



BENELUX 2012

HISTORY, INSTITUTIONS AND MISSIONS



WHAT IS THE BENELUX ??

Benelux in 4 important dates and more than 50 years...



- 1944 a Customs Union
- 1958 « The Benelux Economic Union »
- 1985 The Schengen Agreement
- 2008 « The Benelux Union »

The European Union and the Benelux



« The provisions of this Treaty shall not preclude the existence or completion of regional unions between Belgium and Luxembourg, or between Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands to the extent that the objectives of these regional unions are not attained by application of this Treaty »

**ARTICLE 350
EU TREATY**

*Benelux : an „added-value
for the 3 countries and for Europe”*

Benelux... an added-value

1943-1958: Precursor of the European Community

1943/44	Monetary Convention, then Customs Union (<i>entered into force 1948</i>)
1953	Protocol on a common commercial policy
1958	Benelux Economic Union Treaty (<i>free movement of persons, goods, and goods and coordination of economic, financial and social policies</i>)

1958-1985: model and laboratory for the European integration

1966/70	Uniform law on drawings/models/brands
1974	Benelux-Court of Justice
1975	Office for Drawings and Models (later : Intellectual Propriety)

1985-1996: Inspirator: a common Benelux vision for Europe

1985	Schengen-agreement [BNL + FR + DE]
1990	Start of political cooperation with : Baltic, Višegrad 4 and Nordic Council

1996- today: New challenges in a bigger Europe in constant evolution

1996	Start of the police cooperation
2004	Treaty on cross-border police interventions
2008	Signature of the "Benelux Union" Treaty

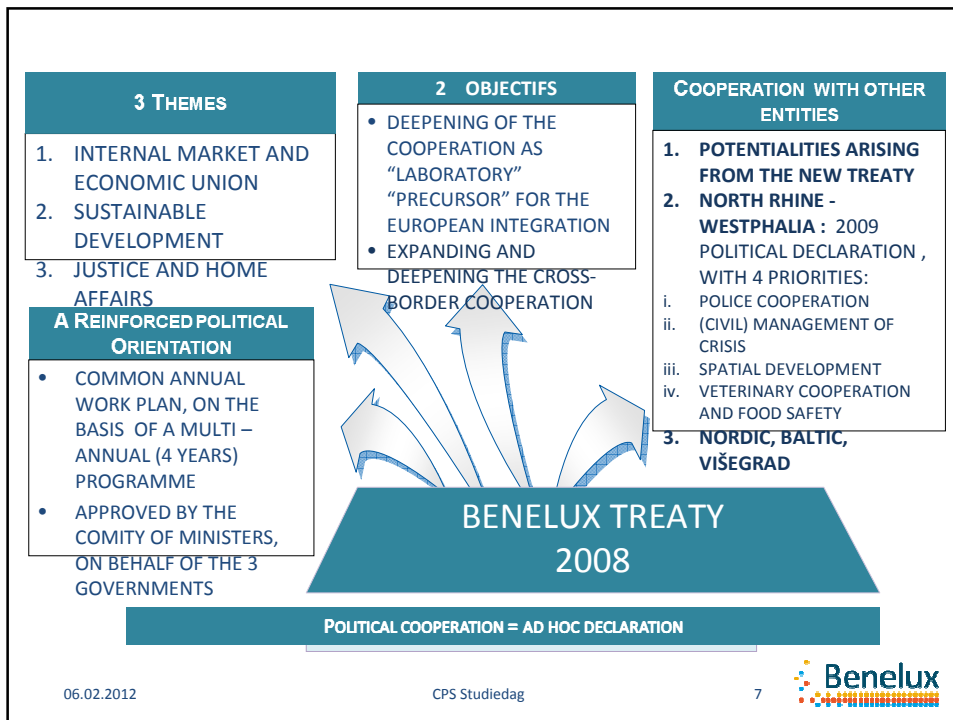
The new Benelux Treaty

A new milestone in trans-border cooperation

Signed June 17th, 2008 – entry into force January 1st, 2012

- A framework agreement (40 articles)
- For an unlimited duration
- 5 + 1 institutions
- A "Benelux Union"





