



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Czech Republic



Flanders
State of the Art

COOPERATION PROGRAMME
BETWEEN
THE CZECH REPUBLIC
AND
FLANDERS
FOR 2022-2024

The Delegation of the Government of the Czech Republic and the Delegation of the Government of Flanders on the basis of the Agreement on Cooperation between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of Flanders, signed in Prague on February the 12 of 2002, have reached the following understanding:

DELEGATION OF FLANDERS

- Department Chancellery & Foreign Office

Julie Bynens
Co-chair, Secretary General

Koen Haverbeke
General Representative of Flanders in Central Europe

Andrea Bednářová
Head of the Representation of Flanders in the Czech Republic

Stefaan De Groote
Policy Officer bilateral co-operation with Central-Europe

- Flanders Investment and Trade

Markéta Borůvková
Trade & Investment Counsellor, head of the FIT-office in the Czech Republic

- Department Welfare, Public Health and Family

Fabian Dominguez,
Counsellor international policy on social affairs and public health

DELEGATION OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Aleš Chmelař,
Chair, Deputy Minister for Europe

Pavel Klucký, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Belgium

Jana Lolić Šindelková, Director of West Europe Department

Petr Kroužek, Deputy Director of East Europe Department

Lenka Jacošová Dimunová, Head of Unit, West Europe Department

Marek Toman, desk-officer for Belgium, West Europe Department

1. LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORT

MANAGEMENT TRAINING ON PORT, LOGISTICS AND MARITIME MATTERS

DESCRIPTION

The Flemish Party offers yearly two Czech experts the possibility to participate at APEC, the international Antwerpen/Flanders Port Training Center. APEC focuses on knowledge transfer to professionals through standard seminars, tailor-made courses, study visits and lectures. The courses offer an ideal mix of theory and practice in which professionals can deepen their expertise on port, maritime and logistics matters in an interactive way.

Participants are selected by APEC. The Flemish Party covers the expenses for participation in the seminars. The international travel expenses are covered by the participant or by the organisation on which he/she depends.

Contact person:

Flanders: Peter Van Heesvelde, peter.vanheesvelde@vlaanderen.be

Reception program: 'Smart & sustainable logistics and transport'
Description

Flanders invites a Czech professional to participate in a five-day international reception program with the subject: 'Smart & sustainable logistics and transport' in the autumn of 2022.

The aim is to know the Flemish perspective in this area better for a group of high-level opinion leaders and decision-makers.

Topics related to the guest's professional activities and interests are also discussed. During five days, the guests receive a tour and an introduction through meetings with key figures from the private and public sector, visits to leading companies and strategic research institutions.

Contact person

Flanders: Koen Haverbeke, koen.haverbeke@flanders.eu

2. FOREIGN TRADE

DESCRIPTION

Flanders is the main partner in the Czech – Belgian trade. The Czech Republic is for Flanders the third biggest trade partner in Central & Eastern Europe. It is important to foster and further enhance the economic and commercial relations between both parties. Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT) is the contact point for Flemish companies that want to discover and develop the Czech market as well as a facilitator of foreign investment projects originating in the Czech Republic.

Within its export promotion strategy, FIT focuses on the following promising target sectors in the Czech Republic: construction and infrastructure, machinery, food & beverages, environment and renewable energy, e-commerce, gaming and ICT (AI, big data, IoT).

Furthermore, the VLAM (Flemish Center for Agro & Fisheries Marketing) focuses on the products of the Flemish agricultural, horticultural and fishing sectors.

ACTIONS

- Information exchange between the parties regarding business and investment opportunities, its markets and sectors and useful contacts
- Flanders Investment & Trade organises missions and other trade promotion events
- Flanders Investment & Trade organises site-visit programmes to Flanders for Czech companies which consider investment in the region

Contact persons

Flanders

Markéta Borůvková, Head of Post FIT Prague, marketa.boruvkova@fitagency.com

Caroline Levrau, Deputy Director Inward Investment, caroline.levrau@fitagency.be

Marnix Bierlin, Area Manager Central & Eastern Europe, marnix.bierlin@fitagency.be

3. ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE

THE GEOGRAPHIC ARBORETUM OF TERVUREN

DESCRIPTION

The Royal Trust is owner and is managing the Geographic Arboretum of Tervuren. There is a common interest with the Czech community in Belgium. Both have the intention to organize occasional voluntary activities in the arboretum, in particular in the part dedicated to the species originating in the Czech Republic. They decided to sign a Partnership Agreement, which could be the start of a longer lasting cooperation. There could be a link with the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forests (Agentschap Natuur en Bos - ANB) as this administration manages the surrounding Sonian Forest and both institutions are core partners in the project running for a National Park 'Forests of Brabant'.

