



**Crisis management in Flanders, waterproof?**

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**STAR-FLOOD**

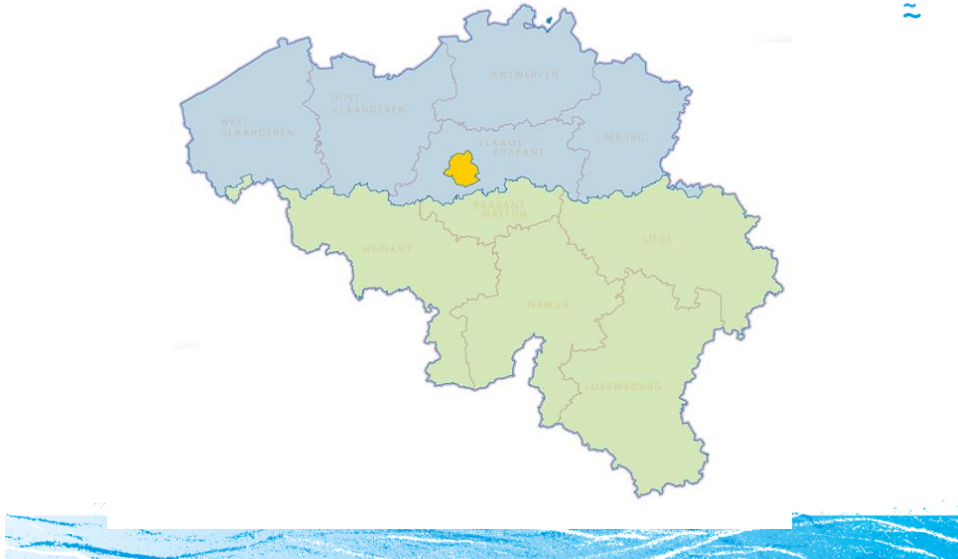
## STAR-FLOOD project



- How do EU MS deal with current and future flood risks?
- 6 countries: Belgium, France, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden & UK
- 5 strategies



## Crisis management in Flanders



## Methodology



Interviews at national & Flemish level  
+ comparison of two urban cases

### Interviews:

- Municipal emergency planning official
- Fire brigade commander
- Provincial emergency planning official
- Citizen group on floods
- National crisis centre



## 2 cases



	Antwerp	Geraardsbergen
<b>Size</b>	512,000 inh.	38,000 inh.
<b>Economy</b>	Economic hub	Rural area
<b>Flood events</b>	1976, 1998 Tidal & pluvial	1999, 2002/03, 2010 Fluvial



## Evaluation of flood crisis management in Flanders



### Bottlenecks

- Coordination
  - between water and crisis management
  - between Flanders and Wallonia
- Lack of community resilience
- Lack of resources



## Community resilience



### Citizen engagement in flood management:

- Public participation in policy making
- Citizen volunteering during crises
- Self-reliance



## Self-reliance



	Antwerp	Geraardsbergen
<b>Discourse Government</b>	Expect citizens to provide own sand bags	Citizens should first do what they can to solve their own problems → advice on infrastructural measures
<b>Discourse Population</b>	Flood protection is government responsibility.	Government should first do what they can to protect them, then we will see what we can do ourselves
<b>In practice</b>	No infrastructural measures	Only small adaptation measures



## Citizen volunteering



	Antwerp	Geraardsbergen
Discourse government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be useful but problem of coordination &amp; training</li> <li>• Insurance problem</li> <li>• Expect citizens not to be interested</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More trouble than useful + insurance problem VS. helpful</li> <li>• Considerable interest from citizens</li> </ul>
In practice	Very little use of volunteers	Use of volunteers to fill up sandbags + catering



## Explaining difference in volunteering



- Size municipality
  - more connections among citizens and between citizens and government
- Lack of resources in Geraardsbergen
  - + volunteering fire department



## Lack of resources



- Decrease of army support
- Financial deficit municipalities
- Volunteering fire brigade corps:
  - 15% professional & 85% volunteer
  - Requirements on training, engagement,... increase



## Conclusions



- Only indicative results
- Population is not ready for discourse of self-reliance
  - Do citizens need to take responsibility?
  - If yes, how to stimulate them?
- Can citizens help to compensate for lack of resources in crisis management?

