

## **Wallonia European Creative District (WECD) is the EU-labelled project that highlighted Wallonia as a demonstrator for innovation through creativity.**

After three years of implementation of the Creative Wallonia programme, Wallonia has been distinguished by the EU as a "European Creative District" and created the WECD project. The Public Service of Wallonia (DG06), Boost-up/Industries créatives (operated by Wallonie Design), St'Art Invest, the Wallonia Agency for Digitalization and ID Campus (involved in the field of education) as well as the clusters Twist (media) and ICT- Infopôle have worked together to enhance the potential of creative industries to lead a region in industrial transition to a creative economy. In accordance with their respective skills, the partners of the WECD project built a four-axes action programme: Creative skills, Better Business Support, Better Financial Support, Facilitating clusters and networking activities. WECD has been unique in its management processes. The ambition was to implement the creative methodologies supported by the CCI within a public policy learning project. The project ensured cross-collaboration within the project Consortium and at the European level in order to strengthen the relevance and the effectiveness of the whole project. Collective intelligence and iterative process evaluation were also ingredients in the recipe for success. By testing actions, tools, new ways of thinking, working and learning, WECD has managed to improve Wallonia's global CCI strategy and to raise global awareness about the potential of the creative industries and the creative economy.

## **Resources needed**

WECD is a one million euros project on a thirty months period (EU + Wallonia co-financing) divided between the five partners to implement the actions.

## **Evidence of success**

Following the project recommendations and results, the creative economy is now one of the transversal priority axes of the Walloon Smart Specialization strategy. The management processes of the WECD have been transferred within the regional framework. Moreover, the success of the project was internationally recognized by the European Commission and Wallonia is now part of several international networks, projects and think

tanks related to cultural and creative industries.

## **Difficulties encountered**

\*Need to segment our communication strategy in order to address the different publics initially targeted. \*Difficulties in implementing concrete actions together with other European territories. \*Solutions: cross-collaboration, iterative process, collective intelligence.

## **Potential for learning or transfer**

\*Mobilization of international expertise via the High Level Group, composed by 8 European experts, which followed the evolution of the actions and helped building or rethinking the project.

\*Use of the “Creative District” label which is now internationally recognized and specific communication in line with the different publics addressed.

\*Specific actions that were developed and tested inside the project can be duplicated in other regions: specific training program on creativity, creative vouchers, call for specific ICCs projects (Boost-up), coaching investors for the specificities of the CCI and coaching CCI entrepreneurs their access to finance, Creative Hubs as local third places gathering enterprises, universities, creative stakeholders and spirits.

\*The Walloon holistic approach of the creativity was as well recognized. The regional strategy addresses the entire CCIs value chain from training to financing throughout cross-collaboration between sectors and stakeholders.

### **Main institution**

Service public de Wallonie

### **Location**

Prov. Namur, Belgium (Belgique-België)

### **Start Date**

January 2013

### **End Date**

October 2015

[Further information](#)