ACTIONS

The ANB welcomes the Partnership Agreement on the Geographic Arboretum. It underlines that its role in this regard is limited but would like to support activities that strengthen the role of the arboretum, especially in the context of the candidacy as a National Park.

Contact persons

- Czech Republic: Ms. Eva Voženílková, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, Department of Landscape Adaptation on Climate Change; eva.vozenilkova@mzp.cz, +420 267 122 726

Mr. Jiří Velebil, Silva Tarouca Research Institute of Landscape and Horticulture, velebil@vukoz.cz, +420 296 528 319

- Flanders: Mr. Patrick Huvenne, director of the arboretum for the Royal Trust, regional manager for the Agency for Nature and Forests, patrick.huvenne@vlaanderen.be

SHARING EXPERIENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

DESCRIPTION

Both parties started in 2019-2021 a cooperation in sharing experience in environmental education. We appreciated the online exchange we had on, amongst others, environmental education in times of corona and how to work with volunteers in EE-centres. The new project will build on previous activities.

We would like to (continue to) work on the following topics:

- link nature education-nature connectedness of teenagers in school-context (secondary education)
- (forest) garden schools and outdoor education/teaching on the playing and learning grounds of kindergartens and primary schools
- the concept impact-driven evaluation
- climate education
- Week of the bee in Flanders (campaign broader audience)
- EE-centres

Actions

- Exchange of good practises, publications, research results and other materials
- An online conference or live excursion/seminar specific about garden schools mentioned above.
- Five-day study visit (with a maximum of five persons) in CZ (if circumstances permit/if possible): presentation of the unique network of environmental centres in the Czech Republic and the system of environmental education, the system of outdoor education in gardens and grounds of primary schools, education in forest kindergartens, developing climate education, etc to the Flemish party by a four or five day visit of the Flemish side (2022-2024)
- Five-day study visit (with a maximum of five persons) in Flanders (if circumstances permit/ if possible) to learn about the campaign “week of the bee”, EE-centres, MOS project, climate education, garden schools-outdoor education etc.

Contact persons:

- Czech Republic: Jitka Burianová/Miroslav Novák, Ministry of the Environment
- Flanders: Elke Vanwildemeersch, Department of Environment and Spatial Planning, elke.vanwildemeersch@vlaanderen.be

Light pollution - possible solutions (Environment/human health)

DESCRIPTION

The project aims to raise awareness of the issue of light pollution and the approaches of both countries.

ACTIONS

The work will take concrete form through the exchange of information, publications and approaches to the problem from one side to the other. The aim of the project is to connect actors dealing with light pollution from the Czech Republic and Belgium. It is proposed that meetings and exchange of information to be conducted online.

The project should deal with the exchange of information, knowledge and experience. It should contribute to improving the understanding of light pollution as a harmful phenomenon, its effects, and especially effective ways of preventing and reducing it by (not only) legislative means.

Contact persons

- Czech Republic: Ms Helena Vaňková, Ministry of the Environment
- Flanders: Quirina Huet, Department of Environment and Spatial Planning, quirina.huet@vlaanderen.be

EIRENE (ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE)

DESCRIPTION

EIRENE is a new European research infrastructure to support comprehensive research on the relationship between human health and the environment, lifestyle, diet, exercise, economic pressures and psychosocial problems.

The concept of a pan-European infrastructure supporting research on the effects of long-term exposures to various types of stressors on population health and the roles that these exposures play in the development of chronic diseases, builds on a decade of experience in successfully building the Czech national RECETOX RI and connects 50 research institutions from 17 countries, including Flanders (Belgium).

The main objective is to create a pan-European infrastructure supporting the linking of actors affecting human and environmental health.

