

# Place Standard Tool Euregio Maas-Rhein (PST-EMR) 2024

Group ID:



Together, we are building the foundation to shape our crossborder living environment in the Euregion Meuse-Rhine.

## Dear participant,

We are thrilled that you have this brochure in hand and invite you to participate in our survey. The following pages focus on your satisfaction with your living environment.



Share your opinion on the following topics:



Mobility



Public Space



Adapting to the  
consequences of climate change



Social Interaction



Supplies,  
Housing, Education,  
Economy

What will we do with the results of this survey?

1. The results will be compiled into reports and recommendations.
2. We will present the findings to euregional administrations, health organizations, political decision-makers, and citizens' initiatives.
3. We aim to learn how to integrate a framework for crossborder citizen participation into the region's existing structures.

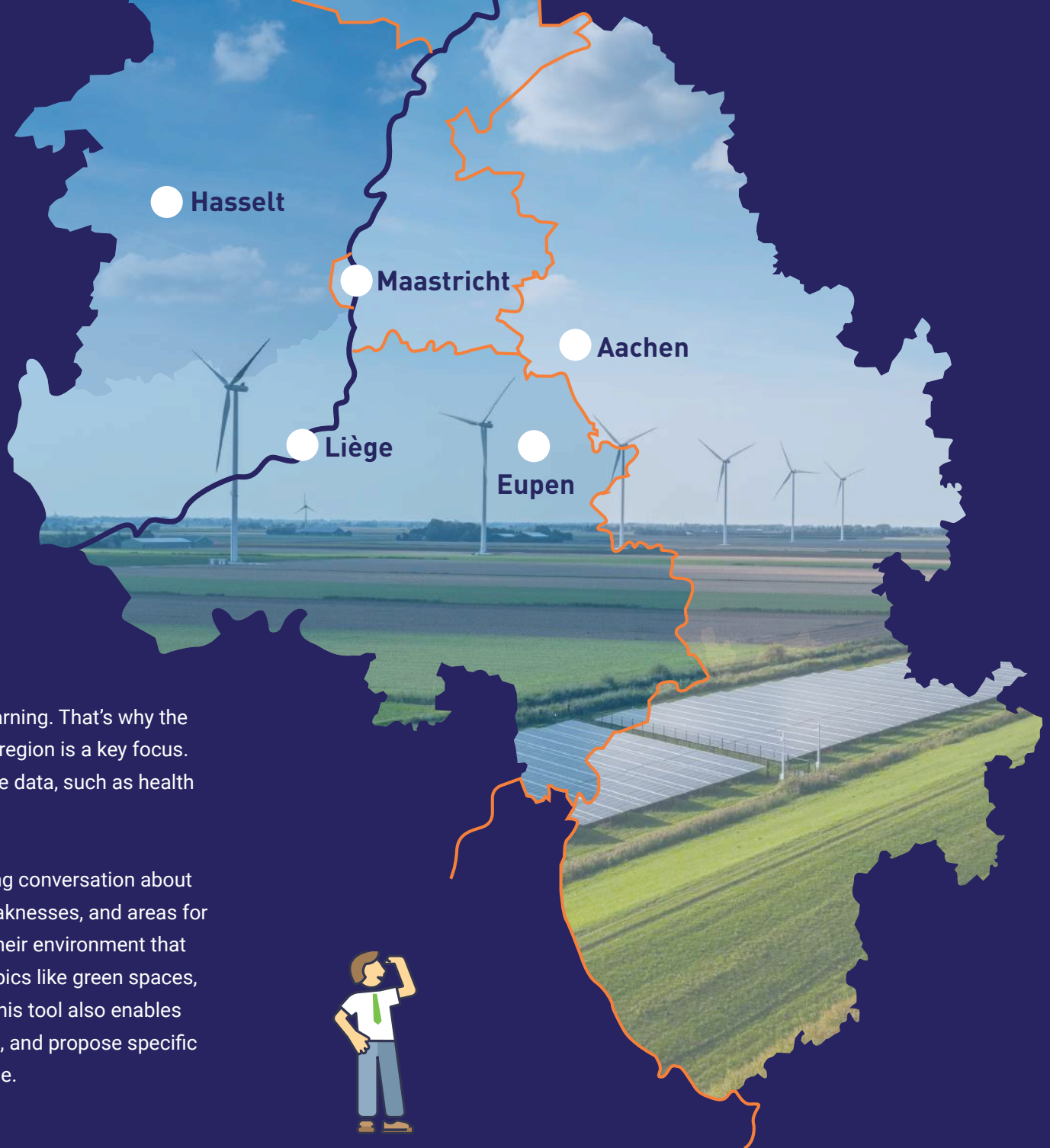


# The “Place Standard Tool Euregio Meuse-Rhine” (PST-EMR)

The **PST-EMR** questionnaire allows residents of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine to assess their living environment, whether it's an entire city, municipality, neighborhood, district, or larger street. While laws and regulations affecting local environments are often set at the national level, border regions frequently face unique challenges that require cross-border solutions.

These regions also present opportunities for mutual learning. That's why the participation of people living and working in the border region is a key focus. Their insights are a valuable complement to quantitative data, such as health and social reports or local development statistics.

The **PST-EMR** serves as a discussion guide, encouraging conversation about one's living environment. It helps identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Participants assess various aspects of their environment that impact health, from the effects of climate change to topics like green spaces, housing, transport, social interaction, and healthcare. This tool also enables participants to pinpoint deficits, suggest improvements, and propose specific actions. The **PST-EMR** is user-friendly and free of charge.



## Why is the living environment so important?

The environment in which we live, learn, work or spend our free time has a significant impact on our quality of life and health. For example, living in an area with poorly maintained housing, few green spaces, poor air quality or excessive noise increases the risk of health problems.

Not feeling safe in your neighbourhood can also have a negative impact on your well-being. On the other hand, the design of the environment in which we live can also have a positive influence on our health. For example, having lots of green spaces, safe cycle paths and public meeting places can have a positive effect on our health.