Mission statement

Le Benelux est une coopération qui transcende les frontières entre les Belges, les Néerlandais et les Luxembourgeois
..... a cooperation that transcends the borders between Belgians, Dutch and Luxembourgers

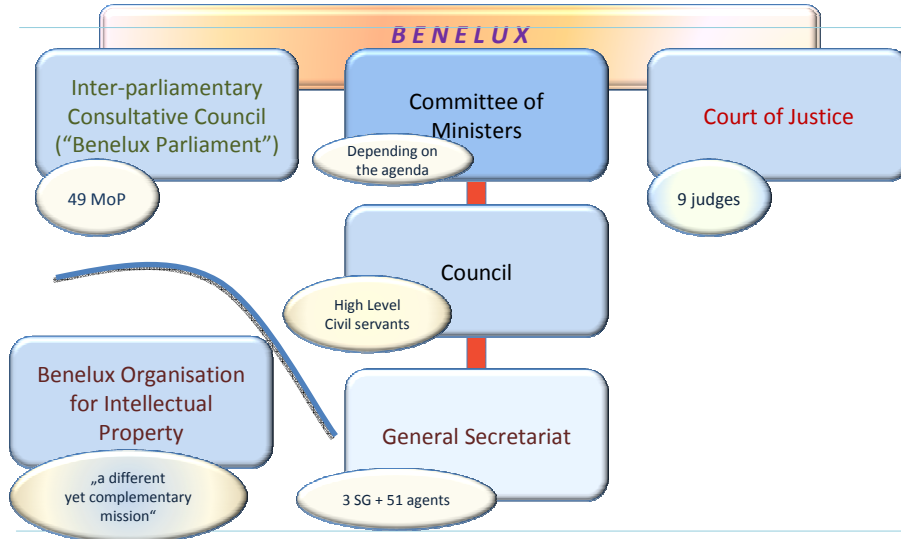
L'objectif du Benelux est d'être une région sans frontières, améliorant le bien-être, la mobilité, la sécurité et le développement durable de tous.
..... a region without borders, insuring greater welfare, mobility, safety and sustainable development for all

De ce fait, le Benelux est le laboratoire idéal pour faire progresser l'intégration européenne.
.... the ideal laboratory (testing ground) to advance European integration.



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The 5 institutions of the Benelux (2008 Treaty) + the BOIP



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FAQ ABOUT THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT



The SG of an international organisation based on the principle "one country, one vote" (i.e unanimity)

The Secretariat of the Comity of Ministers, of the Council and of the working groups ; not of the Court of Justice nor the "Benelux Parliament"

To initiate, support and do the follow-up of the initiatives/actions/programs/decided by the 3 countries, based on a certain autonomy (right of initiative) but largely mandat-driven

Values ; Impartial, professional, actif, open and result-driven

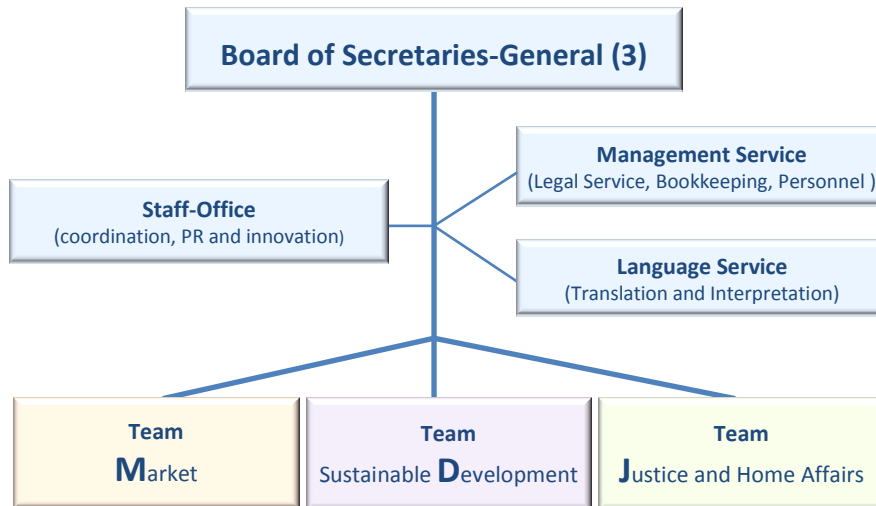
Personnel: +/- 50 with a budget of 7,5 millions € / year

