

***The Euregion Maas-Rhein: The Problematics
of being 'left in the dark'***

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Imagine: you are in the unfortunate position of witnessing your house go up in flames.

The survival of everything you treasure and possess - memories, photos, important documents, expensive electrical goods, your car - all depends on the powers of the fire service to promptly respond to your desperate call for emergency assistance. Naturally you expect, nay pray, that the nearest fire brigade responds and arrives early enough to limit the damage done to your worldly possessions. Luckily, it does. Sadly, though,

all your hopes are in vain. True, the firemen do everything they possibly can to quench the flames, but all that they can do is stand at the national border aiming their fire hoses in the direction of your house. Thankfully, cross-border co-operation has improved over the years.

1 Introduction

The Euregio Maas-Rhein (EMR) is often proclaimed to be the model for European integration, even being described in EMR literature as ‘Europa im Kleinforma.’ It is therefore no surprise that this region, comprising of three countries and three language areas, is regularly used as a testing ground for EU integration theories, as well as more practical cross-border co-operation projects. In many respects, it is due to this characteristic that the region first drew my attention. I have a deep interest in languages and cultures in general, and in particular those found in such close proximity in this area. It seemed only natural that any case study for this thesis would be conducted here.

1.1 What is the Euregio Maas-Rhein?

The Euregio Maas-Rhein was founded in 1976, and as such it is one of the oldest cross-border organisations. In 1991, the Euregio became a ‘Stichting’ and as such gained legal rights under Dutch law.

Within the spatial territory of the EMR fall Regio Aachen (Germany), the Province of Liege, the German-speaking Community of Belgium, the Belgian Province of Limburg (Belgium), and the Dutch Province of Limburg (the Netherlands). Since the decline of heavy industry in the 1970s, the region has fallen behind economically, a condition which has been exacerbated by its peripheral location from each of the three countries’ capitals. Each of the partner regions varies in geographical surface area as well as population size. The largest of these regions by population is Regio Aachen with 1,288,000 inhabitants and 3,535km² surface area, followed by Liege with 963,000 inhabitants and 3,862km² surface area, Belgian Limburg with 826,690 inhabitants and 2422km² surface area, Dutch Limburg with 748,000 inhabitants and 2209km² surface area, and finally the German-speaking Community with only 75,000 inhabitants and 854km² surface area. (Stichting EMR website, 2010) The five partner regions co-operate with each other as well as civil society partners and Interreg to implement projects covering seven themes: economic development, scientific

institutions, work and education, health services, mobility and infrastructure, culture and tourism, security and the environment.

1.2 Research Questions

The main focus of this thesis revolves around the following research questions:

- 1) How is the Euregio Maas-Rhein ‘visualised’ and ‘seen’ by different actors involved? (EMR Stichting, Interreg, the euregional population)
- 2) What are the consequences and further political implications of divergent levels of ‘visibility’ and ‘awareness’?

These questions and the concepts that they raise will be examined and elaborated throughout the subsequent sections. In essence, they will allow conclusions to be reached concerning the wider (political) implications of a lack of ‘awareness’ and ‘visibility’ of the EMR.

1.3 Outline

This research will consider a selection of theories concerning the border and democratic deficit, as well as concepts relating to mapping and cartographic representations of territory, intertwined with Foucault’s theory of power/knowledge and discourse. I will also include terms which I have developed myself as an extension to the theories mentioned, namely ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ and ‘*Sichtbarkeit*’. I will draw hypotheses from these theories, which will then be tested against information collected from fieldwork conducted at the Euregio Maas-Rhein office in Eupen. Results of surveys, interviews and desk research will be outlined, and conclusions will thereafter be drawn.

2 Theory

2.1 The border

When studying any cross-border situation it is obviously important to consider the concept of 'border' itself. It is commonly accepted that borders between nation states outline the political power boundaries of national governments. However, that is not to say that they are physical or empirical lines or zones but rather they should be viewed as social, cultural and political constructs. (Paasi, 2001) Many border scholars, including Van Houtum and Struver (2002, p. 142), assert that borders are "socially reproduced phenomena" and as a result they assume different representations and meanings for the different actors involved. In this respect, then, the borders separating the five partner regions of the EMR, and the three borders separating the three nation states of the EMR, have different significance for the various actors in the euregion. In addition to this the border is experienced differently by each individual. Some will cross the border everyday to visit family or friends, to work, or to shop. Others might not cross the border at all, and will even consider it to have no role whatsoever in their day to day life.

The Euregio Maas-Rhein can at once be read as a "space of flows" and a "region". (Castells, 2000 cited in Rumford, 2006, p.155). The EMR has established its own border and produced maps in order to clearly outline areas which are included or excluded in the euregional space. It is, therefore, a 'place' and a 'region' in its own right and a specific bounded entity. The border of the euregion has been socially constructed and has created new lines of dichotomy: between the inclusive nature of 'us' and 'we' within the euregion and the exclusive 'them' as the 'Other'. It is a border area where national borders have been softened after various European Treaties, thus allowing for easier mobility of flows and the idea that borders have become part of routine experience. (Rumford, 2006) They are, therefore, not all 'hard borders' with heavily secured parameters, but they are also places of increased mobility and thus are more frequently crossed and experienced. (Rumford, 2006) Rather than these borders outlining the limits of government power, they are rather a visual representation of the space to be included in the cross-border co-operation area.

The EMR border does not represent the limit of national government legislation of Germany, Belgium or the Netherlands. Neither is it a physical border. It is the space onto which the imaginations and visions of the dominant actor will be etched, under the name of the Euregion Maas-Rhein.

However, despite the formal removal of internal borders and physical barriers of separation, it remains very much the case that the borders of a territory are rich in significance and meaning. As mentioned above, they are still the markers of juridical power and territory as well as reflecting visible identities that tie people to a particular place. That is not to say that this diversity of overlapping authority, multiple identities and soft borders is becoming the bane of the nation-state. In fact the opposite should be the case. These border regions of the Euregion Maas-Rhein — geographically distanced from the economic centres and capitals of their respective nation states — have suffered from similar economic problems due to the former reliance on industry, such as textiles and woollen mills. As periphery regions are often economically weaker compared to the rest of the nation state, it seems ideal that this euregion can pool its resources in an attempt to cooperate towards finding a solution to their common and shared grievances. This kind of co-operation to improve the standard of living in border regions should, as a result, be welcomed by national governments.

In the study of this region and the co-operation process among its partners it is also interesting to consider Simmel's metaphor of bridges and doors that he uses to demonstrate the capability of borders to both connect and separate. (Van Houtum and Struver 2002). In this metaphor, Simmel highlights how it is possible that individuals can be spatially close but not necessarily socially close and vice versa. Hence, in cross-border regions such as the Euregion Maas-Rhein there are cross-border communities which are spatially close but "socially remote because they feel that they belong with another group". (Van Houtum and Struver, 2002, p.143) This other group may be their local region or nation state. Whilst this may point to issues of identity and the necessity to create an 'us' in order to achieve social closeness, this is not necessarily desired in the case of the Euregion Maas-Rhein. This concept of social closeness can also have implications on the ease of co-operation between various groups; those actors which have greater social and cultural similarities find it easier to cooperate on initiatives and projects than those areas which demonstrate greater

underlying differences. That is to say, that the Dutch-speaking partner regions will have fewer problems cooperating than the partner regions of Liege and Aachen, for example.

There is indeed a certain amount of reconciliation needed here, between the necessity of the Euregion Maas-Rhein to pool its resources and bloom in the wake of diversity and the paradox of spatial proximity and social separateness. Dominance of one of these ideas would be expected, as an intermingling and a less than clear-cut relationship between the two do not quite seem to mould together in a euregional form. It is precisely this dilemma which unwittingly plagues the attempts of the EMR to disseminate its vision for and of the euregion. Divergent visions and representations of space, whether they are mental or physical, must be harmonised in order to bring forth some kind of clarity for the euregional population. It would seem logical that either the EMR should concentrate on propagating its ideals for the region based on *either* the advantage to be yielded through mutual co-operation, pooling resources and highlighting diversity as a virtue, *or* by cultural, historical and social ties or memories which arise out of spatial proximity. This conundrum will be returned to in subsequent sections, but essentially the foundations of this complexity are very firmly rooted in the visions that the EMR holds for the euregion and wishes to project outward onto the euregional population, and even beyond the regional borders.

2.2 Spatial visions and meanings

Intrinsically linked to the concept of borders being social constructs are the concepts of ‘visions’ and ‘spatial fantasies.’ In some respects it could be argued that ‘visions’ and ‘fantasies’ are one and the same. A number of empirical studies have shown that people living in different states identify themselves with Europe on different grounds. (Cinnirella, 1997 cited in Paasi, 2001) If this theory is to be applied to the Euregio Maas-Rhein, it could be assumed that the five local populations have different associations with the euregion, and by extension, have different spatial visions of the region. For example, due to the geographical situation of Dutch Limburg being located so far away from the Randstad and surrounded by national borders on three

sides, the needs of the population in this area would be different to the needs of another. Thus, each region would want to reap different benefits out of the euregion and cross-border co-operation. To take this idea a step further, it is vital to realise that the visions and needs of the different actors involved may not be the same. The imposition of one actor's 'spatial vision' for a (border) region could be viewed as a form of colonisation of social life, as there is a "constant reproduction of fantasies about the enclosed, bordered community". (Van Houtum and Struver, 2002, p.142).

2.2.1 '*Habitus*'

In order to further understand the theory outlined above, it is also vital to consider Van Houtum's concept of 'habitus' (Van Houtum and Struver, 2002) This idea is of great importance as it is the way in which new visions are reproduced and become normalised in the psyche of the border region population. This is achieved by an actor imposing their own vision on other actors. (Van Houtum and Struver 2002). To a large degree, this idea reflects the notion put forward by Paasi, as he argues that regions and their representations "are made by people and social groups", and that any symbolic meaning attached to their territory is a social construct. (Paasi, 2001, p.13) Regions are "simultaneously both products and constituents of social action and always reflect asymmetrical power relations, as some actors participate more in the production of space, whilst others 'consume' and reproduce them". (Paasi, 2001, p.13) The EMR Stichting, for example, through its discourse of cross-border integration, Green Papers, official documents, progress reports and publicity material is constantly reproducing their vision, or fantasy, of the Euregion Maas-Rhein. Paasi also comments on the *institutionalisation of regions* as being a process through which "a territorial unit becomes an established entity in the spatial structure and is then identified in political, economic, cultural and administrative institutionalized practices and social consciousness and is continually reproduced in these social practices". (Paasi, 2001, p.16) The meaning of naming as the process that enables the use of regions in political and everyday discourse is also emphasised by Paasi, as he mentions the use of symbols, arms, flags et cetera which politicians use to create 'spatial landscapes' and an expression of the territory. Billig has termed this banal nationalism. (Billig, 1995) If a region has been transposed onto the social

consciousness, it has become established. It is then identified in various spheres of social action and discourse, which requires the help of the media in order to (re)produce and maintain the spatial meaning. (Paasi, 2001) These ideas, therefore, not only indicate economic and social co-operation across the border, but also to the need for some level of political co-operation and level of governance.

However, Paasi's model *institutionalisation of the regions* only appears to focus on the spatial narratives and imaginations of state elites and fails to fully recognise and acknowledge the 'spatial stories' of everyday people living in the borderlands. In relation to Foucault's power/knowledge nexus, to be discussed below, ignoring the spatial stories of the local populations and concentrating on the imaginations of the elites would have implications as to who holds the power in the Euregion Maas-Rhein and, by extension, whose visualisation of the euregion is the most dominant and will become normalised.

In addition to this, Van Houtum's 'habitus' model is centred on the establishment of national spatial images, rather than those of cross-border areas. In today's day and age where economy, culture and society are being transformed, pushed and pulled, squeezed and stretched by globalisation, it is only logical that such models and theories should no longer be limited to the nation state. A throng of academics in previous years have begun to prophesy the end of the nation state and the need to have a more outward and global outlook. Where better a place to start, not in exotic far-off lands across oceans, but with the humble neighbour across the way? In this case, therefore, that is not to say that the concept of euregional habit forming could not exist and eventually (re)produce a euregional spatial imagination. In time, the cross-border populations and communities will become more and more used to the notion of cross-border living and cross-border practices, thus normalising and internalising the process. However, it is critical to mention here that this process remains a political, rather than a natural one. In the case of the Euregion Maas-Rhein, 'habitus' will perhaps refer to the action and experience of cross-border living rather than one actor's visions being imposed on others. As the communities begin to share aspects of the public sector, such as hospitals and emergency services, they will gradually become more used to it and it will form part of the 'habitus'. It will become normalised in their psyche and eventually taken for granted in the cross-border society.

Therefore, it can be asserted that in order to overcome borders, one must overcome the socially constructed imaginations of belonging to a certain place and of the need for a spatial fixity. The euregion space should therefore become a (comm)unity, rather than a five separate partner regions making decisions together.

2.2.2 *Foucault, discourse and savoir/pouvoir*

As Paasi and Houtum's concept of 'habitus' thus far has only applied to the national reproduction of spatial images, it is useful to consider here Foucault's theory of discourse and how ideas, concepts, and perhaps by extension 'spatial visions' become normalised in a cross-border society. It is important to remember that Foucault's discourse is not just confined to the use of language; it is much more than words. In this sense, his notion of discourse also applies to the use of maps and visual representations. It connects power and knowledge and is spread by those who have the means to and power of communication. (Foucault, 1969) There are always multiple competing discourses, and many of them become altered over time and undergo transformations. The more dominant and powerful discourse will become normalised and accepted in society.

Discourse concerning all matters is created and disseminated through society by those who hold power. It refers to systems of knowledge and belief. For example, if an individual is unaware of something—say, of the EMR—then that individual will dismiss its existence as he or she has no previous knowledge or experience of it. Discourse is entwined with socially anchored power networks and it is also capable of giving an individual certain social and political power. (Foucault, 1969) Foucault asserts that “mechanisms of power produce different types of knowledge which collate information on people's activities and existence” (Michel Foucault website, 2010) According to Foucault, one should not think about the individual in the place of power. In society one person, the more dominant, has power over another, for example a king or a president. Foucault claims that power cannot and never really is held by one individual, but rather it flows through them. It is therefore a more fluid concept, even though it may appear that those in positions of dominance (leaders,

politicians) hold power. In this respect it is important to rethink old concepts of power and cease conceptualising society in the traditional ways, that is, from top down, but rather as a society in which power flows through structures.

If euregional spatial visions are created by the EMR elites, then the EMR view is limited to the view of those elites. Those in power decide what the euregion is, or what it should be. This might not necessarily be what all actors concerned actually want the EMR to be, but because power is flowing through them, and they hold the most knowledge, it is presumably their discourse and vision which will be dominant.

Hypothesis 1: *The visions and needs of different actors within the Euregion Maas-Rhein are different and as a result there is a divergence between that, which is being imposed by the EMR and that, which is desired by the population.*

2.3 Democratic Deficit

The cross-border area of the Euregion Maas-Rhein is beginning to experience and realise the necessity of new forms of governance, namely multi-layered governance. In recent years there has been a shift in focus on governance as a process rather than an institution, meaning that a wide range of actors are involved. Rumford (2006) mentions the ‘governance turn’ and the consequential influence of societal actors in political rule, and the fact that society does not necessarily have the same boundaries it had before. In many respects it can be argued that political space can no longer be thought of purely in terms of national space (Rumford, 2006). In this instance it is the cross-border region as a whole territorial unit that is making decisions, rather than the national or regional governments. In this sense it is essential to consider the euregion as a ‘region’, rather than simply a ‘space of flows’. However, it is important to remember that the creation of regions and regional decision making is not only a result of forces from within the region, but also of “power-holding actors outside its territoriality”, namely national governments. (Paasi, 2001, p.13)

In the case of the EMR, the actors involved in the governance process are not only elected politicians, but unelected members of civil society, sector experts, Interreg

workers, and project partners. The EMR is, therefore, not a traditional form of governance, meaning that elected parties are not collectively accountable to their electorate, ultimately resulting in a system that still has not developed a model of politicised accountability in a governance perspective. Simply put, there is no euregional public opinion, no euregional electorate and no euregional *demos*. (Crombez, 2003) As such, it suffers from a democratic deficit and problems of accountability. The population at present are not yet aware enough, and thus not involved in euregional debate and conversation.

Van Houtum and Struver (2002) also highlight this factor as one of the major problems with cross-border co-operation. There is often a substantial gap between people and policy, indicating governance issues, particularly democratic deficit; a concept which is certainly not new to the European Union, but one which can also be applied to the Euregio Maas-Rhein.

Paasi also believes that the geopolitical discourses on EU and cross-border integration are detached from daily life (Van Houtum and Struver, 2002), thus pointing towards democratic deficit issues. Scott also suggests that this is a significant problem in the integration process, since despite the fact that many actors are involved in European integration and unification as a whole, the very idea of 'Europe' and 'the European Union' continue to be extremely detached and distanced from its citizens, despite attempts to encourage and strengthen cross-border co-operation and re-mapping EU space. (Scott in Van Houtum and Struver, 2002) This gap between public and policy at a governance level, as mentioned by Houtum and hinted at by Paasi, could be interlinked with the notion that the visions and needs of the various actors involved in this particular cross-border situation are not just different, but are also differently embedded in power/knowledge networks. If politicians were held accountable, and the democratic deficit were decreased, then perhaps this would have a similar impact on the 'visionary' gap, thus substantially improving the integration process.

Kramsch (2010) also contributes to the idea of democratic deficit with reference to the cross-border region of the Rhein-Waal. According to Streuver (2004, cited in Kramsch, 2010) the majority of the cross-border population remain unaware of top-down initiatives implemented by higher levels of governance, and this contributes to

the problematisation of democratic deficit in cross-border studies. However, I would suggest that this statement is a little too broad-sweeping and should not be applied to analysis of every cross-border region of the EU. It is undoubtedly the case that some border regions experience a far more intense form of integration and levels of awareness vary from place to place. It is my hypothesis that inhabitants of the Euregion Maas-Rhein are aware of the existence of the Euregion itself and some of the projects implemented, but are not necessarily aware that the origin of these projects lies with the Euregion.

2.4 ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ and ‘*Sichtbarkeit*’

Intrinsically linked to the idea of democratic deficit is that of visibility, something that should be of great significance for politicians since they are politically responsible for the electorate. If the electorate are not aware of the EMR, this will lead to criticism of their politicians who are seen to be wasting their time and resources on ‘foreign’ matters which are of no importance to them. This concept is thus inextricably linked to cohesion and credibility of the EMR. While it is accepted that cohesion can exist without credibility or awareness, it does nevertheless make the process much more difficult.

2.4.1 ‘*Wahrnehmung*’

In extension to the already existing theories concerning EU integration and governance processes, I find it of great importance to also consider the notions of visibility and credibility. In order to clarify these concepts I use the German translation ‘*Wahrnehmung*’. While this term and concept is frequently used in the field of psychology, especially in theories of perception, as far as I am aware it has not yet been applied to the study of European Integration. That is not to say that I take my inspiration from psychology, but rather an interest in language and translation. The use of the German ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ can be divided into two further sub-concepts as it has two translations and meanings in English. Firstly, it will be taken to mean ‘to notice’ or be visually ‘aware’ (of the existence and work of the EMR Stichting and

euregion). In the second instance it is taken to mean ‘to appreciate’ something and hold in high regard, thus leading to the concept of credibility.

2.4.2 ‘Sichtbarkeit’

In addition to this I also consider the concept of ‘visibility’, referring to the German ‘Sichtbarkeit’. This term pertains to how the euregion is ‘seen’ by the population and, by extension, ‘how’ they know of its existence. This refers to the extent to which the euregion is in public view and how the populations of the regional partners notice and are aware of it. Possible examples of such visibility are posters around town, logos on public transport etc.

It is therefore clear to see that these two concepts are intertwined and (a lack of) visibility and credibility could have potentially important political consequences for the integration process.

Hypothesis 2: *The levels of EMR ‘Wahrnehmung’ and ‘Sichtbarkeit’ are different in each of the partner regions.*

Hypothesis 3: *‘Wahrnehmung’ and ‘Sichtbarkeit’ have deeper political implications, especially concerning democratic deficit.*

- *Low levels of ‘Wahrnehmung’ and ‘Sichtbarkeit’ will slow the integration process at cross-border regions.*
- *Increased levels of awareness of the EMR will, or rather should, have a subsequent impact on political legitimacy. The role of public debate and contestation of ideas concerning the EMR and its future plans is of utmost importance for this. The greater the number of people who are ‘aware’ of the EMR, the greater the stage and arena for public debate. More voices and opinions, and new voices and opinions at that, will be heard, discussed and deliberated. The ultimate desire is for a greater level of public involvement, the creation of a ‘euregional demos’; a population with a voice which is being heard rather than left in the dark and dismissed.*
- *Increased awareness and credibility could lead to greater levels of participation at ground level of the local population, and vice versa, thus reducing the democratic deficit.*
- *Problems of remaining ‘unseen’.*
- *Those with higher levels of ‘Sichtbarkeit’ and ‘Wahrnehmung’ have greater power and knowledge, thus have a greater influence over EMR spatial visioning.*

2.5 Mapping and the power of visual representation

2.5.1 Maps

The representation of European space through the use of maps and visual iconography has had a significant impact on the construction and reconstruction of policy discourses. (Jensen and Richardson, 2003) The importance of maps should not be underestimated, as their communicative and political power can often be substantial in representing visions, ideals, or planning for a region.