One of the major challenges is climate change. It affects the health and well-being of millions of people worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified climate change as one of the greatest health challenges of the 21st century. Climate change results in extreme weather events such as heat waves and droughts, heavy precipitation (with flooding) and storms.

These effects have a direct impact on human health. The number of people dying from cardiovascular diseases has already increased significantly, and the risk of skin cancer and mental health issues has significantly increased as well. Climate change also contributes to the spread of vectors such as ticks or mosquitoes and thus to the transmission of certain diseases such as Lyme disease or meningitis. The pollen season has also been extended, which can be a major constraint for people with allergies. And climate change has consequences for our basic needs such as food, clean water and clean air.

Consequently, we need to develop ways of educating people about how to deal with these events. The living environment also needs to be adapted to climate change. Examples of such adaptation measures include effective warning systems for extreme weather events, climate-oriented construction, and the creation of more green spaces and local water features. These can promote general well-being and mental health, and encourage physical activity. So climate adaptation measures not only reduce the negative impacts of climate change, but also promote human health.

On the other hand, climate protection measures aim to counteract climate change. Both aspects are important: climate protection and climate adaptation. The **PST-EMR** focuses on climate adaptation, in other words, on how to deal with the consequences of climate change that are already having an impact today.

Once we understand the strengths and weaknesses of a particular living environment, informed decisions can be made for improvements and resources can be used where they are most urgently needed.

The unique feature of the **PST-EMR**: It reflects the reality of many people who live, work, study and spend their leisure time in the border region. For citizens in the region, regularly crossing borders is part of everyday life. It is therefore essential that action is coordinated at cross-border level.

The **PST-EMR** is designed to support the responsible stakeholders in their home towns and in the border region to create attractive and healthy living environments.





### How is the questionnaire structured?

The **PST-EMR** is used in the Euregion Meuse-Rhine, which covers three different countries and four languages.

