents and institutions.	
<b>Projektkronym</b>	ECON	
<b>Projekttitle</b>	EMR Connect	
<b>Projektnummer</b>	3	
<b>Name der Organisation des Lead Partner in Landessprache</b>		
Aachener Verkehrsverbund GmbH		
<b>Projektdauer</b>	<b>Projektbeginn</b>	01.01.2017
in Monaten	<b>Projektende</b>	31.12.2019

The EMR Connect project essentially aims to improve cross-border mobility and create a stronger network within the Meuse-Rhine Euroregion (EMR). In the public transport sector in particular, numerous barriers still exist which, despite the improvements that have already been made, hamper international accessibility. Hence, cross-border public transport faces both new and existing challenges in the fields of ticketing, pricing, infrastructure and the respective transport services. The aim, is therefore to avoid creating new barriers, to systematically remove current obstacles and to improve cross-border mobility for EMR citizens, visitors and businesses step-by-step.

In the "Ticketing and Sales" division, the partners will take on the interoperable implementation of e-ticketing in order to prevent creating new barriers in cross-border public transport. The international use of e-ticketing presents a new problem for which highly innovative solutions must be found. In addition, purchasing tickets for cross-border travel should be made a lot easier for passengers by implementing our new sales solutions. Furthermore, radical improvements will be sought in the area of euro-regional passenger information, including the integration of dynamic timetables for travel within the EMR. The new technologies are developed and implemented, taking into account the innovative approaches that already exist within the project. This would, therefore, make the EMR the first region in Europe to use interoperable e-ticketing.

In the area of "Infrastructure and Services", the project partners want to tackle the issue of interoperability within the euro-regional infrastructure together. For regional rail transport, this means the approval and application of cross-border interoperable vehicles to improve cross-border links. For cross-border bus transport, preliminary studies on the future use of electric buses shall be carried out first. Building on this and in line with suitable investment, interoperable charging stations for the buses should be created and the first cross-border bus lines can be electrified. The EMR would then be the first region in Europe to have tackled cross-border electrified bus routes. With regards to establishing a cross-border e-bike rental system in the EMR as a multimodal supplement to the cross-border public transport, a suitable rental station should be set up and piloted in Parkstad Limburg.

In the "Tariffs" section, the launch of the new Limburg regional concession (2016-2031) should be used to achieve uniform and consistent tariffs for cross-border travel between Aachen and Limburg (Netherlands). Moreover, euro-regional offers for school classes will be developed, as well as great deals for students.

The field of "Networking within the knowledge and educational region of the EMR" is a cross-section oriented work package in which the partners lead a series of lectures and workshops on the subject of cross-border public transport for university students within the EMR, thereby stimulating cross-border mobility, increasing the networks between the EMR universities and harnessing the creativity of the young people for the project partners to use. Based on this, a euro-regional think-tank is to be established which shall sustainably deal with issues and challenges of the euro-regional mobility. In addition, a knowledge exchange regarding best practice approaches is to be held between practitioners (such as transport planners or local government employees) in workshops in alternating EMR locations.

By implementing the measures outlined above, cross-border transport in the tri-border region will be sustainably and comprehensively strengthened, thereby increasing its attractiveness to EMR citizens, visitors and companies. In so doing, the political target of strengthening public transport in intermodal comparison in a special way is satisfied. What is more, new technologies, that at present do not exist, are being developed and implemented.



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**Annex 6      Masterthesis “Konzeption eines nachhaltigen Mobilitätskonzepts für die Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft Belgiens“, Andreas Graff, 2018 (front page)**

