

World Music Contest Kerkrade

OFFICIAL PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

Practical information for participating bands in Marching, Marching Parade and Show
Contests

Edition 2026



wmc
kerkrade

powered by **hesi.eu**

Table of Contents

GENERAL INFORMATION.....	4
PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK.....	4
EVENT OVERVIEW.....	4
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE.....	5
ADJUDICATION TAPES	5
BAND LIAISON SYSTEM	5
LOGISTICS AND VENUE OPERATIONS	6
ARRIVAL PROCEDURES	6
PARKING	6
INTAKE AND ACCREDITATION	6
STAFF ADMITTANCE TO THE FIELD AND GRANDSTAND	6
PASS ALLOCATION	7
DRESSING FACILITIES	7
PERFORMANCE PREPARATION	8
WARM-UP AREAS.....	8
OFFICIAL WMC-TIMETABLE	8
CONTEST PROCEDURES	9
ENTRY TO THE STADIUM.....	9
FIELD ENTRY	9
STARTING PROCEDURE	9
PERFORMANCE COMPLETION	9
CONTEST CATEGORIES	10
MARCHING CONTEST	10
<i>Starting procedure.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>End of the performance</i>	<i>10</i>
MARCHING PARADE CONTEST	10
<i>Starting procedure.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>End of the performance</i>	<i>10</i>
SHOW CONTEST	11
<i>Starting procedure.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>End of the performance</i>	<i>11</i>
AWARDS AND CEREMONIES	12
DAILY CEREMONY	12
<i>Results ceremony</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Prizing ceremony.....</i>	<i>12</i>
SPECIAL AWARDS.....	13
<i>Best drum major award.....</i>	<i>13</i>
BEST WMC DRUM MAJOR AWARD 2026.....	13
<i>Special awards.....</i>	<i>14</i>
CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION SHOW CONTEST	15
COMPETITION FORMAT	15

PRELIMS	15
ADJUDICATION AND RESULTS	16
ADJUDICATION SYSTEM	16
ACCESS TO SCORES.....	16
MEDIA COVERAGE	17
LIVE-STREAM	17
NOS AND L1	17
ANNEXES	18
ANNEX A - PARKING	19
ANNEX B - INTAKE OFFICE PARTICIPATION SERVICES LOCATION	20
ANNEX C - DRESSING ROOMS	21
ANNEX D - WARM UP AREAS.....	22
ANNEX E - ENTRANCE AND E	23

GENERAL INFORMATION

Purpose of the Handbook

In this handbook you will find all the information you will need as a participating band in the Marching, Marching Parade and Show Contests at WMC 2026.

WMC fully understands that the day your band performs in competition will be an overwhelming day. After months of preparation, this is the moment you have been working towards. In past evaluations participants have informed us that practical information regarding everything that is happening during the contest would be helpful to make WMC a better experience.

This document is the result of those past evaluations. We have tried to bring all the necessary information together into one document.

This Handbook aims to inform you about everything from your arrival in Kerkrade until your departure and participating bands with instructions regarding:

- Logistics and venue operations
- Competition procedures
- Participant services
- Awards and ceremonies
- Adjudication systems

All participating bands and staff members are required to comply with the procedures and regulations described in this handbook.

We wish you all the best with your preparation for WMC 2026 and we hope that this day will be a once in a lifetime experience. If you have any questions or queries regarding this document, please do not hesitate to contact us at henksmit@wmc.nl.

Event Overview

The World Music Contest (WMC) is an international competitive festival for marching bands and show bands.

Competitions are conducted in the following categories:

- Marching Contest
- Marching Parade Contest
- Show Contest

Each category is organized into divisions reflecting competitive level and instrumentation. All competitions are conducted at the **Parkstad Limburg Stadion, Roda JC Ring 1, 6466 NH Kerkrade, the Netherlands.**

Official Language

English shall serve as the official operational language of the competition. All official announcements, documentation, and adjudication materials shall be issued in English.

Adjudication tapes

All adjudication tapes will primarily be made in English. However, it is down to the discretion of the adjudicator whether he/she makes the tapes in the language of the competing band.

The adjudicators from Japan and Thailand have the choice to make the tapes in their own language if they deem their English insufficient. If this is the case, then bands should use AI to translate the tapes to their own language.

Band Liaison System

Each participating band will be assigned to an official **WMC Guide**.

The guide serves as the primary point of contact between the band and the event organization.

The responsibilities of the guide include:

- Coordinating the band's movement through the venue.
- Assisting with operational questions.
- Providing communication with event officials.

Participant service is located at intake (see Annex B).

LOGISTICS AND VENUE OPERATIONS

Arrival Procedures

All participating bands shall arrive at the Parkstad Limburg Stadion no later than two (2) hours prior to their first performance as stated on the WMC-timetable.

Upon arrival, transportation vehicles will be directed to **Parking Area P2**, the designated participant parking area (see Annex A).

Parking

Supporter buses must follow designated road signage directing them to parking areas located along **Van Swietenstraat**.

Private vehicles may utilize public parking facilities surrounding the stadium complex in line with the local parking policies.

Intake and Accreditation

Each band must report to the **Intake Office** upon arrival (see Annex B).

A designated band representative shall complete the intake procedure. We advise you to arrive in plenty of time to report to the intake office so you can process all the information you will receive and check the most recent time schedule of the day, as this office can be very busy.

The intake process includes:

- Verification of band registration.
- Distribution of access passes.
- Confirmation of performance WMC-timetable.
- Logistical coordination.

Staff admittance to the field and grandstand

The following accreditation passes are issued to participating bands:

Field Pass (waistcoats): Permits access to the competition field during their performance.

Stands Pass (waistcoats): Permits access to designated seating areas in the stadium during their performance.

Media Pass (waistcoats): Permits field access (waistcoats) for photography only. Camera stands and Video recording on the field are not permitted.

Passes (waistcoats) can be requested on a band-by-band basis at intake. Any further information regarding contest area (field) and grandstand passes for staff members/media will be made available at this point.

Pass Allocation

The following accreditation allocations apply:

Marching and Marching Parade Contest:

- 4 Field Passes
- 4 Stands Passes
- 1 Media Pass

Show Contest – Large Ensemble (major front ensemble and/or props):

- 8 Field Passes
- 4 Stands Passes
- 1 Media Pass

Show Contest – Small Ensemble (minor (1-2 instruments) and/or props or no front ensemble and no props):

- 4 Field Passes
- 4 Stands Passes
- 1 Media Pass

Additional passes may be issued at the discretion of the organization.

Dressing Facilities

Dressing rooms (male and female) are available on the first floor of the stadium (see Annex C). Should you require them, your guide will know the location.

Participants are responsible for securing their personal belongings.

PERFORMANCE PREPARATION

Warm-Up Areas

Two official warm-up locations are available (see Annex D):

- Warm-Up Area 1 (WU1)
- Warm-Up Area 2 (WU2)
- Warm-Up Area 3 (WU3)

WU1, WU2 and WU3 are located on Wiebachstraat within walking distance of the stadium.

WU 1 is not available on Friday July 17. For the prelims on Friday July 17 there will be 2 warm-up areas available: WU2 and WU3. WU2 and WU3 are in the same location. The location is large, but we ask the larger bands to be polite to the smaller bands when warming up.

Each band will receive a designated warm-up time.

Warm-up sessions must not exceed the allocated time.

Warm-ups are prohibited in all other areas surrounding the stadium. Bands are free to arrange their own warm up facility away from the stadium. Please take travel time into account.

Official WMC-Timetable

The official timetable governs the operational flow of each band on each competition day.

The timetable includes the following stages:

Warmup time:	The allocated time of your warmup and designated warmup area (WU1, WU2 and WU3, see annex D).
Transit:	The transit time from designated warmup area to the stadium.
Report time:	The time you will have to report the complete band and staff members/media pass holders at the EE-area (Entrance and Exit of bands) to the stadium (annex E).
Field reporting time:	The time the band will be guided to the E-area (side of the competition area, within the stadium). This will be during the performance of the band prior to your performance.
Start time:	The time you are permitted to enter the competition area and compete.
Ceremony:	The time you must report to your allocated gate for the ceremony of the conclusion of the competition day.

The timetable may be subject to adjustments. Bands must remain in contact with their assigned guide for updates. Updates are also published on the WMC-website and in your assigned online WMC-folder.

CONTEST PROCEDURES

Entry to the Stadium

Bands shall report to the **Entrance and Exit Area (EE Area)** at the time specified in the timetable (see Annex E).

Event marshals will guide bands through the entry process.

Bands must move toward the stadium entry point **without playing**.

Field Entry

Bands will be escorted to the sideline staging area (E) during the performance of the preceding band.

When the previous band has cleared the field, the band will be instructed to move to its starting position (Marching Contest and Marching Parade Contest without playing – Show Contest are allowed to play). The overall time starts when the first person or equipment (f.e. pit percussion) enters the Performance Area (only for the Show and Marching Parade Contest). The announcer's introduction will not be deemed as part of the overall time.

For bands using pit percussion and/or electronic devices:

- The pit area is in front of the performance area, between the 20-yard lines.
- A power source is available in front of the pit area. Bands should supply their own extension cables.

Starting Procedure

The official announcer will introduce the band.

In the Marching Parade Contest and Show Contest, the official introduction of the band is not included in the overall time.

The following announcement will initiate the performance:

“[Band Name], please start your march/marching parade/show.”

The performance time will start after this announcement at first moment the band move or play.

Performance Completion

Upon completion of the performance, bands must exit the competition field via the designated exit route (EE-area).

Bands may exit with or without playing.

CONTEST CATEGORIES

Marching Contest

The WMC marshal will give the sign to the drum major to move without playing to the starting point for competition. Then the announcer will introduce the band with your previously given information and the titles of the performance pieces. Make sure the information is short and to the point. You then wait for the starting procedure. The announcers will check with the drum major, the band's name, city and country of origin, and the name of the drum major.

Starting procedure

The announcer will start the procedure with:

- Please welcome from: city, country, name of band, drum major. Performing in the @@ division.
- "Name band, please start your march." The performance time will start after this announcement at the first moment the band move or play.

End of the performance

On completion of your performance and the band have crossed the finishing line (same as the starting point) you must exit the performance area via the shortest route to the EE-area. The performance time will stop once the first person has crossed the start/finish line.

Marching Parade Contest

The WMC marshal will give the sign to the drum major to move without playing to the starting point for competition via the shortest route. Then the announcer will introduce the band with your previously given information and the titles of the performance pieces. Make sure the information is short and to the point. You then wait for the starting procedure. The announcers will check the band's name, city and country of origin, and the name of the drum major/conductor(s). Please be aware that your overall time starts as soon as you enter the performance area.

Starting procedure

The announcer will start the procedure with:

- Please welcome from: city, country, name of band, drum major. Performing in the @@ division.
- "Name band, start you marching parade." The performance time will start after this announcement at the first moment the band move or play.

End of the performance

On completion of your performance, you must exit the performance area via the shortest route to the EE-area. The performance time will stop after the drum major/band leader gives a clear visible sign that the performance has come to an end. The overall time stops once the complete band has left the performance area. Be aware that

marching off the field is part of your overall time and subjected to penalties if you exceed the maximum overall time.

Show Contest

The WMC marshal will give the sign to the drum major to move to the starting point for competition via the shortest route with or without music. Then the announcer will introduce the band with your previously given information and the titles of the performance pieces. Make sure the information is short and to the point. You then wait for the starting procedure. The announcers will check the band's name, city and country of origin, and the name of the drum major/conductor(s). Please be aware that your overall time starts as soon as you, or your equipment enter the performance area.

Starting procedure

The announcer will start the procedure with:

- Please welcome from: city, country, name of band, drum major. Performing in the @@ division.
- "Name band, please start you show." The performance time will start after this announcement at the first moment the band move or play.

End of the performance

On completion of your performance, you must exit the performance area via the shortest route to the EE-area. The performance time will stop after the drum major/band leader gives a clear visible sign that the performance has come to an end. The overall time stops once the complete band, including equipment, has left the performance area. Be aware that marching off the field is part of your overall time and subjected to penalties if you exceed the maximum overall time.

AWARDS AND CEREMONIES

Daily Ceremony

At the conclusion of each competition day, an official ceremony will be conducted. All participating bands must assemble at the designated gate at the time stated in the timetable.

Bands will enter the field and be guided to an area on the field for the ceremony. A maximum of ten staff members may accompany the band onto the field.

Because some divisions are spread over two days (within the same weekend), There will be two ceremonies:

- Results ceremony
- Prizing ceremony

Results ceremony

A band that performs on the first day in a division that is spread over a two-day competition, will receive their score during the results ceremony. The scores will be given in order of appearance. The ranking and awards will be announced on the second day.

The result ceremony does not apply to the Championship Division Show (prelims). These bands will receive their final score from finals during the prizing ceremony on Sunday July 19.

The results ceremonies will take place as follows:

Saturday 11. July

1st Division Marching Parade Contest

1st Division Show Contest

Saturday 18. July

World Division Marching Contest

World Division Show Contest

Championship Division Marching Contest

Prizing ceremony

The crowning of the champion of each division will take place during the prizing ceremony. The prizing ceremony will take place on days where a division is concluded. This can be on the same day as you perform but it could also be on the day after you have performed. During the prizing ceremony all scores from that day will be given in order of appearance. Once all the scores are announced, flags, pennants and special awards will then be awarded. This is for all prizing ceremonies, except for prizing ceremony Championship Division Show on July 19 (see Championship Division Show Contest).

Drum majors/representatives who have received their results on a previous day are invited to take part in the prizing ceremony. This is only possible in full uniform. If you want the whole band to participate in the prizing ceremony, please inform your personal guide and state this at intake.

The prizing ceremonies will take place as follows:

Saturday 11. July

Junior Division Marching Contest

Junior Division Show Contest

2nd Division Marching Contest

Sunday 12. July

2nd Division Show Contest

1st Division Marching Contest

1st Division Marching Parade Contest

1st Division Show Contest

Saturday 18. July

Championship Division Marching Parade Contest

Sunday 19. July

World Division Marching Contest

World Division Show Contest

Championship Division Marching Contest

Championship Division Show Contest

Special Awards

Best drum major award

This award will be presented at the conclusion of each competition day and is awarded to the drum major that received the highest score of that competition day regardless of contest form or division. Only the winner of that day will be announced. The drum major will only be rewarded when he/she has performed most of their performance with a mace.

Best WMC drum major award 2026

This award will be presented on the last day of the contests (Sunday 19. July) to the drum major that received the highest score of the entire contest. The drum major that has (up to but not including the last day) the highest score, will be invited to be present on the final prizing ceremony on the last competition day. This is an open invitation and not mandatory.

Special awards

WMC will present special awards in each division to bands in the Marching and Show Contests. For the Championship Division Show, further special awards will be presented. All the special awards will be presented during each prizing ceremony of each division.

The special awards are:

Marching Contest (if applicable)

- Best Brass/Wind/Fanfare Band
- Best Percussion Ensemble/Drum Band (including so-called mallet bands)
- Best Natural Horn Band
- Best Flute Band

Show Contest (all divisions)

- Best Music
- Best Effect
- Best Visual

Further special awards Show Contest Championship Division:

- Best Brass/Winds
- Best Percussion
- Best Auxiliary

CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION SHOW CONTEST

Competition Format

The Championship Division Show Contest uses a **two-round competition structure (Prelims and Finals)**.

Prelims

All participating bands perform during Prelims in the order determined by the official draw.

The twelve (12) highest scoring bands will advance to the Finals.

Bands ranked 13–16 will compete in the World Division Show Contest on Saturday 18 or Sunday 19. July 2026. They will perform in reversed order to their scores in prelims.

Preliminary scores will not be announced but will determine the placements in competition blocks for Finals.

There will be **four (4)** competition blocks ***in the finals Championship Division Show***. A draw will be held for each competition block to determine the order of appearance in that specific competition block. The draw will be held immediately after the Prelims on Friday July 17, 2026.

Competition blocks are as follows:

- Block 4: Bands ranked 10- 12
- Block 3: Bands ranked 7-9
- Block 2: Bands ranked 4-6
- Block 1: Bands ranked 1-3

Please make sure your drum major and a band representative are present.

If for any religious reasons a band is unable to perform in Finals (Sunday 19. July) and have already made WMC aware, they will perform their Finals on Saturday 18. July. However, their results will not be announced until the final prizing ceremony on Sunday 19. July.

Bands that also compete in the Marching Contest, the order of their march performance will be determined directly after the draw for the Show Contest Finals.

Details about the Saturday and Sunday competition will then be explained in more detail during the draw for finals. The final WMC-timetable for Saturday 18. and Sunday 19. July will be available and published no later than 2 hours after the draw.

ADJUDICATION AND RESULTS

Adjudication System

WMC will use an online platform where bands can access the following:

- The (updated) WMC-time table.
- Official scores.
- Recaps.
- Adjudicator audio commentary.

Access to Scores

The adjudicators audio commentary will be available directly after the performance. Scores, results and recaps will become available shortly after each the prizing ceremony.

MEDIA COVERAGE

LIVE-STREAM

All contests are available through an official paid livestream.

VIDA

With the VIDA platform, it is possible to follow all performances during the WMC via livestream and to watch them back. To make VIDA possible, a simplified camera setup was chosen compared to previous editions, but naturally with high-quality audio; after all, the WMC is a festival centered on music. With the realization of VIDA, a step towards the future is being taken. In the long term, this platform aims to unlock the rich WMC archive on the one hand, and to create the possibility to showcase other (international) brass band events in the Netherlands on the other. All WMC livestreams can be viewed at www.vidabywmc.nl

Weekend access and All-access pass

The WMC livestreams are offered for 20 euros per weekend.

A distinction is made between the matches in the stadium and the matches in the Rodahal and the Theater. Upon purchasing a stream in one of the categories, the streams in that same category for the rest of that weekend are automatically unlocked as well. In addition to weekend access, there is also an All-access pass for 90 euros that provides access to all WMC livestreams. All individuals and associations who purchased the livestream via crowdfunding will receive a unique personal access code from the WMC to unlock an All-access pass. Individuals or associations who paid 500 euros will receive 20 unique access codes.

Media Partners and Coverage

For various parts of the WMC, the organization will collaborate with a number of partners. For instance, 4Bars Rest will cover the Championship Division Brassband, and Emotions on Stage will also be present to cover various competitions. At the stadium, Korpsmuziek will handle coverage, reports, and podcasts, while Korpsspot is responsible for the livestream.

NOS and L1

The WMC organization is also proud to announce that both NOS (national broadcasting company) and L1 (regional broadcasting company for the province of Limburg) are offering ample airtime to the festival. For instance, NOS will provide live coverage in Kerkrade on July 18. In this 50-minute program, the various components of the festival are highlighted. The broadcast takes place on Saturday evening, July 18, at 7:00 PM on NPO1.

In addition, L1 will broadcast the opening of the WMC live and air a twenty-five-minute "WMC News" every Sunday.

ANNEXES

Annex A – Parking

Annex B – Intake Office Participation Services Location

Annex C – Changing Rooms

Annex D – Warm Up Areas

Annex E – Entrance and Exit Areas

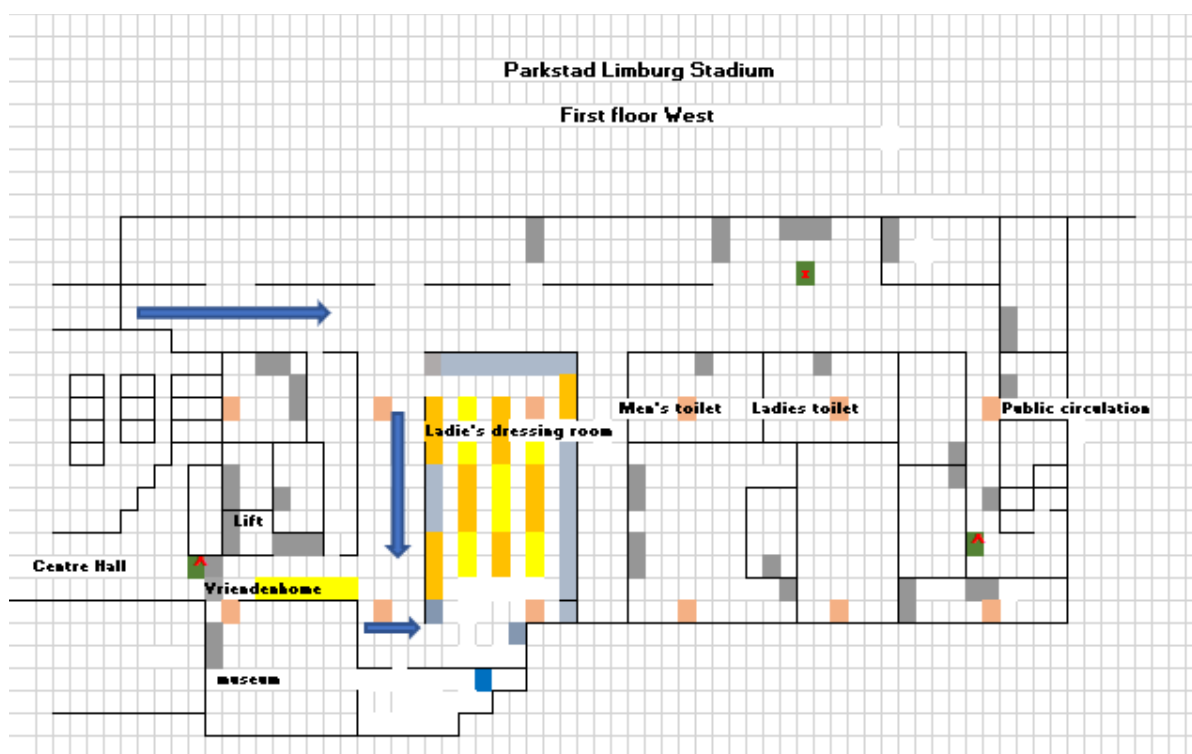
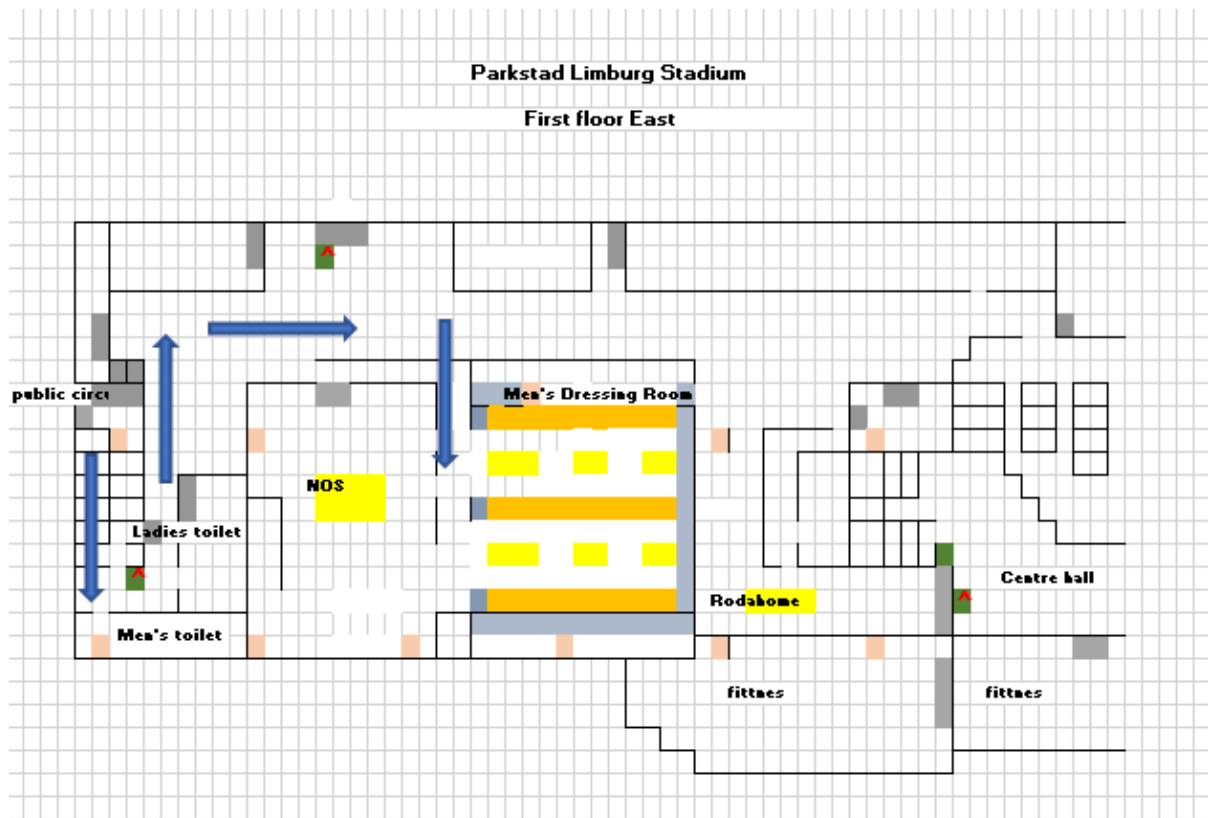
Annex A - parking



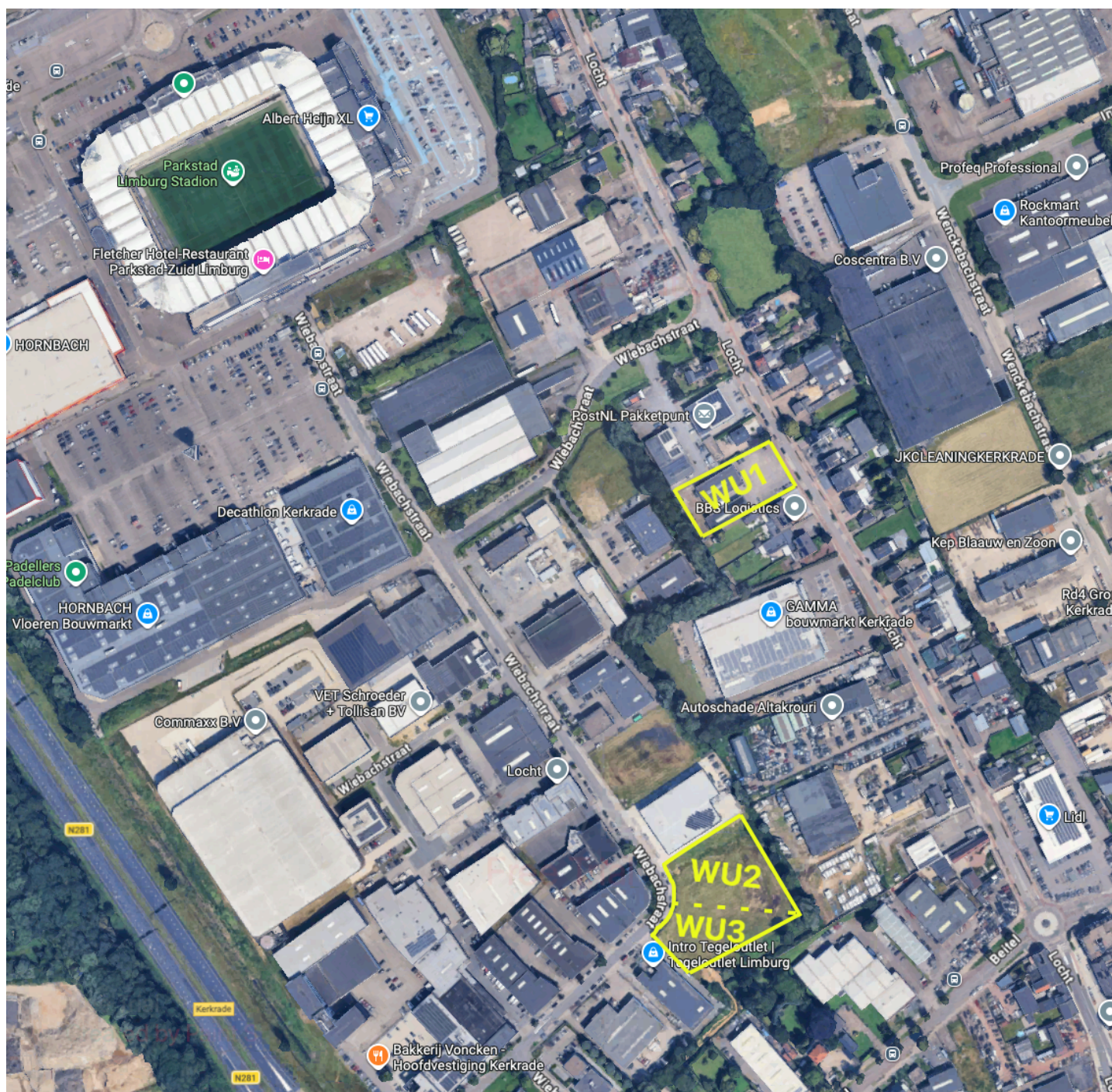
Annex B - Intake Office Participation Services Location



Annex C - Dressing Rooms



Annex D - Warm Up Areas



Annex E - Entrance and E

