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Europe/International

## A Gren(z)spas(s) for border fun

### **"Grenzhoppers" initiative presents feasibility study on cross-border information // Promoting tourism**

A Gren(z)spas(s) for the district of Borken and the neighboring Dutch region of Achterhoek is intended to provide a comprehensive picture of tourist opportunities, benefits and information. It was the subject of a feasibility study commissioned by the "Grenzhoppers" initiative last year. Now the result was presented in Lievelede (Netherlands).

The study shows that far-reaching cross-border cooperation in the field of tourism is possible in this area. Bocholt could also benefit from this.

The initiative for this research came from the Saxion Hogeschool in Enschede and the "Grenzhoppers". The university has already advised various tourist areas, e.g. in Austria, France and Germany, on the introduction of tourist discount cards. All municipalities in the Achterhoek region as well as the district of Borken, the province of Gelderland and the EUREGIO have contributed financially to the implementation of the study.

### **Survey on both sides of the border**

"We would like to offer information for tourists and residents of the border region in a Gren(z)spas(s) or a Gren(z)s app. The overall offer of entrepreneurs, cultural institutions, retail and events will be included," said Bernou Wagenaar, tourism and international cooperation officer at the municipality of Oost Gelre, at the presentation of the study. She added: "In order to get a good picture of the wishes of, for example, the gastronomy, accommodation and cultural providers, we interviewed 195 private individuals and companies on both sides of the border. In addition, the experts conducted interviews with important tourism organizations such as Achterhoek Tourismus, Münsterland e.V. and Stadtmarketing Bocholt and Borken."

### **Attractive activities and offers**

Based on the results of the study, the first step was taken to create a Gren(z)spas Pass in paper form. The idea here is that visitors and tourists can use their pass to take advantage of attractive activities and offers. This Gren(z)spas(s) is intended to give guests to the local border region a more comprehensive picture of the available opportunities. The future goal is to make it possible to get to know and take advantage of cross-border offers on both sides of the border with one card.

### **Mixed form of Gren(z)spas(s) and Gren(z)s app**

According to the "Grenzhoppers" and Saxion Hogeschool, the paper Gren(z)spas(s) could be an interim solution until a digital border app is introduced. "But we could also opt for a hybrid between a passport and an app. You often see this in tourist areas abroad," Wagenaar explains, "We expect that with this passport, visitors to our border region will move more easily from place to place and experience a more versatile stay. We have a lot to offer in this region and across the border; and it's good that this will now be brought together." The next step will be to map out the possibilities for implementation as well as the financial framework.





*Foto von der "Gren(z)spa(s)"-Karte  
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