

**Cross Border Taskforce Corona**  
**Belgium – Netherlands – North Rhine-Westphalia – Lower Saxony – Rhineland-Palatinate**

**53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020, 2.30 – 2.55 pm (conference call)**

**Minutes**

Participants as listed in the attachment

**(1) Opening**

5.1.2e (NRW) opens the meeting and welcomes the participants. He excuses the participants of Lower Saxony and Rhineland-Palatinate, and informs that for the NRW Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs (MAGS) 5.1.2e will from now on replace 5.1.2e. He welcomes 5.1.2e to the Taskforce.

**(2) Situation reports**

Belgium, the Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony and Rhineland-Palatinate deliver reports as summarised in the attached document.

The summary of risk assessments is currently as follows:

Assessment (4) by	Region	(5) Consequence
1) Belgium	(7) <b>Germany:</b> the whole country is now classified as “red”. (since 11/11) (8) <a href="https://diplomatie.belgium.be/nl/covid_tabel">https://diplomatie.belgium.be/nl/covid_tabel</a>	(9) The Belgian government discourages travel to areas classified as “red”. (10) For “red”, quarantine and test are compulsory.
1)	(12) <b>Netherlands:</b> entirely “red”.	
3) Netherlands	(15) <b>Germany:</b> since November 3, all of Germany is classified as “orange” for health reasons. <a href="https://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/landen/duitsland/reizen/reisadvies">https://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/landen/duitsland/reizen/reisadvies</a>	(16) “ <b>Orange</b> ” for health risk means: only necessary travel. no tourist trips. After a stay in Germany or Belgium, strong recommendation for quarantine at home for 10 days on return to the Netherlands.
7)	(18) <b>Belgium:</b> entire country is “orange” for health risk reasons. (19) <a href="https://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/landen/belgie/reizen/reisadvies">https://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/landen/belgie/reizen/reisadvies</a>	
0) Germany / NRW	(22) <b>Belgium</b> – entire country is a “risk area” (since 30 Sept).	(23) Quarantine is compulsory – but “1 – 3 – 5” rule still in place.
4)	(25) <b>Netherlands:</b> entire country is a “risk area” (since October 17).	

- [5.1.2e] reports that hospitals in NRW currently treat 1 Dutch and 22 Belgian IC patients. 8 patients have already been transferred back to the Netherlands (2) and Belgium (6). In addition, 4 patients from France (Hauts-de-France) are also in IC treatment in NRW hospitals.

**(26) Matters of common interest**

- BE [5.1.2e] and NL [5.1.2e] express their gratitude to NRW and RP for the incorporation of an exception for inland water transport in the newly issued regulation (CoronaEinreiseVerordnung). NRW [5.1.2e] acknowledges with thanks the clarifications by NL in the letter by Minister Hugo de Jonge on the quarantine rules applicable to cross-border workers, distinguishing between cross-border workers and students versus seasonal and migrant workers.
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- BE [5.1.2e] reports on concerns in Belgium about the situation of health care workers. In a recent survey, 7 out of 10 hospitals stated that more help is needed. Belgium is also aware of Belgian citizens' travelling to the Dutch province of Zeeland. Concerning the effectiveness of measures, she will send a list of current research studies on that topic to be attached to the minutes.
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- NL [5.1.2e] mentions that it is to be expected that the sale and use of fireworks will be prohibited in the Netherlands for New Year's Eve so that any additional work in hospitals due to injuries caused by fireworks is avoided. Such a decision may cause negative effects on the borders.
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- NRW [5.1.2e] informs NRW has decided to start Christmas vacation in the schools earlier than planned – last day of school will be Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> December. The rationale behind the decision is to allow for self-isolation of families who plan to visit older relatives for Christmas.

**Next meeting: 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020, 2.30 pm**