ACTIONS

- Meetings in Flanders and the Czech Republic to create nodes and synchronisation and bringing together the complementary capacities available in the two countries.

Contact persons

- Czech Republic: Jana Klánová, Jan Ostřížek, RECETOX
- Flanders: Greet Schoeters, VITO

PARTNERSHIP FOR CHEMICAL RISK ASSESSMENT (PARC)

DESCRIPTION

The Partnership for Chemical Risk Assessment (PARC) is a pan-European research and innovation programme to support EU and national evaluation bodies and chemical risk management, providing new data, knowledge, methods, networks and skills to address current, emerging and new chemical safety challenges.

The main objective is to develop data infrastructures to support risk assessment in the EU, following the work of the European Commission.

ACTIONS

- Collaboration in the development of data solutions and IT tools to support chemical risk assessment.

Contact persons

- Czech Republic: Jana Klánová, Lucie Bielská, Richard Hůlek, RECETOX
- Flanders: Jan Theunis, VITO

4. PUBLIC AND SOCIAL POLICIES – FAMILY POLICY

SHARING OF EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF PRESCHOOL CARE AND EDUCATION

DESCRIPTION

The project

The project would involve, in particular:

- Defining the parameters of preschool care and education (namely the initial and further training of care staff, and legislation setting the operational and hygiene requirements for preschool care providers);
- incorporating the environmental approach in preschool care and education policies;
- supporting local authorities in providing preschool care and education services;
- supporting employers in providing preschool care and education services;
- motivating parents to use preschool care and education opportunities;
- alternative preschools and the ways to incorporate them in the existing legislation.

ACTIONS

- Establish cooperation with preschool care providers in all areas (home care, self-employed carers, preschool facilities – public/private owned/municipal/corporate etc.)
- Webinars on the training of care staff – existing qualification standards and the way ahead
- Webinars on alternative preschools and the ways to incorporate them in the existing legislation
- Online meetings to discuss ways to support local authorities in providing preschool care services
- Online meetings to discuss ways to support employers in providing preschool care services
- Online meetings to discuss ways to support families in accessing preschool care
- Case study: Development of legislation setting the hygiene and operational requirements for preschool care providers
- International conference on work with under 3-year olds

Contact persons

- In the Czech Republic: Family Policy and Rights of the Child Department, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- In Flanders: Fabian Dominguez, Department Welfare, Public Health and Family, fabian.dominguez@vlaanderen.be.

FAMILY SUPPORT

DESCRIPTION

The project would address the design and operation of the family support system. It would encourage international exchange of experience and good practice. The objective would be to develop recommendations for the design of a system protecting families with children against a significant decline in living standards in times of economic crisis.

The project would be based on current analyses of the situation of different types of families. In the Czech Republic, the project might build on the results of the comprehensive survey of the situation of families and the elderly including a socio-economic and demographic analysis and an attitudes and values survey (survey conducted in 2018-2022).

ACTIONS

- Establish cooperation between the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and its counterpart in the Flemish Region.
- Establish cooperation between the Czech Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs and its counterpart in the Flemish Region.
- Webinars to share experience with the design of family support systems
- Establishment and launch a Czech-Flemish working group on family support (the working group would compare the Czech and Flemish family support systems, identify the strengths and weaknesses of each system, and develop recommendations)
- A conference to share good practice relating to the design of family support systems.

Contact persons

- In the Czech Republic: Family Policy and Rights of the Child Department, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- In Flanders: Fabian Dominguez, Department Welfare, Public Health and Family, fabian.dominguez@vlaanderen.be.

PROMOTION OF SOCIAL CARE AND LEGAL PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN

DESCRIPTION

The project would specifically address the protection of the rights of the child. The Czech Republic and the Flemish Region would establish cooperation to exchange experience and good practice in the field of protection of the rights of the child.

The goal is to give advice concerning timely identification of vulnerable children, planning of social work with such children and families and the design of services to families and children. At last the project aims to give advice and sharing good practice concerning the children's participation.

Contact persons

- In the Czech Republic: Family Policy and Rights of the Child Department, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- In Flanders: Fabian Dominguez, Department Welfare, Public Health and Family, fabian.dominguez@vlaanderen.be.