The survey addresses five key topics, with adapting to the consequences of climate change in your living environment as the central focus, given its growing importance for a sustainable future. The other topics include mobility, public spaces, supplies/housing/education/economy, and social interaction.

Most questions are designed to assess your satisfaction with each topic, and your scores can be transferred to the result diagram. It is important that you provide specific reasons for your scores in the text field, as this helps highlight which areas of your environment perform well and where improvements are needed at a glance.

Additionally, please answer the questions regarding your residence, age, and gender, as well as those specific to the Euregion Meuse-Rhine.



# Basic information

Before we really get started, we would like to know something from you

## Where do you live?

- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Netherlands

## And in which city do you live?

City/town: \_\_\_\_\_

District/region: \_\_\_\_\_

## How old are you?

- ☐ Younger than 16
- ☐ 16 – 24 years
- ☐ 25 – 34 years
- ☐ 35 – 44 years
- ☐ 45 – 54 years
- ☐ 55 – 64 years
- ☐ 65 – 74 years
- ☐ 75 years or older

## Please mark your gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Divers
- ☐ No specification

## Do you sometimes travel across the border to your neighbouring country?

- ☐ Yes, daily
- ☐ Yes, several times a week
- ☐ Yes, several times a month
- ☐ Yes, a few times a year
- ☐ Yes, at most once a year
- ☐ No, never

## On what occasions do you travel to the neighbouring country?

You can select more than one answer.

- ☐ Work
- ☐ Visit family or friends
- ☐ Holiday/vacation
- ☐ Hobbies
- ☐ Hobby
- ☐ Other reasons: \_\_\_\_\_



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# Climate change adaptations

## Drinking water

Due to climate change, it is often more hot and dry. Especially during the summer, it is important for your health to drink plenty of water also when you're away from home. In the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, tap water is of very good quality. Free, easily accessible and appealing drinking water supplies, such as public fountains, can therefore be very helpful.

How do I rate the availability of free drinking water in my surroundings?



### These points can help with the assessment:

- There are plenty of places with free drinking water: squares, parks, green spaces, clubhouses, sports grounds, swimming pools, social meeting places, schools, daycare centres, offices, religious institutions, medical clinics, pharmacies, shops, restaurants.
- These drinking water facilities are accessible at all times. They are clean and attractive.
- There is enough information on where to find drinking water facilities.

My Feedback:



# Climate change adaptations

## Cooling outside

Our cities and communities are becoming warmer due to climate change especially where buildings are close together. Green spaces and water features as well as sunshades and the like help to cool the environment.

How do I rate the shading and cooling options in my neighbourhood?



### These points can help with the assessment:

- In my neighbourhood, there is plenty of shade on footpaths, cycle paths, playgrounds, sports grounds, meeting points and bus stops.
- The facades and roofs of buildings are often green.
- My neighbourhood is cooled, for example by water fountains or water surfaces.

My Feedback:





# Climate change adaptations

## Cooling inside

When it gets hot, cool public indoor spaces can also help in the short term when you are away from home. However, cool public spaces should be available, open and freely accessible during the day.

### How do I assess the availability of cool indoor space in my neighbourhood?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- There are plenty of cool spaces in the neighbourhood: libraries, government offices, religious institutions, museums, club buildings, social meeting places, shops and restaurants.
- These spaces are open and accessible at all times during the day. I can walk or bike there or get there by bus or train/tram.
- Buses and trains/trams are air-conditioned.
- There is enough information about where to find these cool places.

My Feedback:



# Climate change adaptations

## Extreme weather protection

In addition to heat, climate change often leads to other extreme natural events such as storms, heavy rain or flooding. We cannot completely prevent these. And they often happen quite suddenly. However, good preparation can reduce the risks and minimise the damage.

### How do I assess the safety of my surroundings in the event of heavy rain, flooding and storms?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- In my neighbourhood, buildings, trees and other things (e.g. rubbish bins) are well protected against natural forces.
- There is enough protection against flooding.
- There are places of refuge if people have to leave their homes temporarily.
- There is enough information on protection from extreme weather. Local people know where to get help in an emergency.
- I can find enough information on how to protect my living space against the consequences of climate change.