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STRUCTURE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT

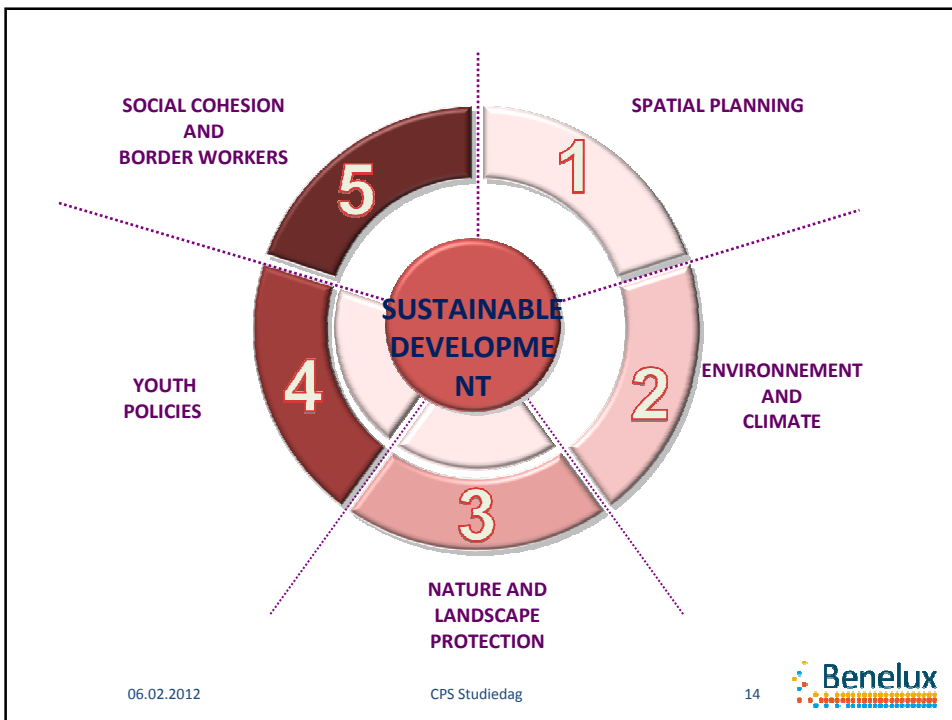
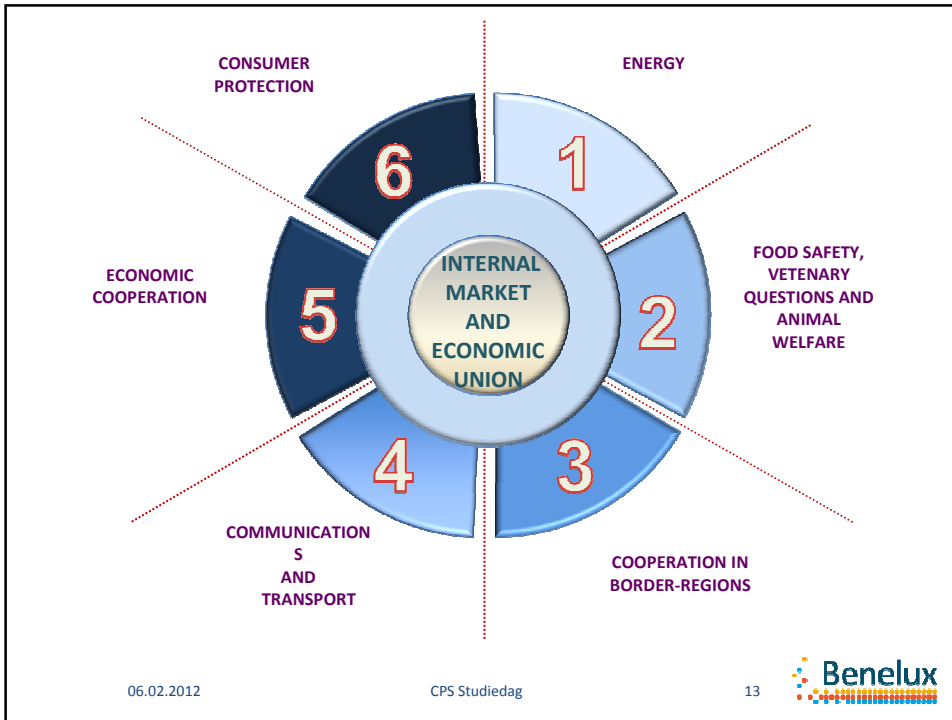


