



Maastricht

## ECONOMIC FABRIC

With a history of heavy industry (coal and steel), the majority of the regions which make up this cross-border territory have succeeded in their transition to high-value-added and knowledge-based industries and services and are among Europe's "leaders of innovation".<sup>83</sup> This territory is marked by the presence of major multinationals in cutting-edge technologies such as Philips, and research centres such as the IMEC (Inter-University Microelectronics Centre) in Leuven. The dominant sectors are: the chemical industry and new materials, electronics and pharmaceuticals.

## SECTORS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Cross-border economic exchanges are highly developed. Moreover, the public and semi-public authorities encourage and support these initiatives through numerous projects.

- **The Top Technology Cluster (TTC) project**<sup>84</sup> was developed to create cross-border consortia of SMEs in the region's three leading fields. This initiative introduced many tools such as: networking events, assistance from 'business development support' advisors and vouchers for innovation, which the consortia could use to benefit from initial advice on how to structure their partnership.
- As a continuation of the TTC came the **Cross-Border Cluster Stimulation (GCS) project**.<sup>85</sup> This project offered grants of between €100,000 and €250,000 to cross-border SME consortia for industrial research and to initiate the development of new products.

<sup>83</sup> 65 "The Case of the Top Technology Region/ Eindhoven-Leuven-Aachen triangle (TTR-ELAt) – Regions and Innovation: Collaborating Across Borders", OECD (Claire Nauwelaers, Karen Maguire, Guilia Ajmone Marsan), 2013.

<sup>84</sup> Project implemented between 2011 and 2013 and co-financed by the Euregio Meuse-Rhine programme. For more information: [www.ttc-innovation.eu](http://www.ttc-innovation.eu).

<sup>85</sup> Project implemented between 2011 and 2014 and co-financed by the Euregio Meuse-Rhine programme. For more information, see the Project Factsheet.