

Belgium

VET in Europe - Country Report

2010

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Abstract:

This is an overview of the VET system in Belgium. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General context - framework for the knowledge society
2. Policy development - objectives, frameworks, mechanisms, priorities
3. VET in times of crisis
4. Legislative and Institutional framework - provision of learning opportunities
5. Initial vocational education and training
6. Continuing vocational education and training for adults
7. Training VET teachers and trainers
8. Matching VET provision with labour market needs
9. Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources
11. National VET statistics - allocation of programmes

This overview has been prepared in 2010 and its reference year is 2009. Similar overviews of previous years can be viewed at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/vet-in-europe-country-reports.aspx>

More detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/detailed-thematic-analyses.aspx>

Keywords:

vocational education and training (VET) systems; initial vocational training; continuing vocational training; lifelong learning; VET policy development; financial crisis and VET policies; VET legislative and institutional frameworks; validation of non-formal and informal education; teachers and trainers; anticipation of skill needs; vocational guidance and counselling; VET financing mechanisms; allocation of national VET programmes; national and international qualification systems.

Geographic term:

Belgium

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1. GENERAL CONTEXT - FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

1.1 - POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Belgium, which became a unitary State in 1831, is a parliamentary democracy in the form of a constitutional monarchy and, following successive amendments to the Constitution (1970, 1980, 1988, and 1993), Belgium has become a federal State. Through these amendments, the State transferred many powers to the regions and the communities. For instance, the communities became responsible for education, while the regions are responsible for some aspects of vocational training, such as social advancement, redeployment and retraining.

The last amendment of the Constitution in 1993 transformed Belgium into a completely federal State.

The political and administrative structures can be grouped according to **five** levels: federal, community, regional, provincial and municipal.

A) FEDERAL LEVEL

The federal level is represented by the Federal institutions, the Chamber of Representatives, the Senate, the King and the Federal Government.

B) COMMUNITY LEVEL

Belgium consists of **3** communities, namely the Dutch - speaking Community or Dutch-speaking Community; the French -speaking Community; German-speaking Community. Two Joint Community Commissions represent the common interest in the Brussels Capital region of the two main Communities (for Dutch-speaking: the Dutch - speaking Community Commission Community known in Dutch as the Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie (VGC) for the the French Community : French Community Commission known in French as La Commission communautaire française COCOF).

The French Community is responsible for the French-speaking part of Wallonia and for the Frenchspeaking institutions in Brussels. The Dutch - speaking Community is responsible for Flanders and for Dutch-speaking institutions in Brussels. The German-speaking Community is responsible for the German-speaking area.

The communities are responsible for issues more specifically connected with the individual, such as education and culture. The three communities have their own legislative assembly (Parliament) and their own government. Concerning education, all educational matters have been transferred to the three communities. They are responsible for education within their linguistic area and, as concerns the French and Flemish communities, they are also responsible for the French or Dutch-speaking establishments in bilingual areas (Brussels). The educational responsibilities of the Dutch - speaking Community are vested in the Flemish Parliament (legislative power), the Dutch - speaking Community Government and the Education Minister (executive power). The educational responsibilities of the French and Germanspeaking communities are vested in their respective Councils, as well as in their respective Governments and Ministers of Education. It is also important to underline that since 1st January 2001, the German-speaking Community has responsibility for employment and vocational training.

C) REGIONAL LEVEL

Belgium consists of three regions: the **Flemish** region, the **Walloon** region and the **Brussels-Capital** region. The Walloon region is responsible for Wallonia; the Flemish region is responsible for Flanders and the Brussels-Capital region is responsible for the 19 municipalities or *communes* that make it up.

They are responsible for issues connected with, employment, economy or others, such as aid for enterprises and town planning. The three regions have their own legislative assembly and their own government. Flanders is region and as region merged with the surface of Dutch - speaking Community (see map of Belgium and constitutional powers) consequently the same parliament and government for the Flemish region and Community.

D) PROVINCIAL LEVEL

There are ten provinces in Belgium: 5 Walloon provinces and 5 Flemish provinces. On 31 January 1994, the province of Brabant (the Brussels Capital Region is part of this province and is the centre of it) was replaced by two provinces: Walloon and Flemish Brabant. Provincial governments continue to be responsible for enforcing laws, decrees, orders and regulatory orders at provincial level.

E) LOCAL LEVEL

The state consists of 262 Walloon municipalities, 19 municipalities in Brussels and 308 Flemish municipalities. Municipalities are responsible for those issues which have been assigned to them by the municipality law of 1988 combined with the special law of 1988.

The financing of education, especially secondary education, may involve all five levels of government, but also enterprises.

1.2. POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Belgium's surface is 30.528 km². It has borders with four countries: the Netherlands to the north, Germany and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to the east and France to the south. To the west it is bordered by the North Sea.

GEO\TIME	2003	2006	2009	2010
EU 27	486647831	493226936	499723520(p)	501259840
BE	10355844	10511382	10750000(p)	10827000

Source of Data: Eurostat (Demographic Statistics); Date of extraction: 02 May 2010

(p) - provisional value

Description: The inhabitants of a given area on 1 January of the year in question (or, in some cases, on 31 December of the previous year). The population is based on data from the most recent census adjusted by the components of population change produced since the last census, or based on population registers

As in most other EU member states, the age pyramid shows a demographic imbalance towards older citizens. The 0-19 age group formulates the 23 % of the total population, the proportion of the 20-64 age cohort is 60 %, while those above 65 are represented by 17%. (Table 1.2.2).

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
TOTAL	10.239.085	10.309.725	10.396.421	10.511.382	10.666.866
0-19 YEAR	2.419.964	2.408.943	2.408.456	2.428.706	2.452.770
20-64 YEAR OLD	6.104.028	6.154.390	6.207.845	6.273.659	6.394.370
65 AND OLDER	1.715.093	1.746.392	1.780.120	1.809.017	1.819.726
MEN	5.006.014	5.042.288	5.087.176	5.143.821	5.224.309
0-19 YEAR	1.237.139	1.231.221	1.230.570	1.241.251	1.252.956
20-64 YEAR OLD	3.069.738	3.094.653	3.120.599	3.150.333	3.210.419
65 AND OLDER	699.137	716.414	736.007	752.237	760.934
WOMAN	5.233.071	5.267.437	5.309.245	5.367.561	5.442.557
0-19 YEAR	1.182.825	1.177.722	1.177.886	1.187.455	1.199.814
20-64 YEAR OLD	3.034.290	3.059.737	3.087.246	3.123.326	3.183.951
65 AND OLDER	1.015.956	1.029.978	1.044.113	1.056.780	1.058.792

Source: Federal Governance Service Economy - General Statistics en Economic Information

*Situation on January 1 st 2009.

The projected old-age dependency ratio is an indicator of the projected number of persons aged 65+ expressed as a percentage of the projected number of persons aged between 15 and 64. In Belgium this proportion will be 1 to 4 in 2010, meaning 1 retired against four employed/active population; whereas in 2060, the proportion will be almost 2 to 2, meaning 2 retired against 2 employed/active population.

GEO\TIME	2010	2015	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
EU 27	25.9	28.26	31.05	38.04	45.36	50.42	53.47
BE	26.09	28.18	30.6	37.58	42.27	43.87	45.84

Source of Data: Eurostat (EUROPOP2008 - Convergence scenario, national level (proj_08c))

Date of extraction: 30 Apr 2010;

Description: Population aged 65+ divided by population aged 15-64 (projections)

1.3. ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

The overall national strategy, adopted in order to achieve the Lisbon goals, is focused on ushering, in a long-term basis, economic growth within a stable macroeconomic context. The strategy involves the consolidation of the economy in general, and the creation of more and better jobs, a better social cohesion and a healthy environment, in particular. Towards this end the focus of investment in 2007-2010 is primarily on “creating incentives for growth and employment”. As a result of ongoing consultations and cooperation between the federal government, the regions and the communities, the various economic and labour market policy measures have been streamlined within the context of a well-balanced policy for the entire country.

The Belgian economy is export-driven and highly sensitive to economic market trends.

In 2007, the Belgian government has taken a series of steps to discourage early exits from the labour market and encourage re-entry of those who have stayed out of activity. These measures have included the closing of some early retirement paths, as stipulated in the Solidarity Pact between the Generations. In addition, activation measures have been enacted, notably in the form of individualised road maps for returning to work, follow-up interviews and possible sanctions in case of insufficient job search activities.

In 2009, compared to the EU the Belgian employment shares had a lower percentage of employment in the Primary and in the Manufacturing sector, however, it was higher in the non marketed services (Table 1.3.1).

GEO	PRIMARY SECTOR AND UTILITIES		MANUFACTURING		CONSTRUCTION		DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSPORT		BUSINESS AND OTHER SERVICES		NON MARKETED SERVICES	
	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%
EU 27	15192.8	7.0	35068.2	16.1	17290.9	7.9	57470.5	26.4	38557.9	17.7	53201.2	24.4
BE	131.1	3.0	656.1	14.8	316.3	7.2	1121.5	25.4	793.5	17.9	1402	31.7

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey); Extracted on: 30-04-2010;

Description: Employment persons aged 15+ by economic sector of activity (NACE rev2) in thousands and as % of total employment

The employment rate continues to be lower than the European average but there is reported to be a faster percentage of increase. The change in the situation is primarily reflected in a sharp rise in the employment rate in the 55-64 age category (Table 1.3.2A). This is chiefly attributed to the requirement for older unemployed people to be available for work longer.

GEO	TIME ISCE D / AGE	2003			2006			2009		
		15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU 27	0-2	25.1(i)	66.1(i)	41.9 (i)	24.8	66.9	43.5	22.8	64.1	43.3
	3-4	47.2 (i)	79.1 (i)	54.9 (i)	48.1	80.5	57.9	46.3	80.5	59.5
	5-6	62.0 (i)	88.0 (i)	72.4 (i)	60.5	88.5	74.2	58.4	88.2	74.5
	No A.	14.9 (i)	72.6 (i)	39.1 (i)	5.1	76.0	5.6	5.5	75.6	63.9
	TOTAL	36.0 (i)	77.4 (i)	51.5 (i)	36.6	79.1	54.4	35.2	78.8	56.5
BE	0-2	12.0	63.5	30.6	12.5	63.4	33.9	11.9	61.9	35.0
	3-4	35.7	80.8	51.6	35.0	81.8	51.1	32.1	82.7	54.4
	5-6	72.9	89.2	62.0	65.9	90.5	63.0	53.0	90.8	66.3
	No A.	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	TOTAL	27.1	78.1	42.5	27.6	80.2	45.7	25.3	81.2	49.1

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey); Extracted on 30-04-20100

Description: Employment rates represent the number of employed persons as percentage of the total population. Specific rates are calculated by age groups and educational level

(i) = see explanatory notes; No A.: No answer

The situation, together with an increase in the size of the working population, has nonetheless created several side-effects, such as a mild increase in the rate of unemployment to reach 8.2 % in 2006, although the rate of unemployment fell again in 2007 to 7.5% and to 7% in 2008 and during the first quarter 2009: already 7,2 (crisis) and 8,4 in 2010 (Table 1.3.2B).