Firstly, it is crucial to remember that creating a European or a common euregional identity does by no means signify cultural homogenisation, but rather acknowledging “identity as diversity” (Faludi, 2003). As highlighted by Foucault, this discursive process is not only achieved through text, but perhaps more importantly through imaging and maps. Iconography is therefore a way of framing concerted attempts to construct policy by using images that capture and emphasise certain ideas about European (or, EMR) space in ways that are communicable to its citizens and thus can be attributed to some extent to the creation of a European (or, EMR) identity. (Jensen and Richardson, 2003)

The concept of mapping identity also has a notable impact on democratic legitimacy, as, according to Scharpf, “democratic legitimacy presupposes a collective identity and public discourses about common interest and rules of fair distribution based on that common identity”. (Faludi, 2003, p.203) This process of mapping is strongly linked with the *naturalisation* of space in the sense that iconography and maps are used to form discourse, which eventually becomes normalised and accepted in society. However, it is vital to point out here that the EMR does not want to create a specific ‘euregional identity’ but rather preserve the cultural, historical, societal differences between the regional partners. With this in mind, it seems somewhat strange that in its promotional material the EMR then continues to point to shared histories and memories, cultural ties and bonds which have been incidentally and mercilessly ripped apart as a result of national wars and shifting national boundaries. To this end, the EMR is harking back to days of supposed ‘euregional unification’, when the region was originally a territorial whole; when it simply *was*.

Yet this is wholly at odds with conversations with workers at the EMR office conducted during my internship, as well as other EMR documentation. It appears, therefore, that there is a battle between visions, both fighting for dominance, which in end effect could be detrimental to the public's perception of the euregion. If the EMR Stichting wishes to have any influence over the public conception of the region, then it is imperative that it chooses one vision, rather than two conflicting ones. It should either be based on historical and cultural memories, or a region comprising of a relationship between the five separate and individual partner regions based on mutual co-operation and the desire to benefit from the fruits of difference and diversity.

The overriding aim is for the euregion to be profitable for all actors involved, that is, increasing the standard of living for the cross-border population by benefiting from knowledge, know-how, resources and co-operation with the other partner regions. It does not wish to create a homogenous, 'euregional' space. In fact, the (re)production of a homogenous space would have repercussions for the prosperity of the region, as it would reduce opportunities for social, political and economic development. To some extent, difference is the key to advancement.

According to Kramsch, it would appear that in practice there is a greater tendency to reduce 'difference to sameness'. (Kramsch, 2010) This idea, which extends back to Plato, has influenced Marxist theory concerning the removal of borders and capitalist assimilation of space, as well as Foucault's 'conduct of conduct' and the panopticon. (Kramsch, 2010) The EMR Stichting has produced maps of the euregion, which resemble the simplest of school maps, marking out and distinguishing between the partner regions on the basis of block colour. This is clearly seen in the official map for the region. (Source: EMR website) As mentioned in the previous sections, the EMR is at once trying to establish itself as a territorial whole (Kramsch, 2010) and to exhibit the partner regions as separate from their national territories. The EMR has therefore redrawn the borders between the three countries and the five partner regions, but firstly removing the national borders, then replacing them between the euregion itself as a territorial whole and the other nation states. This can also be seen on a political level, as by doing so the EMR is also distinguishing itself from high levels of governance. (Kramsch, 2010) To some extent it could be argued that the EMR has

superficially created a new ‘us’, those within the euregional border, and a new ‘them’, the national territories and hinterlands.

It is highly unlikely that the regular citizen of this region has read the strategy papers, Green papers or policy documents outlining the intricacies of governance aims and systems. Therefore these images and maps should, or rather in this case *could*, be a viable and weighty tool for bringing politics to the people on a level which is accessible and comprehensible. In this sense, cartography and visual representations of space form an integral part of EMR discourse and the forming of ‘habitus’ among the population, and should be considered when analysing the visions of actors in the EMR territory. Images and maps prove to be a powerful resource for connecting European space and the role of the regions and the people within that space, and as a result the euregion map and symbol play an important role in the spatial imagery of the region. Maps can depict an apparently homogenous EU/EMR territory (Jansen and Richardson, 2003) and according to Kunzmann (1996, cited in Jansen and Richardson, 2003) they allow for certain advantages in the policy creation process. Maps can therefore facilitate a “joint cross-cultural understanding of spatial development”(Jansen and Richardson, 2003, p.22); a visualisation of spatial problems makes communication between areas much easier, and symbols and spatial images reduce complexity in spatial planning.

2.5.2 *Power/knowledge nexus of visual representations*

However, it is important to notice here that a reduction of complexities comes at a price. Jensen and Richardson’s classic text (2003) on visualising European space highlights the fact that maps and spatial imaginations are seen as a form of discourse. Entangled within the notion of ‘reducing complexities’ are the concepts of knowledge and power, used by Jensen and Richardson (2003). The knowledge/power nexus can also be used as a tool for our understanding of the world. Images and maps, therefore, have a substantial role in the conception of European space, the role of regions, and ourselves within that space. Space is presented as a neutral ground for human action, but the process of map making involves the concepts of power and knowledge, as it involves “selection, omission, simplification, classification, and the creation of

hierarchies and symbolisation.” (Jensen and Richardson, 2003 p. 12) Map making and (re)creating spatial visualisations often supports top-down process of spatial homogenisation.

Admittedly then, maps do have their shortcomings, as they only represent one authors/actors reading and often only represent one visualisation. In this sense, it is possible to view a map as a cultural text. (Jensen and Richardson, 2003) Maps have an ability to capture and frame ideas about space, transfer those ideas from one individual to the next, often causing many conflicting understandings and interpretations. “Mapping and imaging are therefore techniques of power in that they capture and frame certain ideas, relations, realities and potentials whilst excluding others.” (Jensen and Richardson, 2003, p. 11) Underlying maps and their creation, therefore, are power and knowledge. The intrinsic power of maps and spatial imagery is that they demonstrate how the world actually is and they subsequently seduce individuals into thinking precisely that. In addition to this, maps also have the function of being communicative, and hold a certain ambivalent potential. (Jensen and Richardson, 2003) Richardson, (2003), also highlights the need for maps to be read as ‘infographs’ and not simply as neutral artefacts, and that it is essential that one sees the politics behind any kind of visual representation. Therefore the political is increasingly interested with ‘form over content’. (Jensen and Richardson, 2003) In many respects, maps and visualisations of space have also had a significant impact on nation building.

Therefore, in addition to producing tables and graphs to demonstrate survey responses, I will also use this information in order to establish various maps of the euregion to visually reflect the difference in responses between the five partner regions. In this sense, I will be able to cartographically represent divisions within the euregion.

Hypothesis 4: *The differences between the five partner regions can be demonstrated visually.*

3 Methodology

3.1 Overview

The research methods of this project were based on mixed research strategies, which allowed for an in-depth and qualitative approach. I decided to use a combination of the Grounded Theory Approach and a Case Study. These approaches complemented each other well, as it allowed for data, such as interview responses to be collected and compared against existing theories. In order to assure that accurate and current opinions and information were collected, and the reality of the situation in the EMR was reflected, fieldwork was conducted on-site at the EMR office in Eupen. I also moved to Aachen for the duration of the internship, thus experienced everyday life in the Euregion Maas-Rhein, and frequently crossed national borders to travel to Eupen and back to the Netherlands.

In addition, a triangulation of research methods and sources was used throughout the project. Interviews and internet surveys formed the backbone of the practical research for the case study, and the analysis of documents and articles was the basis for the desk research which was completed alongside the practical fieldwork.

3.2 Population awareness, visibility and visions of the EMR

In order to collect the required information for this research I opted to conduct an email survey. I favoured this form of survey over telephone interviews and letter questionnaires, as it would allow me to reach a greater number of people from all demographic groups. Letters would consume too much time and I feared responses would be few and far between given the extra effort respondents would have to go to in order to reply. Email surveys seemed to be the fairest way of collecting results, especially above personal interviews on the street and telephone interviews, due to the language factor. As there are three language zones within this region, it would be unfair to conduct the interviews in German in Regio Aachen, and then conduct them in English in the Dutch speaking areas.

The survey was first written in English, then translated into Dutch, French and German (See Appendix.) The survey includes a selection of drop-down/yes-no questions as well as open box questions, thus allowing respondents to reflect more on their opinion and desires from the euregion. In this respect, the survey allowed for a great insight into the visions and opinions of the public, as they had time to consider their responses.

I then used Google as a search tool to locate local businesses, schools and organizations in the five partner regions to find email addresses of local people. When searching for local businesses I was sure to include a wide range of services and industries, so as to reach a broad demographic type, for example, architects, lawyers, hairdressers, bars. In total I received 161 responses, which is a very low number compared to the total amount of survey requests sent out (approximately 10%). However, I feel that I would not have received this many results if I had used another method.

Whilst searching for respondents, I was careful to ensure that I received a balanced percentage of results from each of the partner regions. From question 1 it is evident that there is an even spread of respondents, with the exception of Liege which has 9% more responses than the other regions.

3.3 Visions of EMR

In order to assess the visions and aims of the EMR, I used a number of methods. For the practical side, I had a number of conversations with workers at the EMR office in Eupen. In addition, this aspect of study also required some desk research, whereby I consulted official EMR documents, such as Green Papers, EMR website, Euregional leaflets/posters/public relations documentation.

3.4 Visions of Interreg

The research required to locate the spatial vision of Interreg was also a mix between practical and desk research. Similar to analysing the EMR visions, I looked at official Interreg documents, project information, operational programmes, brochures and websites. I also conducted an interview with August Kohl, the head of Interreg for the Euregio Maas-Rhein, which was vital in order to evaluate the aims of Interreg in this region as well as finding out about the opinions of professionals involved in the cross-border integration process.

4 Results

4.1. EMR Stichting

Although the Euregion Maas-Rhein was first established in 1976, prompted by Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands, it did not have a juridical status until 1991 when it became a foundation under Dutch private law; the Stichting Euregion Maas-Rhein. Formally located in Maastricht, Dutch Limburg, the Stichting is the principal mediator between the partner regions, national level actors and European level actors especially with regard to project selection and management of cross-border integration activities. (Kramsch, 2008)

(a) EMR discourse

The Stichting EMR discourse and spatial vision for the euregional territory are demonstrated through a number of means. As previously mentioned, this discourse is not simply limited to text, such as the Green Paper “A vision for the Euregion Maas-Rhein” and the website, but equally important are the various maps and symbols which have been produced.

(b) Maps and icons

Inserted below are the maps that are produced by the Stichting Euregion Maas-Rhein to represent the areas covered within the boundaries of the EMR. The first (Map 1) is the new version from the new website, and the second (Map 2) is from the old website. However, both maps portray the same message in the same way; the EMR as a territorial whole. Map 1 demonstrates this fact much more strongly than Map 2, as it depicts the EMR as a spatial area which is completely separated from any other territory or nation state. The EMR simply *is*. With this representation it is suspended, and appears not located within any other spatiality or territory, as it only shows the area up until the EMR border and nothing beyond.



Map 1: The Stichting Euregio Maas-Rhein (Source: Euregio Maas-Rhein website, www.euregio-mr.com)

In comparison, Map 2 locates the EMR in its geographical place as a border region, spanning as it does the three nation states. It portrays territory beyond that which is encompassed within its boundaries. With Map 2, if the names of the cities were removed, it would not be clear or instantly evident that the area shown was a cross-border region. Furthermore, it would not be obvious which three nation states it was depicting.



Map 2: The Stichting Euregion Maas-Rhein (Source: Euregion Maas-Rhein website, www.euregio-mr.com)

Map 2 makes it explicit that the euregion is a cross-border region. Moreover, it specifically names the individual partner regions, rather than simply the main cities within the region. This may represent a shift in discourse from a border region comprising of separate regions, to a region as a whole. Both Map 1 and Map 2, in accordance with Kramsch's analysis of maps mentioned above, represent the euregional space in a banal manner, using blocks of colour to distinguish between the five partner regions. Map 1 does this in a much more simplified manner than Map 2.

The euregional symbol (below) bears some primitive similarities to the cartographic representations. The black, green and blue swirls represent each of the three nation

states involved; they circle and intertwine to give the impression of a well connected space. Each piece fits together in a seamlessly, thus visually removing the border.



Image 1: EMR logo (Source: Euregio Maas-Rhein website, www.euregio-mr.com)

(c) Textual discourse

The overriding aim of the euregio is outlined neatly at the start page of the website:

“Unser Ziel ist es, unabhängig von Grenzen, in der Region lebenden Menschen oder Besuchern mehr Lebensqualität zu ermöglichen durch Information, Kommunikation und Kooperation in den fünf Partnerregionen.”

Briefly translated the main aim is to improve the quality of life for inhabitants of or visitors to the Euregio Maas-Rhein through information, communication and co-operation within the five partner regions, irrespective of the borders which (used to) separate them. Reference to the border in this manner complements the visual representations of euregional space, indicating a territorial whole. Emphasis on improving quality of life is also reiterated in the Green Paper, as it is noted that “quality of life will be the leitmotiv of the EMR over the coming years”.

The website further makes reference to periods of conflict between the three nation states, common problems experienced as a result of warfare and economic and population decline. The peripheries of nation states often suffer the hardest, as *“Die Grenzregionen wurden daher häufig zu strukturschwachen, unzureichend erschlossenen Gebieten”*. There is almost a sense of camaraderie trickling through the

dialogue, suggesting that these cut-off border regions, neglected by their respective capitals, should instead co-operate together.

The website does, however, continue by indicating differences between the partner regions, which suggests that whilst there may be a territorial whole, the aim of the EMR is definitely not to strive for cultural or identity homogenisation, as each partner region is to retain its individual character and focus on its own specific needs.

“Trotz weiterhin bestehender unterschiedlicher Interessen stehen die fünf Partnerregionen in der Euregio Maas Rhein längst nicht mehr mit dem Rücken zueinander, sondern bewegen sich insbesondere seit Beginn der neunziger Jahre gezielt aufeinander zu.”

This is highlighted in the above passage taken from the website, stating that despite the five regions having different interests, they are no longer standing with their backs to each other, but are instead moving towards each other and looking inwards. This would suggest that focus has shifted from procuring help from within the nation state to within the euregion. However, the Green Paper further attests to the importance of the role of the nation state, as the EMR recognises that “action must (..) also come from national governments”. In this respect the EMR is fully aware of its weaknesses, as most of the competences lay with the national rather than regional governments. The Green Paper also echoes this sentiment and encourages more intense action and co-operation within the euregion, stating that there should be more focus “on more significant and recognisable projects with a predominantly euregional character which bring added value for the euregion as a whole”. However, it must be noted that such phrases are rather broad and generalist, perhaps to the extent that they do not really have a great deal of value behind them. “Quality of life” and “euregional character” then, could be deemed empty. How would they be defined? And how would they be quantified or measured?

In addition to this, the EMR also wants to “profile itself as a creative knowledge and technology based region in the heart of Europe”. Here there is a clear focus on science and institutional knowledge exchange, which will initially only benefit a handful of those in the scientific community, and not the population at large.

Aside from the overt statements firmly rooting co-operation efforts for the benefit of improved quality of life, the EMR's other vision is that it becomes accepted and respected as the model for European integration, as it fully believes that "the EMR rightfully deserves recognition as a European pilot or model region". This would suggest that the EMR holds its visions for the euregional space to be the 'correct' ones to the extent that they should be applied to other cross-border regions of the EU. However, whilst this recognition may very well be emanated through other integration elites and experts within the EU, it might be of greater benefit if this recognition was sought among the region's own population first.

(e) Visions for the areas of co-operation

Co-operation between the partner regions is multifarious and can be divided into seven areas: the environment and climate change; tourism and culture; knowledge and science institutes; the labour market and education; care, mobility and infrastructure; and security. Broadly speaking, then, they fall within the larger concerns of social, economic, educational and cultural; the categories referred to in the population survey. For each of these areas the EMR has various targets, aspirations or visions that it wants to achieve and implement for the euregional territory.

The EMR's environmental visions focus on encouraging "projects which distinguish themselves by their environmentally beneficial nature and which contribute to guaranteeing welfare, freedom and quality of live for present and future generations".

The EMR further believes that it is of vital importance that there is continued and significant co-operation between the various knowledge institutions within the region, as it will lead not only to scientific developments but also improvements in the local economy. It therefore aims to promote "innovation, knowledge-intensive research and its application". Co-operation within the region has a special focus on life sciences and the ultimate aim is that the euregion becomes respected globally as one of the prominent players in knowledge and research. This falls under the umbrella of one of the overall visions of the EMR mentioned above, namely that the euregion become recognised as a global knowledge and innovation centre. This longing, obviously, is

not something unique to this particular euregion, or euregions across Europe in general, but rather for towns, cities, metropolises and countries all over the world, and each of them is in constant competition with one another. One must not forget the underlying need for Europe to be economically competitive on a global scale, an objective which requires strength at internal borders, or rather economic fracture lines.

The focus for the labour market and education is primarily aimed at improving and accelerating the work carried out by the Cross-border Commuter Task Force, hence the necessity to reduce administrative hurdles of cross-border living and working. This work pays particular attention to problems in relation to “social security, labour legislation and taxation”. There is also to be an improvement in linguistic skills in the region as a whole, and well as further mutual recognition of school leaving certificates and higher education degree courses.

The attention for care and cure is to be placed on establishing a Task Force and to achieve greater co-operation between the hospitals and care centres within the euregion. As for mobility and infrastructure, “intensification of the co-operation and euregional planning regarding cross-border public transport is urgently required”.

The co-operation area of culture and tourism requires “a speedy implementation of joint initiatives” and reinforcement of the cultural profile of the region. The EMR envisions achieving this via promoting cultural-historical links between the partner regions, as well as establishing “an EMR cultural, leisure and events calendar”. The EMR’s vision for security issues in the region is primarily based on improving the connections between the police forces.

In addition to this, the EMR is also placing a great deal of emphasis on the improvement of language skills, believing that “knowledge of language is an essential prerequisite for further intensification of euregional co-operation and integration”. One of the ways in which it intends to achieve this is by the development of bilingual schools and an increased number of school exchanges. The EMR also notices the need for the creation of “professional relationships with the various media”.

The EMR therefore has numerous aims in different co-operation areas which it wishes to fulfil over the coming years, all of which are to be implemented under the principal objective of improving quality of life. Results and comparisons will be made below.

4.2 Interreg

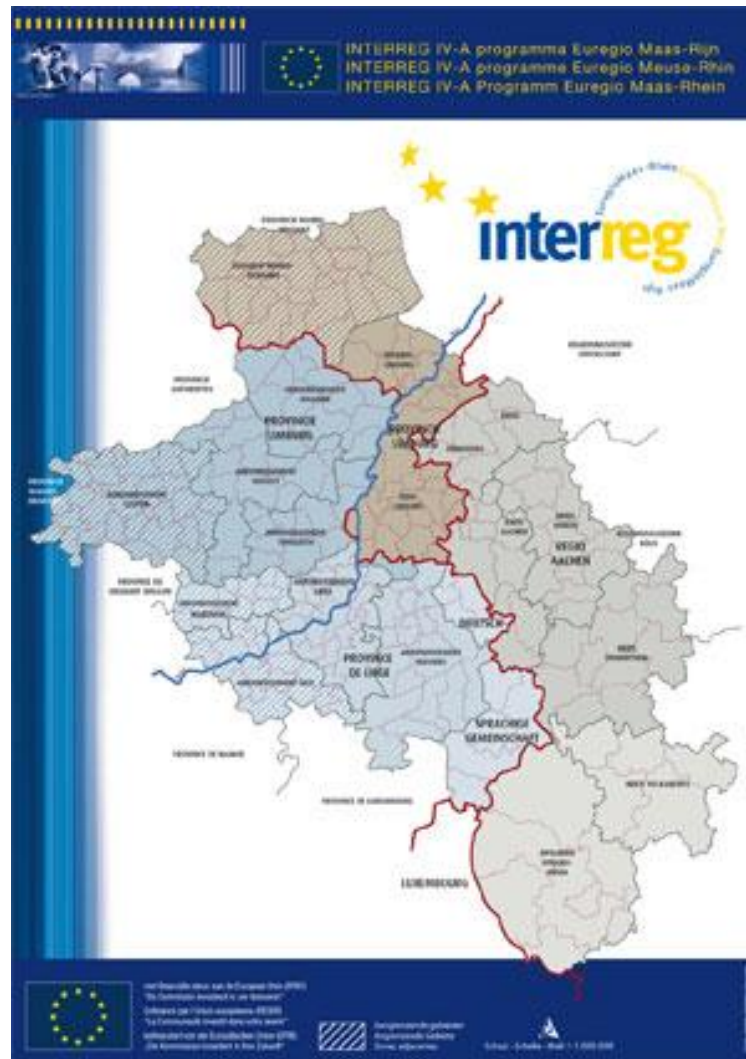
In order to fully consider the visions and principle objectives of the euregion, it is of utmost importance to include some analysis of the work of Interreg. The Interreg initiative incorporates three strands of co-operation: cross-border, transnational and interregional. In the case of the EMR co-operation obviously occurs under the cross-border strand. Interreg is a tool used by the European Union to achieve the objective of ‘territorial cohesion’ and has become integrated into the EU Cohesion Policy. (Duehr, Colomb, Nadin, 2010) The priorities of the current programme, Interreg IV, are based on the Lisbon and Gothenburg Agenda and as such now focus on innovation, environment, accessibility and sustainable urban development. (Duehr, Colomb, Nadin, 2010) Within the euregion, Interreg supports projects and provides some of the funding for their implementation. The rest has to be sourced from regional partners or other private partners via various co-financing arrangements. For example for the funding period of 2007 – 2013 over EUR 7,752 billion was earmarked through the European Regional Development Fund for all EU projects under Interreg IV. In the case of the EMR, the total contribution of EU funding stands at EUR 72, 044, 843 million, co-financing from the governments stands at EUR 66, 427, 933 million, and the contribution of the private reaches EUR 5, 626, 910 million. (EMR website, 2010)

As an EU-wide initiative, Interreg therefore represents the visions of the EU in relation of cross-border areas and the EU territory as a whole.

