



CONNECTING
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IC link Eindhoven - Heerlen - Aachen

RoCK (Regions of Connected Knowledge) is a major new European project which has secured € 5.9 million of European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) under the EU INTERREG IVB North West Europe programme. RoCK looks at ways to improve railway connections between international knowledge regions and make them more user-friendly, including cross-border and international routes. It focuses on getting the most out of the existing infrastructure and developing smart solutions to improve the current transport networks. One of the RoCK projects is the Eindhoven - Heerlen - Aachen Intercity rail link.

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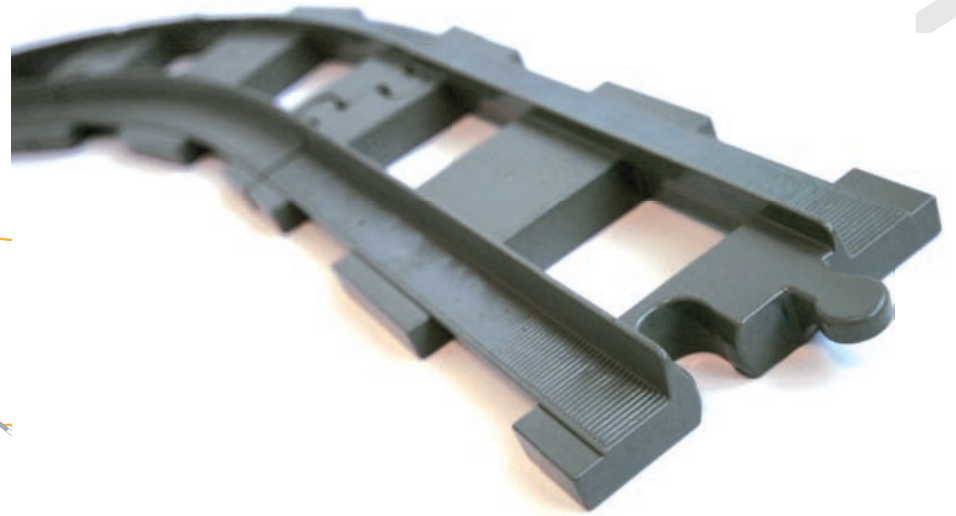
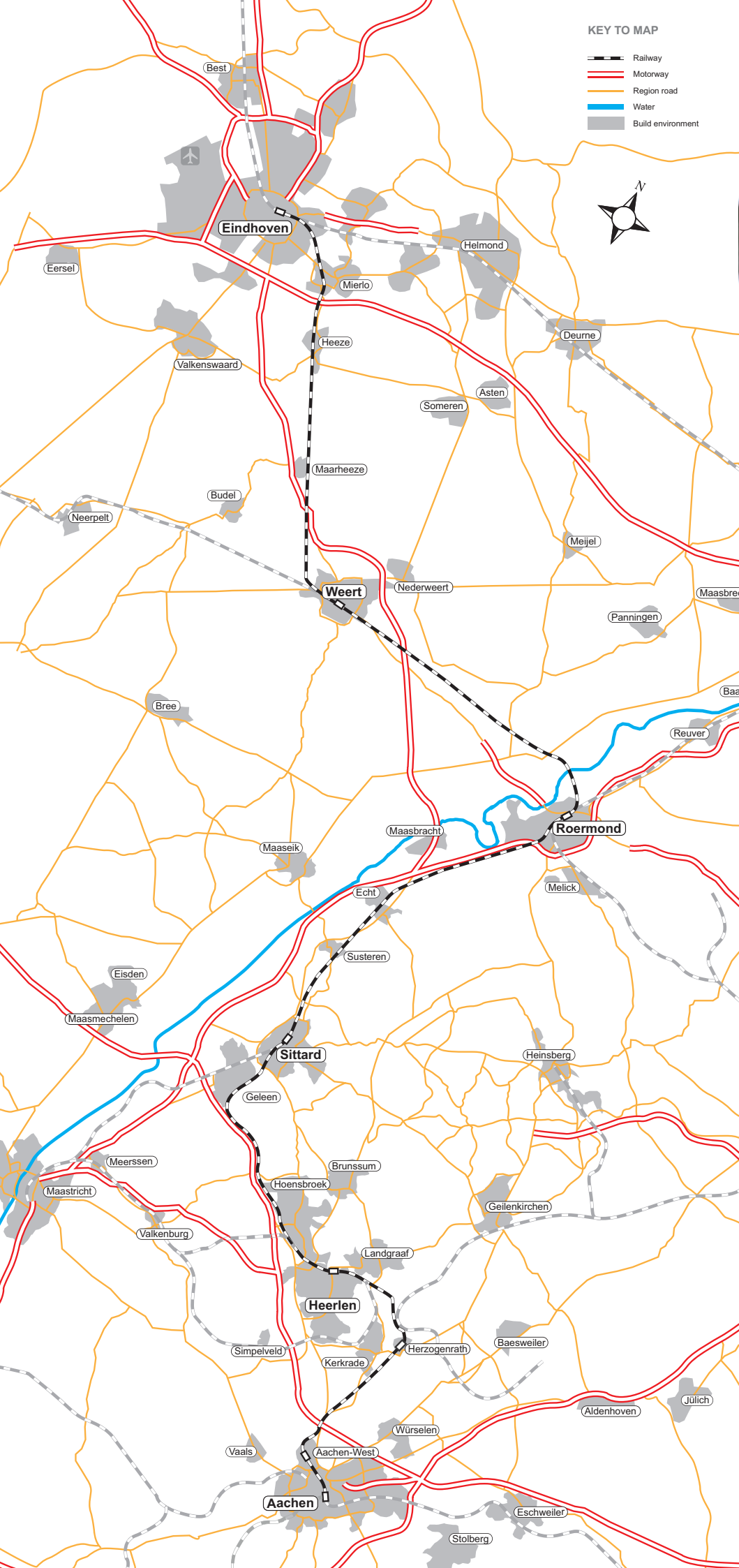
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Currently, the knowledge regions of Eindhoven and Aachen - one of the axes of the ELAt (Eindhoven, Leuven, Aachen) triangle - are poorly served by public transport links. There is a cross-border railway line, but capacity and technical limitations currently make a high-quality Intercity train (IC) link impossible. The existing Dutch IC network stops just before the border in Heerlen, leaving a 20 km gap between the Dutch rail network and the German and European HST networks. The gap is caused by the use of different train operating systems, which mean that the current Dutch IC trains (EMUs, Electric Multiple Units) cannot be used on the German rail network.

This investment contributes fully to RoCK's overall objectives: it will develop an existing railway link between two important knowledge regions (Brainport Eindhoven and Aachen, via Heerlen/Parkstad Limburg) into a high-quality connection. This investment makes use of the existing infrastructure, and improves quality by smart solutions.

Responsible partner:

Parkstad Limburg (NL)

Closely involved organisations are:

- Deutsche Bahn Regio NRW (DE)
- NS (NL)
- AVV, Aachener Verkehrsverbund (DE)
- The RWTH Aachen and TU/e (Eindhoven University of Technology) are partially involved in this investment
- ProRail (NL)