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009 - Q1	2010
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.6	7.5	8.2	8.4	8.4	8.3	7,5	7	7,2	8,4

Source: OECD : OECD Unemployment Rates Percentage of labour force - De Trends April 2010

In 2008 altogether 1,190,977 persons received unemployment benefits every month, of which:

- 658,590 persons were fully unemployed;
- 296,091 persons were temporary unemployed; and
- 236,296 persons were taking time credit (an increase of 5.5 % compared with 2007).

Due to the crisis the number of the fully unemployed people increased with 100,000 by the end of year 2009 and another 60,000 at the end of year 2010.

Table 1.3.3. shows unemployment rates by age groups and highest level of education in Belgium in 2009. From the table it can be seen that unemployment rates are higher than the EU average for the age group 15-24 while the rates tend to decrease with higher educational attainment.

GEO	TIME ISCED / AGE	2003			2006			2009		
		15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU 27	0-2	20.2 (i)	11.6 (i)	7.2 (i)	21.2	11.2	7.5	25.9	14.8	9.1
	3-4	17.7 (i)	8.4 (i)	7.7 (i)	15.4	7.3	6.9	16.9	7.5	6.2
	5-6	12.0 (i)	4.8 (i)	3.7 (i)	13.4	4.3	3.6	15.4	4.8	3.4
	NO A.	13.9 (i)	7.8 (i)	7.4 (i)	20.1	:	:	22.0	7.5	:
	TOTAL	18.0 (i)	8.3 (i)	6.6 (i)	17.2	7.3	6.3	19.7	8.2	6.3
BE	0-2	30.5	12.4	3.3	30.1	14.1	8.4	30.2	14.8	6.7
	3-4	18.3	7.1	2.8	18.0	7.2	4.6	20.5	7.0	4.8
	5-6	6.2	3.9	2.6	16.1	3.8	3.3	16.7	3.8	3.9
	NO A.	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	TOTAL	19.0	7.4	2.9	20.5	7.4	5.6	21.9	7.1	5.1

Source: Eurostat (LFS); Extracted on: 30-04-2010

Description: unemployment rates represent the number of unemployed persons as percentage of the active population (employed + unemployed)

(i) = see explanatory notes; (:)= not available

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/lfsq_esms.htm

1.4. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

Compared to the EU average, Belgium is characterised by a high level of educational attainment. The percentage of people aged 25-64 with tertiary education was 32% in 2007, while the EU-27 average was 9 percentage points lower (23% in 2007).

	TOTAL	PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION (ISCED LEVELS 0-2)		UPPER SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION (ISCED LEVELS 3-4)		TERTIARY EDUCATION (ISCED LEVELS 5-6)	
		TOTAL (1000)	%	TOTAL (1000)	%	TOTAL (1000)	%
EU27	268116	77859	29	125857	47	62688	23
BE	5723	1834	32	2052	36	1837	32

Source of Data: Eurostat; EU Labour Force Survey;

The percentage of early school leavers has decreased from 14,1% in 2002 to 12,0% in 2008. The EU-27 average in 2008 was 14,9% and the Lisbon target was 10% by 2010.

GEO/TIME	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EU 27	17.0	16.6 (b)	16.1	15.8	15.5	15.1	14.9
BE	14.1	14.3	13.1 (b)	12.9	12.6	12.1	12.0

Source of data Eurostat (LFS); Extracted: 30-04-2010; Last update 26-04-2010

Table 1.4.3. presents the number of graduates in ISCED 3-4 by field of education and sex. The number of graduates in vocationally oriented ISCED 3 has slightly decreased from 72,958 in 2005 to 71,039 in 2007, while the number of graduates in ISCED 4 has increased from 24,030 in 2005 to 28,091 in 2006.

YEAR		2005						2007					
GEO	S	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC
BE	F	25380	:	37453	9	:	12920	26350	:	36028	21	:	15080
	M	19491	:	35505	46	:	11110	20334	:	35011	72	:	13011
	T	44871	:	72958	55	:	24030	46684	:	71039	93	:	28091

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection); Extracted: 01-05-2010; Last update: 13-01-2010

• Available total - calculated by Cedefop;

S= sex; M=males; F=females; T= total; GEN=general; PV=pre-vocational; VOC=vocational

In Belgium, 81,3% of the 20-24 year olds graduated in upper secondary education, with 83,7% in Flanders, 78,7% in Wallonia and 75,4% in Brussels. The EU-average is 76,8%. Both in the Union as a whole and in Belgium, major efforts must be made to attain the 85% target (source: FOD Economie).

TIME	2002			2005			2008		
GEO	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU 27	76.7	79.3	74.0	77.5	80.2	74.8	78.5	81.3	75.6
BE	81.6	84.8	78.5	81.8	85.3	78.4	82.2	83.9	80.5

Source: Eurostat (LFS); Extracted: 30-04-2010

Description: Youth education attainment level - Percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education

According to the Labour Force Survey, the percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to survey was 6.8% in 2008, compared to 8.3% in 2005 and 6.0% in 2002 (lower than EU27 which was 9.8% in 2005 and 7.2% in 2002). The participation of women is slightly higher than that of men (7.2% compared to 6.4% in 2008), as shown in Table 1.4.5.

TIME	2002			2005			2008		
GEO	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU 27	7.2	7.8	6.6	9.8	10.5	9.0	9.5	10.4	8.7
BE	6.0	6.0	5.9	8.3	8.5	8.2	6.8	7.2	6.4

Source: Eurostat (LFS); Extracted on: 30-04-2010

Description: Life-long learning (adult participation in education and training) - Percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey

1.5 - DEFINITIONS

TERM: GENERAL EDUCATION

Education which is mainly designed to lead participants to a deeper understanding of a subject or group of subjects, especially, but not necessarily, with a view to preparing participants for further (additional) education at the same or a higher level. Successful completion of these programmes may or may not provide the participants with a labour-market relevant qualification at this level. These programmes are typically school-based. Programmes with a general orientation and not focusing on a particular specialization should be classified in this category.

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "International Standard Classification of Education - ISCED 1997", Paris, November 1997

TERM: PRE-VOCATIONAL OR PRE-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Education which is mainly designed to introduce participants to the world of work and to prepare them for entry into vocational or technical education programmes. Successful completion of such programmes does not yet lead to a labour-market relevant vocational or technical qualification. For a programme to be considered as pre-vocational or pre-technical education, at least 25 per cent of its content has to be vocational or technical.

Source: ISCED 1997

TERM: VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Education which is mainly designed to lead participants to acquire the practical skills, know-how and understanding necessary for employment in a particular occupation or trade or class of occupations or trades. Successful completion of such programmes leads to a labour-market relevant vocational qualification recognized by the competent authorities in the country in which it is obtained (e.g. Ministry of Education, employers' associations, etc.).

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "International Standard Classification of Education - ISCED 1997", Paris, November 1997

TERM: FIRST STAGE OF TERTIARY OR HIGHER EDUCATION

Includes tertiary programmes with: (a) academic orientation (type A), which are largely theoretical; (b) occupational orientation (type B), usually shorter than type A and geared towards entry to the labour market. Type A programmes provide access to advanced research studies and professions with high skill requirements. Type B programmes prepare students for direct entry into a specific occupation. Entry to ISCED level 5 normally requires successful completion of ISCED levels 3 or 4.

Comment: Level 5 A programmes with academic orientation are typically outside the scope of VET.

Source: Terminology of vocational training policy, Cedefop

TERM: POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION

Programmes that lie between the upper-secondary and tertiary levels of education from an international point of view, even though they might clearly be considered as upper-secondary or tertiary programmes in a national context. They are often not significantly more advanced than programmes at ISCED 3 (upper secondary) but they serve to broaden the knowledge of participants who have already completed a programme at level 3. The students are usually older than those at level 3. ISCED 4 programmes typically last between six months and two years.

Source: ISCED 1997

TERM: INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IVET)

Initial vocational education and training (IVET) is defined as training undertaken typically after full-time compulsory education (although it may start before) to promote the acquisition

of the necessary knowledge, skills and competences for entry to an occupation or group of occupations. It can be undertaken purely within a school-based and/or work-based environment. It includes apprenticeship training.

Source: Glossary of the EknowVET database

TERM: CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CVET)

DEF. 1:

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) can be broadly defined as professional or vocational development through education and training undertaken typically after one has completed initial vocational education and training (IVET). It can be provided and undertaken at the initiative of public authorities, social partners, sectors, enterprises, individuals as well as a range of voluntary and community organisations. It also includes learning on-the-job not synonyms, much of which can be classified as non-formal or informal learning. It may lead to certification.

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) thus relates to the further professional, vocational or personal development of people. It can take place in a societal, industrial sector and/or in a specific organisational or company context.

Source: Glossary of the EknowVET database

DEF. 2:

Education or training after initial education and training - or after entry into working life aimed at helping individuals to:

- improve or update their knowledge and/or skills;
- acquire new skills for a career move or retraining;
- continue their personal or professional development

Source: Terminology of vocational training policy, Cedefop

TERM: SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMMES

In school-based programmes instruction takes place (either partly or exclusively) in educational institutions. These include special training centres for vocational education run by public or private authorities or enterprise-based special training centres if these qualify as educational institutions. These programmes can have an on-the-job training component, i.e. a component of some practical experience at the workplace.

Source: UOE data collection on education systems, Volume 1, Manual, Concepts, definitions and classifications

TERM: ALTERNANCE TRAINING

Education and training combining periods in an educational institution or training centre and in the workplace. The alternance scheme can take place on weekly, monthly or yearly basis. Depending on the country and applicable status, participants may be contractually linked to the employer and/or receive the remuneration.

Comment: the German “dual system” is an example of alternance training.

Source: Terminology of European education and training policy, Cedefop, 2008.

TERM: APPRENTICESHIP

Systematic, long-term training alternating periods in a school or training centre and at the workplace; the apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration (wage or allowance). The employer assumes responsibility for providing the trainee with training leading to a specific occupation.

Source: Terminology of vocational training policy, Cedefop.

(Please note: this definition is not prepared specifically for the context of statistical data collection. Further definitions exist at Eurostat, but no single standard definition has been agreed).