My Feedback:



### Now think back to your visits to neighbouring countries

What did you like about one or more of these issues there: **drinking water**, **cooling outside & inside**, and **extreme weather protection**? And what did you find less good?

Also indicate in which country you saw these good/less good things.



The following list contains various measures that can be taken in your neighbourhood to respond to the consequences of climate change.

Please tick the measures that are particularly important to you for your living environment.

You can select up to 4 answers

- ☐ Offer of free warning and emergency apps
- ☐ Warning via sirens, loudspeakers, radio or television
- ☐ Maps with assistance services in the event of climate events such as storm damage, flooding, etc.
- ☐ Freely accessible drinking water fountains outdoors, in the city, etc.
- ☐ Stores or other buildings where you can fill bottles with drinking water for free
- ☐ Shades areas
- ☐ Cooled rooms
- ☐ More plants and trees in cities
- ☐ Something else, that is:

☐ None of this



**If events related to climate change take place in a neighbouring country, this can also have an impact on you and your living environment. What would be important for you personally in such a case?**

Would you like a warning system (e.g. an app) that informs the entire Euregio Meuse-Rhine when acute climate events are imminent? (e.g. heat, storms, flooding)

- ☐ Yes, in any case
- ☐ Yes, if it has an impact on my living environment
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Would you like an information system (e.g. an app) that informs people throughout the Euregio Meuse-Rhine where they can get support services or help in an emergency when such extreme weather events occur?

- ☐ Yes, in any case
- ☐ Yes, if it has an impact on my living environment
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Would you like to receive general information about current environmental or climate issues in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine?

- ☐ Yes, in any case
- ☐ Yes, if it has an impact on my living environment
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

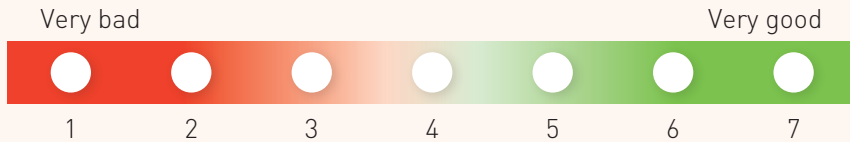






Active mobility means walking and cycling frequently. Active mobility requires footpaths, cycle lanes and car-free roads or roads where cars drive slowly. On good paths, wheelchairs, walkers and prams can be used without any problems.

### How do I rate the possibility of walking or cycling?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

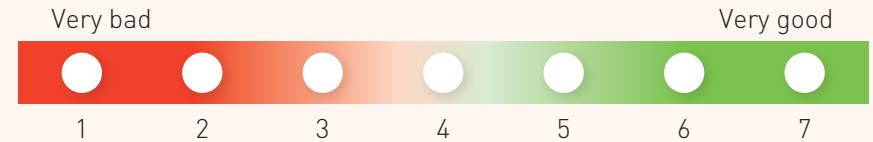
- There are enough footpaths and cycle lanes in my neighbourhood.
- I can reach important places in my everyday life on foot or by bike (school, work, parks, bus stops, supermarkets).
- There are enough traffic lights and zebra crossings. The paths are good and well maintained.
- There are benches along the way.
- I can use the paths at any time without any problems, even in winter.

My Feedback:



Public transport includes buses, trams and trains, for example. Public transport is an environmentally friendly alternative to travelling by car.

### How do I rate the public transport in my area?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- Local public transport is reliable. The vehicles run regularly and often enough.
- Timetable information is easy and straightforward to find.
- Public transport is safe and accessible.
- Travelling by public transport is inexpensive. There are enough stops nearby.
- The stops are protected from rain and sun.
- The stops have benches, rubbish bins and secure parking spaces for bicycles.
- The stops and vehicles are clean and well maintained.

My Feedback:



In a safe environment, road traffic is well regulated. There are enough parking spaces for cars, motorbikes and bicycles. Road users can move around safely.