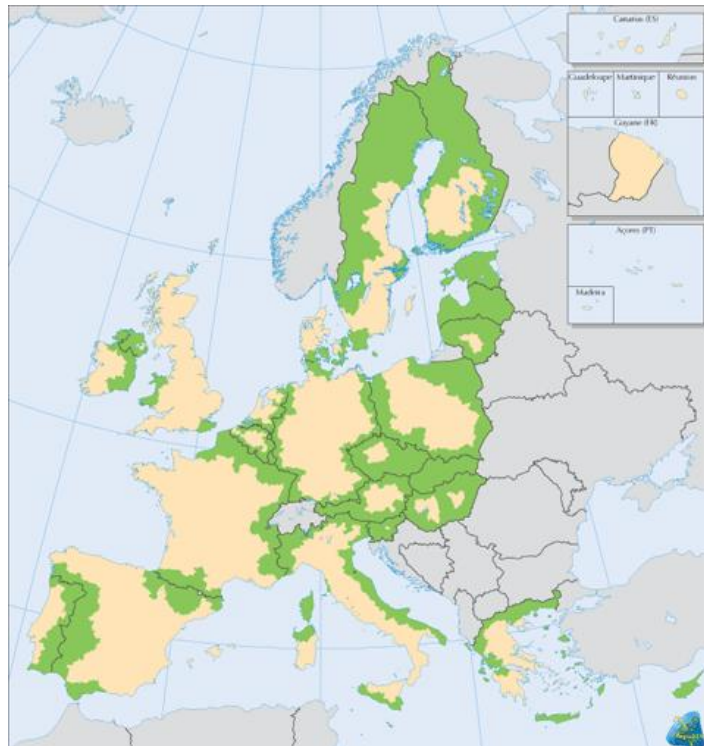
(a) Interreg mapping

As with the previous section, it is useful here to consider the cartographic visualisations and representations offered by Interreg for this euregion. Map 3 below is different from those produced by the EMR Stichting. This representation does bear

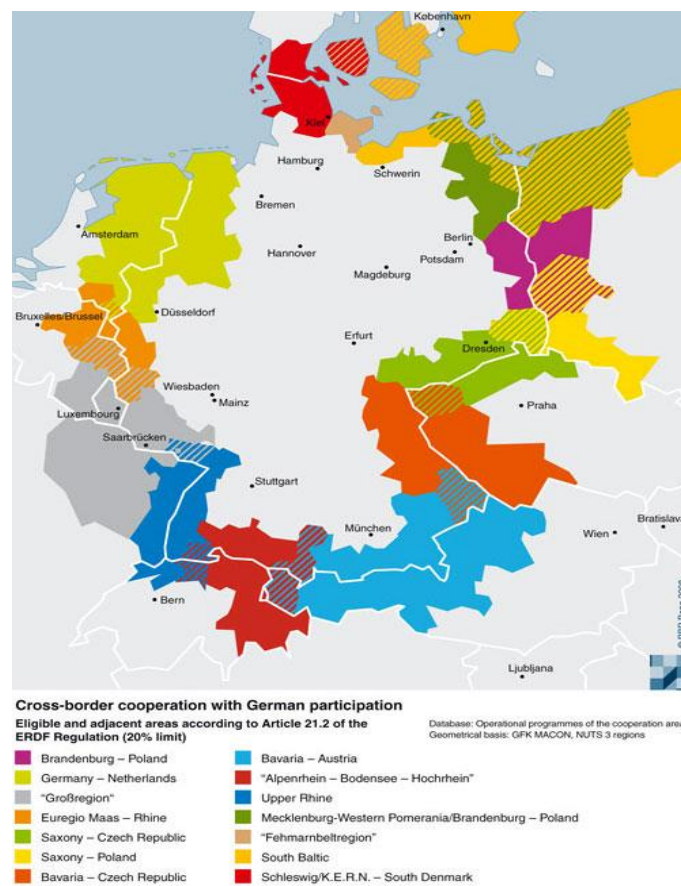
some similarities to Map 2, as it also shows the hinterlands of the regions and not just the euregion as a territorial whole detached from the respective nation states. However, the national borders are explicitly marked between the countries, unlike in Map 1 and Map 2.



Map 3: Interreg map of the Euregio Maas-Rhein (Source: Interreg ERM website, www.interregemr.info)



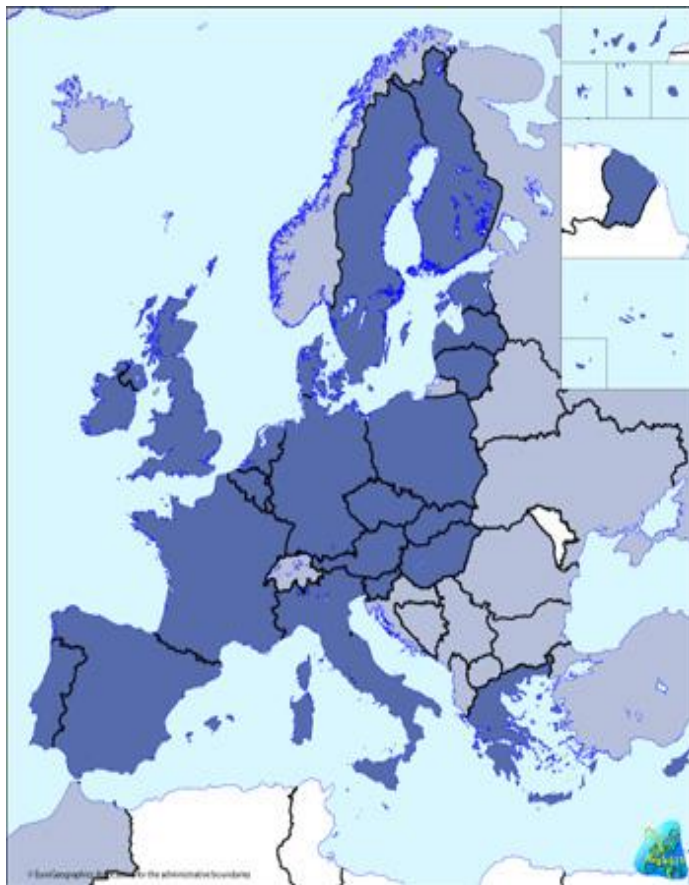
Map 4: Interreg regions of the EU (Source: ec.europa.eu)



Map 5: Interreg regions around the German border (Source: interreg.de)



Map 6: Interreg northwest Europe co-operation area (Source: canterbury.gov.uk)



Map 7: Interreg 111 (non-)partner countries (Source: event.interact-eu.net)



Map 8: Interreg EU integration co-operation areas (Source: interreg3c.net)

Further still, there are various other interpretations and visualisations of the euregional space, as demonstrated above. Map 5, taken from the German Interreg website, represents the Euregion Maas-Rhein simply as a part of a bigger picture with the main focus being on Germany itself, highlighting as it does all cross-border co-operation programmes around the whole German border. This visualisation indicates the importance of such regions for Germany.

Maps 4, 6, 7 and 8 are all visualisations of EU Regional Policy, some found at the ec.europa.eu website, others from spatial planning websites, and they also proffer an alternative vision of the EMR. Maps 6, 7 and 8 visualise EU territory as being boxed into separate territories, but at the same time they are still part of the whole. They demarcate and differentiate between larger areas of the EU, such as the northwestern European co-operation areas (Maps 6 and 8) and those countries which are participating in the co-operation initiatives and those who are not. Once again, the

EMR is simply a small part of a grand idea. On its own its effects on European integration, especially at cross-border regions, would be fairly insignificant. But as a whole and as part of the Euregional/Regional Policy the impact has the potential to be much greater. The EMR is therefore being represented within the EU territory and is no longer portrayed as a territorial unity, as above.

Map 4, therefore, is visual and cartographic representation of the EU's aims and visions for the future of cross-border European space and reflects the intentions and objectives of Regional Policy. Although Interreg and the EMR Stichting might have their own sub-agendas in order to achieve higher levels of integration, they are pursued merely in order to comply with EU (regional and cohesion) policy objectives. That is to say that the real power rests with the EU, thus EU policy objectives override those of the EMR. The EMR has very little political weight when dealing with national and European level actors as it holds no real competences.

Under the new programming period Interreg IV is no longer a separate Community initiative, but rather it has been fully incorporated into "European territorial co-operation", one of the three objectives outlined for EU Cohesion policy. Cohesion policy, and therefore the Interreg programmes, are financially supported by the European Regional Development Fund. (Duerh, Colomb and Nadin, 2010) The primary purpose of such funding is to "strengthen the economic base" in order for the regions to improve their economy and quality of life. As stated in the Interreg III Guidelines, the main aim of the programmes is to "develop cross-border economic and social centres through joint strategies for sustainable territorial development". However, it has long been understood that the effectiveness of Interreg programmes is difficult to assess as there are great divergences between border regions and each have different approaches to co-operation and integration. (Duehr, Colomb and Nadin, 2010)

(b) Interreg A: Areas of development

Interreg's development strategy has a number of overlaps with the EMR's focus areas for co-operation including improvement of physical infrastructure, development of

economic and scientific co-operation, environmental protection, development of human potential, development of social integration, and technical help. Over the last decade Interreg has co-operated with the EMR Stichting, regional partners and civil society members on numerous projects dealing with cross-border problems in these areas. Examples can be found below.

(c) Divergence in the territorial whole

Following an interview with August Kohl it is clear that from an Interreg perspective there is already some imbalance between the partner regions, mainly with regards to the type of projects that are of more importance. This mirrors the comments which feature on the euregion website, stating that whilst the partner regions no longer stand with their backs to each other, they do have different needs and interests. This is reflected through the nature of the Interreg projects and initiatives in which they co-operate.

Essentially, there is a re-bordering of euregional space. It is possible to draw a line through the euregion from West to East thus separating the more technical, research and scientific orientated (especially in life sciences) north from the southern region, which is primarily concerned with environmental issues, tourism and developing better public transport connections. So, in addition to the outer euregional border separating it from the 'outside' and the respective nation states, and the borders between the five partner regions, there are also new virtual borders within the new territorial whole. These are unintentional borders, arising out of already existing regional assets and specialisations; some areas and cities are traditionally and historically more focused and concerned with tourism, for example, than scientific research. However, with the possible exception of the Province of Liege and Regio Aachen, as the major cities (Liege and Aachen) themselves have many of the same technical priorities similar to the north, this concerns especially university co-operation, Uni-Kliniks, and research and development. The differentiation occurs, here, with regards to the hinterlands and the southern countryside of the regions, which prefer to focus on tourism and environment.

Clearly, then, there is some divergence between the regions other than the obvious cultural, historical, linguistic differences, forged along national lines. However, this should not be read as a negative factor for the euregion, or as a hindrance to co-operation and integration. For example, the German-speaking Community interests predominantly fall within the bracket of tourism and the environment, so it would be senseless for the German-speaking Community to try to take part in scientific research projects as it does not have the equipment, resources, funds or facilities to be able to do so. Despite this it is important that not all the technical projects are located in the north, and thus it is necessary to have a mix of projects in all areas in order to maintain some kind of balance within the region.

Kohl also indicated that for the regions of Wallonia and Hasselt cross-border work is much less necessary than for other regions due to the strong hinterland. This sentiment was also echoed in conversations with Rudolf Godesar. In comparison, Dutch Limburg has a much greater need for cross-border co-operation due to its being surrounded on three sides by the other partner regions. In addition to this, Dutch Limburg is located a substantial distance from The Hague and thus places much more emphasis and importance on co-operation. This is also true for Regio Aachen, as Aachen is the most western city from Berlin. Liege was also the main industrial hub, and perhaps is still harking back to its glory days.

Therefore the five partner regions try to co-operate with each other by concentrating on common interests which benefit all actors. As a result there is often a lot of compromise which has to be made, such as for example the MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) project (mentioned in further detail below), due to the above mentioned differences in priorities.

(c) Co-operation and obstacles

Bearing in mind these differences it seems self-evident that the negotiation process is somewhat arduous. It is, however, often made easier when there is a real *will* to work together as it has a subsequent impact on the organization of a project, the preparation for meetings and the desire for procuring fast results. In order to reach the desired

level of co-operation it has often been found that it is essential for there to be a significant level of trust between the contract partners, representatives from the involved partner regions and Interreg. Without trust, progress is slow.

To further aid the negotiation process a great deal of emphasis is placed on linguistic skills and communication. The issue of language raises a multitude of problems, not just for the daily life of those living in geographical cross-border areas which also straddle language barriers, but also for those professionals directly involved in promoting integration and initiating projects. Obviously, some areas co-operate better than others due to the lack of a language barrier, as is the case for example between the German-speaking Community and Regio Aachen, or Dutch Limburg and Belgian Limburg. Moreover, it has been noted that co-operation between Dutch and Belgian Limburg has proven to be much easier due similarities in culture, organization and regional structures. It is therefore of utmost importance that the other regions with different languages and structures take the time to understand, respect and learn how to work with different systems. In this respect Liege suffers a great deal being as it is the only French-speaking partner region and having a completely different organizational structure. The regional influence (Region Wallonia) in Liege is much stronger than in other partner regions due its highly-centralised, Napoleonic-era government structure. (Kramsch, 2010)

Kohl also pointed at the financial difficulties involved in co-operation and integration within the region. Project participation is reliant on the provision of funding from other regional and/or private funding in addition to that provided by Interreg. Not all partner regions can take part in all projects—not just because a project might not be a particular priority, but also because of a lack of funds. In comparison to the other regions, and as a consequence of the regional influence in the structural system, Liege has very little money at its disposal. The Wallonian Government is in control of finances which are directed to Interreg and is reluctant to provide money for projects. This is not the case in the other four partner regions.

Another issue which impedes co-operation and negotiation is the impact of national level politics, which is obviously different in each of the regions. It has often been the case when trying to agree on an aim for a particular project, that the basic idea is good,

but one region might not want to take part in it because it will not receive any extra benefit from participation because they already have it on a national level. A consequence of this is that the partner region pulls out of the project altogether and refuses to co-finance. However, due to the fear that the region may lose out on another initiative which develops throughout or as a result of the project, the usual progression is further negotiations to achieve a compromise.

This process especially has been of much importance in the health sector, in particular with discussions surrounding the MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) project. The Dutch hospitals in Limburg have a very strong system in place to help prevent the spread of the disease, much more so than the German hospitals in Regio Aachen, for example. It was therefore suggested that the other hospitals in the euregion could benefit from the knowledge and co-operation of the Dutch hospitals in this case to be able to deal with the MRSA problem as efficiently. Dutch Limburg felt that they would not benefit from such a project as they already had a national system in place and thus refused to co-finance, at which point negotiations became prolonged as all actors had to find a compromise in order to ensure Dutch Limburg co-operation. In Dutch Limburg there had been an underlying problem with a shortage of specialist doctors and as a result with long waiting times. Belgian Limburg and Regio Aachen did not have this problem, thus negotiations tried to incorporate this aspect into the project, as there was now an element from which all actors could benefit. If a patient from Regio Aachen required a specialist who was based in Dutch Limburg they would be entitled to be treated in this region and so on. This further opened up another issue of “who pays?”, as treatment can be received in another country from the patient’s own. This was resolved once again through a series of long and deliberated talks, where finally it was decided to launch a co-operation between the regions’ insurance companies to introduce a tariff system whereby the patients could use their own insurance health card and hardly notice the difference.

A further obstruction to co-operation stems from the fact that consent often must be given from national level government. It may be the case that the euregion has a great idea to improve integration and has put in great effort after a number of long negotiations, only to be stopped by a national representative who puts paid to the project. This is most often seen in the education system, which is regulated on a

national level apart from in Regio Aachen where it is controlled by the Bundesland. A further example of national intervention preventing euregional progress is concerning plans for a 'Gewerbegebiet' on the border between Dutch Limburg and Regio Aachen. The EMR wanted to encourage firms to locate their business in this area. However, plans were scuppered when representatives of German national government from Berlin refused to allow co-operation from the German side of the border. There are no exceptions to national level regulations, which sadly means that great projects which would benefit the euregion have to be cancelled.

This problem is very much intertwined with the concept that the EMR and its partners are the experts who are fully aware of the needs of the cross-border regions, yet the projects are terminated by national level politicians and workers who have no knowledge and experience of the cross-border situation. It is a gross understatement even to say that national governments are a huge obstacle for European integration. Despite the fact that most governments in Europe are committed to the grand ideas of cross-border integration and co-operation, be it as it may termed under the phrase 'United in Diversity', the reluctance of national governments to aid Euregional Stichting and Interreg projects because they do not fall completely in line with national politics demonstrates a massive hindrance for integration. National governments are not prepared to make slight adjustments in order to make marked improvements to the lives of cross-border communities—which are often left neglected due to their peripheral location.

(d) 'Sichtbarkeit'

Interreg projects and co-operational work can also be subjected to analysis of visibility and awareness, as initiatives implemented have diverging impacts on the euregional population with regard to these concepts. As such, Interreg projects can be split into two groups: global and small projects. Global projects are much larger in scale, such as the organization of Euregional health insurance cards, the Euregiobahn, research and development in life sciences, and university co-operation and knowledge exchange. In their own right these projects are of great importance to the competitiveness of the Euregion, especially with respect to attracting future research,

institutes and industry, thus reflecting the vision of the EMR as a global knowledge centre. However, it is fairly reasonable to presume that these projects do not necessarily reach the euregional populace; whether that is because they are totally unaware of such projects all together, or are aware of them but do not recognise that the EMR/Interreg are responsible for them. Many people are unaware of the level of co-operation on a scientific level between institutes and universities and, what is more, such co-operation does not interest them. This is primarily because these projects do not directly include the people of the euregion, and nor do they bring them together. Whilst they may improve the euregion's global position as a knowledge-based centre, this notion seems somewhat intangible for the normal citizen. However, with certain projects it is often the case that citizens are aware of projects, especially projects such as the use of the Euregional health insurance card, but they may not be aware that it is the EMR which has organised and implemented them.

This has a significant consequence on '*Wahrnehmung*'. It is highly possible for an individual to be aware of the EMR, but to not find its work and efforts important, thus yielding low levels of credibility. Therefore, if the population were also more aware of the work that was being undertaken behind the scenes in order for seamless cross-border living to be achieved and, more to the point, that it was being carried out by the EMR Stichting and Interreg, for example, it would do wonders to the integration and co-operation process in the region. In essence the more people who are aware of the euregion and the efforts of the EMR Stichting and Interreg, the higher the likelihood that more people would take an interest and thus be inclined to involve themselves in projects whether they be project suggestions or organisation of people-to-people initiatives. Awareness of the EMR would essentially act as the finger pushing over the first in a long row of dominos. It would be the initial and much needed trigger towards increased public debate, perhaps even heated arguments about the EMR in general.

Conversely, there is an argument that there is little need for the population of the euregion to be aware of it at all, as the role of the EMR and Interreg is to iron out the creases so that the populace does not encounter difficulties in cross-border activities. This is integration without the population knowing about the problems. One could even go as far as to say that once integration is smooth across the border, the EMR

and Interreg would become superfluous. However, this argument leads to discussions of democratic deficit and the notion that it would be far more beneficial for the integration process as a whole if the population were aware of it, thus giving legitimacy to projects and politicians who are devoting time and resources. Visibility and awareness are therefore vital concepts. Moreover, integration without the awareness of the population is much too slow.

(d) 1. 'Sichtbarkeit'—Large-scale projects

The large scale projects are often ones, as previously mentioned, which do not have a direct impact on the euregional population, for one reason or another. The examples mentioned in the previous sections, such as hospital co-operation, euregional health card and insurance projects, all fall under the scope of the large scale. A further example is EPICC: Euregio Polizei Informations- in Cooperations-Centrum, aimed at tackling the problem of cross-border criminality. In order to do this effectively it facilitates information exchange between partner regions concerning identity checks, driving licences, missing persons, weapons information, evidence exchange and vehicle information, for example. According to the end report of this project in 2007 the improvements to cross-border co-operation in this field increased the feeling of security for the population of the region. Moreover, the EPICC was also concerned with the notion of visibility as it produced a flyer in order to inform the public about its work and the information databank, as well as a number of other promotional materials, such as rulers and notebooks.

Additionally, the police forces of the euregion also co-operate in a number of other areas. For example, there is now intense co-operation between the Dutch Limburg and Regio Aachen police forces whereby they are permitted to cross the borders and even share a common bureau. There has also been substantial improvements concerning the co-operation of fire services, but this process has not been without its complications. For example, initially the Regio Aachen fire service may have been quicker to respond to a fire just across the German border into Dutch Limburg or the German-speaking Community, but due to the laws the firemen were not allowed to cross. In some cases they had to literally stand at the border and aim water at a fire in the

German-speaking Community or Dutch Limburg. The EMR helped to change this so that fire services were able to cross the borders to deal with fires in other euregion partner areas. However, then came the next hurdle that once a Regio Aachen fire service arrived in the German-speaking Community, they were confronted with the infrastructural problem that the Regio Aachen fire hoses did not connect to the local fixtures and thus were not able to reach a water supply and unable to help. It may seem that opening the borders is the hard part, but this is far from the truth. There are a multitude of small differences between systems, infrastructures, administration culture and language which need to be overcome in order for the desired level of co-operation and integration to be achieved. The Euregio Maas-Rhein, whilst having made giant steps forward, still has a mountain to climb. Perhaps this task is made significantly more difficult because the people are not aware that there is still so much work to be done to solve the issues which arise from open borders.

This problem is also true for mobility within the region. Mobility always plays a large underlying role in the integration process and on some level it can be argued that the transport system in the euregion is nowhere near comprehensive or well-connected enough to support the levels of desired integration. The development of the Euregiobahn between Heerlen and Stoldberg/Dueren and the Bus 50 from Maastricht to Aachen are small steps on the way to realizing a fully integrated euregion, but much work still has to be done. Although there is the EuregioTicket, which allows for unlimited travel in the euregion at a cost of 15€ a day, at closer inspection this is not such a great offer and reveals substantial holes in the mobility network of the region. The area of ticket validity is deceptively small as it only includes a limited number of routes and particular types of trains. For example, the ticket is not valid on the high-speed trains, which are the main connectors between Aachen and Liege. It is only valid on the RegionalBahn which is considerably slower. There is also no rail connection between Aachen and Maastricht and Aachen and Hasselt, which is quite poor considering they are three of the major cities of the euregion. In proportion to the surface area of the whole region, the euregional ticket barely scratches the surface of euregional mobility.