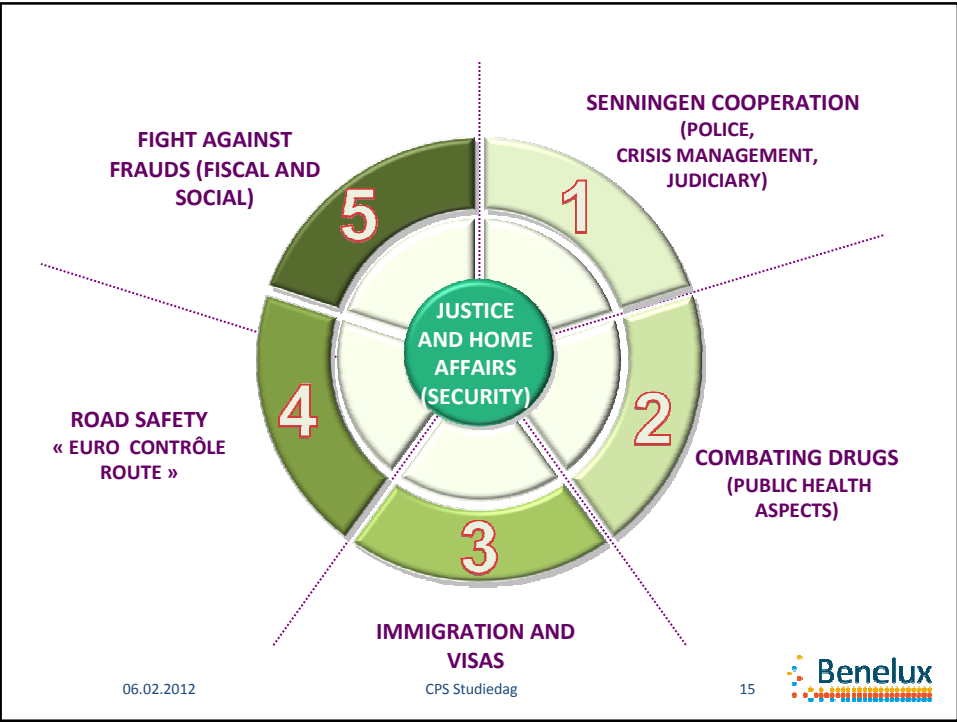
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WHAT DOES THE BENELUX DO?





