



Lost in Translation Risk Reduction in-between Belgian, French, German and Luxembourgish

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The MAG-Net project relies on the collaboration with our regional partners, i.e., CAL / Luxembourg (Belgium), the City of Saarbrücken (Germany), CMSEA (France), Caritas Westeifel (Germany) and AGD Saarbrücken (Germany). Funding has been obtained by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the INTERREG IV-A Program in the Greater Region.

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Abstract:

Over the past few years, the cultural and party scene in the Greater Region of Belgium, France, Germany and the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg has become more and more diversified. The events attract an international audience, people being able to attend a party or a festival in neighboring countries by driving only dozens of kilometers. Consequently, attendees are often unfamiliar both with the local language and with the legal situation of the spot they choose to party. As this situation implies multiple difficulties for health promotion and risk reduction activities in the party environment, several actors of the Greater Region have joined forces in the MAG-Net Party project. We will present the underlying strategies to achieve a pragmatic approach specific to the Greater Region, emphasizing on the intercultural exchanges and the synergy of skills stemming from the different partners.

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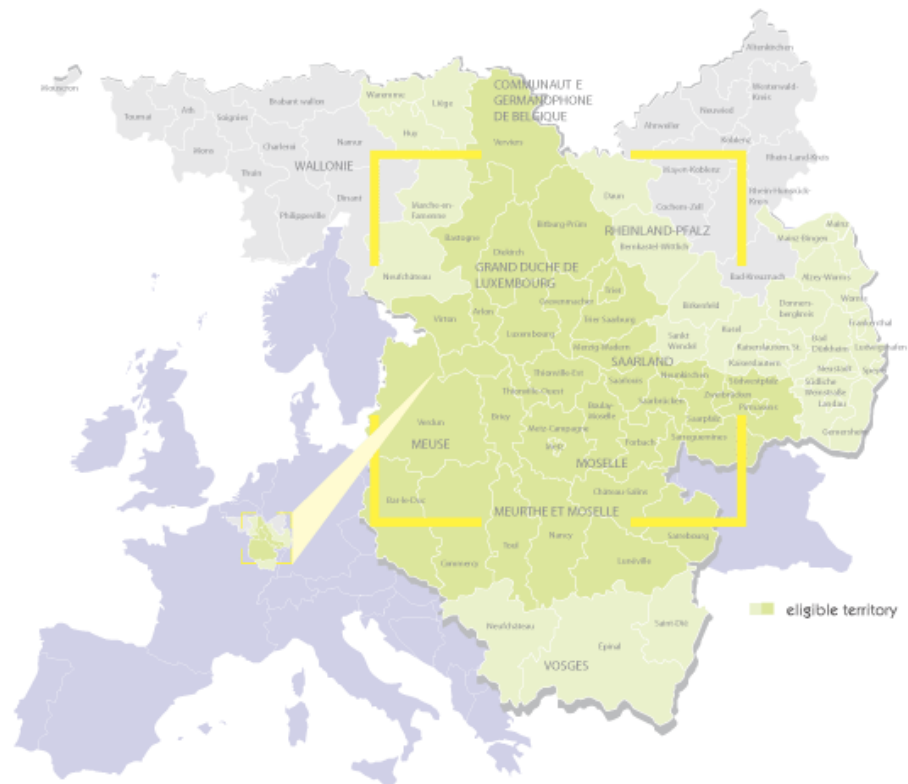
The Greater Region between Belgium, France, Germany, and the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg (Cf. Figure 1) is characterized by the high mobility of its residents. A large percentage of the population commutes to one or several neighboring countries for everyday life activities be it for work, for school, for shopping or for cultural activities. While used to move to the adjacent regions for a specific purpose, the residents of any of the implicated regions remain nonetheless strongly attached to the local characteristics of the population of their region of origin, be it through their native language(s), their cultural and religious background, civic and social-economic settings. Even though the Greater Region is geographically situated on a very small territory, the adjacent regions do strongly differ on any of those characteristics.

Over the past few years, the cultural and party scene in the Greater Region has flourished the number, the diversity and the quality of the events having steeply increased. Numerous events now attract an international audience, people being able to attend a party or a festival in neighboring countries by driving only dozens of kilometers. Consequently, attendees are often unfamiliar with the local language, the legal situation or the provided services of the location they choose to party. As this situation causes several difficulties for health promotion and risk reduction activities in the party scene, in 2009, six health promotion actors of the Greater Region have joined forces in a common project, called MAG-Net Party.