ACTIONS

- Establish cooperation between the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and institutions involved in the protection of the rights of the child in the Flemish Region.
- Establish cooperation between the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and organizations providing services to families with children in the Flemish Region.
- Webinars to share experience concerning protection of the rights of the child (in particular, to share experience relating to the strengths and weaknesses of each country's public system for the protection of the rights of the child) and the develop recommendations.
- Webinars to share experience with the identification of vulnerable children and the planning of work with such children and families including the children's participation, and to develop recommendations,
- A conference to share experience and present the recommendations.

5. CULTURE

The recent events in Europe, namely the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, have had a profound impact on the cultural sector. That is why Flanders and the Czech Republic want to strengthen their collaboration in this field. We aim to work together on a wide-ranging set of cultural topics.

1. Collaboration between policy experts on cultural policies.

Both governments are willing to share information on the developments in culture policies, at different policy levels, including on the identification of stakeholders and on financial resources. This policy exchange is especially important for several recent European developments like the European recovery plans and the support of the creative and cultural industries after the pandemic. The shared experiences of hosting Ukrainian refugees and artists could also be an interesting point of comparison.

Furthermore, Flanders and the Czech Republic will promote and stimulate culture networking and the exchanges of cultural sector actors in order to search for (long term) partners and the development of long-lasting trajectories, projects or events.

2. Film

The Flemish and Czech partners want to strengthen co-operation in the area of cinematography, for instance supporting the participation in film festivals, exchange of information on the festivals and examination of the possibility for further cooperation. Both Flanders and the Czech Republic have a rich tradition on animation film. Both participants will exchange information on this theme and examine the possibilities for cooperation. At present, there is an active link between Flanders Image and the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. Coproduction of cinematographic products between Flanders and the Czech Republic is possible because of the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production.

3. Museums

During the previous working programme, several contacts between museums in Flanders and the Czech Republic existed. For example, the Kazerne Dossin, a Holocaust Museum in Mechelen, established cooperation with the Memorial of Silence in Prague. In the future, we will explore how further cooperation between museums can be achieved.

4. Performance and theatre

Both Participants are prepared to support cooperation in the field of non-professional art (exchange of ensembles, participation in non-professional art festivals, cooperation between public organisations) and cooperation within AITA/IATA. Both Participants will also support cooperation between the Arts and Theatre Institute and Flanders Art Institute within the European Network of Information Centres for the Performing Arts (ENICPA).

5. Literature

Both parties intend to support the translation of their national literature into the second language through special programmes, and to encourage the cooperation of translators and writers by visiting national literary festivals, book fairs and other literary events.

6. Libraries

Both parties support the cooperation of the Czech National Library with the library of the Catholic University of Leuven.

7. Heritage

Both parties investigate if there are possibilities to cooperate with regard to the similar value and diversity of heritage in both territories. They intend to share knowledge and best practices concerning the fight against the illicit trafficking in cultural goods; and to share knowledge and best practices concerning protection, conservation and digitization of movable cultural heritage.

Contact person

Flanders: Andries Clement, Department of Culture, Youth and Media, Andries.clement@vlaanderen.be.

Czech Republic: Michaela Židková, International Relations Department, Ministry of Culture, michaela.zidkova@mkcr.cz

6. EDUCATION

Both sides will strive for a common participation in the European tools for a support of research, development and innovations (including 9 RP Horizont Europa, COST, EUREKA). The sides will be looking for a possibility to develop the bilateral cooperation in the field of research, development and innovation.

The Flemish party offers scholarships for Master studies by the Master Mind Scholarship Program. More information on Flemish scholarships is accessible at: <http://www.studyinlanders.be/en/scholarship-programmes/master-mind-scholarships/>.

Information on scholarships offered for study and research visits to the Czech institutions of higher education is available at <https://www.studyin.cz/plan-your-studies/scholarships/> and general information on study opportunities in the Czech republic at www.studyin.cz.

The parties will exchange information on higher education policy developments and share ideas on promoting their cooperation and possibilities of peer learning. They will exchange information and, where relevant, discuss topics of common interest, such as recognition of higher education qualifications, utilising, inter alia, the existing ENIC-NARIC network.