Interreg and the EMR are trying to improve the situation for example by introducing one ticket which is valid on any bus or train in the euregional area, but as local travel

is privatized it also relies on the co-operation of private businesses to be willing to commit to such a venture, which can be problematic especially as they are primarily concerned with making a profit.

In addition, Interreg also concerns itself with other issues which are important to the euregional population according to the responses in the survey. Interreg has been involved in a number projects dealing with language skills and competences during the last decade under Interreg III, for example, Proqua, Cake, Caro Lingua, as well as a number of other educational projects, such as Duaal Master. Caro Lingua, for example, was set up by the EMR Stichting in order to be able to benefit from the regions geographic position and linguistic diversity. It is a school exchange programme, whereby students in the euregion have the opportunity to communicate with their neighbours in their own languages, and learn something of the different cultures. It involved visits across the border, as well as distance communication via email tandems, for example. Under the umbrella of the CaroLingua project, numerous further school projects were initiated by the participants, mostly concerning language learning tandem culture, euregional theatre and sport.

Such projects, whilst large in nature, can be deemed as important for those living in the euregional area, especially for cross-border commuters. However, much of the funding for projects is often allocated to life science research and university research co-operation projects. Here it is blatantly obvious that the average euregional inhabitant would not be interested in such projects, as they would not consider them important for their daily lives. What is more, such initiatives only involve a handful of (academic) elites, who are specifically interested in these scientific research areas and thus have an extremely low impact on increasing ‘*Sichtbarkeit*’ and ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ in the euregion.

(d) 2. ‘*Sichtbarkeit*’—*People to People*

It is the smaller Interreg projects which have the greatest impact on the population awareness of the EMR. They function under the leitmotiv of ‘*Partnerschaft und Botton-Up-Konzept*’; namely the organisation of the projects is in the hands of the

local population, rather than politicians and social, cultural and economic experts. The focus is to promote co-operation between those at ground level and thus to increase levels of trust between the members of the community. Part and parcel of this process obviously involves face-to-face contact with each other with the ultimate hope to dismantle prejudices and to improve knowledge about life and society in the neighbouring partner regions. This enhancement of contact between the citizens should allow for a strengthening of a feeling of belonging. In order to achieve any of this it is essential that as many people as possible take part in the initiatives.

The success of these projects is not only supported by the results of the survey (see below), but also by the admission of the Head of Interreg himself. The People-to-People projects, such as euregional sports days and theatre events only require a small budget, yet they involve thousands of cross-border citizens. However, despite the low cost of implementing these projects, a lower amount than desired is actually allocated to them due to a lack of overall funds. It is fair to say, however, that these small projects have a much larger impact on public involvement and, by extension, awareness of the EMR.

During the past years, over 50 People-to-People projects have been realised in the euregion, the most being for sport and music, but they also concern art, education, culture and leisure. Examples of such projects include the euregional Sports day, Theatrefest, Euro-shopping-plus, Euregio Jazz Aachen, Euregional Kunst en Cultuur project, Nacht van de Euregio, Tanzenden Staedten, Les voix du monde, Euregional Rock meetings, Scrabble, Rockmusik in der Euregio and Euregio Volleybal Tornadoi. The success of these projects is unquestionable, as Interreg reports state that the *‘Beteiligung, euregionale Bewusstseinsbildung, Vertiefung der kulturellen und sozialen Kontakte, ein absolute Erfolg waren.’* Perhaps the extent of the project success is a little over-exaggerated in order to bolster public relations as such statements can often be pure rhetoric, appearing to be say a lot without really saying anything at all. The reports go even further to suggest that the results procured from these projects contradict the financial resources demanded in the first place in order for them to take place. However, it does note that a substantial consequence is the fact that they often cost the EMR Stichting a lot of time, disproportionate to financial means and project size. That said, the report also further reiterates that this should not

detract from the aim and tangible success of these projects: *‘die groessmoegliche Beteiligung der Buerger der Euregio Maas-Rhein, die Buergernaehe ueber diese Art von Projekten und die Staerkung des Zugehoerigkeitsfuehls zum gemeinsamen Wirtschafts- und Kulturraum Euregio Maas-Rhein.’*

(e) Visibility

In addition to the People-to-People projects, it is also noteworthy to consider the extent to which the Euregio (logo/name) is actually seen throughout the region. After a period of three months living in Aachen, the euregio was very rarely visible. Occasionally there are busses with posters advertising euregional business fairs or the Euregio zoo, for example. However, in the central stations and tourist information centres of the main cities of the region, one would hardly know that you were in the euregio at all. Euregional tourist information leaflets, for example, are next to nonexistent. Admittedly, in some of the stations there is often a map advertising the EuregioTicket for the rail network. The EuregioBahn between Stolberg and Heerlen is also heavily branded with the ‘Euregio’ logo. (See below) It is, however, interesting that emphasis is placed on ‘regio’ rather than ‘euregio’ as a whole. Perhaps those behind the project wished to portray, or indeed consider the area themselves to be, a ‘region’ rather than a specifically labelled ‘euregio’.



Image 2: Euregiobahn at Heerlen station (Source: commons.wikimedia.org)

Commonly seen is the term ‘Euregio’ used by small businesses in the region as an advertising tool. For example, many firms use the phrase “*Der No.1 in der Euregio!*” such as a chip shop in Kelmnis, German-speaking Community. People seem to be aware of what the term is, but they fail to make the connection to the EMR or the office in Eupen, or any of the projects. What is more, the use of the term ‘Euregio’ is much more common in the German-speaking areas, most notably in Regio Aachen. This is clearly demonstrated by a quick search in Google maps, as the search engine throws up a spattering of results in this area with businesses utilising the term ‘Euregio’ in their name. Obviously this should not be taken as a concrete indicator of awareness levels as many firms do not pay to advertise on Google and thus would not be included in the search. Moreover, whilst assumptions concerning EMR awareness could be made, it would be wrong to presume that the areas with the most companies using the term were the areas in which EMR awareness was the highest. This could in fact be due to linguistics, as some workers at the EMR were of the opinion that ‘euregio’ sounds much better in German, than ‘l’euregio’ in French and ‘Euregio’ in Dutch.

(f) Identity

It is commonly acknowledged at the EMR and Interreg that creating a euregional identity is not an aim of their work, nor is it something which is strived for. If a euregional identity does not exist, it most certainly is not the wish of the EMR to mix all the partner region identities and create a supra-euregional identity. This sentiment is also shared by the majority of the population, as one respondent of the survey remarked, “*Développer une identité eurorégionale ne semble pas nécessaire, c'est une institution économique qui n'a pas besoin d'identité culturelle spécifique. Nous avons déjà nos identités allemande, limbourgeoise, liégeoise.*” (Communications worker, from Liege, aged 20-29) The co-operation is simply about making the most of their ‘*vielfaelt*’ and coming together to achieve common goals. Therefore, there will never be an integration of an all-together, just a system of profiting from the diversity which the various areas of the euregional space have to offer and share with each other. This, however, proves to be a delicate balancing act for the EMR and indeed for other regions and cities around Europe. It is an arduous task to separate and differentiate the euregion from its connections to its surrounding areas and hinterlands. At once the EMR needs to de-emphasise the ideas of homogeneous identity, playing up its functional character, but it must still define itself vis-à-vis the surrounding regions and levels. (Kramsch, 2010) As the race to become the next and all-important knowledge hub gathers speed and intensifies, it remains to be seen how the EMR Stichting is to achieve that without playing the cultural card. (Kramsch, 2010)

4.3 The Euregional Population

A set of complete responses in the form of tables and graphs is attached in the Appendix of this work. (See below)

After analysing the results of the survey it is possible to allude to a certain degree of overlap concerning visions for the euregional space as well as what is actually wanted by the euregional population and what is already being provided. In many instances it is quite clear that many correlations can be made between the latter two.

(a) Demographics

In order to have a fair analysis of results, I tried to ensure that I had an equal percentage of respondents from each of the partner regions. By and large this was achieved, as most of the partner regions accounted for between 17 – 20% of the results, with the exception of Liege with 27%. (Appendix, Fig.1)

As the survey was conducted online it was harder to assess the respondents' age. However, question 2 of the survey allowed for this information to be collected and it was found that there is perhaps a slight bias towards the older generations, as the majority of the respondents fall into the older age bracket options (114 of 161). (Appendix, Fig 2) This would perhaps highlight a limitation of the survey and it would perhaps have been beneficial to have a more evenly spread demographic.

(b) Awareness

A number of questions in the survey were specifically targeted at identifying the levels of awareness of the EMR among the population as a territorial whole, as well as the differences between the 5 regional partners. As mentioned in the theory chapters it is of vital importance that the levels of awareness are discovered so as to allude to other political implications and assess power relations between the actors.

Question 5 of the survey deals directly with EMR awareness, as it asks "Are you aware of the Euregio Maas-Rhein?" (Appendix) From Fig 5 (Appendix) it is explicitly clear that the levels of awareness among the population are, in actual fact, extremely high. Of the 161 total respondents, 131 (81%) answered positively. So, the population of EMR as a territorial whole can be said to be aware of the existence of the EMR. However, the situation is slightly different when the responses from the partner regions are compared. Regio Aachen received the most 'yes' results (96%), closely followed by the German-speaking Community and Dutch Limburg. It was the Belgian partner regions of Limburg and Liege which were lagging behind, as only 70% in Liege and 72% in Belgian Limburg were aware of the EMR. What's more, it is also vital to be aware that whilst a high percentage answered 'yes' to this question, it was later clarified by some respondents by stating that they knew of the region, but they

could not elaborate on what it was specifically. For example, one respondent from Liege said, “*Je sais que cet Eurégion existe mais je n'ai aucune idée de ce que cela recouvre. En résumé : je ne sais pas à quoi elle sert.*” (Self-employed, Verviers, Liege, in age group 40 – 49)

In line with Hypothesis 2 mentioned in the above theory chapter, this question demonstrates, therefore, that the level of EMR awareness is different in each of the partner regions. When comparing all five regions together the differences between them do not appear to be overtly dramatic, ranging as they do between 70—96%. However, when taken on an individual basis and comparison is made between the highest and lowest levels of awareness, a 30% difference is rather considerable.

Surprisingly when asked, “do you think the existence of a euregion is necessary in order to promote cross-border integration?” (Appendix. Fig 6) the responses do not fully correlate with those from question 5. One would perhaps have expected that the area with the highest level of awareness would view a euregion as necessary for integration, but this is not the case. The most ‘yes’ responses came from Dutch Limburg (92%), followed by the German-speaking Community and Liege (81%), Belgian Limburg (80%) and finally Regio Aachen (77%). (Appendix, Fig.7) It is interesting here, then, that the partner region with the highest level of awareness (Regio Aachen), yielded the lowest number of ‘yes’ results and that Liege scored substantially higher. Alternatively, it could merely demonstrate that those few Liegois who know of EMR are more supportive of it than those in Regio Aachen.

However, even in high percentage scoring regions there were respondents who questioned the necessity of euregions, as one stated, “*In dieser Hinsicht sieht man als kleiner EU Bürger auf EU Ebene keine große Entwicklung, ausser grosse Verwaltungsapparate. Benötigen noch einen weiteren Apparat?*” Another respondent offered a completely contrasting opinion of the euregion, saying that “*Die Euregio Maas-Rhein ist für unsere German-speaking Community sehr wichtig, weil sie unsere Gegend in einen größeren Zusammenhang einbettet und weil die DG in diesem Zusammenhang eine wichtige Brückenfunktion übernehmen kann. Der Sitz der Euregio ist in Eupen, was wiederum unsere Gemeinschaft aufwertet und für uns langfristig von Vorteil sein kann.*”

Both these statements came from German-speaking Community inhabitants, thus demonstrating that there is no one unified or harmonious opinion when it comes to European/euregional integration. But this does not come as a surprise, of course. Other respondents also felt equally strongly about the existence of euregions, as one participant from BL said, “*ik zie het nut er niet van in, we leven in Europa, opdelen in allerlei regio's is niet zinvol*” (Civil servant, from Maastricht, Belgian Limburg, aged 40–49). Such statements merely point to the discrepancies and difficulties in spatial visioning practices, and allude to the power relations when such processes are taking place. It appears that some respondents from Belgian Limburg, and perhaps this comment should not just be limited to those but also extended to include others across the whole of the euregion who did not take part in this survey, are thinking on a European rather than a euregional level. This way of thinking could be endorsing the concept that the EU visions for European territory as a whole are ultimately more important and necessary than the euregionally-focused visions. Ironically, it sometimes seems to be overlooked by many, not just by members of the general population, but also actors at European and national level, that the strength and integration concerns of cross-border regions are vital in achieving not only the EU’s mantra of ‘United in Diversity’, but also the economic and competitive objectives outlined in the Lisbon and Gothenburg Agendas. Moreover, such responses could also highlight once again that some citizens are unaware of the necessary work and projects being undertaken in order to improve the quality and ease of life in cross-border regions. Perhaps if this respondent had a greater knowledge of the EMR Stichting and Interreg efforts, he/she would feel slightly differently.

The results from question 8 are also highly relevant as they further demonstrate how important the EMR is in their daily life. Or rather, the *perceived* importance. It is vital to note here that awareness does not necessarily lead to agreement. The respondents were asked “how big a role does the EMR have on your daily life on a scale of 1 – 5 (1 being not very, 5 being very)?” With the exception of the German-speaking Community, the majority of the results were in the 1 – 3 answer brackets (Appendix, Fig 8) thus highlighting that many were under the impression that their daily lives were not very affected by the EMR, and the activities of the EMR had little bearing on them.

Both these questions are highly significant when considering the concept credibility of the euregion according to the general public. Question 6 indicates directly whether or not people think that the existence of the euregion is necessary at all and the responses to question 8 gauge the extent to which the EMR/Interreg projects are valued or deemed significant to the local population. These, therefore, are important indicators for ‘Sichtbarkeit’ and ‘Wahrnehmung’. As the majority of respondents believed the EMR activities to have minimum impact on their daily lives, it is clear that they are unaware of the scope and number of projects which have been introduced over the last decade of Interreg funding. Or rather, they are aware of the projects, perhaps because they have used the health insurance card, travel on the EuregioBahn, or are cross-border commuters, but they are not necessarily aware that they have been achieved by the EMR Stichting or Interreg. One respondent even mentioned the necessity of increased awareness among the population, stating “*Man müsste mehr über euregionale Zusammenarbeiten wissen, ich denke es gibt viele Initiativen von denen der Bürger allerdings nicht viel weiß*” (Art historian, from Eupen, German-speaking Community, aged 20 – 29).

In relation to Hypothesis 2, these questions further demonstrate that there are different levels of *Wahrnehmung* among the partner regions of the euregion. However, the results of these questions, especially the comments made by a number of participants, also firmly highlight that there is no uniform attitude or opinion *within* each of the individual regions. Naturally, however, this comes as no real surprise.

Furthermore, it is of course of interest and importance to find out *how* the population are aware of the EMR. This was achieved through question 6 of the survey: “How do you know about the euregion?” where the participants were given a choice of answers. The majority of the respondents knew about the existence of the EMR through media, work and having lived in the euregion for many years. (Appendix, Fig 6) The younger respondents who were aware of it were so via their university education, having done courses in European studies or completed their degree at one of the universities in the euregion.

Question 12 considered the possibility of future involvement of the population by asking: “What initiatives could be introduced to increase your awareness of the

euregion?” A number of options were provided, but there was also opportunity for respondents to add their own ideas. It also allowed for multiple answers to be given by one respondent. 20% of all responses thought that an improvement and increase in EMR publicity and branding would increase their awareness of the EMR. A further 20% of the responses were in favour of the development of an EMR media, with example given in such as TV channels, radio shows or newspapers. 16% of the responses were for an improvement of economic co-operation between the regions and another 16% for the improvement of the public transport network between the regions. (Appendix, Fig. 12) Those respondents who added their own ideas included such items as provision of more information about the EMR in general and a focus on common euregional culture and shared history.

(c) Interest in the Euregion

Included in the survey were a number of questions dealing with the concept of ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ in that they asked the respondents what kind of initiatives would encourage them to take more interest in the euregion and its work of the Stichting. If higher levels of interest are generated among the population(s), this would lead to greater levels of participation, thus having wider political implications.

The questions aimed at uncovering this information deal with the societal, cultural, economic and educational initiatives, all of which are incorporated in the EMR/Interreg sphere of work. They were all open-box questions, allowing respondents to reflect on the question and provide their own thoughts rather than being spoon-fed ideas and being limited to ideas already provided. This would also allow for the real opinions of the population to be shown. As a result, many responses gave more than one idea.

Question 13, therefore, asks: “What cultural initiatives would increase your interest in the EMR?” The most frequent response, mentioned by 29 of the respondents, was that their interest would be increased through the development and introduction of euregional ‘expos’. A further 28 of the respondents said that open-air concerts would increase their levels of interest. Euregional sports competitions and festivals were also

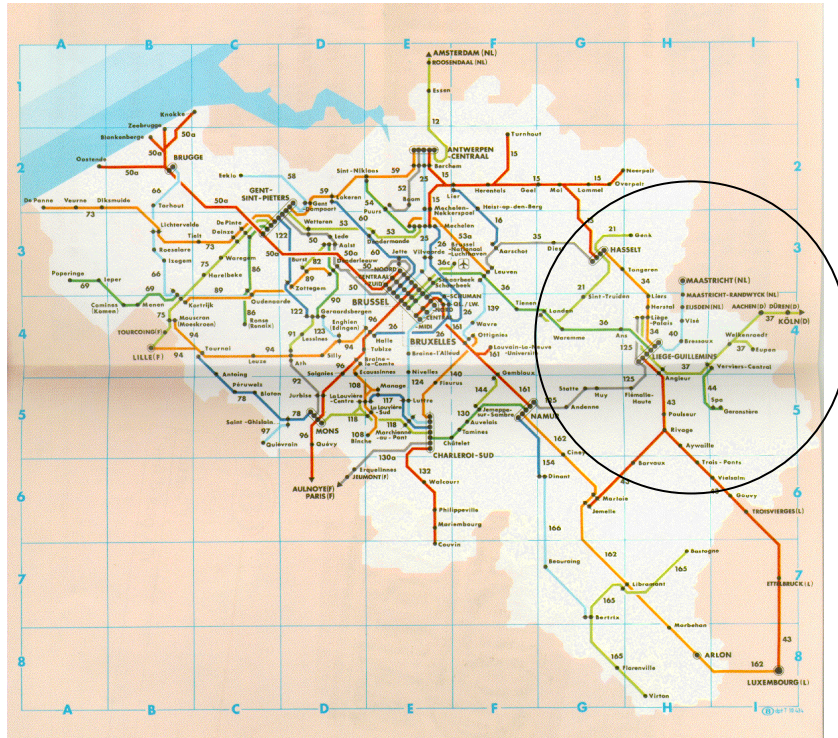
frequent responses. (Appendix, Fig.13) However, a number of respondents claimed that they did not feel that it was necessary for the euregion to involve itself in some matters as one participant from Belgian Limburg, for example, stated. *“Er is binnen Belgisch Limburg een ruim aanbod genoeg van culturele activiteiten. Verder kunnen we nog uitwijken naar het Antwerps sportpaleis, Brussel mochten er daar culturele activiteiten plaatsvinden die leuk zijn—buitenland is voor mij echt niet nodig.”*

(Administrative worker, from Ham, Belgian Limburg, aged over 50) Nevertheless, others placed much more emphasis on cultural exchange and euregional development, especially one respondent who stated *“culturele hoofdstad van Europa worden als Euregio”* (Self-employed, from Zutendaal, Belgian Limburg, aged over 50).

Interestingly, this has some resonance with the City of Maastricht’s bid to become the European Capital of Culture in 2018.

However, it is vital to note here that a number of such projects have already taken place under both Interreg III and IV (see above section). This therefore indicates that whilst these people-to-people projects do reach and involve great numbers of euregional inhabitants, especially in comparison to global projects, they still have a limited impact due to the lack of funding available.

Question 14 asked respondents: “What type of economic initiatives would increase your interest in the EMR?” The most common response for this question was to have improved transport connections between the regions, complete with cheaper and more flexible ticketing, and to establish improved connection and knowledge networks between industries and companies in the euregion. Both these suggestions were mentioned 18 times by respondents. The poor mobility opportunities are of greater concern to inhabitants in the Belgian partner regions. The map below of the Belgian rail network highlights the lack of rail transport connections in the Belgian partner regions of the euregion. Considering the geographical size and rural nature of these partner regions (outside the industrial hubs of Liege, Verviers, for example) there are very few connections. What is more, there is only one rail line which appears to be crossing any of the national borders of the euregion: across the German border in the direction of Aachen. This map therefore highlights the mobility issues and concerns of the Belgian population of the euregion.



Map 9: Map of the Belgian rail network (Source cs.kuleuven.be)

Again, the mobility concern is also being tackled by Interreg and the EMR, through the creation of the EuregionalTicket, EuregioBahn, and other Euregional bus lines, for example. However, not one of the respondents made a reference to these initiatives, but rather suggested such improvements as ones which would increase their interest. This implies that those who responded with such ideas do not know about these projects and improvements to euregional mobility.

Another frequently mentioned initiative which would increase interest in the EMR is to have more harmonised tax systems in each of the regions. However, this is not a matter in which the euregion can have much influence, as tax and monetary matters are controlled by national governments.

