

Financing adult learning database

Name of the instrument - Local language	Opleidingscheques voor wernemers
Name of the instrument - English translation	Training vouchers for employees
Scheme ID	24
Country	 Belgium
Reporting year	2020
Type of instrument	Grant for individuals
Sub-type of instrument	Lump-sum support
Type of entry	Single instrument

Short description	<p>Employees without a higher education degrees may apply for public contributions (vouchers) to cover their education and training costs. Employees with a higher education degree are also eligible provided that the education and training that they follow are a part of their personal development plan agreed with an accredited personal development coach/centre. All kinds of education and training are eligible. This grant is partly funded by the Public Employment Service (PES) Flanders (VDAB), with co-funding from the individual. Employees can purchase vouchers in advance, with which they then pay the training institution. Employees can buy vouchers paying 50% (for no tertiary education) of their nominal value, which may not exceed EUR 125 per year. 50% of the value of the vouchers is co-funded by VDAB (PES Flanders). The funding is directly transferred to the training institution. No preferential treatment is applied for a particular eligible group. The voucher scheme does not apply to the self-employed, unemployed, persons with a student contract, and persons with a working contract of fewer than 80 hours per month.</p>
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Level of operation	Regional
Name of a part of the country	Not applicable
Name of the region (for regional instruments)	Flanders

Name of the sector (for sectoral instruments)	Not applicable
Relevance	Key instrument
Legal basis	Het besluit van de Vlaamse regering (BVR) van 18/07/2003 betreffende de opleidings - en begeleidingscheques voor werknemers (B.S. 25/08/2003) Decision of the Flemish government of 18 July 2003 regarding training and guidance subsidies (or vouchers) for workers (employed workers) (B.S. 25/08/2003)
Objective(s) and target(s)	The official objective is to support employees' skill development in the framework of lifelong learning.
Year of implementation	2003
Operation/management	Public Employment Service (PES) Flanders: VDAB , was in charge for managing the scheme before September 1, 2020.After September 1, 2020, it is Departement WSE (i.e. Ministry of Work and Social Economy) who manages this instrument.
Eligible group(s)	All employees are eligible, except for self-employed persons, people receiving unemployment benefits, persons with a student contract and younger than 25, and persons working less than 80 hours per month.
Group(s) with preferential treatment	No preferential treatment
Education and training eligible	All kinds of education and training are eligible. For persons with higher education degree, only education and training activities leading to strenghtening the person's position in the labour market and agreed in the personal development plan (agreed with an accredited personal development coach/centre) are eligible.
Source of financing and collection mechanism	This grant is partly funded by the Public Employment Service (PES) Flanders (VDAB). The individual pays for the rest.50% of the value of the vouchers is co-funded by VDAB (PES Flanders), although in some specific cases it can be of 100%. The nominal value of the vouchers may not exceed 250 per year. The funding is directly transferred to the training institution.
Financing formula and allocation mechanisms	Employees can purchase vouchers in advance, with which they then pay the training institution. Employees have to pay the training themselves (i.e. training cannot be payed by employer). If the employee does not have a secondary education diploma co-funding is 100% (i.e. a maximum of EUR 250) if training involves courses in basic reading/writing, maths, ICT, Dutch for non-Dutch speakers, ... If the employee does not have a tertiary education diploma, the maximum is EUR 500 with 50% co-funding (i.e. a maximum of EUR 250), if training leads to a bachelor degree (or a 'graduaatsopleiding', i.e. a degree 'between' secondary education and a professional bachelor).
Eligible costs	Direct costs, e.g. tuition fees, and costs for course

	material bought from the course provider (e.g. books) are eligible costs.
Volumes of funding	The budget of this grant is as follows: - Operating expenses in 2017, 2018 and 2019: EUR 200 000 - Vouchers: in 2017, EUR 3 500 000, in 2018 EUR 3 500 000, in 2019 EUR 2 740 000 Amount of co-funding paid, Expenses: - Operating expenses: in 2017: EUR 105 886, in 2018: EUR 90 150, in 2019: 20 215 - Vouchers: In 2017: EUR 2 602 792; in 2018: EUR 2 392 667, in 2019: EUR 1 996 577
Beneficiaries/take up	- Number of vouchers bought:In 2017: 2 9763; in 2018: 27 185; in 2019: 22 441 - Number of vouchers actually used:In 2017: 28 507; in 2018: 25 971; in 2019: 20 746
Organisation responsible for monitoring/evaluation	Public Employment Service (PES) Flanders: VDAB (before September 1, 2020) Departement WSE (i.e. Ministry of Work and Social Economy) (after September 1, 2020)
Most relevant webpage - in English	Not available
Most relevant webpage - local language	http://www.vdab.be/opleidingscheques/werknemers.shtml
Recent changes	Recent changes in response to COVID-19 No changes
Sources	Website of the VDAB: https://www.vdab.be/opleidingscheques/werknemers.shtml Flemish government https://www.vlaanderen.be/opleidingscheques-voor-werknemers