



# BRANDTour

Interreg Europe



European Union  
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## The BRANDTour Project

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East-Flanders**

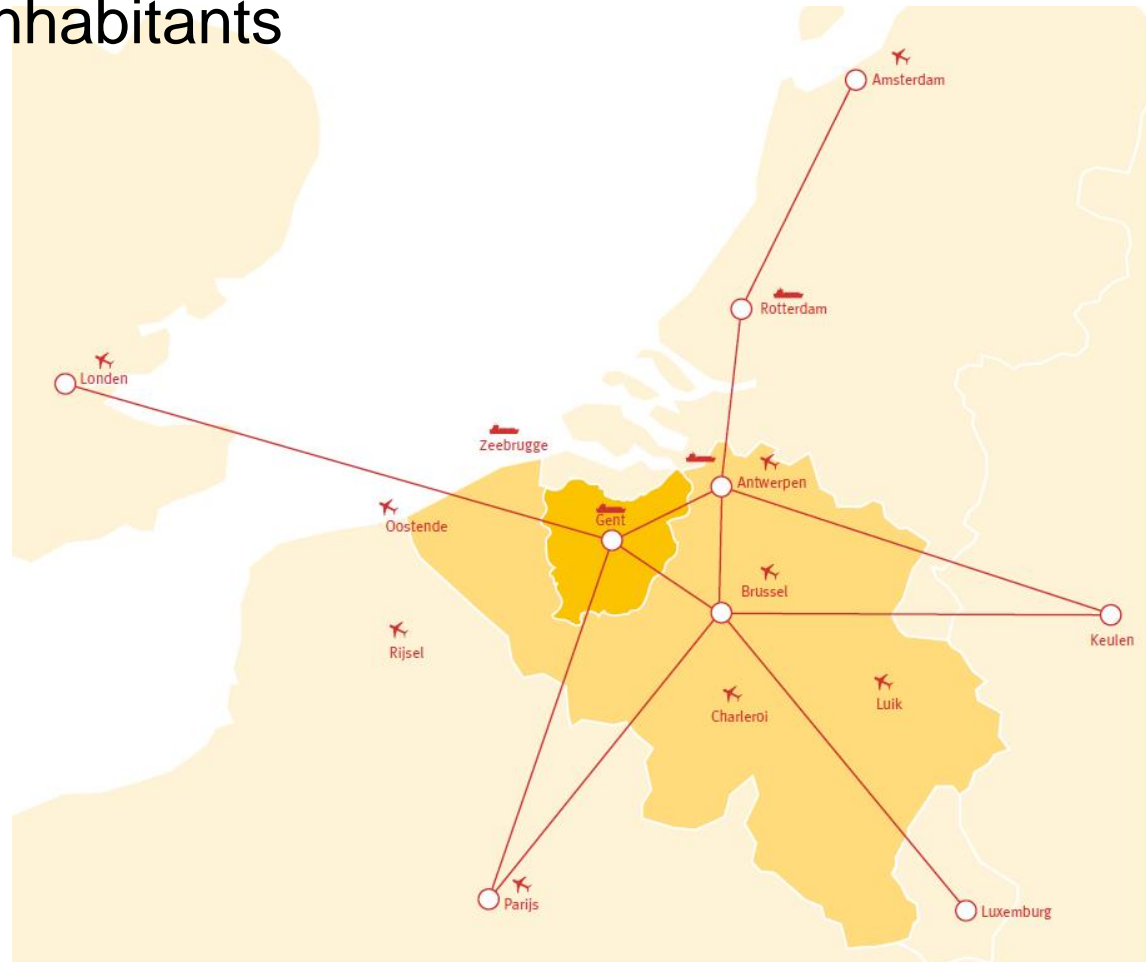
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9 May, 2017 | Kickoff seminar in Florence

## East-Flanders?

- 1 478 509 inhabitants
- 2 982 m<sup>2</sup>





## Economic Council of East-Flanders

- ✓ Founded in 1955 by the Provincial Government
- ✓ Regional development association (non-profit)
- ✓ Strengthen and support the socio-economic development in the province of East Flanders
- ✓ Board of Directors: Representatives of public sector (majority) and private sector (associations and SME's)
- ✓ Activities:
  - 1.) Stimulating (young) entrepreneurship
  - 2.) Stimulating local economic development
  - 3.) Management programs for SMEs
  - 4.) Promotion and development of important clusters: food, tourism, textile, construction, social enterprises

## Tourism profile and trends

- ✓ 1.002.000 arrivals and 2,1 million overnight stays (long-term increase +3%/y)
- ✓ 2016: decrease arrivals (-1,4%) and overnight stays (-4,5%)
  - > foreigners decrease after terrorist attacks (Paris, Brussels, Nice)
    - Italy -18,5% | Netherlands -5,8% | Spain +1,5% | Greece +22,8% | Japan -20% | USA -20% | Russia -24% | China -27% | India -53%
  - > internal market increases with 4,4%
- ✓ 70% recreational holidays, 15% MICE (meeting and events), 15% other business
- ✓ Country of arrival: B (50%) | top seven of other countries: N, D, UK, F, E, USA, PL, IT
- ✓ 66% hotels, 13% B&B, 4% camping, 15% youth accomodation
- ✓ End of 2016, beginning of 2017: signs of recovery

## Tourism organization and policy programs

### ✓ Strategic Policy Plan for Tourism in East-Flanders 2014-2019

1. To develop sustainable, qualitative and innovative tourism products
2. To advise and stimulate tourism SME's on creating new tourism products (cooperation between public and private actors)
3. To coordinate different local tourism initiatives on a regional level
4. To communicate and promote (known and less known) tourism destinations and initiatives in East-Flanders (rural areas vs historical cities)
5. To attract new business tourism (MICE)
6. To act as a knowledge and expertise center for all stakeholders

### ✓ East-Flemish regional strategy on economic development and stimulating entrepreneurship 2014-2019

1. New value creation through cooperation and exchange of experiences between tourism SMEs and other sectors such as sports (e.g. cycling), culture, local food sector, horticulture (flowers) and crafts.
2. Economic discovery tourism e.g. East-Flemish products of excellence in the food sector (beer, chocolate, hams).
3. Stimulating new entrepreneurship in the tourism sector.

## Tourism SMEs

- ✓ Employment: 2,2% agriculture | 22,9% industry | 34,4% government, healthcare and education | 40,5% services sector -> of which 4% tourism, recreation and hospitality sector (+- 23000 persons)
- ✓ 42% is self-employed; 58% is employed in an SME
- ✓ most important employers in tourism sector: 56% restaurants, 9% hotels, 14% bars, 8% catering services, 10% travel agencies, 3% other
- ✓ 2828 SMEs; 89,7% has <10 employees





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## Thank you!

Questions welcome



*Project smedia*