Question 15 then deals with educational initiatives, asking: “What educational initiatives would increase your interest in the EMR?” By far the most common response to this question was to have an increased number of educational exchanges for a semester, a whole year, or a week or setting up e-mail exchange between pupils, either at primary school level or university level. (Appendix, Fig. 15) The other focus which concerns the euregional population is language abilities. It was commonly

stated in the responses that language tuition needs to be improved. However, from the survey responses it is clear that some regions see this as a priority more than others. Liege responses, the French-speaking area, placed a much greater emphasis on this aspect than the other partner regions, and their anxiety is much more pronounced. However, whilst it may be true that those from Regio Aachen are just as incompetent as those from Liege when it comes to language learning, they are much less concerned with this issue because everyone is able to understand and communicate with them. For the population of Liege this is more of a problem, as French is less widely understood.

Once again, these responses clearly highlight that the lack of awareness of projects is not just limited to people-to-people projects and is especially exemplified in the concern for current levels of language aptitude and the availability and quality of language learning opportunities. For a vast majority of the respondents, especially those from Liege, the language barrier causes great unease. Many stated comments along the lines of “*la barrière de la langue*”, (Communications worker, from Liege, aged between 20 – 29) and “*formation en langues !!!!!*” (Head of relations at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Liege-Verviers-Namur, from Spa, aged between 40 – 49) as main aspects which they felt were absolutely in need of further co-operation and integration. However, once again, the results from the survey show that there is very little awareness of EMR/Interreg projects, as not one respondent made a reference to one of the many language projects which have already been implemented, for example, the CaroLingua project. The same is also valid for educational exchanges between all levels of schools, universities and day care centres.

Question 16, lastly, deals with the social initiatives, asking: “What social initiatives would increase your interest in the EMR?” The most frequent response for this question was to have a free choice of hospital and health care in the euregion, rather than having to go to the one in their partner region. Other popular suggestions focused on stronger co-operation between insurance and pension companies, tax harmonisation, and co-operation of the emergency services.

As with the previous questions, the responses demonstrate a lack of knowledge and awareness of previous EMR/Interreg projects concerning the social aspect of the region.

4.4 Conclusion of results

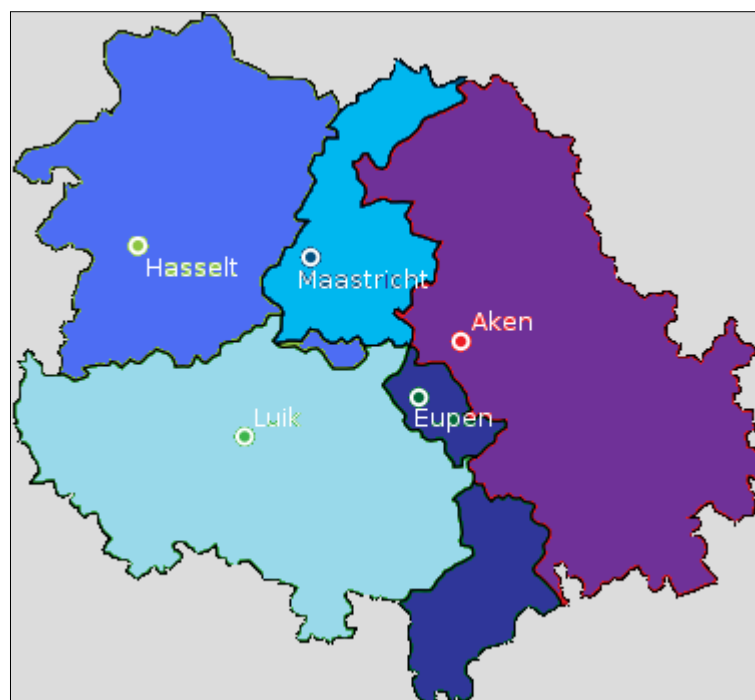
Therefore, the responses of this survey demonstrate that, as a general rule, the population is not adequately aware of projects which are being implemented by the EMR. Whilst it is true that 81% of respondents are aware that a euregion exists, they are not fully aware of the work or projects on which it has already co-operated. Indeed, if the opposite were in fact the case, they would not have listed the types and scope of initiative ideas which were subsequently given in the survey responses.

5. Cartographic representation

After analyzing the results of the survey conducted among the population it was then possible to map the answers in order to visualize any divergence of response according to partner region. In this way, it was possible to convey the results in map form, so as to allow for a greater visual representation of the results. Viewing the responses in such a way, rather than reading figures in a table or graphs, allows for similarities and differences between partner regions to be seen more clearly.

For each of the maps and response representations, the colour scale is from dark to light, that is, dark purple represents this highest percentage, and lightest blue the lowest.

Question 5 – Levels of awareness within the EMR

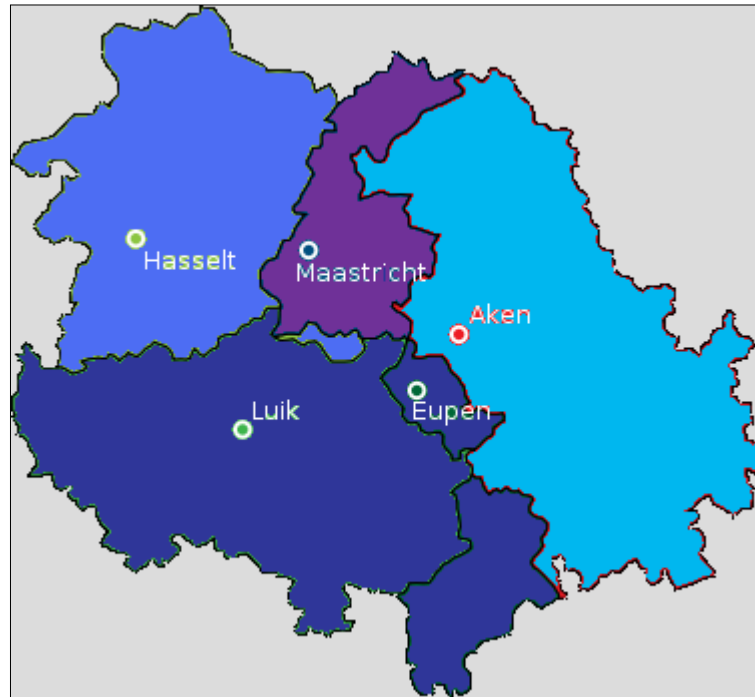


Map 10: Levels of awareness within the EMR. (Source: [EuregioMaas-rijn.svg](#), with own changes)

This map visualizes the responses for the question “to what extent are you aware of the Euregio Maas-Rhein?” From the map, it is clear that the partner region whose inhabitants are most aware of the EMR is Regio Aachen, with the Province of Liege

receiving the lowest amount of positive responses. The area with the second highest number of positive respondents is the German-speaking Community, so in this case there is even a difference between the partner regions in terms of language. This map also helps to visualise the different levels of awareness, with regards to Hypothesis 2.

Question 6 – The necessity of a euregion.

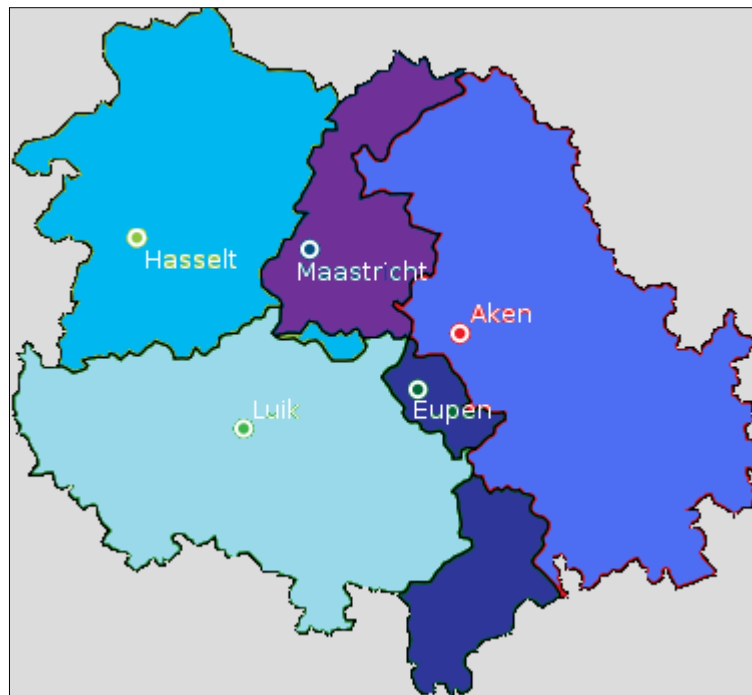


Map 11: The necessity of a euregion (Source: [EuregioMaas-rijn.svg](#) with own changes)

This map visualizes the response to the question “is a euregion necessary for cross-border integration?” and thus also helps to visualise the divergent levels of *Wahrnehmung* across the region in line with Hypothesis 2. Here it is evident that the population of Dutch Limburg is more in favour of such structures being in place in order to facilitate and encourage cross-border relations. This question raises an interesting point. While it was highlighted by question 5 that Regio Aachen respondents were more aware of the EMR in general, from analysing the results from question 6 it seems that they are least in favour of actually having such a structure for integration. However, it should be remembered here that this is a visual representation without any statistics in view and thus does not demonstrate the fact that there are only a few percentage points between each partner region in their results. Nevertheless, it is interesting that Liege scored relatively highly on this point and still

views the euregion as necessary even though it was the region which was the least aware of the EMR. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that awareness leads to automatic acceptance and agreement.

Question 17 – Levels of euregional identity.



Map 12: Levels of euregional identity. (Source: [EuregioMaas-rijn.svg](#) with own changes)

This map visualises the responses to the question “To what extent do you identify yourself with the Euregio Maas-Rhein?” With regards to the results from question 5, Regio Aachen did not have the highest levels of euregional identity, but rather Dutch Limburg did. Consistently, and to be expected, Liege has the lowest level of euregional identity. This is not surprising, given it has the lowest levels of EMR awareness.

6. Implications

The results from the survey, coupled with the desk research and analysis of EMR/Interreg spatial visions and co-operation point to a number of theoretical political implications, as outlined in the theory chapter. (See above) It is also possible to validate, or otherwise, the remaining hypotheses (Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 3) mentioned previously, as a result of theoretical analysis and application to the case study in the euregion.

The hypotheses 1: *The visions and needs of the various actors are different, and, therefore, there is a divergence between what is being imposed by the EMR Stichting and that which is desired by the population*, and 3: *Wahrnehmung and Sichtbarkeit have deeper political implications*, are inextricably linked and as such will be dealt with together.

To a certain extent, the visions of some of the actors involved do have considerable overlap. The EMR Stichting, euregional population and Interreg are all interested in the development of similar projects—such as co-operation on health care, mobility, education, language instruction—namely in the aim of improving the ease of cross-border living. However, the population shows much less interest in research co-operation between the universities and life sciences development, mainly because such projects do not produce tangible and instant results for local people on a day to day basis. Therefore, contrary to the hypothesis made, in general it is possible to assert that what the population want from their euregion is already being delivered by the EMR Stichting and Interreg, but perhaps more emphasis is placed on scientific co-operation than they would hope. The divergence arises when one observes the rhetoric of integration and co-operation, specifically of the EMR Stichting and Interreg, and by extension the EU. The primary focus, as mentioned time and time again in various documents, Green Papers, and even website text, is to elevate the EMR to be recognised globally as a scientific knowledge and information centre. Such a vision is most certainly not mirrored in the responses provided by participants in the survey. But rather, it does echo the sentiments and vague rhetoric proffered by the EU in its Cohesion policy, as well as the Lisbon and Gothenburg objectives.

When considering Foucault's power/knowledge nexus, and his theory of power flow, it can be argued that to a large extent there is a 'discourse gap' within the Euregion Maas-Rhein. In this instance, the EMR discourse has not yet become normalised among the population as a whole. Indeed, it is only current among the small number of elites involved in and/or aware of cross-border co-operation activities and initiatives developed by the EMR Stichting and Interreg. As shown in the results of the survey, the population is aware of the existence of a euregion, as most recognise the name of the euregion and understand that it does involve some form of economic and social co-operation between the partner regions. However, it is probably fair to say that judging by the results yielded by questions 13 to 16, for the majority, this is the limit of their knowledge. Nevertheless, it is important to note there is a small percentage who are aware of the projects undertaken to improve cross-border living, even though they form a small minority. However, there is a significant gap in the knowledge of the population which links the projects to the EMR itself, and it is essential that this gap is significantly reduced or indeed removed all together. The idea of a euregion, as well as terms such as 'co-operation' and 'integration', remain abstract for the population at large. Thus, awareness of the concept of a euregion is high, but the workings and actual tangible co-operation remains hidden in the dark. This is not in any way to suggest that it is necessary, or even slightly beneficial for the general population to be aware of and understand the smallest of intricacies of the inner workings of euregional management and governance. Such knowledge has never been a prerequisite in the past for the (re)production of national states in the past centuries, and is most definitely not expected or required in the case of cross-border regions. The knowledge referred to is rather a more peripheral one, whereby the population has at least some awareness of the various types of projects and opportunities which are available to and for them to improve their own cross-border living experience.

However, it cannot be assumed that awareness leads to automatic acceptance and agreement. Indeed, it is potentially this very disagreement between various visions for and of the EMR which is a prerequisite for legitimacy. It is the role of institutions, such as the EMR Stichting, to be able to provide a platform or arena of discussion and space in order to allow for these different visions to exist among a cross-border population. Difference in visions, the acceptance of these differences and, what is

more, the public discussion and debate thereof are the very essence of European integration: 'United in Diversity.'

It can be argued, then, that in this case of the Euregion Maas-Rhein, there is no flow of power through the system. Contrary to Foucault's theory of power not being held by an individual, or by a small group, but rather that it flows through systems, the power in this case has become blocked; it is stuck at the top in the hands of a few and the upper echelons of euregional integration, and hasn't yet started to trickle down to ground level. This therefore highlights the importance of people-to-people projects, which are pivotal in increasing euregional awareness and, more than that, credibility.

Furthermore, the EMR Stichting needs to attempt to create a 'habitus' of cross-border co-operation and to diffuse its discourse and spatial vision for the territorial whole. This should apply not only to the small group of elites already accustomed to cross-border (global) projects, but also to the local level, encouraging neighbouring communities to play an active role in culturing communication and integration. The notion of real cross-border integration and co-operation has not yet fully become normalised.

The knowledge and information gap for the population is highly detrimental and it is resoundingly desirable that it disappears. The situation as it stands allows for power to effectively rest with a small group 'in the know', while those lacking knowledge are left in the dark. However, at first glance it may appear that the EMR Stichting is therefore in control and the holder of power and knowledge, but this is not strictly speaking the case. The efforts of the EMR Stichting and Interreg are being guided, perhaps rather forcibly, by EU policy. Adjustments and changes have been made to Interreg programmes, moving from the earlier emphasis on day to day integration to more global concerns, which have a significant impact on the nature of cross-border co-operation. In order for projects to receive funding they must fulfil a number of selection criteria, primarily focussing on the objectives outlined in the Lisbon and Gothenburg Agendas. The overriding aim and concern, therefore, is for Europe to become the strongest knowledge-based economy in the world and this has implications for cross-border co-operation and project selection. It is perhaps for this reason, then, that life sciences, Uni-Klinik and scientific research projects often

received a large allocation of funds compared to other projects deemed more useful for the actual border population. To a large degree it seems the technocrats in their offices in Brussels forget about the individuals living in cross-border regions and their relationship and everyday stories with the border and cross-border living.

In many respects, much relies on funding, or rather the lack of it. The cross-border co-operation of euregions around the EU must to be in line with EU policy, thus in essence, reflect EU spatial visions. However, these visions are for the EU as a territorial whole; to be a global competitive force, based on a strong knowledge-based economy. These visions are not for the benefit of those living in the border regions.

It is almost as if the integration and co-operation process is occurring on three hierarchical tiers:

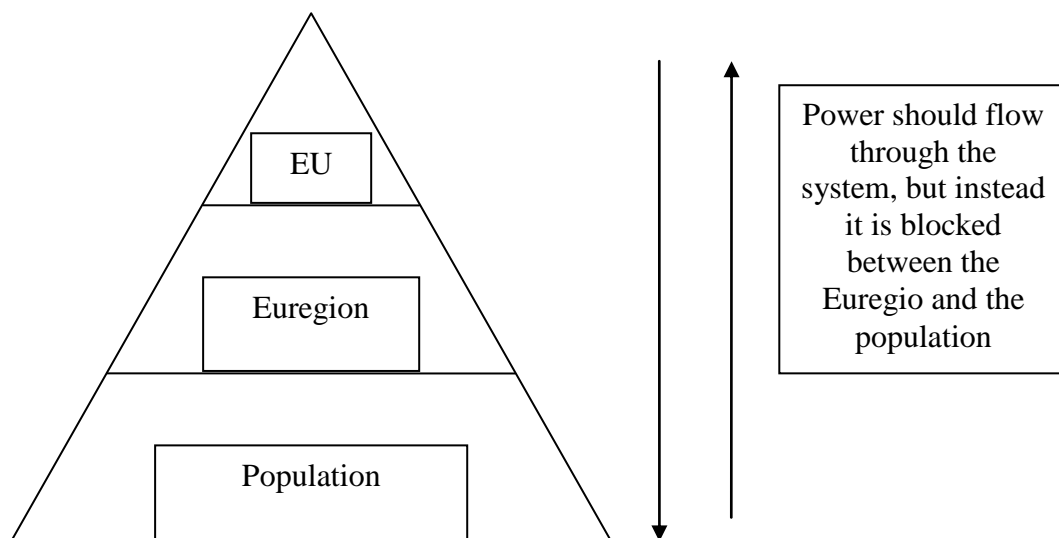


Image 3: Source: Own design

As with any hierarchy, those at the top represent the smallest number, yet they hold the greatest amount of power. Those at the bottom have the least information, the least expansive knowledge and thus the smallest influence on spatial visions within the euregion. However, in this case, it is not necessarily the EU which is best informed concerning cross-border situations and conditions, rather it is the professionals and elites as well as the population actually living at the borders. If the EU really did have

the best knowledge and information, it would not insist on broad, generic and global project implementation but would allow the focus to fall on the *real* problems and issues which arise from the removal of borders.

In order to realign the spatial visions for the euregional territorial whole it is essential to increase population participation in co-operation and international activities. In turn, this would reduce the democratic deficit which plagues not only euregional politics, but also EU politics on a wider scale. An increase in awareness would subsequently increase participation rates and help to bridge the gap between the various levels of the hierarchy. This increased involvement would create an ideal and mature environment in which discourse would be able to flow unabated, and habitus would be formed. Moreover, this new flow of power through the system would perhaps then cause a shift in the power relationships between the EU, the euregion and the people, ultimately impacting the dominance of certain spatial visions for the region.

If the EU really wants to be accessible and credible in the eyes of local populations, it is essential that it actually takes the steps towards creating an atmosphere where participation and real democracy can be cultivated. In order to increase awareness it would be much more beneficial to give money to the neighbouring communities and let them decide together what to do with it. This would at once decentralise the power and involve many more people in the decision making process, especially at a local level. This would allow for a growth in interest in durational activities, as well as having a substantial effect on '*Sichtbarkeit*' and '*Wahrnehmung*'. This concept would produce valuable tool for progression.

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Interviews and conversations

August Kohl: Interreg coordinator

Hans Niessen: Director EMR

Rudolf Godesar: Coordinator of Security and Health Services

Appendix

1. Surveys for the euregional population in French, German and Dutch

2. Survey Results – tables and graphs

Tables and graphs produced in Excel

Fig. 1

Question 1: Where do you live?

AC	28	17%
DG	27	17%
Liege	43	27%
NL	32	20%
BL	31	19%
TOTAL	161	

Total respondents: 161 – 100%

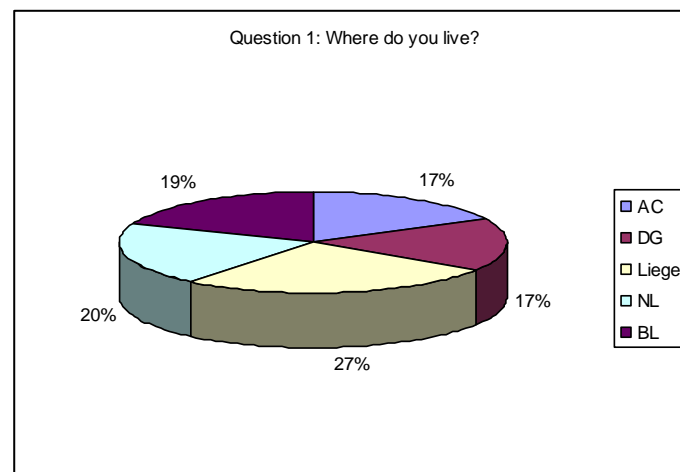


Fig. 2

Question 2: How old are you?

<20	1
20 - 29	24
30 - 39	20
40 - 49	52
>50	62
TOTAL	159
No Response	2

Total responses: 159 – 99%

Fig. 3

Question 3: What is your profession?

Translator	2
Cultural director	1
lawyer	9
Consultant	3
Student	11
Self employed	20
Engineer	6
Chemist	2
B&B/Hotel/Camping	7
Pensioner	9
Businessman	18
Secretary/Admin	4
Vet	3
Accountant	6
HR	2
Pilot	1
Florist	1
Editor	1
Communication	1
Architect	5
Travel agent	1
Tourism office	1
Museum director	1
Shop owner	1
Traffic planner	1
Teacher	4
Bank clerk	2
Estate agent	1
Carpenter	1
Dentist	1
Housewife	1
Civil Servant	7
Butcher	1
Nurse	4
Art historian	1
Chef	1
Theatre director	1
Social worker	3
Lab technician	1
IT consultant	2
Electrician	1
TOTAL	149

Fig. 4

Question 4: What is your level of education?