How do I rate the traffic and parking situation in my neighbourhood?



**These points can help with the assessment:**

- Road traffic is safe.
- People walking and cycling have priority over motorised vehicles.
- There are enough traffic lights and zebra crossings.
- Residents are not affected or disturbed by noise or poor air quality. Parked cars, motorbikes and bicycles are not a danger to others.
- There are covered e-charging stations and parking spaces for bicycles.
- There are enough alternatives to the car, for example car sharing, bike sharing, public buses, carpooling opportunities.

### My Feedback:



### Now think back to your visits to neighbouring countries

What did you like about one or more of these issues there: **active mobility**, **public transport** and **transport**? And what did you find less good?

Also indicate in which country you saw these good/less good things.

A stylized illustration of a person with brown hair, wearing a white t-shirt and light blue pants, riding a green bicycle. They have a green backpack on their back and are waving their right hand. The bicycle is positioned in the bottom right corner of the page.



Natural space are parks, forests, fields, rivers, lakes, ponds and green spaces including those next to paths and roads, inside and outside cities and municipalities. Natural spaces improve air quality. We feel good in natural spaces.

How do I rate the natural space in my area?



These points can help with the assessment:

- There are a sufficient number and variety of natural areas.
- The natural spaces are easily accessible at all times, even without having to use the car.
- The green spaces are well maintained. They are watered regularly. There are enough benches.
- You can do different things in the natural areas, such as exercise, play or simply go for a walk. There are hardly any trees or plants that many people are allergic to, for example birch trees or ragweed.

My Feedback:



People should enjoy being in their surroundings. Streets, buildings and squares can have a positive or negative influence on people's attitude to life.

How do I rate buildings, streets and places in my area?



These points can help with the assessment:

- The streets, buildings and squares are designed in such a way that everyone enjoys being there.
- There are hardly any empty buildings or damaged streets. It is rarely noisy.
- Even at night, you feel comfortable and find your way around easily. There are enough public toilets and benches.

My Feedback:



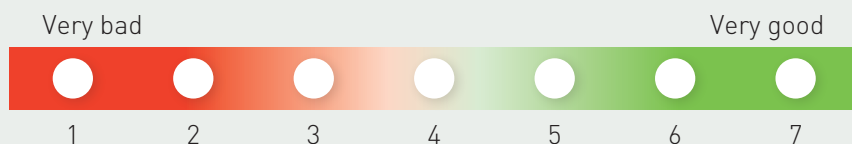


# Public Space

## Care and Maintenance

Well-maintained surroundings give residents a good feeling. It increases identification with the neighbourhood and reduces vandalism.

### How do I assess the state of my surroundings?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- The public streets, areas and buildings are well maintained and clean. There is hardly any dirt or waste.
- Damage to property is rare.
- The waste collection service comes regularly.

My Feedback:



# Public Space

## Perceived Safety

A safe environment reduces crime and anti-social behaviour. People feel more comfortable there and are more active. A high level of safety also means that people feel well informed and safe in the event of sudden events triggered by climate change, such as flooding.

### How do I assess the safety of my surroundings?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- I feel safe during the day and at night.
- There is hardly any crime or antisocial behaviour such as damage to property.
- The streets and squares are well lit and easy to see.
- Nobody feels threatened because of his or her origin, faith or sexual identity.
- No one feels unsafe or affected by climate change.
- Warning systems are well known, like emergency apps, cell broadcasting or heat warnings.
- People are well informed about how to avoid fires during drought and heat.

My Feedback:



# Public Space





Good everyday supplies and amenities improve the quality of life. Everyday amenities include shops, markets, banks, post offices, cafés and restaurants, hairdressers, citizens' offices and religious institutions.

### How do I assess the everyday amenities in my neighbourhood?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- Shops are nearby. I can walk or bike there, or get there by bus or train.
- The shops are well maintained. They are barrier-free and offer quiet areas and toilets.
- There are many social facilities such as a food bank. I can eat a balanced, varied and sustainable diet.
- The shops adjust their opening hours in summer and winter. They protect me from extreme cold and heat.