TERM: QUALIFICATION

A formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

Source: EQF, 2006

TERM: SKILLS

The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

Source: EQF, 2006

TERM: COMPETENCE

The proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/ or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Source: EQF, 2006

2. POLICY DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVES, FRAMEWORKS, MECHANISMS, PRIORITIES

2.1 - OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES OF THE NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT AREAS OF VET

2.1.1. NATIONAL LLL STRATEGIES

Through several policy briefs, notes, action plans (through the skills and competences agenda in Flanders and through the Marshall plan in Wallonia, lifelong learning (LLL) strategies have been designed and implemented. Aim of policy briefs notes and action plans is involving all stakeholders: public authorities as well as social partners, education and training providers and the public employment service. Meeting the twin challenges of efficiency and equity is central in all these policy briefs, notes, action plans.

As from 2002, agreements (covenants) were also concluded between the Minister of Employment and the social partners of different sectors of economic activity (both industry and services). In these agreements, arrangements are made concerning the improvement of the connection between education, the labour market and the LLL strategy in different sectors of economic activity. Since then, the minister for education and employment puts continuous emphasis on the even better integration of the interests of VET schools in the latter agreements.

These national LLL strategies are particularly supported by the following initiatives:

NEW PATHWAY FOR EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

A new educational pathway called “higher professional education” will enable early school leavers to obtain an official diploma of secondary education while they are studying to obtain a qualification at EQF-level 5. As part of the Skills Agenda, a comprehensive approach towards early school leavers is being developed, for instance, it focuses on a better co-operation between educational partners and the VDAB (the Flemish External Autonomous Agency for Employment and Vocational Training) in order to improve qualifications of this vulnerable group of youngsters.

IMPROVING WORKPLACE SKILLS

Within the department of Education and Training, a new unit was established: the Project Strategic Education and Training Policy. It deals with the implementation of the LLL policy and involves several policy domains and the main goal is to implement policy priority 1: “better linkages between education and the labour market”. Improving workplace skills amongst pupils, students and the labour force is a major objective.

TRAINING DATABANK

An umbrella training databank is accessible on the website www.wordwatjewil.be. This is a joint initiative between Education, the VDAB, the Flemish Agency for Entrepreneurial Training or **SYNTRA Flanders** and social/cultural work. An expansion to include private training providers is included.

Via the Strategic Plans « Activities creation (Plan stratégique PST 1 &2) in Wallonia, an enhanced cooperation is created between the stakeholders and many actions are taking place, but communication to the citizen still has to be improved. Identified as the action n°2, the

clustering policy is considered as one of the bases of the new industrial policy the Government intends to conduct.

Further in Wallonia

- 1) Identification of skill needs at central level (Wallonia) via labour market analysis by the FOREM, trend analysis of the CESRW (Walloon Social Economic Council);
- 2) Use of FOREM web site to communicate about the concrete needs on the labour market;
- 3) In 2007-2008, several pilot projects were launched to develop the Qualification Framework. One of the objectives of these projects is to match education offer and skill needs of the professional sectors;
- 4) The creation of a new Qualification Agency (goal is to create more flexible pathways for the citizen).is decided mainly to cope with the connection between education and vocational training but it will not deal with the 6/7/8 EQF level (due to the political situation in Wallonia: two ministries of education: one for general education and one for higher education).

ENCOURAGING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Within the framework of a more flexible labour market, entrepreneurship is also encouraged. The average Belgian has not yet sufficiently developed the reflex to create his own job by becoming self-employed. European employment policy is increasingly concentrated on supply side solutions (like training, counselling and “flexicurity”) for helping the labour force adapt to a rapidly changing environment created by globalisation and an ageing population.

Encouraging Entrepreneurship starts already at school. Accordingly, this has been given extra attention in education over the last year. For instance, pupils in the last three years of French-language secondary education receive first hand information about the business world by entrepreneurs and government officials: In Flanders, pupils were given the opportunity to draw up a business plan (there was even a competition) and the course materials for the certificate of business management were updated and made more interactive. To widen entrepreneurship the European Commission supported a Community of Practice on Inclusive Entrepreneurship (COPIE), led by Flanders. COPIE is an open network aiming to make entrepreneurship an attractive and viable option for more people during the 2007-13 period.

TRAINING FOR IN-DEMAND JOBS

Brussels focused its efforts to offer training on in-demand jobs; the employers’ federations and other organisations were regularly consulted for their input. Flanders introduced a bonus to encourage training for in-demand jobs and Wallonia developed a plan to better fill in-demand jobs. This plan consists of the analysis of those jobs for which the supply of workers is inadequate; the improvement of the detection of such jobs; the screening of jobseekers for their skills; and the development of specific training courses. The aim is too achieve the best individual match between supply and demand.

OPERATIONAL PLAN ENHANCING LITERACY IN THE THREE COMMUNITIES

The use of training vouchers is enjoying growing success in the three Regions. For instance, Brussels expanded the use of training vouchers for jobseekers going back to work, from language training to other areas, such as ICT. Wallonia increased the options for training vouchers, both for companies and for workers; it boosted its offering by establishing a special ‘language cheque’ and by increasing the number of vouchers that a business can order.

Via the wide objective of the training vouchers enhancing literacy (language, digital, etc.) could be increased. Flanders is working on adjusting the system in various ways, including on the basis of the conclusion that certain less-favoured groups, such as unskilled individuals and people aged 50 and over, are significantly under-represented in the group of those people who make use of training vouchers.

Brussels enhanced the synergies between the employment service and the organisations that offer training, especially those concentrating on specialist centres and based on a modular approach (as this approach is the most effective to enhance the chances on the labour market). In Wallonia, a few new ICT centres were opened and the surrounding network was strengthened. Wallonia also developed a project whereby an introductory course for jobseekers in ICT and Internet was organised at the skill centres.

For jobseekers, training combined with work experience leads more easily to a job. That is why Flanders and Wallonia increased the number of work experience places. Flanders is also running experiments in cooperating with private firms (via deployment measures) and temporary work agencies to increase the efficiency and target group reach of work experience programmes. Brussels simplified the associated administrative procedure.

Work experience places in sectors 4,461 in 2006 increased to 4,781 in 2007 while the Lisbon benchmark foresees 1,385/ year.

Formal recognition of acquired skills must be the final component in a solid policy on lifelong learning.

SERVICE CHEQUES - MORE JOBS IN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND LOCAL ('PROXIMITY') SERVICES

The aim of the service cheques is to encourage employability of the low skilled for certain professions. It is one of the first steps of labour market integration and training. Employers recruiting with service cheques can receive a financial benefit of the (local) authorities.

The 'service cheque' system was further expanded in 2006, meaning that structural efforts to ensure financing are urgently needed. All employment services worked actively to channel job-seekers through this system. For example, the service-voucher professions were introduced in the Flemish ironing shops, mainly targeting the lesser-educated people and the long-term unemployed. The service voucher sector in Flanders has already helped almost 30,000 people to find a job. The service vouchers are practically used for in demand professions.

Wallonia is organising special training and information sessions for (potential) service cheque workers. The Brussels Region also bolstered information on service vouchers for job-seekers and the German-speaking Community encouraged enthusiasm for services vouchers in the non-profit sector within the framework of streamlining the social economy sector.

MORE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION AND RECOGNITION OF SKILLS

Within the framework of the open method of coordination for 'Education and Training 2010', the Communities pursued their efforts to guarantee equal access to education and to upgrade technical and vocational education. The French Community worked on implementing its sizeable reform plan that runs until 2013 by bolstering the Community foundation in secondary education. The Dutch - speaking Community introduced a bonus system in order to put pressure on the cost of expensive courses of study. Education is a Community matter; therefore the Brussels educational system is covered and represented by the two main Communities (cfr. VGC and COCOF).

2.1.2 POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN THE MAIN VET POLICY AREAS

PACT 2020

On 19 January 2009, a new pact for the future was signed by the social partners in Belgium's Flemish region. *Pact 2020* is a type of tripartite mission statement, which defines a range of policy goals for 2020 for the Flanders region. In line with the European Lisbon Strategy objectives, the region wants to be among Europe's top five regions in relation to innovation, employment, social cohesion and sustainability. Shortcomings in the educational system have in particular led to Pact 2020 for Flanders. For Wallonia these policy developments are the same with the launching of the Marshall plans 1 (2005) & 2 green (2008 professions in the ecological sectors).

To reach a breakthrough in the new future plan for Flanders, 20 concrete goals were formulated to book progress within the following principal domains:

- greater prosperity and welfare;
- a competitive and sustainable economy;
- more workers gainfully employed, in more suitable jobs, and for longer average career terms;
- a high quality standard of living;
- an efficient and effective administration.

Many of these goals are also applicable in the French and German - speaking Community.

GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING

Investing more in knowledge and innovation

In order to meet the Barcelona objective on Investment in Research, the Belgian authorities are determined to increase the investment in R&D in order to reach the 3% of GDP target by 2010. For instance, centres of competitiveness or competency, combining businesses, training centres and public and private research bodies have been developed in the three regions. An additional budget allocation for the competence and strategic research centres is increasing 134 million euros for Belgium every year.

To ensure efficient entry of young people into the labour market, the first necessity is to strengthen secondary education, in particular the subjects which have a direct bearing on the labour market. With this in mind, investments have been allocated for the period 2005-2006 to the basic infrastructures of the technical schools (Flanders: 30 million euros- French-speaking Community 25.7 million euros). Moreover, Brussels-Capital Region has devoted a budget of 2 million euros (2005-2008) to support the investments of the two other Communities. Furthermore, a full time employment programme is carried out through the creation of specialised centres that benefit from a budget of about 40 million euros for the 2005-2008 period. The COCOF (the College of the French Community Commission for schools located in the Brussels Region) is devoting 264,000 euros to the promotion of sandwich training courses. In the same vein, the German-speaking Community is providing 2.68 million euros to fund the creation of sandwich training centres.

Belgium subscribes to the principle of gender equality and for a better work-life balance. It therefore makes investments to increase childcare facilities and to create 13,000 additional places. For this purpose, 72.9 million euros will be invested (Flanders: 18.1 million euros; the

German-speaking Community: 0.4 million euros; and the French-speaking Community: 54.4 million euros). Increasing childcare facilities allows and encourages low skilled women to have access again to the labour market.

In the context of an approach targeting careers, it seems essential to offer training opportunities. Only those who manage to develop their knowledge satisfactorily can keep and improve their chances in the job market. In order to finance this part of the programme, it is necessary not only for workers but also employers and the authorities to contribute. With this in view, the regions and the communities offer training vouchers; the budget for this amounts to 102.9 million euros for the period 2005-2008.

Employers for their part have committed themselves to contributing 1.9% of the total wage bill to the training of their workers. This comes to nearly 10.3 billion euros. (see also theme 5&9)

Flanders

Employers and workers are being encouraged to invest in training via the use of training vouchers. As from 2003, the Flemish government contributes to the direct training costs (for CVET) by means of 'training and guidance vouchers'. The scheme has been growing constantly over the last 4 years: 233.835 vouchers were requested in 2006 (with the value of 28.896.450 euros), 250.130 vouchers (with the value of 34.077.810 euros), and 255.631 vouchers were requested in 2008. In 2007 eighty projects of companies and organisations were approved. These vouchers pay for part of the price of training. In 2007 in Flanders, 175,000 workers, or 12% of the population in question took advantage of this measure (for a total budget of approximately 13.5 million euros). Within this framework, the objective is to grant greater priority to qualifications training, to training for critical positions, and to promote the participation of risk groups.

French-speaking Community

Within the framework of the "Marshall Plan", the Walloon Government has introduced a competitiveness clusters policy. It sets out to develop sectors of activity that offer development possibilities for the Region and to position Wallonia at international level. The basic idea is to marshal the forces of Walloon business and to link business, higher education and the SMEs to develop the synergy needed to raise the profile of Walloon business on the international scene and to move SMEs into the global arena. Wallonia invested 9 million euros in 2007/2008 in training vouchers (not part of this Marshall plan as the training voucher system existed already in 1998) and has, for the past several years, paid increased attention to language training.

The German-speaking Community

The German-speaking Community has reformed its system and provides flexible support to every training initiative started by either an employer or a worker. A budget of 159,000 euros has been planned for this in 2008.

Brussels-Capital region

The Brussels-Capital region is giving priority to jobseekers who find a job and is therefore funding language education and ICT training (budget of 5 million euros in 2008).

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Until recently, the question of the coordination of activation policy to assist beneficiaries and jobseekers has not been given much attention in Belgium. This situation is currently changing, mainly as a result of the favourable economic climate. The employment services in the three regions (the VDAB, FOREM, ACTIRIS) also offer opportunities for information, guidance and skill reviews for young people and adults.

In Belgium mainly the two eldest employment services VDAB and FOREM provide a platform for job-seekers and employers. To perform this important social task as well as possible, the VDAB and FOREM provide a relatively accessible, high quality and free service to all job-seekers and employers. VDAB's and FOREM's mission is to exercise an impact on the labour market in keeping with the economic situation and society.

VDAB and FOREM need to find a way to reconcile economic and social goals. Economically, job vacancies need to be filled quickly and correctly. Socially, VDAB and FOREM want to guarantee a smooth integration of job-seekers in the labour market and help anyone who has difficulties finding a job.

In this way, for the Dutch - speaking Community VDAB plays a part in boosting the Flemish employment level to 65% in 2004 and to 70% in 2010, increasing the participation of under-represented sections of the population in the labour market and aspiring to more individual and social development for everyone.

CURRICULUM REFORM AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The curriculum of initial teacher training institutions will focus strongly on the basics: mathematics, language of instruction, use of ICT, etc. A new core curriculum for teacher training institutions has been drafted and was implemented in 2008.

A modular pathway specifically for adult teachers, trainers and instructors was developed and was implemented in experimental form as of September 2007.

Since 2007, teachers can take either one of the following two training routes:

1) Integrated teacher training which is organised by university colleges and which leads to a Bachelor's degree in pre-primary, primary and secondary education, respectively.

This programme takes 3 years and comprises 180 credits, including 45 for teaching practice.

2) Students who have already obtained a different higher-education degree or adult-education diploma or who have acquired relevant experience and only need to get educational/pedagogical training can attend a specific teacher-training programme, which involves a 60-credit study load, of which 30 credits are specifically devoted to teaching practice. These programmes are organised by universities, university colleges and Centres for Adult Education.

SKILLS NEEDS STRATEGY

Addressing participation of low-skilled people and immigrants in continuous learning is critical to enhance their employability. As part of the Skills Agenda, a comprehensive approach towards early school leavers is being developed. A better cooperation between educational partners and the VDAB is foreseen as part of the competency Agenda in order to improve qualifications of this vulnerable group of youngsters.

The agenda maps the needs for competence development and makes policy recommendations to tackle the skills gaps. During round tables the different stakeholders communicate their points of view. The Walloon Marshall plan and the Skills Agenda are to enhance employability and to increase the employment rate and economic growth. Moreover, an action programme for competence development of individuals and enterprises has been drafted, which will strengthen workers as well as enterprises to cope with transitions towards and changes in the labour market.

VALIDATION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

For validation, not only of the training followed but also of the work experience acquired, formal recognition is required. The necessary structures have been developed for this purpose, representing an investment for the period 2005-2008 of 14 million euros. The lifelong learning strategies in Belgium are covering all levels of education and training whether formal, informal or non-formal (see figures employment rate in % according to the level of education).

EVOLUTION OF THE EMPLOYMENT RATE(*) 25-64Y, IN %, ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF EDUCATION.									
TOTAL	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
FLEMISH REGION	68.6	70.1	69.9	70.0	69.7	71.2	72.1	72.1	73.6
WALLOON REGION	61.9	63.2	62.7	62.4	63.6	62.9	64.1	64.2	65.1
BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION	61.4	62.5	61.5	61.9	60.9	61.9	62.8	60.8	62.6
BELGIUM	65.8	67.2	66.8	66.8	66.9	67.7	68.7	68.5	69.8

Source: Flemish ministry of education & Eurybase - Description of National Education Systems and Policies, 2009

	EUROPEAN OBJECTIVE	FLEMISH REGION			EU-27		
	2010	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007
LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE							
Share of people between the ages of 20 and 24 with at least a diploma of higher secondary education	85	85.1	86.5	86.9	77.5	77.9	78.1
YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING EDUCATION WITHOUT QUALIFICATIONS (EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS)*							
Share of people between the ages of 18 and 24 who do not have a diploma of higher secondary education and who no longer follow education or training	10	10.7	10.0	9.3	15.5	15.2	14.8
PARTICIPATION IN LIFELONG LEARNING**							
Share of people between the ages of 25 and 64 who participate in education or training	12.5	9.1	8.3	7.9	9.7	9.6	9.7

Source: Federal Public Service Economy - General Department of Statistics EAK, Eurostat Labour Force Survey, calculations by the Support Centre for Work and social Economy (WSE)

The designing of an overarching qualifications framework with effective integration of systems of recognition of informal and non-formal learning is another challenge (via the experience certificate, recognition of prior competencies via sector covenants, acquisition of a professional title).

In 2005, the Flemish Government finished the union-making process on the acquisition of a professional title. With this aim, in 2006, a user-friendly service was set up. As this is still an enormous challenge, it will be established in stages: one stage for a group of professions from all the sectors every year (chemical sector, metal-working sector (manual and blue collar

workers), the building sector, the social profit sector, the food sector, the transport sector, international trade, the car mechanics sector, the textile sector, the wood-working sector, the public authorities, electricians, the agricultural sector, the ready-to-wear and textile care sector, hairdressers, the restaurant and catering sector, the graphic design sector, the assembly sector, the audiovisual sector, the real estate sector, the artistic sector, and lastly the house moving sector, are the sectors concerned.

The Social-Economic Council of Flanders (SERV) advises on this large list of professions every year and frames the uniform “standards” that outline the competences, derived from the occupational profiles. The occupational profiles are the minimum requirements to exercise a certain profession. The SERV carries out these activities in close cooperation with the sectoral social partners. In September 2006, a number of assessment bodies began to recognise and assess the competences linked to 6 different professional titles. At the end of the process, the assessment body provides a recommendation to the Flemish Government, which in turn awards the professional titles to the people who have successfully passed the assessment procedure. Flanders is participating in the **OECD-study** on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The review or site visit was planned for May 2007 and it will involve Education and Training, Work, Culture, Youth and Sports. The initiatives concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning are numerous but seem disparate and too little co-ordinated.

NARIC-Flanders is the recognition and information centre of Flanders within the framework of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. It is in charge of the academic recognition of foreign higher education qualifications and the professional recognition of teachers based upon the applicable European Directive. It belongs to the Agency for Higher Education, Adult Education and Study Grants of the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training. More information available at:

The Bologna process, initiated in 1999, now embraces 46 countries cooperating to create a European Higher Education Area. It contains several action lines. Two of its crucial objectives are to harmonise the structures of national higher education systems and to create transparency within Europe and to the world at large. Another important objective is the expansion of national qualifications frameworks for higher education (NQFs) in line with the newly developed Overarching Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA), also referred to as the Bologna framework.

Flanders was the first place in Europe where a statutory Diploma Supplement was introduced.(for universities in 1991 and for university colleges in 1994). As outcome of the Bologna process (restructuring of higher education) in Flanders this has led to the establishment of Naric Flanders via different Decrees (e.g.The Decree on the flexibilisation of higher education of 30 April 2004 implements the flexibilisation part of the Bologna Declaration).

<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/>

In Wallonia, recognition and validation is organized via a consortium and via validation centers implemented by the 5 public institutions of vocational training or as part of a partnership agreement with one of them. These institutions are: Brussels Training ; Education Promotion social; le FOREM (*le Service public wallon de l'emploi et de la formation*) and IFAPME (*Institut wallon de formation en alternance et des indépendants et des petites et moyennes entreprises*). Skills are formally recognized via qualifications issued in the name of the French-speaking Community, the Walloon Region and the French Community Commission.

Validation of prior learning and/or professional experience may lead to access to higher education programmes and to the shortening of study duration.

The target set for 2004 by the social partners, of investing 1.9% of the private sector wage bill in training, has not been achieved (it reached 1.25%). The number of people participating in training decreased to 6.8% in 2008 coming from 8.6 in 2004. Belgium needs, therefore, to reinforce efforts on lifelong learning to reach the EU target of 12.5% participation, and the national target by doubling the participation rate in lifelong learning among the low-skilled.

GEO	BELGIUM			EU 27			
TARGET	2000	2004	2008	2000	2004	2008	DEVELOPMENT
Each month 12.5 % of adults (25-64) participate in lifelong learning	6.2	8.6	6.8	7.1	9.3	9.6	Although the methodology used for this indicator is not optimal, the reduction observed requires that measures be taken.

Source: National Reform Programme 2008-2010 / Belgium - Progress report 2009, 162 p.

Apart from incentives for companies to increase the provision of training places, there is no clear approach to increase participation and investment in training. Measures have been taken for the recognition of competencies. To develop the training agenda, the government is relying on the forthcoming negotiations among social partners on a new multi-sector agreement. Important reforms were launched recently, such as improving the image and the quality of technical education, but they are too recent to show results. It is important to reinforce the measures taken in order to limit early school leaving and thus avoid young people leaving school with limited skills.

The NRP identifies clearly the employment challenges and reflects the government's determination to increase the employment rate. The implementation of the measures is contributing to progress in employment growth, although the unemployment rate continues to hover around 8.4%. Sustained attention is therefore necessary to tap the employment potential of disadvantaged groups, youth and the elderly. Vigorous efforts are needed to limit early school leaving and to revitalise the education and lifelong learning system so that the labour market is sufficiently supplied with skills. For more information see: <http://www.be2010.eu>.

GEO	BELGIUM			EU 27			
TARGET	2000	2004	2008	2000	2004	2008	DEVELOPMENTS
The share of early school leavers must be lower than 10%	12.5	11.9	12.0	17.6	15.8	12.1	Current method
		13.1	12.2		15.9	14.8 (2007)	New method
58% of young people between 20 and 24 must have successfully completed their secondary education	81.7	81.8	82.2	76.6	77.1	78.5	The objective is nearly achieved

Source: National Reform Programme 2008-2010 Belgium - Progress report 2009, 162 p

2.1.3. CURRENT POLICY OBJECTIVES & INITIATIVES

1. On-the-job learning will become a fully-fledged learning pathway which can then be systematically used in secondary education and career-advancement education. The experimental on-the-job learning programmes are extended and elaborated 3-year experimental projects on multilingual education, mainly French and English.
2. 10 projects on vocationally-oriented choice of course have also been recently launched in Belgium.
3. In Flanders within the part-time artistic education (*deeltijds kunstonderwijs - DKO*), renovation projects were launched which focus on collaboration with other levels of education, cultural organisations and amateur art groups, and the use of ICT
4. Centres for adult education are hosting training programmes for trainers of adults, increasing quality of education. Quality assurance is and will be the basis of trust in Belgian VET systems and this quality assurance will be described in systems, recent measures, legislation and projects (current and finished).
5. Indicating demographic change and VET's role in active ageing policies. Indicating the role of adult learning for older workers and other vulnerable groups.
6. Sectoral changes in times of economic crisis and green jobs.
 - Environmental jobs at all levels and new skills related to all kind of sectors. The shift towards all the resources of lifelong learning, towards all forms and methods of learning. To improve the quality of education and training.
 - New training and education measures will primarily focus on long-term goals. Sustainability as keyword for training and education. The development of action plans for independent entrepreneurship in the education is important in these times of economic crisis.

2.2. THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF EUROPEAN TOOLS

WORKING ON QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORKS FOLLOWING THE EQF

(increase of the qualification level for young people by 2020 and fight against dropping out)
The application of the European qualification framework (a translation grid for European qualifications) to simplify and make the various European qualifications understandable is still in the design phase in most countries. In Belgium, Flanders is in the application phase (Decree of 30 April 2009 on the Flemish Qualification framework), whereas Wallonia is in the design phase. This entire process will be completed in all EU Member States by 2011. Only 3 countries (Ireland, the UK and France) are already in the revision phase.

IMPLEMENTATION OF A NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF)

There is need for information on the qualifications and competences regarding career guidance counselors. The Flemish qualification structure has been developed as a common tool for education, training and work. At this moment there is a growing need for professional skills and the risk of skill mismatching and how to respond to this situation; - environmental change, new energy sources, green jobs are high on the competence and qualification agenda.

The future relation of the Qualifications Structure to the EQF will facilitate transnational mobility.

Six pilot projects were started to gain experience with the process of developing qualifications and relating them to a particular level of the structure. At the same time, the developmental process towards a qualifications databank was initiated.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The inspectorate is one of the pillars of the **quality assurance mechanism**. A team of inspectors monitor the quality of schools. The system of school reviews is currently being scrutinised with the objective to improve their efficiency and impact. Having a more focused review based on risk indicators is one possible avenue to increase accountability for schools at-risk (some schools attract only low or unqualified pupils while other schools have only interest in pupils, being school examples for each school). High quality assurance stands also for high equality and access for anyone to start developing its talents in any school.

A framework for general and automatic recognition of degrees and qualifications based on recognition of the quality assurance system could be found in the Decrees on the Structure of Higher Education.

Another important measure was the authorization of the accreditation body to recognize foreign accreditations and quality judgements provided that they comply with the Bergen Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

In 2007-2008, in the French-speaking Community, several pilot projects were launched to develop a Qualification Framework. One of the objectives of these projects is to match education offer and skill needs of the professional sectors. The creation of a new Qualification Agency is decided mainly to cope with the connection between education and vocational training (but will not deal with the 6/7/8 EQF level); and its main goal is to create more flexible pathways for the citizen.

Validation process is based on an orientation memorandum by the social partners and employment services, who are deciding for which jobs; validation would create added value for the employers.

All higher education programmes were transformed into the Bachelor-Master structure.

Professional Bachelor's programmes have the objective to bring students to a level of general and specific knowledge and competences required to perform a particular profession or group of professions independently. A professional Bachelor's programme can therefore lead directly to a place in the labour market.

The main objective of the **academic Bachelor's** programmes is that students will go on to a Master's programme. Thus, they are geared towards bringing the students to a certain level of scientific or artistic knowledge and competences, required for scientific or artistic work in general, and towards a specific field of sciences or arts in particular.

Preparing students for the labour market is only a secondary objective. Some Bachelor's programmes are a follow-up to another (professional) Bachelor's programme. This follow-up programme is geared towards the broadening of or specializing in competences acquired during the initial Bachelor's programme.

Master's programmes have the objective to bring students to an advanced level of scientific or artistic knowledge and competences required for scientific or artistic work in general, and to a specific domain of sciences and arts in particular, which is required for autonomous

scientific or artistic work or to apply this scientific or artistic knowledge independently in one or a group of professions.

GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY IN VET

The rationale for the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area is to provide a mechanism to relate national frameworks to each other so as to enable international transparency, international recognition of qualifications and international mobility of learners and graduates.

In Belgium, we have three official languages. Therefore, Belgium has three National Europass Centres (NEC). Each NEC is responsible for the promotion in its specific language community.

Implementing ECVET could be important because it creates the following benefits:

- to make possible the validation of learning periods abroad;
- to enhance mobility between countries and between VET-systems;
- to facilitate the Recognition of Prior Learning by introducing the notion of “units” (that is to say, relevant parts of qualifications that can be assessed separately).

In Flanders, the Europass Diploma Supplement is compulsory for higher education from 2007 (although it has no reference to Europass on it).

Until 2008, Flanders had no Europass Certificate Supplement. Europass Certificate Supplements have an added value for employers if they contain relevant information (demand-driven manner and useful for the employer). The NEC in Flanders try to work in a. The development of Europass-documents such as the Certificate Supplement and Diploma Supplement should be adjusted to the needs of the labour market.

The French-speaking Community is making efforts to promote Europass to educational actors (schools, adult education, higher education) by integration in learning programmes, especially those who participate in the Lifelong Learning Programme. A report has been provided to the Ministers proposing an increasing use of Europass in connection with the EQF process.

Several common measures were adopted: the organisation of language modules; language exchanges for trainees; trans-regional training courses; and cooperation on ad hoc events such as job fairs and recruitment following collective redundancies.

Initiatives of this kind will be stepped up in future between regional public services in Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels.

The future relation of the Flemish Qualifications Structure to the EQF will facilitate transnational mobility. The biggest challenge at this moment is an inclusion of a comprehensive Flemish (“national”) Qualification Framework so that Flemish (“national”) qualification levels can be linked to EQF. Afterwards, concertation will be needed with the awarding bodies to implement the second objective: to introduce a reference to EQF levels on each certificate and diploma. Promoting the comparability of qualifications between different national, regional or sectoral contexts and ensuring their future compatibility with EQF. By linking general education qualifications, higher education qualifications and professional qualifications to one comprehensive Flemish Qualification Framework, the permeability between the qualification systems in general education, VET and higher education should improve. The procedures for description and levelling of qualifications are described by the Flemish Decree. It concerns both general education qualifications and professional qualifications. In 2008 and 2009 the Regions and Communities continued the development of competence profiles, defining the set of skills (qualifications) required for each occupation. This was used as the frame of reference for drafting module type of training paths. All

projects are EQF conform. Furthermore, the Public Employment Services cooperate to ensure that these skill sets are comparable in order to promote inter-regional mobility.

Strategy: Impact on VET systems: professional qualifications are defined by the social partners of the professional sectors. These qualifications will be the standards for the professional education and training systems.

In the French-speaking Community there is a fear that deadline pressure will lead to a ranking without concrete learning outcomes control. There is in Wallonia as in Flanders the ISCED 97 for education and Bologna structure for higher education. Only vocational training and validation stakeholders seem to find a concrete necessity of learning outcomes based on competency.

There is no Europass Certificate Supplement yet, but it is asked by the agency to create links to the new processes.

In 2007, 6093 Europass CVs have been completed online by citizens residing in Belgium.

OTHER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

A) *Dutch - speaking Community*

The areas where the most striking progress has been made are:

- 1) the implementation of the Generation Pact to increase employment when starting and ending a career, including via a new and active vision of reform;
- 2) the reassessment of training courses;
- 3) the further development of support for short-term jobseekers and the introduction of a new monitoring and support system for the long-term unemployed; initial results are positive;
- 4) refinements to the structure of financial incentives on the labour market via additional tax cuts, bonuses for employers and the introduction of the work bonus;
- 5) active referral by the employment services to the service vouchers system, thus contributing to the system's growing success;
- 6) the enhanced exchange of vacancies between the various employment services and the implementation of an action plan to help the unemployed in Brussels to find jobs on the labour market in the area around the city;
- 7) the implementation of the system for validating acquired skills;
- 8) first global policy priority for education and training in Flanders (2005-2009) with relevance for VET: equity - equal chances - and target group approach (disadvantaged, low skilled, disabled, migrants and the elderly) where necessary.

B) *Wallonia*

There is an urgent need to offer tailored solutions by providing guidance and training to jobseekers, including young people, in the various, and constantly changing, technical trades (mechanic, tool-maker, welder, etc.). Hence there is an evolving need to define common objectives and targeted actions in the area of education, training and getting people into employment with an increased involvement of all possible partners (social partners, the Walloon Region, French Community, IFAPME, etc.).

In 2007, in line with the above needs an agreement has been signed between the main parties (including the Walloon Ministers of Education and of the Economy, Employment and Foreign Trade).

The agreement focuses on ten key areas:

1. Promoting and enhancing the image of jobs in the sector;
2. Investment in updating the CCPQ (Professions and Qualifications Agency of the French Community in Belgium);
3. Company work placements;
4. Development of language training;
5. Labour market analysis (will be intensified in response to the qualification shortfalls currently detected through the “Job Focus” plan).
6. Job seeker training;
7. Training of workers in the sector - Due to a number of problems with recruitment linked to a shortage of skills, companies in the sector are significantly increasing investment in continuous training;
8. Involvement of sectors in the development and enhancing of skills centres (20) and advanced technologies;
9. Development of skills validation - It is now possible to have one’s skills validated in thirty jobs;
10. Support in finding employment.

