

THE UNECE CONVENTION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS (AARHUS CONVENTION)

TASK FORCE ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION

ELECTRONIC INFORMATION TOOLS: CASE STUDY BY BELGIUM (FLANDERS)

INTERACTIVE INFORMATION AND WEB COUNTER FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND DECISIONS (INCLUDING APPEALS) OF ONGOING ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITS

<https://www.omgevingsloket.be/omvPubliek/?openbaaronderzoek>

I. Description

- **1. Brief description: Interactive web counter to consult all submitted request for environmental permits. The website provides**
 - A geographical overview of submitted requests and for and decisions of environmental permits, using geographical location (GIS)
 - the possibility for digital public inquiries of the submitted requests during the procedure
 - the possibility to submit a digital appeal procedure concerning the decision of an environmental permit
- **2. Type:** governmental
- **3. Scope:** sub-regional, local
- **4. Working language(s):** Dutch
- **5. Target users:** general public, NGO's
- **6. Starting year:** 2018
- **7. Budget and funding source:** 2,2 million euro annually (for the global project of which the public consultation web counter is a small part)
- **8. Contact:**

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II. Implementation

- **9. Policy, legal and institutional context:** Flanders Decree on environmental permits
- **10. Partner organizations involved:** All concerned governmental organizations on regional, provincial and local level
- **11. Stakeholders involved, their expected benefits:** online and efficient public participation and consultation concerning environmental permit procedures
- **12. User needs and methods of their assessment:** Internet
- **13. Technology choice:** Interactive website with geographical consultation (GIS)

III. Evaluation

- **14. Results:** 24/7 consultancy possibility for the public of current projects, direct digital input, partial online content (cf. infra)
- **15. Efficiency gains:** previously only knowledge when passing by the potential project (on site publishing), now everybody has information through the internet with added geographic tools
- **16. Risks:** none (the digital procedure is an extension of the prevision analogue publication that remains available)
- **17. Challenges encountered (please indicate resolved or not):** implication of author rights, privacy information and intellectual property limits the possibility of online access. Gradually information gets more structured resulting in a larger amount of online available data. By the end of 2020 a maximum of information should be online available
- **18. Lessons learned:** complexity of data structure implies highly technical tools in order to present the information in a for the public comprehensive format
- **19. Conditions for successful replication:** use of open source technology
- **20. Overall assessment of the tool:** positive