My Feedback:



Good healthcare and social support are important for a high quality of life. This includes, for example, medical clinics, hospitals, pharmacies and care services. Social support services such as social centres, neighbourhood help or meal services support people who need help.

### How do I rate healthcare and social services in my neighbourhood?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- There is sufficient healthcare in my neighbourhood. I can find many offers.
- All healthcare services are easy to reach by foot, by bike or by local transport.
- They are well maintained and easily accessible for everyone, i.e. barrier-free.

My Feedback:





Good neighbourhoods offer a mix of houses, flats, retirement homes and other forms of housing. Families and people of different ages and incomes live here. The neighbourhood should be safe and well maintained so that people enjoy living there.

### How do I rate the housing options in my neighbourhood?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- The houses in my neighbourhood are in good condition. My home is bright and warm. I can ventilate it well.
- I feel safe and protected at home. I have my privacy.
- My home is energy efficient. My energy consumption is low.
- The housing available in my neighbourhood is suitable for households of different sizes.
- The rents and house prices are not too high.
- People in my neighbourhood can stay in their homes even if their life situation changes.

My Feedback:



A good local economy provides jobs. It also creates lively places. For example, cafés, restaurants and shops are created. The local labour market and the opportunity for training or further education are just as important for local people as kindergartens and schools.

### How do I rate education, economy and job opportunities in my neighbourhood?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- There are many different jobs, apprenticeships, and opportunities for further training in my neighbourhood.
- People without a job will find a job centre and training, further education or retraining opportunities nearby.
- People prefer to shop in the local shops. The local restaurants and cafés are well visited.
- The businesses in my neighbourhood do not cause traffic problems or more noise.
- There are enough kindergartens and schools to look after children so that parents can go to work.
- I can also work from home if, for example, it is very hot or the transport companies are on strike.

My Feedback:



## Now think back to your visits to neighbouring countries

What did you like about one or more of these issues there: **everyday supplies, healthcare, housing, education** and **local economy**? And what did you find less good?

If you provide information here, please also state the name of the country or region.

A cartoon illustration of a person with blonde hair, wearing a white t-shirt and blue pants, sitting at a light blue desk. They are looking at a laptop with a frustrated expression, and a speech bubble with a red 'X' is coming out of their mouth. The background is a solid light blue.



In a good neighbourhood, there are various opportunities for sport and play as well as leisure activities. These include, for example, playgrounds, sports grounds, swimming pools, recreation centres, cinemas and museums.

### How do I rate the leisure facilities in my neighbourhood?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- My neighbourhood offers many opportunities for play and leisure activities.
- I can easily walk or cycle there or get there by bus or train/tram. The playgrounds and sports fields are well maintained and safe. Playgrounds and sports fields can be used at any time.
- The offers are inexpensive.

My Feedback:



In a good environment, there are good meeting places for everybody. People come together and enjoy spending time together. These include, for example, youth meeting places, clubs and events. The Internet also offers many opportunities for socialising and mutual exchange.

### How do I assess the opportunities to meet people in my neighbourhood?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- There are many associations, public meeting places and events (indoors and outdoors) in my neighbourhood. People like to go there.
- Everyone is welcome, and you can walk or cycle there or get there by bus or train/tram.
- The meeting places are appealing and well maintained.
- The providers publicise in various ways (newspaper, radio, websites, social media).

My Feedback:



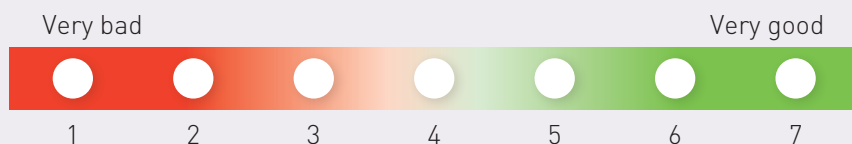


# Social Interaction

## Identity and Belonging

People like to feel a sense of belonging to a particular place. The design of the place, its history and its public image play an important role in this. Shops and businesses also prefer to open in attractive locations, where people like to live.

