

# The Brussels Times

Wednesday, 11 December, 2019

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The decline in the Belgian bee population is due to various human interventions. Credit: Natuurpunt

**More than half of the bee species on Belgian territory are threatened  
with extinction or gone, according to the BELBEES scientific project.**

Most bees are classified as 'threatened with extinction' (33%), as 'no longer present' in Belgium (12%) or as 'almost threatened' (7%). This is the first evaluation of the Belgian bee population in 26 years.

The project has created a "Red List of Bees in Belgium" according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) methodology. With the information on which species are threatened most, a number of protection measures to protect them can be taken.

Some regions of Belgium, like Sandy Flanders, the eastern Kempen region, the surroundings of the Brussels-Capital Region, Condroz, Fagne-Famenne-Calestienne and Gaume are known for their large variety of bee species.

However, there are often special habitats, such as limestone grasslands or heathlands, which are highly endangered and therefore need to be protected and restored as a matter of priority.

The decline in the Belgian bee population is due to various human interventions, including the loss and fragmentation of habitats. This is mostly due to the agricultural sector, which uses a lot of fertilisers and pesticides, or urbanisation, but also to climate change.

The Red List was created together with the University of Mons, Natuurpunt, the University of Liège, the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, the ULB university and Natagora.

*Maïthé Chini*  
*The Brussels Times*

**In the headlines**

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Congo and New Zealand demand  
return of cultural artefactsRecord number of complaints filed  
against police in 2018

## Man hospitalised after getting trapped between tram and tram stop

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A man and a tram driver were hospitalised after a the man fell down and became stuck between the vehicle and the tram stop. Credit: Google Street View

An unidentified man was taken to the hospital after he became stuck between an oncoming tramway and the tram stop on Tuesday morning.

The incident took place at around 11:30 PM near Laeken, when the man tripped and fell down just as the tram was arriving at the Jules de Trooz stop, [RBTF](#) reports.

The man, who was hit by the tram as it arrived, "got stuck between the border stone of the stop and the tram," STIB spokesperson, Ann Van Hamme told [Bruzz](#).

The emergency services arrived on-site, where they reportedly remained until around 12:30, with tram traffic interrupted between the stops Thomas in Schaerbeek and Van Praet.

The man, whose identity has not been disclosed, was rushed to the hospital but his condition was not serious, Van Hamme said, adding that the tram driver was also hospitalised in a state of shock.

*Gabriela Galindo*  
*The Brussels Times*

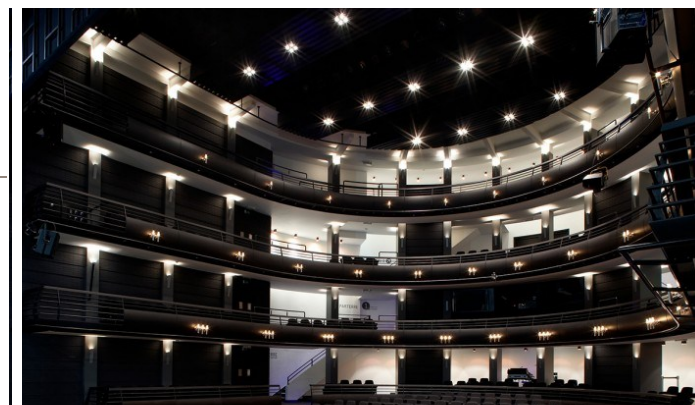
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## Brussels city offers extra funding to help Flemish cultural institutions

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The Royal Flemish Theatre (KVS) receives €1 million for the coming year © KVS

**The municipal government of Brussels-City has promised extra funding worth €300,000 for Flemish cultural projects and associations in the capital, as compensation for cuts announced by the Flemish regional government.**

Last month the Flemish government of Jan Jambon (N-VA) announced an across the board cut of 6% in funding for cultural institutions, and a cut of up to 60% for individual artists.

The major institutions, including deSingel in Antwerp, Flemish Opera and Ballet, the Royal Flemish Theatre (KVS) and the Ancienne Belgique (AB), will suffer a cut of “only” 3% of budgets which are already higher than the rest.

However according to Brussels mayor Philippe Close, some of the institutions affected are a crucial part of the Brussels cultural scene, among them the KVS – where Brussels owns the fabric of the building – the AB, a music venue admired worldwide, and lesser-known venues like Kaaaitheater, Beursschouwburg and the Flemish youth theatre Bronks.

“The announcement of drastic reductions in cultural subsidies by the new Flemish government took us aback,” said Close, flanked for the announcement by the councillor for Flemish affairs Ans Persoons (sp.a) and councillor for culture Delphine Houba (PS). “Brussels-City considers culture and its development an important point of attraction in a city of 184 different nationalities. Culture represents some 7-8% of the budget we have just adopted for the coming year. We wish to continue to defend a project that is inclusive, and to show the sector that it matters to us.”

Prime beneficiary is the KVS, which because of its structural links to Brussels-City receives €1 million for the coming year, as well as subsidies for investments in the future. In addition, the city will provide subsidies of between €5,000 and €25,000 for artists and arts organisations linked to the main cultural houses like Beursschouwburg and Bronks, on a project-by-project basis. Given the name of “Kangaroo BXL,” the adoption of small cultural organisations by major houses will benefit to the tune of €200,000.

Close stressed that the decision was not directly related to the decision of the Flemish government, but a sign of the city’s overall support for all cultures. Approached by Bruzz, meanwhile, Flemish minister-president Jan Jambon declined to comment. “Brussels is an autonomous region,” he said. “I have no comment to make.”

Within the Brussels-Flemish cultural sector itself, the reaction was one of gratitude tempered by loss. Kobe Matthys, representing State of the Arts, a movement created in reaction to cuts back in 2013: “This is a friendly initiative from the city of Brussels. In particular, the Kangaroo BXL project that encourages the cooperation between small-scale artists and the major culture houses is extremely useful. But at the same time this €300,000 from Brussels-City is only a small plaster on an open wound, once you realise that the Flemish Community in 2020 alone will take €10 million out of cultural cooperation.”

*Alan Hope*  
*The Brussels Times*

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