

PRESS RELEASE *(September 2009)*

Launch of Regions of Connected Knowledge (RoCK)

Why international, interoperable and consumer friendly rail services are so important for knowledge regions.

On the first 'Green Streets' conference day (September 7th) the European project 'RoCK' (Regions of Connected Knowledge), co-funded by Interreg IVB, will be launched. The project represents a partnership of 11 partners in 5 different countries with the City of Eindhoven as Lead Partner. During the RoCK session, starting at 14.30 hours, the relation of knowledge regions and transport will be discussed. Innovation, future markets and economic growth need sustainable highly connected transport networks regardless of national borders. The Green Streets two day conference, supported by the Committee of the Regions and EURO CITIES along with media partner Regional Review, will bring together high level speakers, representatives from many of Europe's regional authorities and EC project leaders.

This conference is an opportunity to highlight some of the transport challenges facing Europe's urban spaces, and to showcase the wide variety of projects that city authorities have put into place to overcome these problems.

RoCK is a new major European project which has secured €5.9 million European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) under the EU INTERREG IVB North West Europe programme. RoCK focuses on getting the most out of existing infrastructure and develops smart rail services to improve the transport networks between centres of knowledge regardless of national borders. National borders are still a bottleneck for the free flow of people and ideas. An essential precondition for a single European knowledge economy. Transnational public transport connections are more expensive to build, have fewer passengers and tickets are expensive compared to national networks. Today only high-speed train connections can compete with air and road.

The partners in RoCK are: Eindhoven, Lead Partner (NL), Parkstad Limburg (NL), Maastricht (NL), Venlo (NL), Aachen (DE), Aachener Verkehrsverbund (DE), Mönchengladbach (DE), Vlaamse Vervoermaatschappij De Lijn (BE), Région Nord-Pas de Calais (FR), Reading Borough Council (GB) and SEEDA South East England Development Agency (GB).

Pilots, Smart Services, Publicity and Lobbying

Interaction between knowledge regions will become increasingly important in the future. RoCK activities include a feasibility study for an innovative 'people mover' between Aachen HST station and Aachen University, international integration of ticketing systems, marketing of cross border rail connections, mobile passenger travel information on the PDA using WiMaX and GPS. RoCK builds political support at EU level by organizing European conferences and showcasing the project at

international events influencing policymakers to simplify rail regulations. RoCK is a platform for knowledge exchange within the partnership and beyond. Infrastructure actions are:

Eindhoven – Venlo – Mönchengladbach – Düsseldorf

Eindhoven – Heerlen – Aachen

Existing operational and technical barriers have to be removed in order to establish efficient and attractive Intercity connections feeding into the German High Speed network via Aachen and Düsseldorf.

The Maastricht – Hasselt Light rail connection is a new passenger connection using part of an old freight line to connect the two university cities. To run Belgian light rail vehicles on Dutch tracks, signalling and safety systems have to be updated.

Transmanche Metro is a new inter-regional rail service using existing high speed rail infrastructure to connect cities and regions in Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais not serviced by Eurostar with each other and to the existing transnational point-to-point services to London, Paris and Brussels.

More info about Green Streets event September 7th and 8th visit:
www.theparliament.com/greenstreets

For more info about RoCK or this press release visit www.rock-project.eu or call:

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