SENNINGEN CONSULTATION : FACTS AND FIGURES

A. Fact

- Senningen memorandum concerning “cooperation in the fields of police, justice and immigration” signed June 4th, 1996 in Luxembourg (Senningen)
- In 2003, decision taken by the 3 Ministers of Justice and of the Interior to re-launch the cooperation, widening its scope to “security, antidrug policies and trans-border cooperation regarding catastrophes and accidents”
- Results: the BNL Treaty on cross-border police intervention (2004)
- Inspiration for the EU “Prüm Treaty” (Schengen III) (2005)

B. Figures

- Cooperation outside the treaty of 1958, which was an “Economic Cooperation”
- As an “Acquis Benelux”, out of 856 decisions, roughly 250, thus 30 %
- With regards working groups, out of 95, some 40, thus 40 %

SENNINGEN POLICE COOPERATION

A. Legal Base

- BNL Treaty on cross-border police intervention (2004)
- Senningen Action Plan 2010-2012, to be continued ...

B. Results

An increased cooperation and exchange of information between the three police services, around 4 clusters:

- (1) network of liaison officers,
- (2) joint patrols and exercises,
- (3) common or sharing of equipment and use of new technologies,
- (4) common analysis of international criminal trends; and fight against terrorism and radicalism (COPPRa)

SENNINGEN POLICE COOPERATION

C. Practical examples

- Joint exercises: Candy IV (commercial extortion)
- Support missions/mutual assistance: during or around EU meetings in Brussels or Luxembourg/ assistance of the Dutch and Belgian police during Koninginnendag (NL), Gentse feesten (BEL), the return of the Dutch football team from South Africa
- Joint exercises to maintain order along the borders

D. A specific case: "Euro Contrôle Route" → to become independent by the end of 2012

- Cooperation between 14 European MS (BNL, FR, DE, IRL, UK, ESP, AUT, POL, ROU, BULG, HONG, LIT) + 5 observers (SLO, TCH, LET, MALTA, CH), on the basis of an initial BNL project (1999)
- Mission statement: to increase road safety and the respect of pertinent social laws and the fair competition : fight against violence, tachograph fraud, .. In collaboration with TISPOL (traffic police forces in Europe) and IRU (International Road Union)
- Through: joint exercises, train the trainers courses... and joint controls : in 2011 on loading security, social laws, transport of dangerous goods, technical controls and transport of passengers (105.826 controls, 18.115 (17,11%) were in breach of law)

SENNINGEN CRISIS MANAGEMENT

A. What?

- ORIGIN: Memo of Understanding of 1 June 2006
- Cooperation between the three national crisis centres

B. Results

- Implementation of the MoU for cooperation between the crisis centres (in progress)
- Drafting of a list of strategic risks and survey for the exchange of these data.
- Visit of RNW to the Belgian and Dutch crisis centres

C. Priorities

- Identify, analyse and map out the cross-border risks
- Dispatching of a field correspondent in crisis situation and during exercises
- Conclusion of a nuclear agreement BE-NL, on the basis of the LUX-BE agreement

COMBATING DRUGS - PUBLIC HEALTH

A. What?

- Objective : exchange experiences and knowledge

B. Actions

- A common action plan for :
 - ✓ Prevention
 - ✓ Support for drug addicts
 - ✓ Future-oriented (prospective): early warning system; new narcotics - consumption trends; use of sleeping pills, tranquilizers and psychotropic drugs
- Two themes to be developed further :
 - ✓ drugs in prison environment
 - ✓ drugs in airports

Combatting major tax fraud

A. What?

- ORIGIN : EU Council decisions June 2001 (exploratory discussions) and 2002 (official creation of the Fraud working group)

B. Results

- Automotive sector : *Autocanet network* (cf. Eurofisc)
- Telecom sector : *phone shops and telephone cards*
- Real-estate and construction sectors

C. Priorities

- Fraud via management companies
- Carrousel fraud
- Excises sector
- Extension to social fraud issues

AS A CONCLUSION: OUR CHALLENGES !

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION