

# First coworking space dedicated especially to women opens in Brussels

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# The Brussels Times

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By offering special services like dry cleaning and shopping assistance, the new coworking space said it will help boost female entrepreneurship. Credit: Womanly/Facebook

A coworking space dedicated to boosting female entrepreneurship will be inaugurated on Thursday and will become the first coworking in the city catering especially to women.

Nestled in the leafy southern municipality of Watermael-Boitsfort, Womanly is marketed by its creators as a “brand new tool to meet the needs of female entrepreneurs.”

Womanly’s co-director Marie Buron told [BX1](#) that the goal of the shared office space was “not to completely ban men,” but to support women entrepreneurs by providing them with a dedicated space and tools.

Womanly will “help unburden women of their mental load so that they can develop their business,” Buron said, referring to the unofficial and unequal way in which household, social-life and emotional management tasks are split between the genders.

To do so, the new coworking space offers members special services like dry cleaning and laundry and shopping assistance on top of standard office services like mail management, meeting rooms and printing.

With monthly subscription fees starting at €175, Womanly will also aim to boost networking between female entrepreneurs through a range of events, seminars, workshops and conferences held in a “friendly and efficient environment.”

Ahead of its inauguration on Thursday, the new shared offices have already turned some heads on social media, with some users admitting to being confused by the concept.

“I don’t understand. Why exactly do I need a coworking space separated from male entrepreneurs?” one user wrote, while others pointed out that child care spaces would be a good addition.

Responding to the comments on Facebook, the coworking space said that “women who work with other women work more efficiently and handle stress better,” citing a number of polls and studies carried out primarily in the United States.

*Gabriela Galindo*

*The Brussels Times*

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## Police have no grasp on organised crime activity, says director

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Friday, 07 February 2020



Omaging: gathering intelligence on organised crime from all possible sources

The federal judicial police have little or no grasp of organised crime in Belgium, with proactive operations “practically impossible,” according to Eric Snoeck, the acting head of the service.

Snoeck was speaking at an event to mark the 40th anniversary of the academic journal on criminology, Panopticon. He called for the attention given to terrorism in recent years to be matched in the fight against organised crime. His detectives are responsible of fighting the most serious forms of crime: international drugs trading, complex financial and economic fraud, cybercrime and so on. An important facet of that work is what he refers to by the medical term “imaging” – the gathering of intelligence in order to create a picture of the criminal underworld, and a map on the complex relationships between various groups.

“The imaging of organised crime has come to a standstill,” he said. “In our approach to everything above local crime we are terribly weakened.” His department deals mainly with matters which extend farther than one police zone or indeed one judicial area. “Not only because the imaging has stopped, but also because we are barely able to say what the current trends in criminality are.” And he gave the example of the recent cyber-attack using ransomware on the Ypres weaving machine company Picanol, which crippled the company for a week. The number of officers who could be deployed to that case, he said, “can be counted on the fingers of two hands.”

“The key question is whether we should not urgently improve our approach to organised crime,” he said. “In recent years a great deal has been done about terrorism. Now the time has come for our work on organised crime to be raised to the same level. There are good things happening federally and locally, but it all remains terribly artisanal.”

As a start along that road, he said, his service has begun dealing with the blind spot in the imaging of organised crime, by starting to map the various groups and their members. "We are bringing all kinds of information together, including internationally," he said. "The aim is to be able then to use that intelligence tactically."

*Alan Hope*

*The Brussels Times*