### How do I assess my own affiliation to my neighbourhood?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- In my neighbourhood, I feel comfortable and at home.
- I know the history and traditions of the place. There are regular festivals for everyone.
- We have a sense of community. Everyone can get involved.
- My neighbourhood has a good reputation. People outside have a good impression of my neighbourhood.
- People living here support each other when someone needs help, for example with shopping or snow removal.

My Feedback:

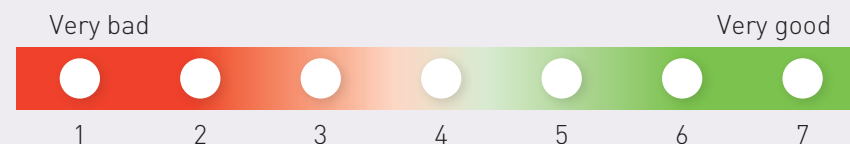


# Social Interaction

## Influence & Sense of Control

People like to help shape their environment. A good environment gives people this opportunity. Having a say and helping to shape change promotes social cohesion. This is particularly the case when people themselves are affected by the changes.

### How do I assess my own affiliation to my neighbourhood?



#### These points can help with the assessment:

- I have the feeling that I can help shape things that affect me. People listen to me.
- The people in charge in my neighbourhood actively work together with the local people to improve the environment.
- I know my rights and how I can have a say.
- The citizens in my neighbourhood are reliably represented.
- I can participate in decision-making both online and in person.


My Feedback:



### Now think back to your visits to neighbouring countries

What did you like about one or more of these issues there: **play and leisure facilities, meeting opportunities, identity and belonging, influence and sense of control**? And what did you find less good?

If you provide information here, please also state the name of the country or region.

A simple line drawing at the bottom right of the page shows two people and a dog. One person stands on the left, wearing a white shirt and blue pants, gesturing with their right hand. Another person sits on the right, also in a white shirt and blue pants, looking towards the standing person. A brown dog stands between them, facing the standing person. The entire page is enclosed in a thin, rounded rectangular border.

# Citizen participation in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine: The euPrevent ACP project

As part of the euPrevent ACP (Active Citizenship Participation) project, a crossborder structure for citizen participation in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine is being developed. The population in this region is deeply connected through historical, cultural, and economic ties, with many regularly crossing borders for work, to visit family and friends, or for leisure activities. Your community is also part of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine!