Operational partners of the MAG-Net Party network are the Comité d'Action Laïque (CAL) / Luxembourg in Belgium, the Comité Mosellan de Sauvegarde de l'Enfance, de l'Adolescence et des Adultes (CMSEA) in France, the City of Saarbrücken and the Aktion Drogenberatung (AGD) of Saarbrücken, as well as the Caritas Westeifel in Germany and the Centre de Prévention des Toxicomanies (CePT) in Luxembourg. Funding has been obtained by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the INTERREG IV-A Program in the Greater Region and by national financial contributions of each of the operational partners.

The professional objectives of the institutions and associations implicated in the MAG-Net Party network range from risk reduction over addiction prevention to health promotion. While the Belgian and French partners were already active in their local party scenes, nearly no projects have been implemented until then in the nightlife activities of adjacent regions of Luxembourg and Germany.

Figure 1. The Greater Region between Belgium, Germany, France and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.



A first essential step after the creation of the network was the intense exchange of the pursued objectives and implemented strategies (documentation, field work, materials), as well as the participation in situ of the other partners' field activities. As an example, each institution disseminated, previously to the project, information leaflets about psychoactive substances. However, the tone of voice of this documentation differs considerably, ranging from neutral descriptive enumerations to second-degree humor. Another difference resides in the profile of the staff used in risk reduction activities: debriefed peers, students, drug users or health promotion professionals. The goal here was not to level out the differences in the various approaches, but to profit from the diversity, the complementarities and the knowledge of the local conditions of the different partners to accomplish a concerted risk reduction project in the party scene of the Greater Region which responds to the demands of the international public, but also respects the local particularities.

A second step was the completion of a brief survey at some major party events in the Greater Region in 2010 to assess the characteristics of the attending public, namely their age, gender, country of residence, spoken languages, as well as the psychoactive substances they consumed in the last two weeks. As an illustration Table 1 summarizes the events where the survey was conducted, as well as the language skills of the interrogated attendees. The objective of this survey is to optimize the risk

reduction activities to the local settings, in order to adapt them not only to the geographical origin and age of the attendees, but also to the drug consumption habits of the latter. Sensitizing an audience experimenting with alcohol and cannabis to the risk of injection methods would be missing the mark and a waste of resources.

Table 1: *Events, number of attendees and number of completed questionnaires during the 2010 survey.*

Event	Attendees	Surveyed	D	F	GB
HipHop Prüm (D)	1000	161	159	49	133
Jardin de Michel (F)	13500	149	30	148	116
Food for your Senses (L)	5000	697	686	681	668
E-Lake (L)	15000	2036	1954	1561	1796
Picadilly (L)	20000	933	902	897	854
Terres Rouges (L)	7000	1023	844	841	775
Ward'in Rock (B)	7000	147	47	143	109
Halberg Open Air (D)	32000	3634	3683	2377	2795
Sunset festival (D)	800	187	183	92	128

Note. The tables summarizes the name of the event (country in parentheses), estimated number of attendees at the event, number of attendees which completed the questionnaire and the number of attendees which mastered the German (D), French (F) or English (GB) language.

The goal of the MAG-Net Party project is to provide accurate and comprehensive information and material for a safe and healthy party environment for any attendee. With that aim, we plan to disseminate in 2011 at some selected party premises and festivals trilingual (French, German, and English) documentation about psychoactive substances (alcohol, amphetamines/speed, cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy, GHB and tobacco), about the local differences in the rules and regulations (cf. legal differences relating to drug use, sale of alcohol and tobacco, road traffic or the protection of minors), social and health services, and public transport. In addition, ear plugs, condoms, lubricants, field sobriety tests, sniff and injection kits can be made available, depending on the party public and setting. Emphasis is laid on visual information, like large icons advertising the various services provided (Cf. Figure 2) or posters summarizing legal regulations. If possible, we will ensure that a specifically trained, multinational and multilingual staff is present at the location. On the long run, the visual identity of MAG-Net Party project should be easily recognized by the party goers in the Greater Region and accepted as a warrant of quality.

Figure 2. The MAG-Net Party visual identity and the icons used to promote the various services provided at the risk reduction stall.