	AC
Abitur	2
Bachelor	4
Master	2
Hochschulabschluss	4
HH	1
Beruffachschule	2
Universitaetabschluss/Diplom	3
	DG
Regendat	1
HBO	1
A1	1
Bachelor	2
Master	1
	Liege
enseignement supérieur type court	2
Supérieur non universitaire	3
CESS	1
Bachelor	8
A1	1
A2	1
Master	1
Bac + 4	1
Bac + 2	1
Enseignement supérieur de type long	1
	NL
W.O	5
HBO	5
Bachelor	6
Master	3
VWO	1
HAVO	1
MAVO mts	1
MBO	1
HTS	1
	BL
Secudair onderwijs	1
Licentiaat Lichamlijke Opvoeding	1
HBO	2
Bachelor	2
Master	2
A1	1
WO	1
middelbaar-lijnpiloot	1
Athenemum +BBIC (int Care opl)	

Fig. 5

Question 5: Are you aware of the EMR?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
Yes	27	24	30	23	26	130
No	1	3	13	8	6	31
TOTAL	28	27	43	32	31	161
Percentage Yes	96%	89%	70%	72%	84%	81%
Percentage No	4%	11%	30%	25%	19%	19%

Total responses: 161 – 100%

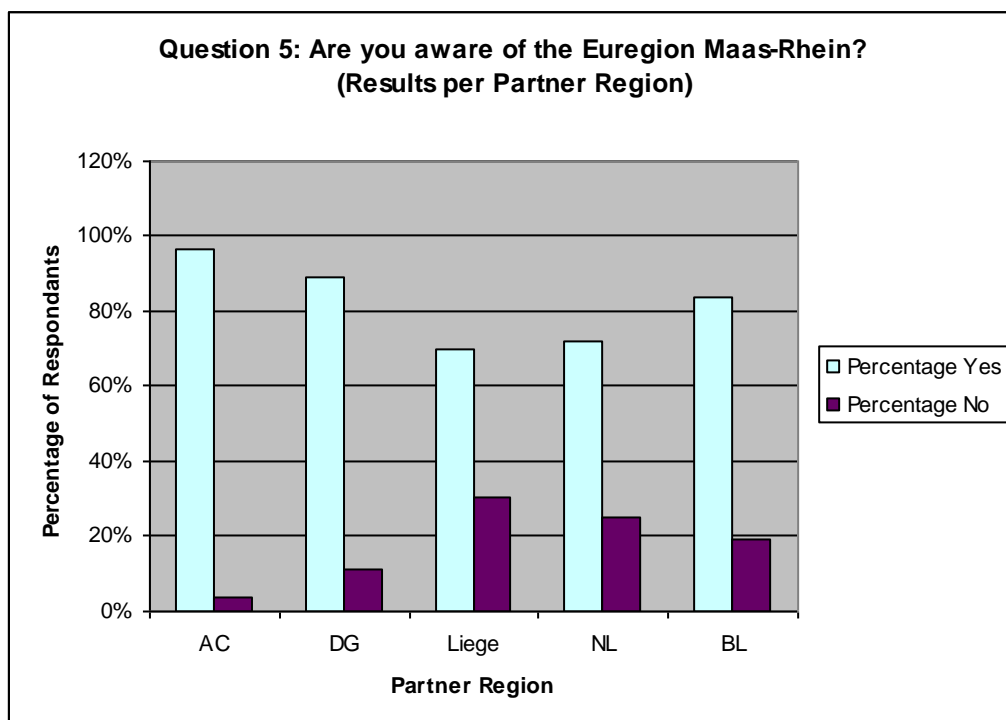
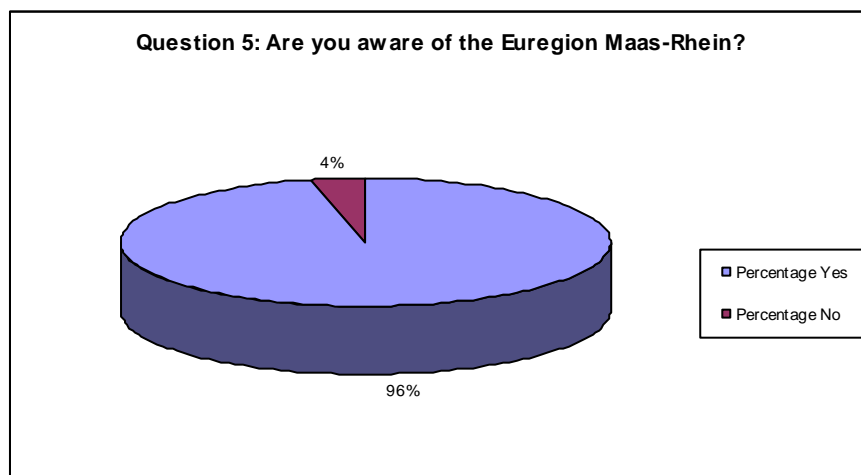


Fig. 6

Question 6: How do you know about the EMR?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
Logos around town/on pub. Transp. etc	2	1	1			4
Involved in Interreg projects	2	1				3
Media	4	3	4	4	3	18
Lived in the Euregion a long time and used to C/B living	4	4	4	6	1	19
Work	3	5	5	2	2	17
Studies			1	1	1	3
Aware of former projects		4	3	1		8
Involved in euregional co-operations	1	1	1	1	2	6

Fig. 7

Question 7: Do you think an EMR is necessary to promote cross-border co-operation?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
Yes	20	22	34	30	24	130
No	6	5	8	2	6	27
No response	2	0	1	0	1	10
TOTAL	26	27	42	32	30	157
Percentage Yes	77%	81%	81%	94%	80%	83%
Percentage No	23%	19%	19%	6%	20%	17%
Percentage No Response	8%	0%	2%	0%	3%	6%

Total responses: 157 – 98%

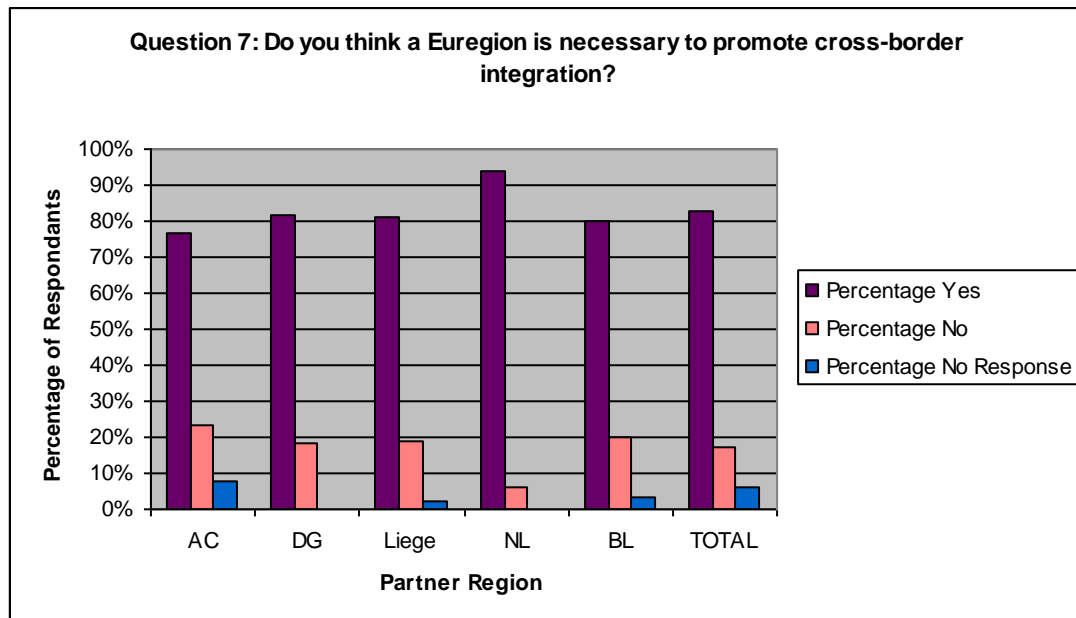


Fig. 8

Question 8: How big a role does the EMR play in your daily life on a scale from 1 – 5?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	3	8	20	4	10	45
2	7	1	10	8	8	34
3	7	7	6	12	9	41
4	7	5	5	5	3	25
5	3	6	0	3	1	13
No Response	1	0	2	0	0	3
TOTAL	27	27	41	32	31	158
Percentage 1	11%	30%	49%	13%	32%	28%
Percentage 2	26%	4%	24%	25%	26%	22%
Percentage 3	26%	26%	15%	38%	29%	26%
Percentage 4	26%	19%	12%	16%	10%	16%
Percentage 5	11%	22%	0%	9%	3%	8%
Percentage No Response	5%	0%	9%	0%	0%	

Total responses: 158 – 98%

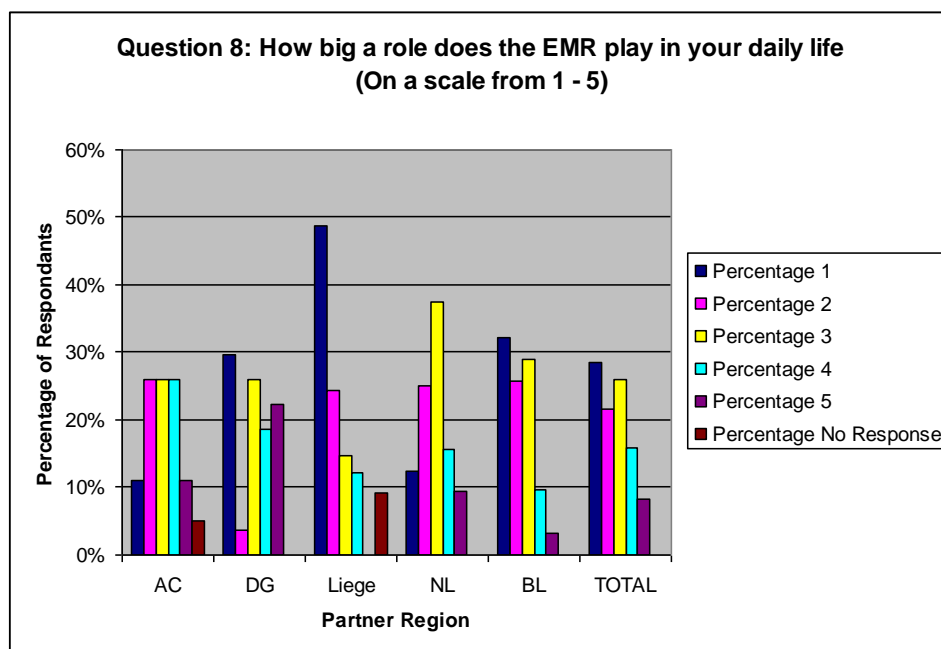


Fig. 9

Question 9: How often do you travel to other regions of the EMR?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
Everyday	1	4	1	0	3	9
A few times a week	4	3	3	15	2	27
A few times a month	9	10	11	12	11	53
Less than once a month	14	10	27	5	15	71
Never	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Response	0	0	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	28	27	42	32	31	160
Percentages						
Everyday	5%	15%	2%	0%	10%	
A few times a week	14%	11%	7%	47%	6%	
A few times a month	32%	37%	26%	38%	35%	
Less than once a month	50%	37%	64%	16%	48%	
Never	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
No Response	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	

Total responses: 160 – 99%

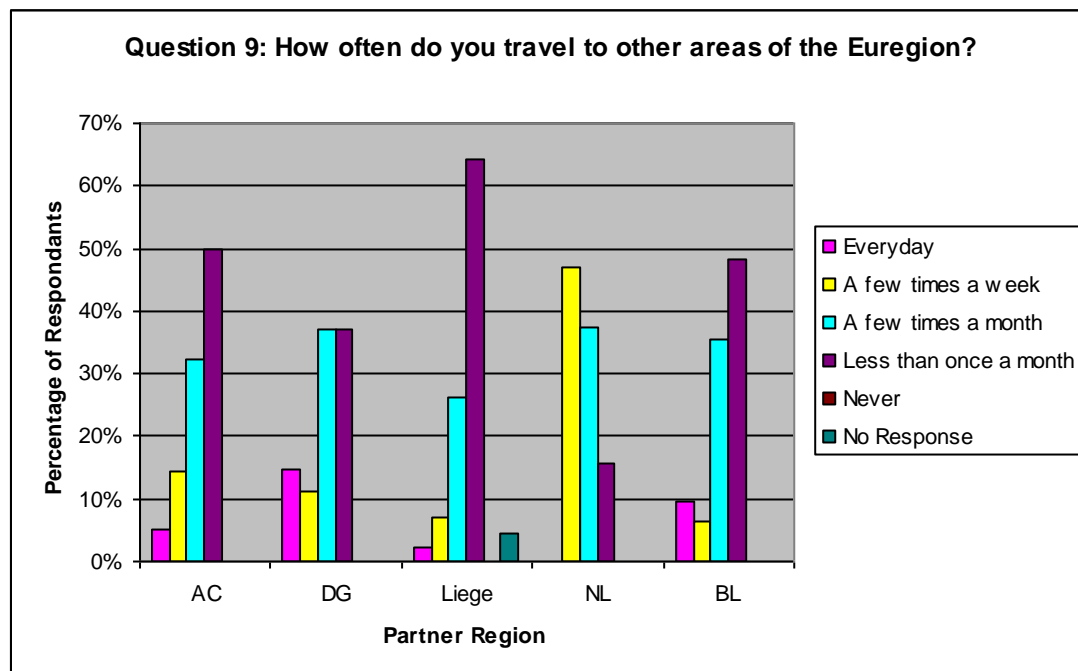


Fig. 10

Question 10: Which region do you visit the most?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
AC	0	15	5	9	4	33
DG	3	0	19	2	1	25
Liege	9	2	13	11	5	40
NL	5	0	2	0	17	24
BL	5	2	3	1	0	11
No Response	6	8	1	9	4	28
TOTAL	22	19	42	23	27	133
Percentages						
AC	-	79%	12%	39%	15%	
DG	14%	-	45%	9%	4%	
Liege	41%	11%	-	48%	19%	
NL	23%	0%	5%	-	63%	
BL	23%	11%	7%	4%	-	
No Response	30%	42%	5%	32%	33%	
NB: No response also includes answers which selected respondent's own region						

Total responses: 133 – 83%

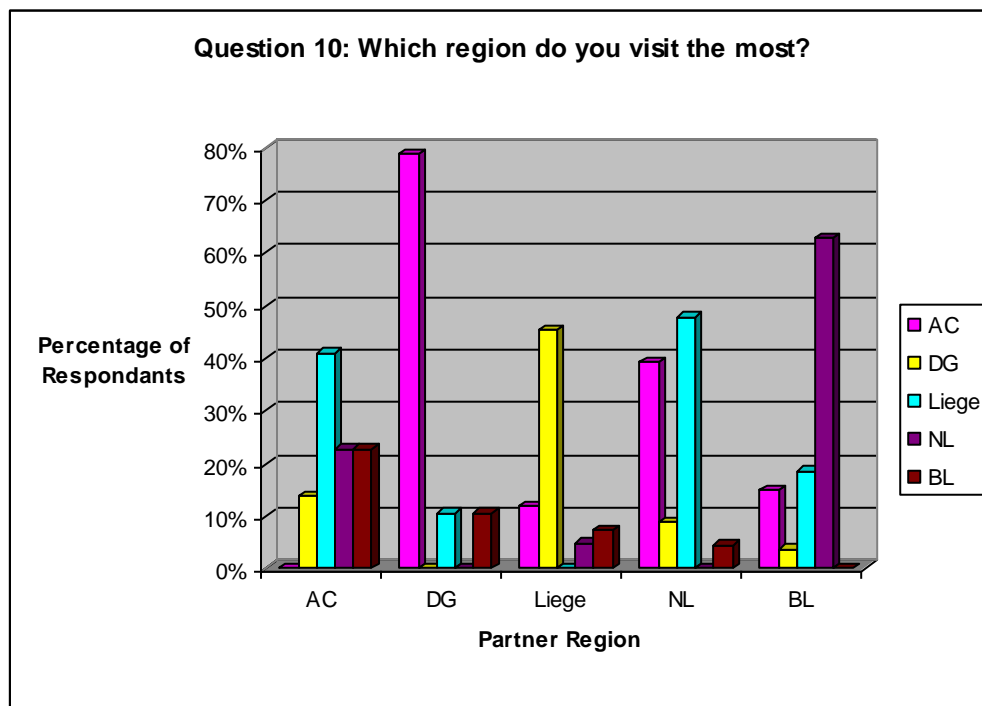


Fig 11

Question 11: Why?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL	%
Visiting family	5	4	4	8	6	27	17%
Shopping	10	12	22	9	11	64	41%
Social activities	5	4	3	2	7	21	13%
Transport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Language knowledge	0	0	0	1	0	1	1%
Work	4	4	9	10	7	34	22%
Other	4	2	2	2	0	10	6%
No Response	0	1	3	0	0	4	5%
TOTAL	28	26	40	32	31	157	
Percentages							
Visiting family	18%	15%	10%	25%	19%		
Shopping	36%	46%	55%	28%	35%		
Social activities	18%	15%	8%	6%	23%		
Transport	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		
Language knowledge	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%		
Work	14%	15%	23%	31%	23%		
Other	14%	8%	5%	6%	0%		
No Response	0%	17%	14%	0%	0%		

Total responses: 157 – 98%

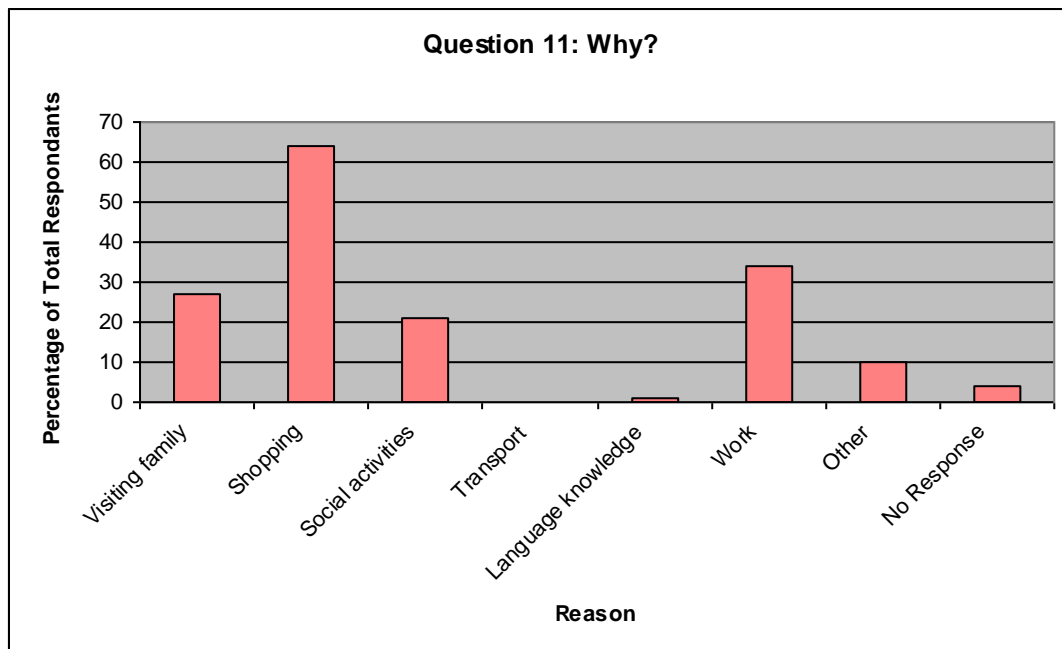


Fig. 12

Question 12: What initiatives could be introduced to increase your awareness of the EMR?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
Publicity/branding	9	10	20	6	5	50
Development of Euregional media	6	9	26	7	2	50
More cultural activities	9	3	16	2	4	34
Bigger choice of cultural activities	7	6	7	0	1	21
Improvements in the Pub Transp. Network	14	12	10	4	0	40
Better economic co-operation	9	12	16	2	0	39
Other	0	0	4	3	6	13
TOTAL	54	52	99	24	18	
Percentages						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
Publicity/Branding	17%	19%	20%	25%	28%	
Development of Euregional media	11%	17%	26%	29%	11%	
More cultural activities	17%	6%	16%	8%	22%	
Bigger choice of cultural activities	13%	12%	7%	0%	6%	
Improvement of Pub Transp Network	26%	23%	10%	17%	0%	
Better economic co-operation	17%	23%	16%	8%	0%	
Other	0%	0%	4%	13%	33%	

Other:	NL	BL
Similar tax rates	1	
Focus on common history and Identity	1	1
TV series		1
More often in the news	2	2
Better communication		1
More information about everything		2

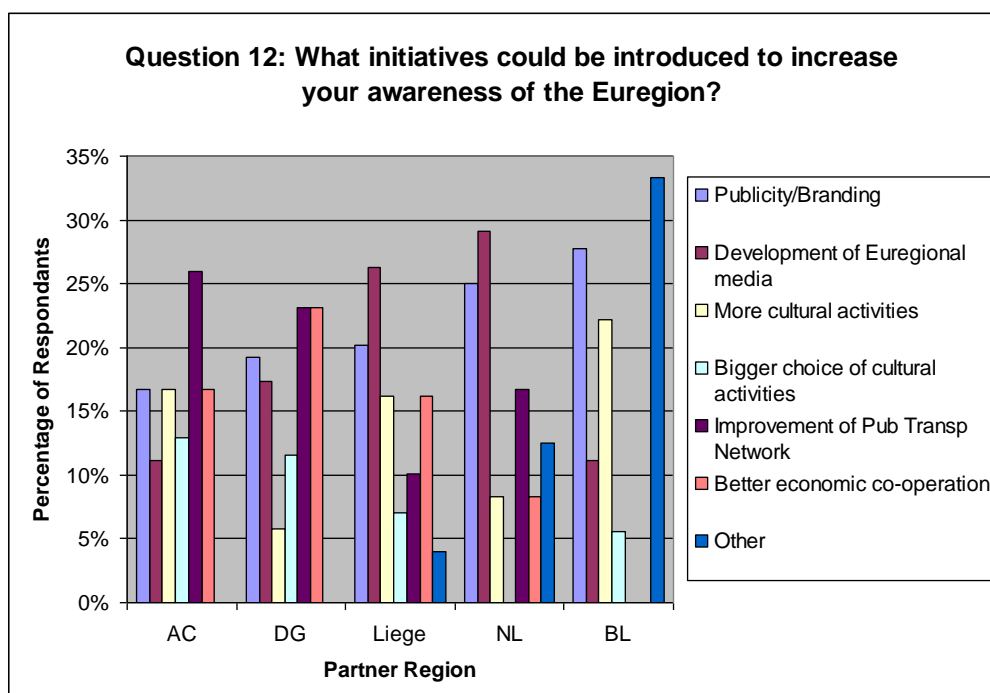


Fig. 13

Question 13: What type of cultural initiatives would increase your interest in the EMR?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
Heritage visits			1			1
Sport competitions	3	2	1	2	1	9
Free leisure activities			1			1
OV films with multi S.Ts			1			1
Euregional concerts with local musicians	2	3	1	2	1	9
Open air concerts	9	5	6	6	2	28
Expos	2	4	11	5	7	29
Multi-lang (audio) guides at tourist attractions			1			1
Share a common history and spread the idea			2			2
Uni co-op			1			1
Euregional festivals	3		6	3		12
Euregional groups/clubs/societies	3		1	1	1	6
Theatre and dance activities	2	3	1		1	7
Study days					1	1
Euregional media	1				1	2
Beer festivals				1		1
Art exhibitions		1		2		3
Walking/Cycle routes		1		1	1	3
Nature excursions	1	1		1		3
More intensive exchange				1		1
Flee markets	1	1				2
Language exchange			2			2
Euregional communal buildings			1			1

Fig.14

Question 14: What type of economic initiatives would increase your interest in the EMR?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
More job c/b information	1		1	1	2	5
Union co-op	1					1
Remove bureaucratic barriers for c/b workers	1	1	1	1	1	5
Improve public transport links/tickets/prices	1	1	4	4	8	18
Better industry links and co-op	4	1	6	4	3	18
Firm visits and open days		2		1	1	4
Expos/Exhibitions	4	4	2	1	1	12
Harmonisation of social systems/taxes/pensions/health	1		1	2	1	5
Tourism		2		3	3	8
Tax advantages	1	1		2		4
Sale/tax harmonisation		1	4			5
Publicity/media coverage about events/offers			2	1		3
Better language instruction			1			1
Recognition of leaving diplomas		1		1		2
Water/adventure parks				1		1
Euregional shopping centre	1					
Euregional business contact book	1					
Euregional info centre about work/life in the other regions		2	1		2	

Fig. 15

Question 15: What type of educational initiatives would increase your interest in the EMR?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
Improvement in language learning opps	3	5	9	4	3	24
Euregional Kindergarten/schools/Unis	1			2		3
C/B child day care	1					1
Walks	1					1
Uni co-op	2	1		2	3	8
School co-op	3			1	3	7
Comparable school diplomas/education systems	2	2	3	3	6	16
Educational exchanges	1	6	16	3	4	30
Multi-lingual instruction at Universities/schools			3	1	1	5
Expos/open days			1	1		2
Educational info catalogue about ed systems - choice avail			1			1
Visits to other regions to see the imp of learning langs		1	1			2
More publicity about options and projects		1				1

Fig. 16

Question 16: What type of social initiatives would increase your interest in the EMR?