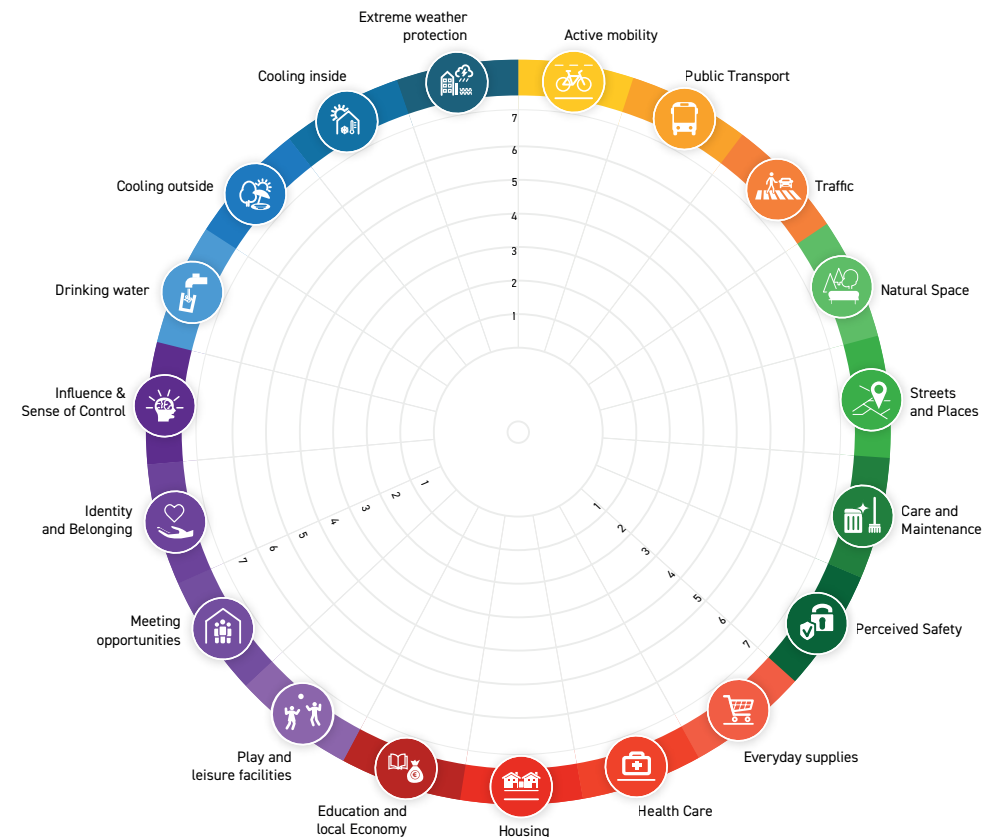
The project is funded by the Robert Bosch Stiftung as part of the Common Ground programme. The project partners are the health authorities GGD Zuid Limburg, the Düren health authority, the district of Heinsberg, the NRW Centre for Health, the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and the foundations euPrevent and EPECS. More information can be found on the homepage: [www.euprevent.eu/project-euprevent-acp](http://www.euprevent.eu/project-euprevent-acp).

## What is the target group of the PST-EMR?

The **PST-EMR** can be used by anyone who wants to participate in the development of healthy communities: municipalities, voluntary services, non-profit organisations and, above all, citizens. The **PST-EMR** enables different stakeholders to work together based on common standards.

## Result

Now transfer your point values to this diagram.



This diagram displays all your responses from the five core modules, making the results of the Place Standard Tool EMR easy to understand. Both individual questions and overarching topics can be compared, clearly highlighting areas of strength and those requiring improvement.

The **PST-EMR** provides municipalities with a robust tool that actively involves citizens in identifying strengths and weaknesses in border regions, municipalities, districts or neighbourhoods, and in learning from each other. It is used to identify and prioritise improvements and to drive forward relevant developments. The particular value of the **PST-EMR** lies in the involvement of all survey participants as individual experts with knowledge of their living environment.

### What happens next?

After the project is concluded in September 2025, the results will be published on the project website and we will present the results of the survey to the political and administrative stakeholders in the Euregion Meuse-Rhine.

### The development of the PST-EMR

The **PST-EMR** is a modified version of the German tool StadtRaumMonitor. The original questions were expanded to include a number of new questions on climate adaptation and questions about the Euregion.

The StadtRaumMonitor is based on the 'Place Standard Tool'. The tool was developed in Scotland and launched in 2015. The primary aim is to reduce existing health and social inequalities and to improve living environments. The term 'place' encompasses not only the geographical and spatial aspects of a location, but also its social, economic, cultural and historical significance. The identity of a place, the connection of the people with this place, and the values and norms that apply there play an important role.

The Place Standard Tool has already been adapted and used in 12 other European countries (e.g. Netherlands, Spain, Latvia, Turkey).

Scan the QR code using a QR scanner app on your mobile phone to be directed straight to the survey website.





# Thank you very much for your support!

This survey is completely anonymous and is conducted by the euPrevent ACP project. The European data protection regulation GDPR applies.



kreis heinsberg  
bodenständig. weitblickend.



Landeszentrum Gesundheit  
Nordrhein-Westfalen



crossing borders in health



Bundeszentrale  
für  
gesundheitliche  
Aufklärung



Gefinancierd in het kader van Common Ground, een project van Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH  
Gefördert im Rahmen von Common Ground, einem Projekt der Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH  
Soutenu dans le cadre de Common Ground, un projet de la Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH

