

Pact for Excellence in Education

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 BELGIUM-FR

Timeline



ID number 28026

Background

The Pact for excellence in education was initiated in 2014 and is the result of intense collective work between the actors of education (Government, administration, Federations of organising authorities and Wallonie-Bruxelles Enseignement, trade unions and parents' associations). It translates into a 'systemic approach to change', which touches on several dimensions, and the will to progressively improve the Belgian French-speaking school system.

Objectives

The Pact for excellence in education aims to strengthen the quality of education and improve the results of all learners, from nursery school to the end of secondary school, for the benefit of all learners in the French Community (*Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles*).

The Pact aims to act in depth on all dimensions of the school system:

- (a) to make more inclusive and more egalitarian;
- (b) to improve learners' results and the climate within the schools;
- (c) to strengthen the collective dynamics between teachers and with the management;
- (d) to give more autonomy to education professionals.

All of this with a view to improving the school system as a whole.

Description

The Pact for excellence in education was launched in January 2015, with a view to gradual implementation from 2017 to 2030. This was confirmed and reaffirmed in the Community Policy Statement covering the period 2019-24.

The Pact for excellence in education is a set of reforms that concerns all aspects of

education: the content of the curricula, the organisation of courses, the training of teachers, etc., from nursery school to the end of secondary school, with the main objective of improving the results of all learners in the French Community (*Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles*).

The work of the Pact for excellence in education is being developed and implemented through consultation and ongoing dialogue with all the stakeholders in education. From the diagnosis to the implementation, through the definition of objectives, the analysis of budgets and the drafting of legal texts, all the work of the representatives of the actors of education and their experts is carried out in a permanent dialogue with the Administration and the Ministers' offices since 2015. Everyone can express their nuances and points of attention.

Moreover, also teachers, headmasters, psycho-medical-social centres' officers, parents, and learners do participate in the work of the Pact of excellence in education. Since 2017, the participatory mechanisms aim to inform, consult, co-construct, share practices, test a measure or a new tool, and provide feedback. Organised in the form of meetings, online surveys, focus groups, consultations, consensus conferences, these mechanisms are set up with researchers, youth organisations or collective intelligence experts. Each process gives rise to a report, the conclusions of which are made public.

The Pact includes a set of guidelines organised in five strategic areas:

- (a) learning content for the 21st century;
- (b) autonomy and empowerment of all actors in the school system;
- (c) valorisation of vocational education;
- (d) strengthening the model of an inclusive school;
- (e) school democracy and well-being at school.

2015 Approved/Agreed

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Legislative process

2019 Implementation

In 2019, a second set of reforms has been implemented, including the new teachers' working time and free access to education.

2020 Implementation

In 2020, a third set of reforms has been implemented regarding the new curriculum for pre-primary school, and the digital strategy for education (school support, devices). Implementation of a Steering Plan for every school started as well as implementation of targeted adjustment steering plans for 20 schools with very low performances.

2021 Implementation

In 2021, a fourth set of reforms has been adopted regarding inclusive education (specific needs for learners with disabilities) and continued professional development.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, new reforms have been implemented:

- (a) new school rhythms,
- (b) the 48 territorial poles (structures attached to a special education school composed of a multidisciplinary team specialising in learning disabilities and/or disability support) are coming into operation, after a transitional year,
- (c) a second set of measures to fight against the shortage of teachers has been

- introduced, including an experimental scheme for replacing absent teachers at primary level,
- (d) a decree defining this new Vocational Education Pathway (*Parcours d'Enseignement Qualifiant*, PEQ) was adopted on 20 July 2022. This decree aims to gradually extend modular teaching to all vocational education programmes.

2023 Implementation

In 2023, the reforms within the Pact for Excellence in Education were further implemented:

- (a) a new procedure for preventing dropouts was put into place for learners from the 1st to 4th grade, in order to make grade repetition exceptional;
- (b) a new online guidance portal was put into place (monorientation.be);
- (c) a new framework for the fight against bullying was started;
- (d) the new governance of qualifying education (IVET) was implemented: the educational offer in IVET schools relied on the analysis of labour market skills needs (especially skills shortages);
- (e) the reform on teachers initial training entered into force.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, the reforms within the Pact for Excellence in Education were further implemented:

- (a) the global plan on the fight against dropout was adopted;
- (b) the reform on the educational approach to guidance was adopted;
- (c) the new support framework to skills development entered into force gradually, with the training of school heads and the support to beginner teachers.

2025 Implementation

In 2025, the reforms within the Pact for Excellence in Education were further implemented:

- (a) a new form of continuing professional development has been introduced for teachers: professional learning communities. This training method encourages staff from schools, PMS centres, and regional hubs to use their own practices as a starting point for setting shared work objectives around a specific theme. Supported by a trainer-facilitator, participants benefit from a collaborative environment that fosters productive exchanges. The involvement of a theme-specific expert (such as a scientist) enriches discussions with insights from educational research. The training concludes with a collectively developed, concrete product that can be disseminated beyond the professional learning community;
- (b) a pilot project was launched to foster school-business partnerships, with two objectives: supporting learners' first job transition and reinforcing teachers' technical skills;
- (c) a new cooperation agreement (French Community - Walloon Region) was adopted to reinforce the implementation of the Digital Strategy for Education, and two pilots projects were launched to take into account the impact and opportunities of AI.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of the French Community

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Learners with disabilities

Education professionals

Teachers
School leaders

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies

Modernising VET infrastructure

Improving digital infrastructure of VET provision

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Attractiveness of the teaching and training profession/career

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Lifelong guidance

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

VET as a driver for innovation and growth preparing for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand

VET promoting equality of opportunities

Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Pact for Excellence in Education](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

Learning becomes modular: Vocational education pathway (PEQ)

Following the evaluation of the CPU system, a new vocational pathway was designed in 2021. On 20 July 2022, the Government of the French Community approved the decree redrawing the learners' path in vocational education and implementing PEQ.

 BELGIUM-FR

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

Reforming initial teacher education

In French-speaking Belgium, the Parliament of the French Community adopted on 6 February 2019 a Decree reforming initial teacher education. The decree creates a master degree (ISCED 7) with the objective of increasing the attractiveness of this profession.

 BELGIUM-FR

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

Digital strategy for education in the French Community

Compulsory education

The digital strategy for education was adopted in 2018 and then implemented. The strategy includes the following five axes:

 BELGIUM-FR

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET

2022 Discontinued**Certification by learning outcomes units (CPU)**

The certification by learning-outcomes units (CPU) divides upper-secondary VET tracks into different CPU. Learners receive the qualification certificate when all the learning-outcomes units are validated.

 BELGIUM-FR**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation**Reforming the provision of vocational education**

The Observatory on Vocational and Qualifying Education, Trades and Technologies was created on 6 June 2018. As provided by the Pact for excellence in education, the observatory is part of the new governance framework for vocational education (nationally referred to as qualifying education).

 BELGIUM-FR**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

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