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
Deal with local problems together rather than on a national level	1		1	1	2	5
Euregional youth groups	1					0
Euregional child care		1				1
Co-op of local planning/transport systems/ticketing		1	2	1	1	5
Tourism		1				1
Co-op of emergency services	2	9		1	2	14
Free choice of hospital/health care		5	2	3	1	11
Co-op of health insurance		4	2	1	2	9
Co-op of insurance companies		4	2	1	2	9
Co-op or pensions insurance		4	2	1	2	9
Harmonisation of laws	1				2	3
Co-op of industries	1		1		1	3
Improvement of language instruction/opps			1		2	3
Markets			1			1
Sports tournaments/events			2			2
Co-op on environmental protection			1			1

Weekly Euregional newspaper			2			2
Euregional expos				1		1
More info on social security				1	2	3
More info on ground level about co-op and it's importance		2		2	1	5
Education				1		1
Employ people to make population interested				1		1
Music and concerts			1			1
Euregional health system			2		1	3
Admin info about how things are done in each region			1		1	2
More publicity about existing co-op		2			1	3
`Co-op in telephone network		1				1
Cheaper pub transp elderly and students					1	1

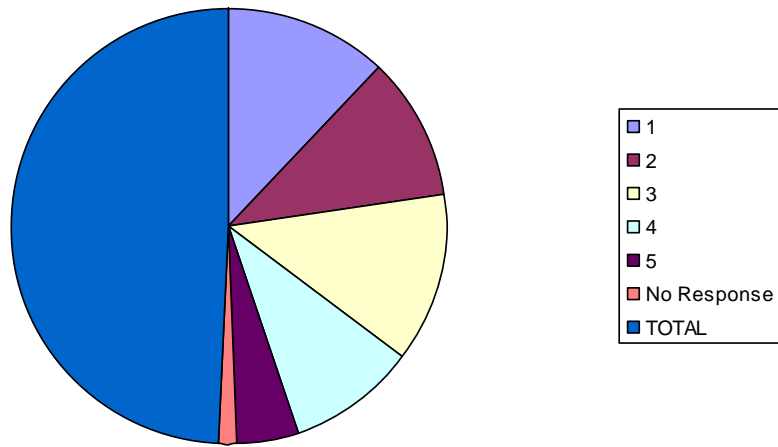
Fig. 17

Question 17: To what extent do you identify with the EMR? (on a scale from 1 – 5?)

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	7	7	15	4	6	39
2	7	4	10	7	6	34
3	5	7	11	9	8	40
4	8	5	3	8	7	31
5	1	4	3	5	2	15
No Response	0	0	1	0	2	3
TOTAL	28	27	42	33	29	159
Percentages						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
1	25%	26%	36%	12%	21%	
2	25%	15%	24%	21%	21%	
3	18%	26%	26%	27%	28%	
4	29%	19%	7%	24%	24%	
5	4%	15%	7%	15%	7%	
No Response	0%	0%	2%	0%	17%	

Total responses: 159 – 99%

Question 17: To what extent do you identify yourself with the Euregion? (On a scale from 1 - 5)



Question 17: To what extent do you identify yourself with the Euregion? (On a scale from 1 - 5)

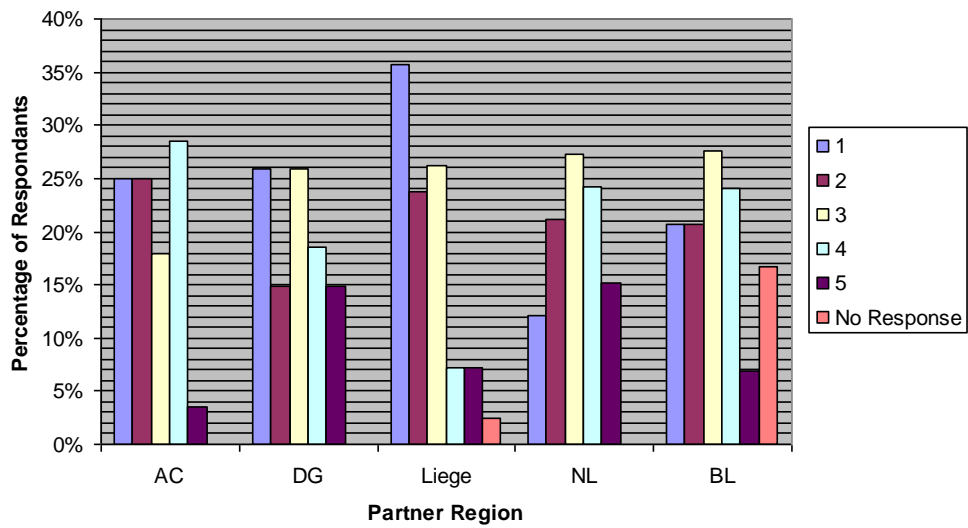


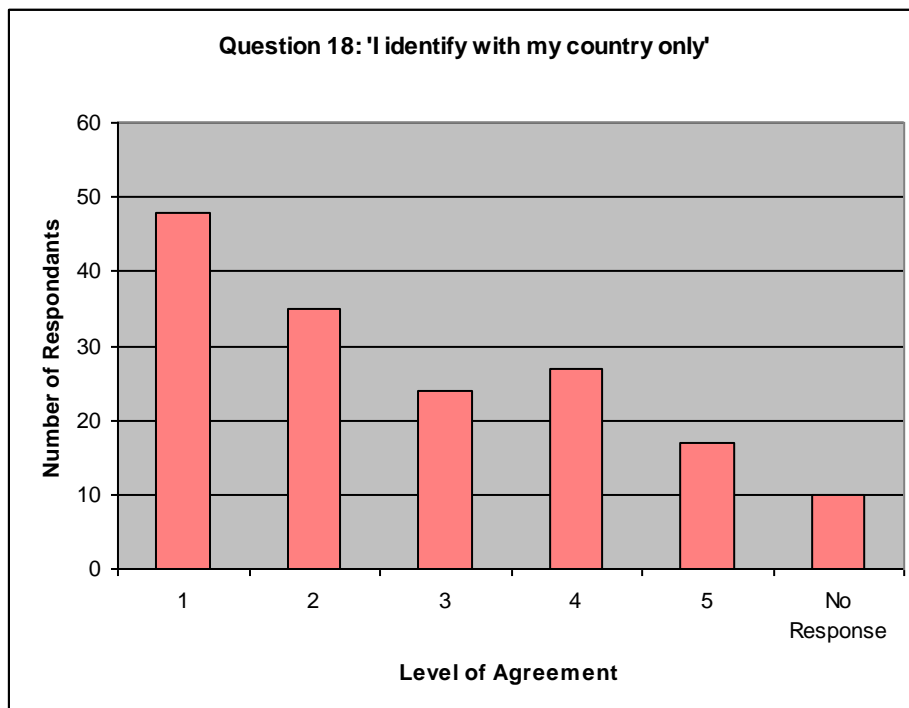
Fig. 18

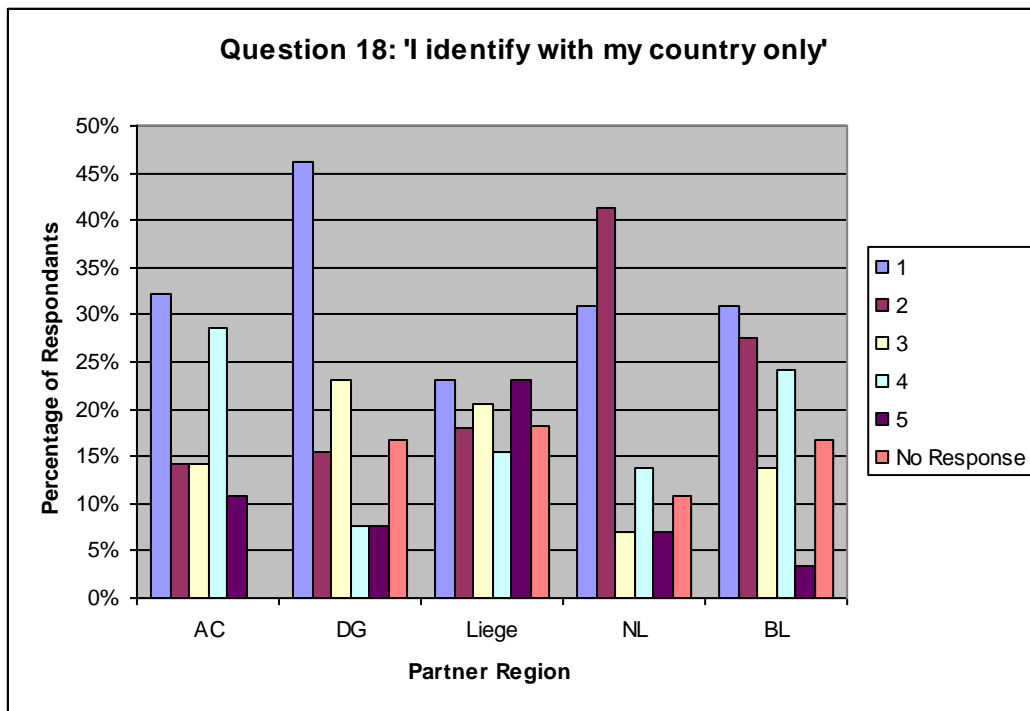
Question 18: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?
(on a scale from 1 – 5?)

I identify with my region only:

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	9	12	9	9	9	48
2	4	4	7	12	8	35
3	4	6	8	2	4	24
4	8	2	6	4	7	27
5	3	2	9	2	1	17
No Response	0	1	4	3	2	10
TOTAL	28	26	39	29	29	151
Percentages						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
1	32%	46%	23%	31%	31%	
2	14%	15%	18%	41%	28%	
3	14%	23%	21%	7%	14%	
4	29%	8%	15%	14%	24%	
5	11%	8%	23%	7%	3%	
No Response	0%	17%	18%	11%	17%	

Total responses: 151 – 94%

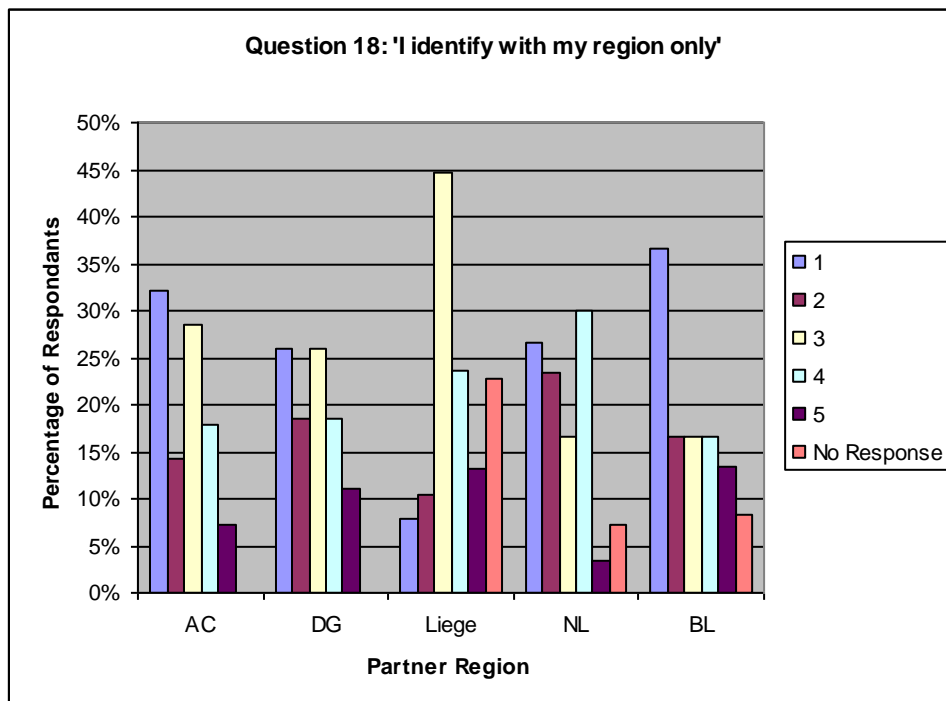
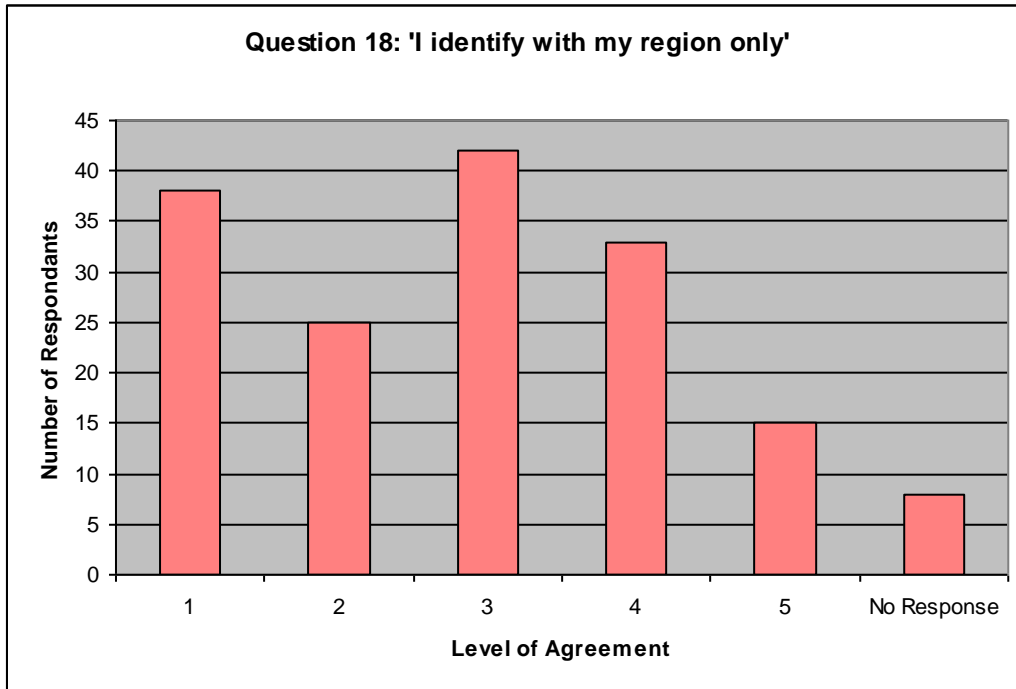




I identify with my region only:

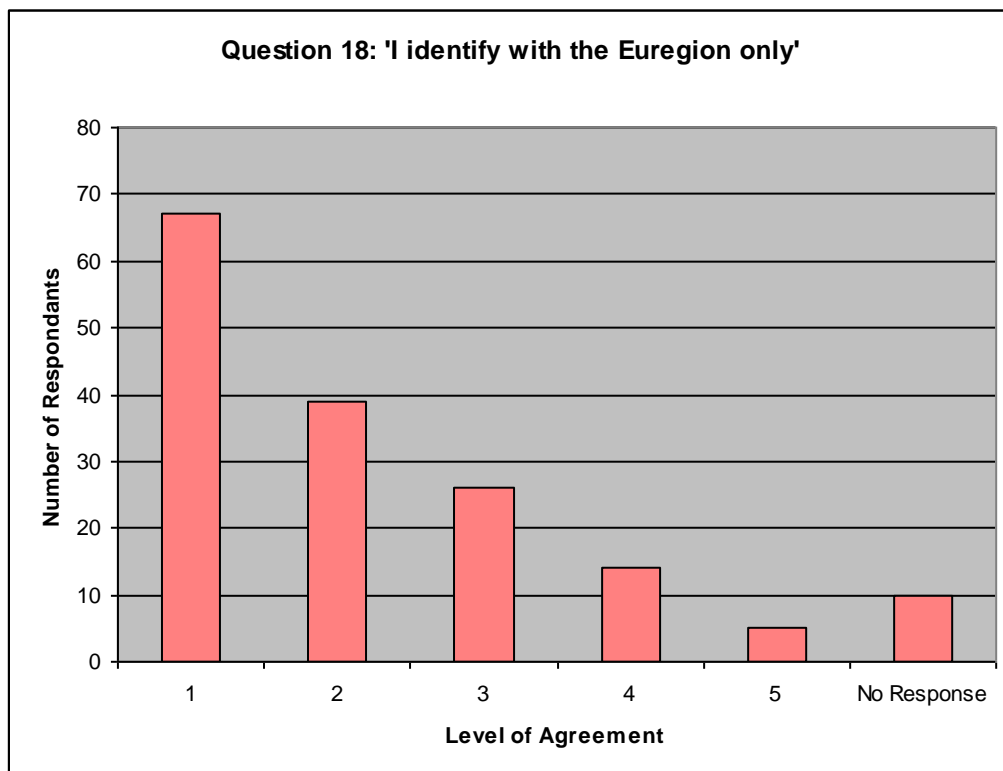
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	9	7	3	8	11	38
2	4	5	4	7	5	25
3	8	7	17	5	5	42
4	5	5	9	9	5	33
5	2	3	5	1	4	15
No Response	0	0	5	2	1	8
TOTAL	28	27	38	30	30	153
Percentages						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
1	32%	26%	8%	27%	37%	
2	14%	19%	11%	23%	17%	
3	29%	26%	45%	17%	17%	
4	18%	19%	24%	30%	17%	
5	7%	11%	13%	3%	13%	
No Response	0%	0%	23%	7%	8%	