3: VET IN TIMES OF CRISIS

3.1 OVERVIEW

3.1.1 FEDERAL MEASURES AS ANSWER TO THE CRISIS:

Modifications on the Generation Pact (Bill) due to the financial and economic crisis

On 16 December 2005, the Belgian Parliament approved the Bill in execution of the Generation Pact (Bill). The Bill contains various tax measures aimed at stimulating innovation, employing more young people and discouraging early retirement. The Bill incorporates existing incentives for the employment of researchers into the Belgian Income Tax Code (ITC). Belgian universities, high schools and scientific institutions are able to retain part of the taxes they withhold on salaries paid to their scientific personnel as a type of subsidy. This incentive was also extended, as of 1 October 2005, to private enterprises employing individuals who work on research projects in partnerships with universities, high schools and scientific institutions. The Bill provides for two additional exemptions from the payment of wage withholding tax. From 1 January 2006, up to 25 percent for, inter alia, civil engineers working on research and development projects, and from 1 July 2006, up to 50 percent for so-called 'Young Innovative Companies'.

Due to the economic crisis the federal parliament has abolished the tax reductions for some vulnerable groups. These tax reductions for some vulnerable groups have been removed out of the recent "law for reactivation". It creates the opportunity to search for a good solution by means of increasing the employment opportunities of older, low-skilled young people and long-term unemployed.

Federal Recovery Plan

The crisis is an opportunity to promote the sustainability of the economy. Therefore, in the framework of the recovery plans, the Government started working on sustainable development, supported activities in the building sector, and speeded up a number of investment projects. The federal Recovery Plan has *strengthened the sustainable socio-economic levers and investments* in the environment.

For the federal Government, the Research & Development budget credits between 2008 and 2009 rose significantly from 463 million to 514 million euro.

Sectors to support training in times of crisis

No less than 26 sectors (federal actors) have responded to the plea by former Minister of Labour Frank Vandenbroucke in 2008 to continue providing their employees with training and coaching even in difficult economic times. The Minister earmarked € 10 million to cover the costs of continued employee training. The arrangements agreed have been added to existing sector agreements..

The chemical sector, metal-working sector (manual and blue collar workers), the building sector, the social profit sector, the temporary staff sector, the food sector, the transport sector, international trade, the car mechanics sector, the textile sector, the wood-working sector, the public authorities, electricians, the agricultural sector, the ready-to-wear and textile care sector, hairdressers, the restaurant and catering sector, the graphic design sector, the assembly sector, the audiovisual sector, the real estate sector, the artistic sector, the house moving sector and lastly, the Auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar

workers (CPNAE) are the sectors concerned. These 26 sectors, which in 2008 represented nearly 1.3 million employees, are all feeling the impact of the economic crisis. Many are faced with restructuring and forced dismissals.

Below are details of some of the most important initiatives:

- mobile training units for the house moving sector so that courses can be given nearer to the place of employment
- emphasising intake of young people including electricians and those seeking employment in the construction and chemical sectors
- specialised courses in new crops and new trends in the agricultural sectors
- training credits - a record of training credits for the employee which can be used to take part in training courses including in the assembly and ready-to-wear sectors
- drawing up a skills balance for employees in the assembly sector, in Auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar workers (CPNAE) training centres, and in the food and temporary employment sectors
- courses in skills development for 100 supervisors working for local authorities
- a comprehensive plan which will be submitted to the European globalisation fund to give those affected by restructuring in the textile sector a better chance of finding employment
- extra training courses for those moving to another sector to give them a chance to enter other branches such as the social profit sector
- highlighting skills of those who remain working in companies despite restructuring but who have to take on new tasks, such as in the food sector

Source: <http://www.werk.be>

3.1.2. COMMUNITY MEASURES AS ANSWER TO THE CRISIS:

Flanders “Restore trust”

The **Flemish Government** had already implemented a number of measures to counter the crisis with its *recovery plan*, “Restore trust” of 14 November 2008. This plan included actions based around three priority axes:

- Improving the granting of credit to companies
- Strengthening the activation of the labour market policy
- Accelerating and strengthening public and private investments

In Flanders the focus of additional funds in 2008 was on enhancing the research environment, innovation via in-house R&D projects, cooperation between businesses and knowledge centres, and implementing the research career action plan. In 2009, the net increase was 64 million euro, of which 29 million euro was structural and 35 million euro was a one-time capital participation.

Within the competence pole Flanders’ Drive, the innovation centre for the automobile industry in Flanders, 2009 saw the start of a gathering of all the scientific and industrial

knowledge on “the car of tomorrow”, with a view to developing scenarios for Flanders to follow so that it can participate in the development toward hybrid vehicles.

Wallonia Anti-Crisis Action Plan

The Walloon Government adopted on 5 December 2008 an *Anti-Crisis Action Plan* in reaction to the economic crisis. This plan has a budget of €1.5 billion and consists of five intervention priorities:

- *Theme 1 - Accelerate investments:* approval of a package of measures to support public and private investments.
- *Theme 2 - Access to credit:* ensuring that companies have access to financing via different mechanisms.
- *Theme 3 - Employment training:* measures to promote employment, especially for young people, to increase the purchasing power of new low-wage employees and temporarily unemployed people, and measures regarding counselling and training.
- *Theme 4 - Alliance environment employment:* measures regarding support for investments in sustainable development and the development of green sectors, specifically for training and employment.
- *Theme 5 - Simplifying and accelerating administrative procedures* in areas that are critical for economic development.

Priority Action Plan The Marshall plan 1 - Green Marshall Plan (Plan Marshall 2)

The Marshall plan 1 in Wallonia strengthened the educational qualifications. The number of students in training has been increased due to the financial and economic crisis, too. 1,500 additional young people have been trained in 2009. (The number of students enrolled in 2007 was: 8,965.

As follow up of the Priority Action Plan (also called the Marshall Plan), which the Walloon Government implemented during the period 2006 - 2009, the Walloon Government implemented for the 2009 - 2014 legislature by a Green Marshall Plan (Plan Marshall 2.)

The Walloon Government wants to continue reforms for human capital which were started in the scope of the “*Contrat pour l’Ecole*” (Contract for school) regarding qualifying education, encouragement of life-long learning, development of multilingualism, and promotion of the qualifying and pre-qualifying training on offer, specifically to meet the needs of sectors and deal with bottlenecks.

The competitive poles: The industrial policy of the Region will be further developed.

Development of “human capital, knowledge, know-how and research” axis of the programmes co-financed by the Structural Funds in the Walloon Region and the French-speaking Community, are projects that aim to develop life-time training. This particularly concerns the development of skills centres and advanced technology centres (via FEDER for infrastructure, via the ESF for training activities), the implementation of the mechanism for skills validation and evaluation of experience, the development of work-linked training and of job-focused training, as well as the e-learning strategy (the responsibility of the AWT).

A second wave of projects related to this axis was approved in April-May 2009. At the level of the ESF, these were to do with job-related training activities, validation of skills, and evaluation of experience. A total budget of 65 million euro was allocated (ESF+WR/CF). Furthermore, 10 new FEDER projects on equipping Skills centres and advanced technology centres (CTA) were chosen, for a total budget of 30.2 million euro (WR+FEDE).

Wallonia is working on a specific integration credit whereby the most hard-to-place job-seekers (such as low-skilled people, the long-term unemployed, welfare cases and non-

Belgians) are counselled individually. In 2008 3,170 job-seekers were followed up via a specific integration agreement. As part of the anti-crisis measures, it was decided to help job-seekers who agreed to take a low-paid job - after counselling - with continued work counselling and paying their childcare and transport costs.

Secondly there is in Wallonia the already existing measure that will be further strengthened "Job tonic (launched in 2005 by the regional minister of work): it stands for strengthening of the links between IVET or CVET (school leavers) and the labour market. This measure is granting the employer an annual allowance via points. It aims to subsidize the wages of young and low-skilled workers who are recruited in the framework of this measure.

Springboard for Young People is a measure in the framework of promoting youth entrepreneurship in Wallonia. It was set up under an EU programme in March 2007 and it improves youth skills by offering practical work experience in a foreign business located in the EU zone. This measure will end on 31 December 2012.

3.2 EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS ON VET AND CORRESPONDING MEASURES

Due to the foreseen consequences of the financial crisis many industrial sectors are in crises not only in Belgium but worldwide: the most important the automobile sector, the construction sector, etc. Employment has declined by 0.8% in 2009, which will correspond to a net loss of 34,600 jobs. The employment rate will fall to 62.7% in 2009 and will fall further to 61.5% in 2010. Combined with a rise in the active population, the reduction in employment will give rise to an increase in the harmonised unemployment rate to 8.2% in 2009.

This rate will increase further in 2010 to reach 9.4%. Since the breakout of the crisis, the rise in total unemployment in Belgium has, up to now, been lower than the average rise in the EU27 (or the euro zone), and is even one of the lowest in the 27 Member States.

In the framework of the Lisbon benchmarks and in responding to the crisis Belgium accelerates the execution of the coordinated policy measures to improve the functioning of the labour market, to revise unemployment benefits to ensure that the unemployed can return to the labour market more easily and quickly, to increase employment participation (especially, older employees and immigrant employees), to reduce regional differences, and to ensure that more people follow lifelong learning in all Regions.

Regarding lifelong learning, all the governments in Belgium are increasing the number of internships; are improving systems that facilitate lifelong learning; 3) are rolling out basic services for career guidance; 4) are stimulating all impulse programme for sectors to train people in times of crisis and are offering additional bridging premium to improve skills during a reduction of working hours.

The economic crisis is both a threat and an opportunity: a threat because in companies, investments in training are often the first thing to be cut back when savings are required; an opportunity because the available time can be used to acquire new qualifications. Moreover, the current recession necessitates an accelerated response to those sectors and professions that will offer the most opportunities in future, such as the care sector and the environmental economy. The development of the required skills has to be implemented today.

3.2. 1.(NEW) SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The heads of the sectors to support training, believe that **skills development helps** employees to cope and **keeps companies competitive**. For this reason, the Minister earmarked extra funding to give them the possibility of continuing to invest in training and education. The sectors drew up new agreements in addenda to the existing sector agreements. Depending on the size of the sector and the extent to which it is affected by the economic crisis, the sectors concerned will now be given some of the financing set aside for this purpose.

The addenda differ per sector but all seem more or less to be promoting an increase in training programmes and assistance for those employees who are affected by restructuring. In practical terms, they plead for an increase in the training budget and adjusting the range of training programmes to fit in with changed circumstances. For those employees who are affected by restructuring, a system will be set up to monitor the quality of their outplacement and they will be given extra insight into their own possibilities by creating a personal record of skills or training CVs. Most sectors offer job seekers a range of training options free of charge. In most sectors, there is also an emphasis on training for those employees suffering from economic unemployment.

