

A cross-border network to tackle regional challenges

MARINE & MARITIME
CHALLENGES

CLIMATE
& ENERGY

NUTRITION
& HEALTH

COMMUNITIES
& WELL-BEING

Launched in 2020, the cross-border 3i University Network brings together the University of Lille (France), KU Leuven, Ghent University (Belgium) and the University of Kent (United Kingdom) to collaborate on addressing the challenges shared in the Flanders-Kent-Hauts-de-France territory. Though the debut was hampered by the health crisis, the partners still initiated a number of joint projects. On June 14 in Lille, the 4 partner universities will emphasise their desire to cooperate together by signing a joint declaration in the context of a forum on the landscape of education and research at the cross-border level.

A cross-border network at the heart of Europe

Thanks to its strategic position at the heart of Northwestern Europe, the territories of Flanders-Kent-Hauts-de-France have great potential for cooperation within the Euroregion. The four universities thus came together with the goal of strengthening academic collaborations. They have funded and co-funded numerous projects, including joint co-supervised theses and collaborative research projects. On the strength of these exchanges, the institutions set up the 3i Network (Interregional Internationalisation Initiative University Network) in 2020 with the aim of responding to shared regional challenges, in particular by supporting the mobility of researchers and the organisation of international scientific events.

Four main themes

Thanks to their proximity, the three regions (Flanders, Kent and Hauts-de-France) share challenges in many areas. The objective of the network is to bring together universities, regional governments, the private sector and civil society in order to tackle common regional challenges. Four initial major themes have thus been defined: marine & maritime questions (blue energy, preservation of the coastal environment, etc.), climate and energy (net zero, sustainability, energy security, etc.), health & nutrition but also well-being & communities (migration, vulnerability,

ageing populations, etc.). Workshops on these themes were also held online in June 2021.

June 14: first forum of the network

The network has received the support of the Hauts-de-France Region, which offered 200,000 euros of funding, making it possible to finance the mobility of more than 400 students, staff and researchers from University of Lille to develop university cooperation. It is therefore no surprise that the Headquarters of the Hauts-de-France Region will welcome the network on June 14 in Lille for its very first face-to-face plenary session. Numerous stakeholders will be present to discuss the scientific challenges but also the funding opportunities in the Euroregional perimeter. Note the presence of the Straits Committee, a multilateral structure for cooperation which brings together 8 départements/provinces/counties in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom and which has just funded a project submitted by the 3i Network.

Programme :

10:00 Welcome

10:30 Opportunities and funding for cross-border research

12:00 Lunch - networking - poster session

13:00 Plenary sessions & workshops

15:45 Restitution & perspectives - signature of joint statement by university representatives

17:00 Cocktail

Programme an registration:

↳ <https://www.3iuni.eu/>

Contact

Stephane Thys
3i university network
+33 (0)3 62 26 90 89
stephane.thys@univ-lille.fr