Both parties will encourage their respective higher education institutions to participate in mobility and cooperation schemes within the framework of educational programs of the European Union and within their respective national programs for international student mobility.

Contact person

Flanders: Magalie Soenen, Department of Education and Training, magalie.soenen@ond.vlaanderen.be

SUMMER LANGUAGE COURSE SCHOLARSHIPS

DESCRIPTION

The existing cooperation enables those interested in the other country's language and culture to get a scholarship for a short intensive language course.

The Czech side offers up to three scholarships per year. If the number of applicants is greater, it is possible to nominate additional applicants and put them on a waiting list.

The Flemish side offers scholarships for Neerlandistiek/Dutch Studies. The scholarships are awarded through the Union for the Dutch Language (Nederlandse Taalunie). The Union offers scholarships for students and for teachers/researchers.

Contact persons

In the Czech Republic: International Relations Department, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
In Flanders: Karlijn Waterman, the Union for the Dutch Language, kwaterman@taalunie.org

7. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

RESEARCH OF NON-TRILOBITE ARTHROPODS OF THE CZECH LOWER PALEOZOIC

DESCRIPTION

The project is a follow-up of a cooperation during the period 2018-2021. Most of the activities took place online. In 2018 and autumn 2019, however, the Flemish side was able to visit the paleontological collections of the National Museum and the Czech Geological Survey. In the case of stays abroad, a maximum of 2 people is expected to visit, both when visiting the Czech Republic and Flanders

ACTIONS

- Each year, ca 14 - 21 days of research on the Flemish side in the collections of the National Museum in Prague and the Czech Geological Survey - the aim is the expert treatment of stored exceptionally preserved material using the most modern methods (including the study of rarely preserved limbs and other soft parts of the body). The research will mainly be carried out by Dr. Van Roy.
- Field excursions to selected sites of the Barrandian area - the aim is to field study sites with exceptional preservation of non-trilobite fauna (so-called lagerstätten, see Fatka et al. 2011).
- Follow-up professional treatment of findings – predominantly online exchange of information, collaboration to prepare common articles.

- Exchange of experience, publications, research findings and other material in geology and palaeontology.
- Reciprocal visit of the Czech party to Flanders (University of Ghent), so far planned for 2023. Coordination of the next common work, possible research of selected pieces by instrumental methods not available in the Czech Republic (short-term export of paleontological material with permission of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic for research purposes). The length of the visit of the Czech side is planned to be about 5-6 days.
- 1x impacted article per year
- Exchange of experience, publications, research findings and other material in geology and palaeontology

Contact persons

- In the Czech Republic: dr. Petr Budil (Czech Geological Survey), prof. Oldřich Fatka (Faculty of Science, Charles University)
- In Flanders: dr. Peter Helena Van Roy, dr. Johan De Grave (University of Ghent)

DEVELOPMENT OF PREDICTIVE PKA-BASED STRUCTURE-PROPERTY MODEL FOR BRØNSTED-ACID-ASSISTED BRØNSTED ACIDS: THEORETICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH

DESCRIPTION

Organic chemistry, physical and theoretical chemistry. The coordination institutions are the Akademie věd České republiky and the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO)

Contact persons

- Czech side: Jiří Pospíšil, Ústav experimentální botaniky AV ČR, v. v. i.
- Flemish side: Freija De Vleeschouwer, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

DIVERSITY AND EVOLUTIONARY HISTORY OF RODENTS AND THEIR ASSOCIATED PATHOGENS IN EASTERN AFRICA

DESCRIPTION

Ecology, zoology, genetic and molecular biology. The coordination institutions are the Akademie věd České republiky and the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO)

Contact persons

- Czech side: Ondřej Mikula, Ústav biologie obratlovců AV ČR, v. v. i.
- Flemish side: Herwig Leirs, Universiteit Antwerpen, Department of Biology

Signed in Prague on April the 27th of 2022.

On behalf of the
Government of Flanders

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and horizontal strokes.

Julie Bynens,
Secretary General

On behalf of the
Government of the Czech Republic

A handwritten signature in blue ink, featuring a series of connected loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Aleš Chmelař,
Deputy Minister for Europe