Further skills development helps employees and unemployed school leavers to cope and it keeps companies competitive. The sectors will further support training in times of crisis and will further co-operate with (high) schools by emphasising intake of young people including electricians and those seeking employment in the construction and chemical sectors, by the development of specialised courses in new crops and new trends in the agricultural sectors, etc...

3.2. 2. POSITIVE IMPLICATIONS THE IMPACT OF THE CRISES ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The strengthening of (new) green jobs in the whole of Belgium (investments in energy) will increase: part of the action plan in Flanders, VIA Flanders in action and the Marshall plan in Wallonia.

FLANDERS

The impact of the crises on education and training could have positive implications on the **shortage of teachers**. It is still difficult to fill in a vacancy. There was already the upgrading of the teacher's profession, but it will be strengthened due to the economical and financial crisis. The former reform (one single common professional profile for all levels of education) has introduced one single professional title: no distinction is made between teachers who have studied at a college of higher professional education, a university or in adult education courses. A common set of basic competencies for teachers in secondary education has also been developed. The distinction between teachers (formerly teachers with a diploma of secondary teacher training, lower level) and formerly teachers qualified for higher secondary education) no longer exists.

Measures (2009) accelerated by the crisis in Flanders

- The launching of an action plan for future engineers by the former Flemish minister for Education and Work 21-04-2009 <http://www.vlaanderen.be>: extensive action plan for the technical and vocational education: pupils must become the future engineers working with solar boilers, solar panels or other green technology.

- The further development of the qualification structure by the former Flemish minister for Education and Work in the Dutch - speaking Community and the upgrading and creation green job profiles
- Measure taken by (May 2009) the former Flemish minister for Education and Work “Experience as a factor in recruitment for many technical jobs” (The experience certificate will be taken into account for a list of 15 professions from different sectors).

Enhancing competency recognition in Flanders: The economic crisis has accelerated this process

Recognition of acquired competencies gives visibility to skills needed on the labour market and matches them with the needs on that market in a purposive and cost-effective manner. The Government of Flanders and the social partners want a breakthrough for the competence certificate on the labour market. The economic crisis has accelerated this process To this end, initiatives are being prepared to assess the ‘market value’ of the competence certificate better when selecting a new occupation, to develop standards faster and to set up test centres for more occupations so as to create broader support for competence certificates among employers, job seekers and workers. Furthermore, beyond the competence certificate, efforts are made to give visibility to and to appreciate acquired skills, through personal development plans and portfolios.

In the framework of the crisis the combination of the narrow approach VDAB started a pilot project measuring the [effectiveness of VDAB outreach pilots for unemployed](#) people who were not in contact with VDAB Antwerp. This project is running as from 17 September 2009 and will end before the Belgian presidency. VDAB Antwerp, the regional Public Employment Service, has set up several outreach pilots for unemployed people who are not in contact with VDAB Antwerp especially non responding or unknown (young) unemployed and/or ethnic minorities.

This evaluation research has the following aims: 1) collection of qualitative information on the target group in the projects; 2) evaluation of the effectiveness of current and past practices in the city of Antwerp; 3) identification of the added value and design options of the VDAB outreach approach. The study is based on a qualitative and mixed method approach through the analysis of administrative data; local agreements and project descriptions; interviews with caseworkers and managers at the local level.

This evaluation research will create employability and will stimulate access to IVET and CVET.

FLANDERS & WALLONIA

Institutions responsible for **Independent Entrepreneurship** (Syntra in Flanders and IFAPME in Wallonia) expect **more registrations** for their training courses. An adaptation of training courses for Independent Entrepreneurship is one of the possibilities. No recent figures are available. The registration for apprenticeships within these training providers (Independent Entrepreneurship (Syntra & IFAPME) will increase.

More and better on-the-job-training via the implementation of sector covenants (agreements between social partners, sectors and the Flemish government) with 24 professional sectors for the period 2007-2009 there is a commitment to offer 30.000 trainee posts for VET-teachers. This is **another way to update VET-teachers’ skills and**

competences. (cfr. operational structures regional technological centres-/VDAB/ Syntra Training/ centres 2004 Flanders / Dual Vocational Education and Training Centres Centres for Advanced Technology together / FOREM competence centres /IFAPME 2008 (Wallonia)).

BRUSSELS REGION

In Brussels (COCOF), 150 supplementary Dutch language training courses were offered, while all pupils in secondary education in the German-speaking Community were offered an internship.

In the course of 2009 the Regions and Communities continued the development of competence profiles, which define which set of skills (qualifications) is required for each occupation. This was used as the frame of reference for drafting often module type of training paths. All projects conform to the European qualification framework, EQF. Furthermore, the Public Employment Services cooperate to ensure that these skill sets are comparable in order to promote inter-regional mobility.

3.3 LONGER TERM CONSEQUENCES AND FUTURE RESPONSES

It is imperative to follow the consequences of the economic crisis on the labour market closely and to avoid short-term unemployment turning into structural (long-term) unemployment. The strategy to stimulate job seekers will be continued.

In the secondary level education of the three communities, the investments in technical and vocational education were carried out as planned and will continue despite the crisis, which entails an injection of about 25 million euro per year (with a significant contribution by the European structural funds). Anti-Crisis Measures for combating unemployment in all the regions and communities as from October 2008 the use of time credit is increasing.

The Law implementing measures to sustain employment in times of economic downturn was published in the Belgian Official Journal on 25 June 2009. Three types of specific measures, applicable during the second half of 2009, aim at decreasing the amount of time worked and reducing salary costs while maintaining purchase power for the workers: temporary unemployment for white-collar workers, crisis related time credit and temporary collective reduction in working time. Only companies in serious difficulty can apply for temporary unemployment for white-collar workers and crisis-related time credit. It concerns companies facing a decrease in turnover or production of at least 20% compared to last year or companies with blue-collar workers already temporarily unemployed during 20 % of their normal working time. In addition, the company must have a sectoral or company collective bargaining agreement, or an approved company plan.

TEMPORARY UNEMPLOYMENT FOR WHITE COLLAR WORKERS

The employer can suspend the employment contract of a white-collar worker entirely for a maximum of 16 weeks. He can also partially suspend the employment contract for a maximum of 26 weeks. In case of a partial suspension, the white-collar worker should work at least 2 days a week. He will receive an unemployment benefit from the national employment office and an additional supplement from the employer which must be at least equivalent to the one received by temporarily unemployed blue-collar workers.

CRISIS RELATED TIME CREDIT

By means of an individual written agreement between the employer and the worker, the working time of a full-time worker can be reduced by 1/5 or 1/2 during a period of one to six months. During this time, the worker is entitled to receive compensation from the national employment office. An additional voluntary contribution can be paid by the employer. Crisis related time credit has no influence over regular time credit.

TEMPORARY COLLECTIVE REDUCTION IN WORKING TIME

The employer can reduce the working time by 1/5 or 1/4 by means of a collective bargaining agreement. In this case, a social security contribution exemption is applied (600 EUR for a 1/5 reduction and 750 EUR for a 1/4 reduction) per worker and per quarter. When the reduction in working time is combined with a 4 day working week, this amount is increased to 1,000 EUR and 1,150 EUR respectively per worker per quarter. However, it must be noted that at least 3/4 of the social security contribution exemption must return to the workers by means of a wage supplement.

OTHER OUTCOMES OF THE CRISIS

More investment in training for technicians who are involved with the latest developments in environmental technology, mobility, chemical, building automation, ICT is one of the outcomes of the crisis.

It is also important to mention the launching of an action plan for future engineers in Flanders (Note 21-04-2009 of the Flemish minister for Education and Work, <http://www.vlaanderen.be>) which implies an extensive action plan for the technical and vocational education: pupils must become the future engineers working with solar boilers, solar panels or other green technology.

The Marshall plan in Wallonia strengthens the educational qualifications. The number of students in training has been increased due to the financial and economic crisis, too. 1,500 additional young people have been trained in 2009. (The number of students enrolled in 2007 was: 8,965)

4: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Education is the responsibility of the linguistic communities of Belgium (Dutch-speaking; French-speaking, and German-speaking communities) and continuing vocational training, which is also the most important tool for work placement through in-service and further training, is the responsibility of the Regions (based on territory) since the constitutional reform of 1988. The three Regions are the Flemish or Dutch-speaking Region, the Walloon Region and the bilingual Brussels-Capital Region.

4.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR IVET

A. DUTCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The Dutch - speaking Community consists of the Flemish Region and the Flemish-speaking institutions of the Brussels-Capital Region. Education policy is the responsibility of the Flemish Minister of Education and the Flemish Administration. The Community subsidises schools governed by other public authorities (the provinces and municipalities), or private persons (schools governed by a private person constitute what is known as the ‘independent education system’).

B. FRENCH COMMUNITY

The French Community includes the Walloon Region without the German-speaking Region and also the French-speaking institutions of the Brussels Capital Region. The Government of the French Community is the top-level authority for education in the Community. The Community subsidises schools governed by other public authorities (the provinces and municipalities), or private persons (schools governed by a private person constitute what is known as the ‘independent education system’).

C. GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The German Community covers the German-speaking Region. The Parliament and the Government of the German-speaking Community are the top-level authorities for education in that Community.

The Regions are responsible for vocational training if it is closely related to employment (i.e. employment-finding, re-entry in the labour market, in-service training, etc.) and is used as an instrument for an employment and economic expansion policy.

In addition to the management and funding of the public employment services, the Regions also have their own training support system. Usually, these measures imply that the Region picks up part of the training cost or pays a premium to companies that use the training programmes. A number of Community actions contribute to the vocational training policy in the form of education channels funded and organised by Communities. More specifically, these concern:

Continuing education, that chiefly targets employees, jobseekers and youngsters who have finished their full-time compulsory education; the aim is that they obtain a higher qualification than the one they already have and refresh their general knowledge;

As part of continuing education in the three Communities *second chance education* prepares people for the exams of the Examining boards of the Communities and that targets adults above the age of 18 who want to obtain their general or technical secondary education degree; Another part of continuing education is *distance education (written education)* that is organised by the Communities and entitles people to sit the exams of the examining boards of the Communities; and further more there are the initiatives of universities and colleges of higher education regarding lifelong learning in the three Communities, particularly the organisation of courses outside normal working hours (evenings and weekends).

DUTCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The law of 29 June 1983 on compulsory education specifies that minors (Belgians and foreigners alike) are subject to compulsory education for a period of 12 years. It starts in the school year during which the child turns 6 and ends when the child becomes 18 years of age.

