

Networking events have been organised, bringing together French and Belgian businesses, research centres and technical hubs.

- ↳ The main event is **Innov'embre**,¹⁴ an event which, since 2013, has included a cross-border element.

LABOUR MARKET

The employment situation is quite varied along the border, with high levels of unemployment on the French side (ranging from 12.9% in Nord-Pas de Calais to 9.4% in Picardie) and Wallonia (11.7% in Hainaut Province and 8% in Namur Province), but very low levels on the Flemish side (3.2% in West Flanders).¹⁵

Along the French-Belgian border, flows of cross-border workers are smaller than along other borders; Belgium receives 12% of all French cross-border workers. In 2013, about 39,000 French residents worked in Belgium.¹⁶ Crossing in the other direction, 10,000 Belgian residents worked in France. The French cross-border workers are in general low-skilled (manual workers for the most part) and work in industry and the agri-food business. In West Flanders, they tend to work in sectors which do not require them to have knowledge of Dutch.

The labour market is not, however, completely fluid. For example, there is a lack of engineers in West Flanders but the positions are not filled by French employees due to their lack of language skills (Dutch and English).

Along this border, there are a number of initiatives designed to encourage cross-border work with respect to the recognition of the other country's qualifications and advertising job vacancies.

- ↳ **The Forum de l'Emploi de l'Eurométropole**¹⁷ (Eurometropolis Job Forum) has been organised each year since 2007 by Pôle Emploi (the French public employment agency), VDAB (the Flemish public employment agency), UNIZO, FOREM (Wallonia's public employment agency).

PLAYERS IN CROSS-BORDER ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

In terms of economic development, public actions are being stepped up at the regional level (and to a lesser extent at the local level) following reforms made on both sides of the border. For example, for the period 2014-2020, the objective of the Nord-Pas de Calais Region is to develop more systematic cooperation with Flanders and Wallonia, based on common interests identified through a comparison of regional Smart Specialisation Strategies.



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TANDEM project

¹⁴ For more information: www.innovembre.fr

¹⁵ Source: EUROSTAT Statistical Atlas (2011 data) <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/>

¹⁶ Source: "Pages de profils", INSEE Nord Pas-de-Calais, February 2014 http://www.eureschannel.org/images/brochuresFR/Pages_de_profil_F_02_2014.pdf

¹⁷ This is a forum where job-seekers and recruiters can meet and discuss career opportunities in the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai region. Since 2007, the Forum has brought together 35,435 visitors, 669 companies and 3,599 job vacancies. For more information: www.job-eurometropole.com