

**CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
THE GOVERNMENT OF FLANDERS  
AND  
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

THE GOVERNMENT OF FLANDERS

and

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA,

hereinafter referred to as 'the Parties',

**On the basis of** the friendship links and the co-operation that already exists between the two Parties, the mutual trust and attachment to the values of freedom, democracy, justice and solidarity;

**Considering** the process of rapprochement between the European Union and its member states on the one hand, and the Republic of Croatia, on the other hand, in negotiating EU accession;

**In accordance with** the will to extend the co-operation between the Government of Flanders and the Government of the Republic of Croatia, co-ordinate the co-operation as far as possible in bilateral and multilateral programmes and extend the co-operation to new areas, as determined in this agreement, while respecting each other's competence;

HAVE REACHED THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT:

#### Article 1

The Parties will strengthen and extend their co-operation in the fields of the economy, technology, education, science, youth work, culture, cultural heritage, media and film policy, social policy, health care, housing, the environment and protection of nature, infrastructure, traffic, traffic telematics, agriculture and the agro-industry, vocational training and employment, tourism, sport, administrative reform, and the other fields for which both Parties are competent.

For this purpose the Parties will promote the co-operation between their institutions, organisations and companies which are active in the above fields.

#### Article 2

With regard to their mutual economic co-operation, the Parties will devote special attention to the following fields:

- the development of economic structures and special economic zones (sustainable industrial sites);
- regional economic development;
- the development of structures for small and medium-sized enterprises;
- encouraging the establishment of direct contacts between small and medium-sized enterprises;
- the promotion of the traditional crafts sector through education and training;
- the development of management programmes for business leaders and the exchange of business experience;
- the expansion of bilateral trade, the establishment of commercial contacts, co-operation between companies and institutions;
- the development of sectoral programmes;
- co-operation in the context of European programmes (pre-accession assistance and structural funds);
- encouraging investments;
- strengthening of social dialogue.

For this purpose the Parties will encourage the exchange of officials, experts, specialists, teaching professionals and business leaders.

#### Article 3

The Parties will encourage co-operation and exchange in the field of primary, secondary and higher education, postgraduate and doctoral studies, vocational training and adult education.

#### Article 4

The Parties will encourage co-operation and exchanges between institutes of higher education and research institutes, in the field of fundamental and applied scientific research and technological development.

#### Article 5

The Parties will promote co-operation in the field of sports and sports activities. To this end they will encourage the exchange of professional knowledge and information about their respective policies in this field.

#### Article 6

The Parties will encourage co-operation and exchange in the fields of art, culture and the cultural heritage and support activities which contribute to their cultural development and dissemination of their respective languages and culture as well as to the mutual acquaintance with their respective cultural heritage and arts.

#### Article 7

The Parties will endeavour to establish bilateral co-operation in the context of UNESCO, and in particular through the national UNESCO commissions.

#### Article 8

The Parties are aware of the important role of the media for a free and democratic society. They will promote co-operation in the field of the print and audiovisual media and the exchange of experts, researchers and journalists.

The Parties will encourage co-operation in the field of media and audiovisual production. They will stimulate the exchange and circulation and co-production of audiovisual productions in particular through Eurimages – the Council of Europe's fund for co-production.

#### Article 9

The Parties will promote co-operation in the field of tourism. To this end they will exchange professional knowledge and information about their respective policies in this field.

#### Article 10

The Parties will work together in the field of social matters and employment, in particular with regard to vocational training, work and working relations and social dialogue, in so far as these fields fall under their respective areas of competence.

To this end the Parties will promote the exchange of experts and social partners.

#### Article 11

The Parties will work together on promoting health, welfare and the social services. To this end they will exchange information, documents and expertise in the fields of social welfare and health care.

In this respect their particular attention will be focused on medical care, health promotion, disease prevention, the integration of the disabled, planning and programming, family policy, social welfare, special youth services and the policy for the elderly.



#### Article 12

The Parties will co-operate in the field of the environment, and the rational use of energy and renewable and alternative energy sources. They will promote the exchange of scientific and technical information and the transfer of technology. To this end the Parties will promote the exchange of experts, business leaders and teaching professionals.

#### Article 13

The Parties will work together in the fields of town and country planning, housing, infrastructure, traffic and traffic telematics. They will promote the exchange of scientific and technical information and the transfer of technology. To this end the Parties will encourage the exchange of experts, business leaders and teaching professionals.

#### Article 14

The Parties will co-operate in the fields of agriculture and rural development, and promote co-operation in a European context.

#### Article 15

The Parties will encourage co-operation between their local government units or authorities. To this end they will promote collaboration between local or municipal councils, endeavour to establish direct contacts between their respective cities and municipalities, and support the creation of twinning organisations.

#### Article 16

With regard to the fields for which this Agreement applies, the Parties will endeavour to establish the co-operation in the context of international governmental organisations, in particular the European institutions. The Parties may inform each other about their respective viewpoints and consult together for this purpose.

The Parties will co-operate in the context of programmes of international organisations in the fields which fall under their specific scope of competence, expressing their special bonds of friendship and treating each other as privileged partners.

#### Article 17

The Parties will actively co-operate in view of the full integration of the Republic of Croatia into the European Union.

#### Article 18

The Parties will establish a joint Flanders-Croatia commission with a view to executing this Agreement.

The joint commission will meet at least every two years, alternately in Zagreb and Brussels.

During the meetings the joint commission will draw up two-yearly work programmes for the execution of the co-operation agreement.

The joint commission may instruct working groups to arrange interim meetings in order to assess the execution of the work programmes.

#### Article 19

The joint commission will be chaired by the ministers appointed by each of the Parties or by their representatives.

The task of the joint commission will be:

- to check how far the co-operation has progressed and evaluate the results;
- to amend the priorities at regular intervals and determine the course to be followed;
- to examine and approve projects;
- to supervise the funds intended for financing the programmes arising from this agreement;
- to examine all the problems related to the execution, operation and interpretation of this Agreement.

#### Article 20

This Agreement has been concluded for a period of five (5) years and shall be tacitly renewed for additional periods of five (5) years, unless either Party denounces it by written notification, through diplomatic channels, at the latest one (1) year before the expiry of the current five-year period.

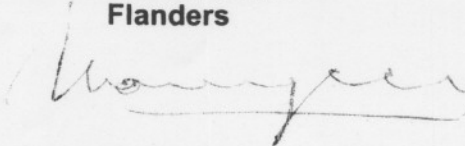
In the case of termination, the Parties will take the necessary measures to guarantee the completion of all projects jointly carried out pursuant to this Agreement.

#### Article 21

This Agreement shall enter into force on the day of the receipt of the last written notification whereby the Parties have notified each other, through diplomatic channels, that their respective internal legal requirements for entry into force of this Agreement have been fulfilled.

Done at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ in two originals, each in the Dutch, Croatian and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence in interpretation of this Agreement, the English text shall prevail.

**For the Government of  
Flanders**



**For the Government of  
the Republic of Croatia**