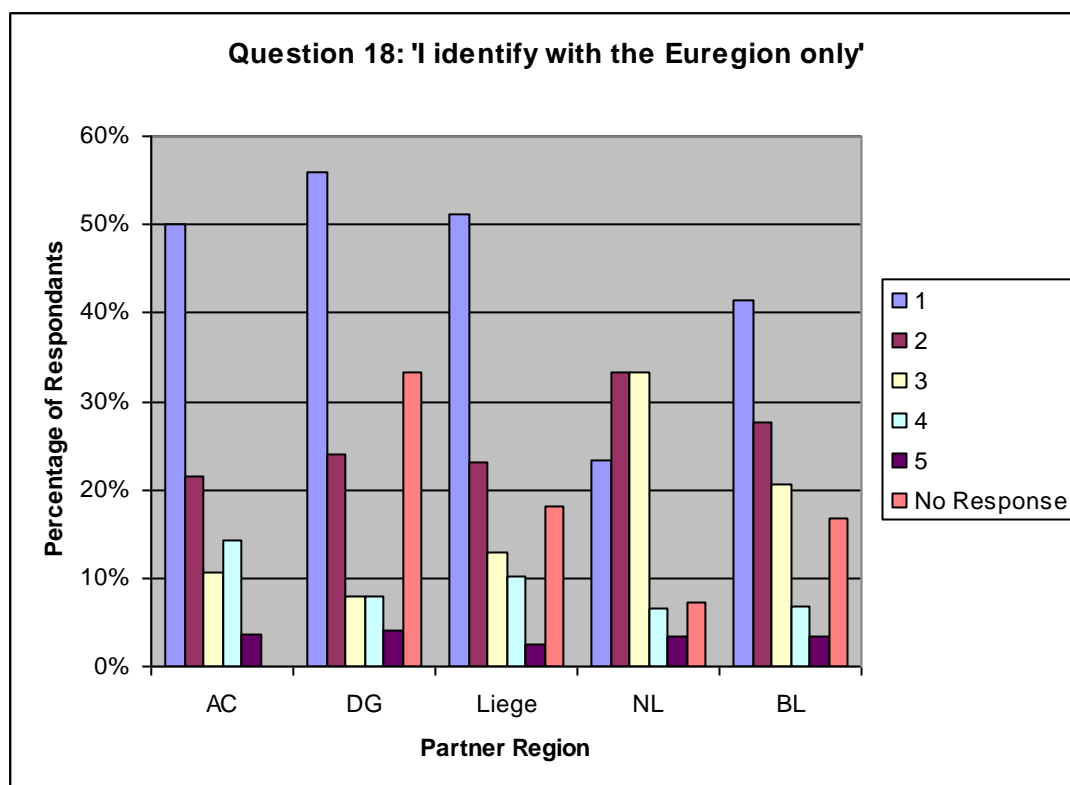
Total responses: 153 – 95%



I identify with the Euregion only:

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	14	14	20	7	12	67
2	6	6	9	10	8	39
3	3	2	5	10	6	26
4	4	2	4	2	2	14
5	1	1	1	1	1	5
No Response	0	2	4	2	2	10
TOTAL	28	25	39	30	29	151
Percentages						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
1	50%	56%	51%	23%	41%	
2	21%	24%	23%	33%	28%	
3	11%	8%	13%	33%	21%	
4	14%	8%	10%	7%	7%	
5	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	
No Response	0%	33%	18%	7%	17%	

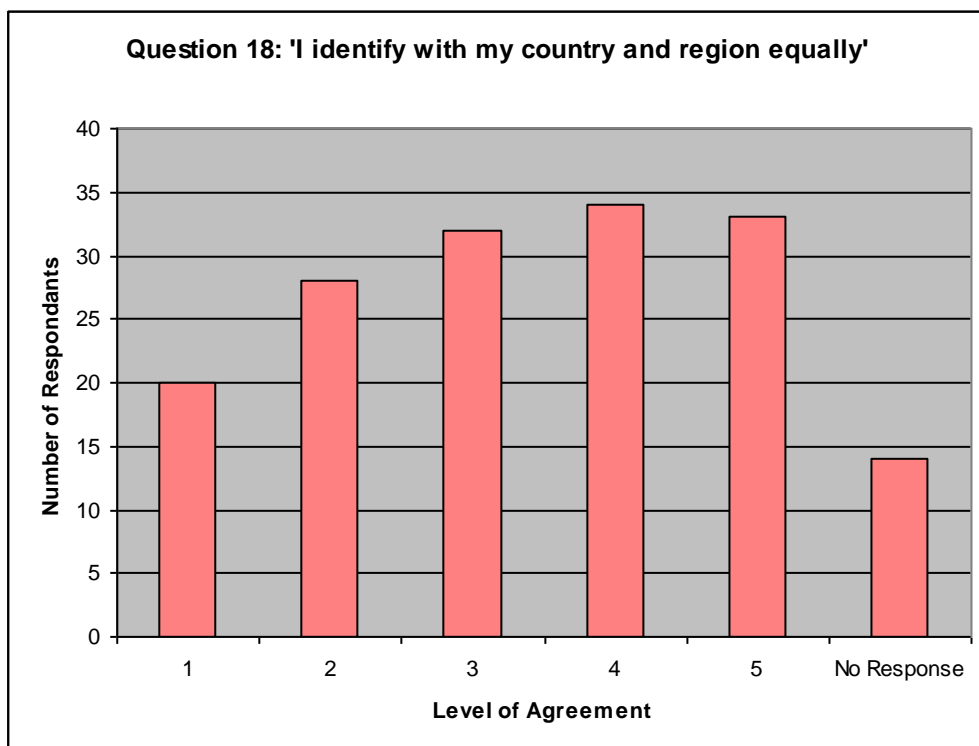
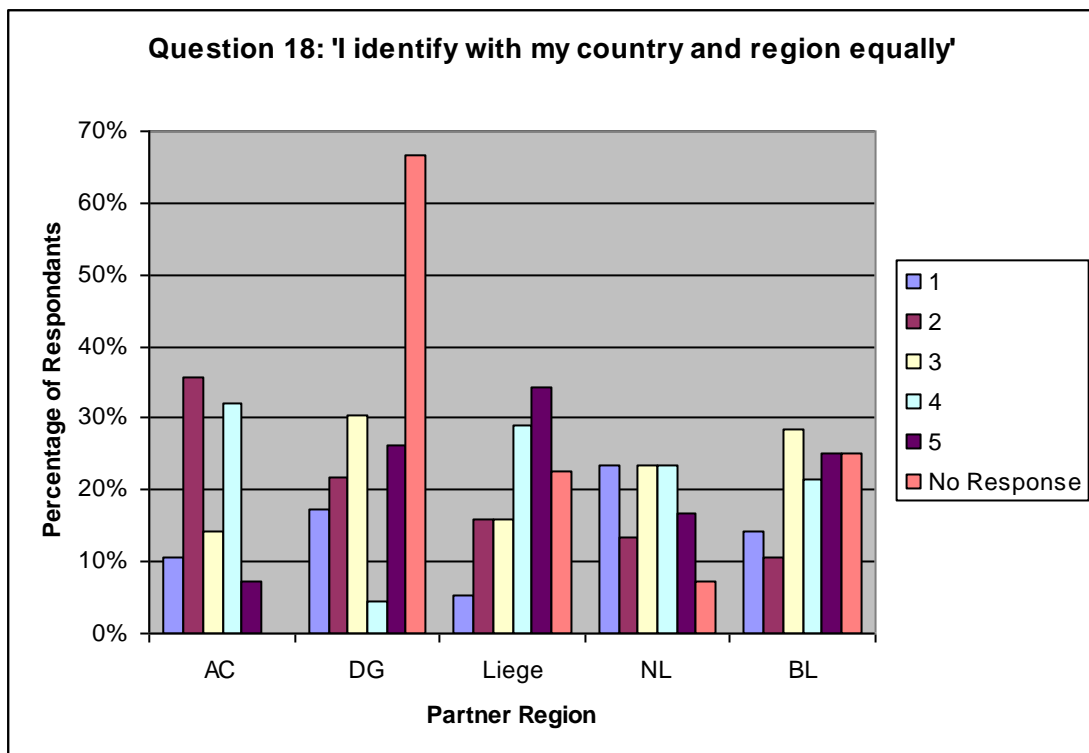




I identify with my country and region equally:

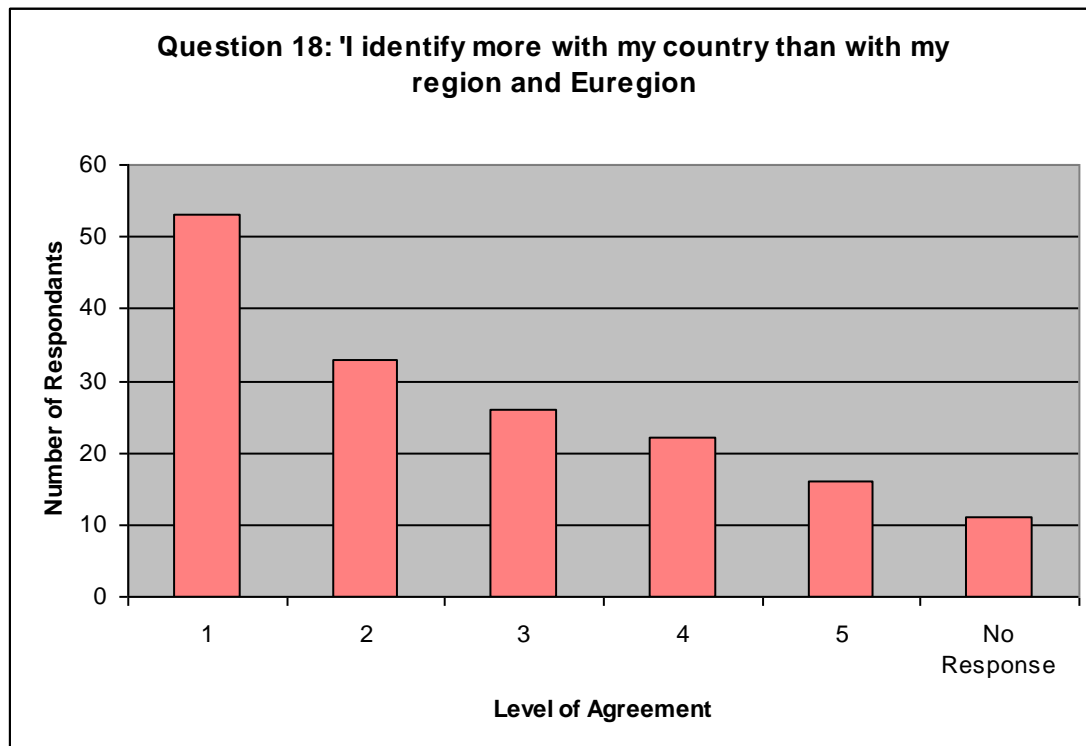
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	3	4	2	7	4	20
2	10	5	6	4	3	28
3	4	7	6	7	8	32
4	9	1	11	7	6	34
5	2	6	13	5	7	33
No Response	0	4	5	2	3	14
TOTAL	28	23	38	30	28	147
Percentages						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
1	11%	17%	5%	23%	14%	
2	36%	22%	16%	13%	11%	
3	14%	30%	16%	23%	29%	
4	32%	4%	29%	23%	21%	
5	7%	26%	34%	17%	25%	
No Response	0%	67%	23%	7%	25%	

Total responses 147 – 91%



I identify more with my country than region and Euregion:

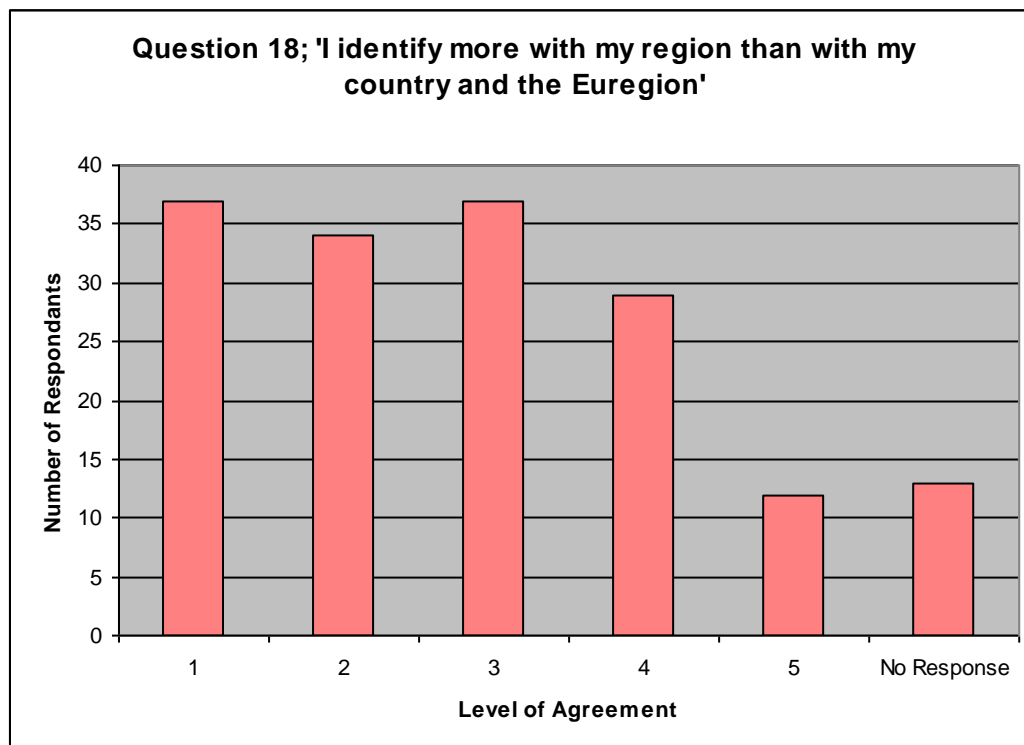
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	7	11	14	12	9	53
2	9	6	7	7	4	33
3	1	3	7	8	7	26
4	8	3	4	3	4	22
5	3	1	7	0	5	16
No Response	0	3	4	2	2	11
TOTAL	28	24	39	30	29	150
Percentages						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
1	25%	46%	36%	40%	31%	
2	32%	25%	18%	23%	14%	
3	4%	13%	18%	27%	24%	
4	29%	13%	10%	10%	14%	
5	11%	4%	18%	0%	17%	
No Response	0%	50%	18%	7%	17%	

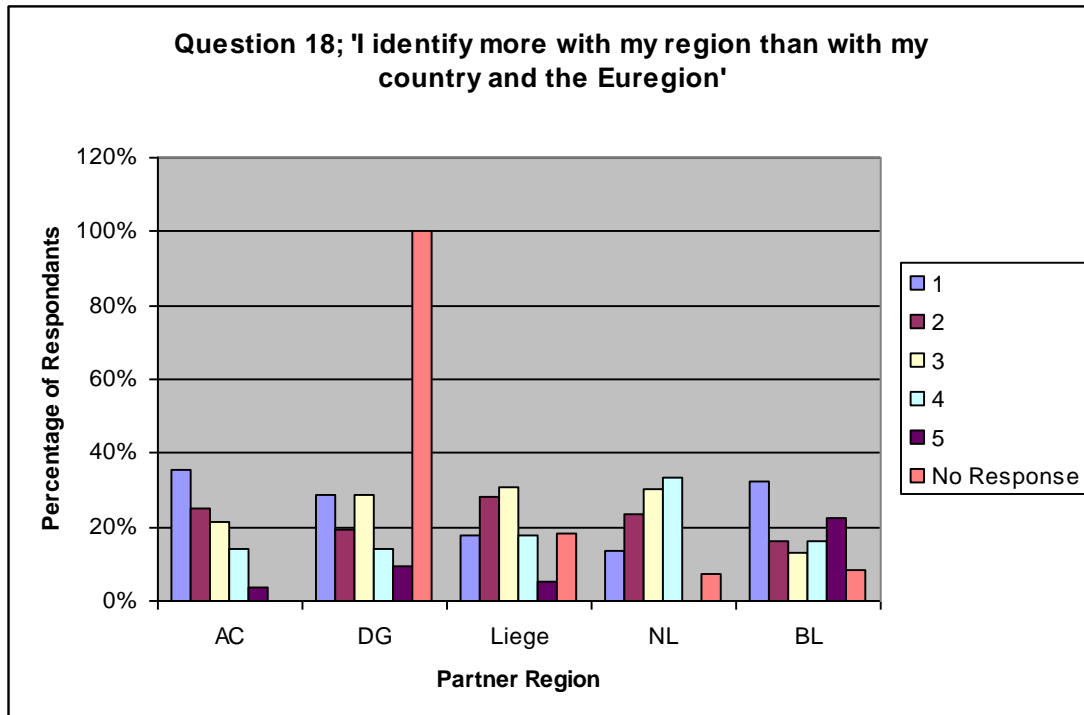


I identify more with my region than country and Euregion:

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	10	6	7	4	10	37
2	7	4	11	7	5	34
3	6	6	12	9	4	37
4	4	3	7	10	5	29
5	1	2	2	0	7	12
No Response	0	6	4	2	1	13
TOTAL	28	21	39	30	31	149
Percentage						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
1	36%	29%	18%	13%	32%	
2	25%	19%	28%	23%	16%	
3	21%	29%	31%	30%	13%	
4	14%	14%	18%	33%	16%	
5	4%	10%	5%	0%	23%	
No Response	0%	100%	18%	7%	8%	

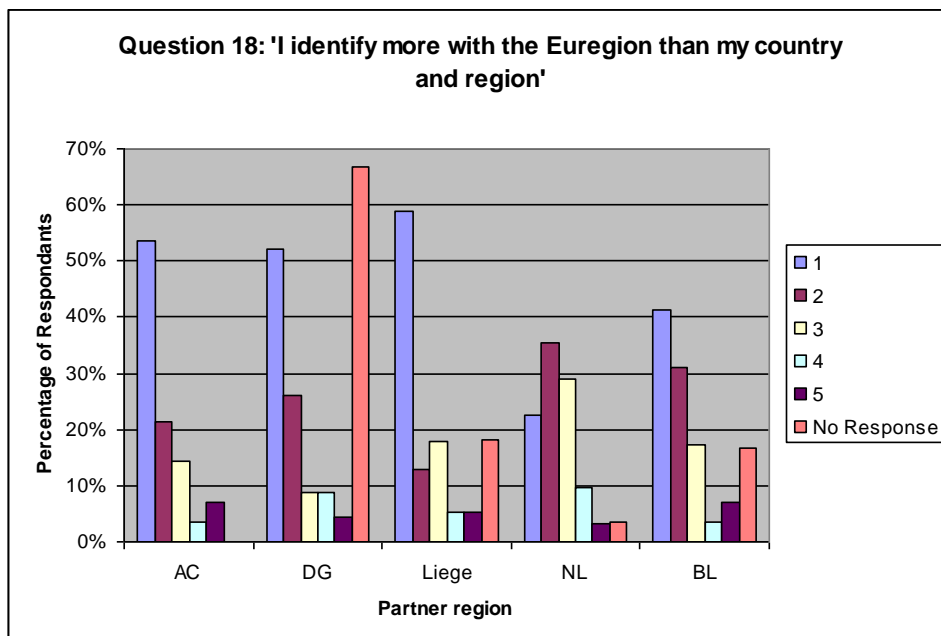
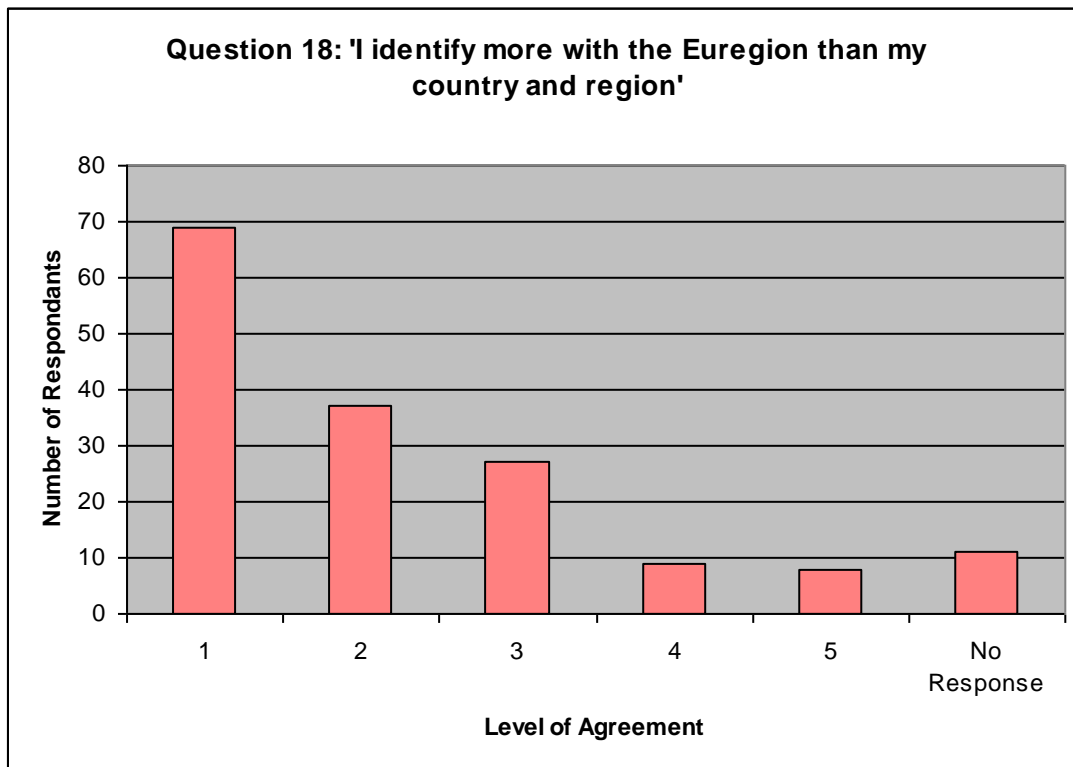
Total responses: 149 – 93%





I identify more with the Euregion than my country and region:

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	15	12	23	7	12	69
2	6	6	5	11	9	37
3	4	2	7	9	5	27
4	1	2	2	3	1	9
5	2	1	2	1	2	8
No Response	0	4	4	1	2	11
TOTAL	28	23	39	31	29	150
Percentage						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
1	54%	52%	59%	23%	41%	
2	21%	26%	13%	35%	31%	
3	14%	9%	18%	29%	17%	
4	4%	9%	5%	10%	3%	
5	7%	4%	5%	3%	7%	
No Response	0%	67%	18%	4%	17%	



I identify with my country, region and Euregion equally:

	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	TOTAL
1	5	9	12	4	11	41
2	5	4	9	7	5	30
3	7	5	7	8	6	33
4	5	0	4	5	5	19
5	4	8	9	6	3	30
No Response	2	1	2	2	1	8
TOTAL	26	26	41	30	30	153
Percentage						
	AC	DG	Liege	NL	BL	
1	19%	35%	29%	13%	37%	
2	19%	15%	22%	23%	17%	
3	27%	19%	17%	27%	20%	
4	19%	0%	10%	17%	17%	
5	15%	31%	22%	20%	10%	
No Response	10%	17%	9%	7%	8%	

Total responses: 153 – 95%