Nowadays, secondary education has a more uniform structure and is subdivided into 3 stages.

Two important reforms determine the current uniform structure of secondary education. Firstly, the two main types (the comprehensive type - type I- and the type offering various courses of study - type II) have been replaced by a new general framework. The former national legislation (adopted prior to the transfer of responsibilities from the Federal government to the Community) of 1971 (type I) and 1957 (type II) has been replaced by the Secondly, over the past 30 years secondary education has evolved towards one uniform legislation for the entire secondary education system (technical and vocational education included) as far as matters such as certification, curricula, pupil assessment, etc. are concerned.

A new reorganisation was established by the Decree of 1998 which specified various measures in relation to secondary education and amended the Decree of 25 February 1997 on elementary education. An important objective of the Decree of 1998 was the optimisation of the orientation of pupils, so that each pupil would receive an education which corresponds best to his own interests and capacities. This meant that a number of educational problems had to be tackled. Some of these challenges were the following: the increasing number of pupils in special education, the growing number of school failures, the elimination mechanism which characterises the secondary education system, the output of unqualified secondary education pupils in the labour market, and so on.

Reforms were introduced in five areas, that is to say, the rationalization and the reshuffle of educational provision, stimulation of the schools' local autonomy, additional efforts for pupils with learning difficulties, the integration of mainstream and special education and the modularisation of vocationally-oriented education. Compulsory education is full-time until the age of 16. Only pupils who have successfully completed the 1st stage of secondary education (i.e. have passed) can opt for part-time compulsory education from the age of 15. This means that pupils must attend part-time education which consists of at least 360 hours per year up to 30 June of the year in which they turn 16, and at least 240 hours per year up to 30 June of the year in which they turn 18.

- The following legislation is of importance to *secondary education*: The main part of the legislation (Decisions of the Flemish government and Decrees) concerns organisation of forms and levels of education. Educational legislation also reflects inclusion in society, taking into account all kinds of disabilities.
- Law to amend certain stipulations of the education legislation of 29 May 1959, also called the 'Schools Pact Act' (this law indicates how education was structured and who are the competent actors in the Dutch - speaking Community at that time).

- Decision of the Flemish government of 31 July 1990 laying down the organisation of part time vocational secondary education.
- Decision of the Flemish government of 31 August 2001 laying down the organisation of the school year in secondary education.
- Decision of the Flemish government of 25 May 2004 to establish centres for part-time vocational secondary education.
- Decision of the Flemish government of 14 July 2004 concerning the experimental Brussels' curriculum in full-time secondary education.
- Decision of the Flemish government of 12 December 2003 concerning the integration of pupils with a moderate to serious intellectual disability into mainstream primary and secondary education.
- Decision of the Flemish government of 10 February 2006 concerning subsidies to pupils in secondary education courses which will lead to the filling of shortage occupations
- Decree of 14 December laying down the organisation and operations of the Regional Technological Centres (RTCs).

Final and developmental objectives

- Decree of 24 July 1996 to ratify the final and developmental objectives of the first stage of mainstream secondary education.
- Decree of 18 January 2002 to ratify the final objectives of the 2nd and 3rd stage of mainstream secondary education (ratifying DECISION FLEMISH GOVERNMENT 23/6/2000).
- Decree of 20 December 2002 to ratify the final objectives of the third grade of the 3rd stage of mainstream vocational secondary education (ratifying DECISION FLEMISH GOVERNMENT 20/9/2002).
- Decree of 7 May 2004 to ratify the specific final objectives determined by decree for general secondary education (ratifying DECISION FLEMISH GOVERNMENT 17/10/2003).
- Decree of 2 June 2006 to ratify the specific final objectives 'top sports' determined by decree for general and technical secondary education (ratifying DECISION FLEMISH GOVERNMENT 10/3/2006).
- Decision of the Flemish government of 16 September 2005 regarding the admissibility and equivalence of applications to deviate from the specific final objectives for general secondary education laid down in the decree.
- Ministerial Order of 12 May 2006 to implement the Decision of the Flemish government of 4 April 2003 to support bridging projects between economy and education.

Part-time vocational secondary education

- DECISION FLEMISH GOVERNMENT of 31 July 1990 concerning the organisation of Service Secondary Vocational Training
- DECISION FLEMISH GOVERNMENT of 14 September 2001 concerning pathway-to-work guidance
- DECISION FLEMISH GOVERNMENT of 28 May 2004 concerning Centres for Part-time Education
- Apprenticeships: DECISION FLEMISH GOVERNMENT of 24 July 1996

Part-time training

- Decision of the Flemish government of 8 July 2005 laying down the organisation, standards and funding of part-time training programmes which meet the part-time compulsory-education requirements.
- Circular letter SO/2005/09 - Part-time training courses which meet the part-time compulsory education requirements.

FRENCH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY (SELECTION OF THE MOST RELEVANT LEGISLATION)

Organizational IVET issues, curricula, learning outcomes, key skills

Decree of 24 July 1997 on Modernization of curricula in schools and evaluation procedures including learning outcomes and acquisition of key skills

- Decree of 30/06/1989 regarding the Executive of the French Community the Committee for approval of diplomas and certificates of secondary education,
- Decree of 02/06/1998 organizing artistic secondary education in the French - speaking Community. Decree of 03/03/2004 governing special secondary education. A law passed on 6 July 1970 governs the organisation of education for children with special needs.
- Decree of the Government of the French Community regarding the basis certificate for studies in secondary education, 03/05/1999.
- Decrees of 08/03/2001, 30/03/2000, 16/03/2000, 17/05/1999, 5/05/1999 for final skills and knowledge required for students in secondary education
- Decree of 19/07/2001 on the organization of the first stage of secondary education
- Decision of the Government of the French - speaking Community of 31/08/1992 executing the decree of 29/07/1992 regarding the organisation of full-time secondary education 31/08/1992.
- Decree of 19/07/2001 on alternating secondary education
- Decision of 30/04/2003 of the Government of the French - speaking Community modifying the list of the basic options in the secondary education and defines the modifying measures
- Decree of 30 June 2006 on the educational organization of the first stage of secondary education concerning the provisions allowing a better knowledge of basic skills.
- Decision of the Government of the French - speaking Community of 30/04/2003, that modifies the list of the basic options in the secondary education and defines the modifying measures.
- Decree of 17/07/2003, which relaxes mainly the requested full certification for immersion education.
- Decision of 18/02/2004 of the Government of the French - speaking Community regarding learning via linguistic immersion for secondary education schools. It holds the list of the secondary education schools authorized to implement the linguistic immersion.

Teaching issues:

- A decree adopted on 3 July 2002, which entered into force in September 2003, redefined in-service training of teachers in specialised education (both for enseignement fondamental and for secondary education).
- Decision of the Government of the French - speaking Community organizing the “*Agrégation*” professional qualification, which provides access to the profession of teaching) of higher secondary education in the High Schools of Arts, 17/09/2003.
- The decree of 3 March 2004 on the organisation of specialised education redefined certain aspects of teachers’ conditions of service, in particular their working hours. Cooperation agreement (24/07/2003) on the validation of skills in the field of vocational training, concluded between the French Community, the Walloon Region and French Community Commission. It creates a system which enables the persons with competencies but without any school certification, to make their competencies officially acknowledged.

The decree’s objective is to restore the balance of educational support in order to ensure equity across schools. It indicates that the organizing powers must now deliberate together in order to organise a rational distribution of options. The decree also contains the rules for the allocation of the total number of teacher-periods.

GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Legislative framework and IVET

The German Community covers the German-speaking Region. The Parliament and the Government of the German-speaking Community are the top-level authorities for education in that Community. The Regions are responsible for vocational training if it is closely related to employment (i.e. employment-finding, re-entry in the labour market, in-service training, etc.) and is used as an instrument for an employment and economic expansion policy.

Administrative levels with decision-making authority are subject to the authority of the Ministry of Education (Ministerium der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft, also organisator of IVET).

The structures of full-time secondary education have been fixed in the Grundlagendekret dated August 31, 1998. All secondary schools in the German-speaking Community are composed of three Stufen (stages) of two years each:

- 1st stage :Beobachtungsstufe (observation stage) (1st and 2nd year in secondary education)
- 2nd stage: Orientierungsstufe (orientation stage) (3rd and 4th year)
- 3rd stage :Bestimmungsstufe (destination stage) (5th and 6th year)

They are organised in three distinct education forms beginning with the 2nd stage :

- allgemein bildender Unterricht (general education)
- technischer Unterricht (technical education)
- berufsbildender Unterricht (vocational education)
 - Law on the general structure of secondary education
 - Decree concerned with the responsibilities entrusted to school providers and staff and with general provisions of an educational and organisational nature for pre-primary, primary and secondary mainstream education

School-based part-time education (Teilzeitunterricht) only exists in two secondary schools which mainly offer education in technical and vocational form.

Pupils may complete the whole of secondary schooling in a single institution, unless they want to have an educational program (combination of optional subjects or of specialised sections in technical or vocational education) which their institution is unable to present.

Royal decree concerned with the organisation of secondary education

At the end of the third stage in vocational education form, a seventh year in secondary education (i.e. a third year in this third stage) can be added freely and so making it possible for the students in this form of education to also be awarded the Secondary Education Final Certificate *Abschlusszeugnis der Oberstufe des Sekundarunterrichts*, which opens the way to subsequent studies in higher education. In contrast to the two other education forms, this certificate is not awarded at the end of the sixth year in vocational education form.

ROLE OF COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS IN IVET

The 5th state reform (the so-called Lambermont agreements) in 2001, gave the different Communities both more financial resources and given control over education, agriculture, foreign trade and development cooperation. Furthermore, as a result of the Municipalities and Provinces Act, the regions were in charge of and had to oversee the subordinate administrations within their territory (provinces, municipalities, and public centres for social welfare). These Lambermont agreements play an important role regarding financial resources for schools of municipalities and provinces.

Without financial means a Community is not able to organize an independent educational policy. Compulsory education is free as stated in the constitution.

As recently as 2007, no one could establish how many children between the ages of 6 and 18 were complying with compulsory education within the Brussels-Capital Region. In 2007 the Dutch - speaking Community Minister for Education and Training and his French-speaking counterpart concluded an agreement on the joint monitoring of compulsory education, which came into operation as of school year 2007-2008 and keeping in mind the Lambermont agreements. The allowances will also be linked to regular school attendance. Moreover, a protocol agreement was concluded with general practitioners and paediatricians regarding the use of medical certificates as a means to justify school absences.

To counter truancy and absenteeism, agreements have also been concluded regarding medical certificates and a prosecution policy, on top of the actions already undertaken within education.

Concluding cooperation agreements exist with other elementary schools outside the school community, with other school communities of elementary or secondary education, institutions for secondary education, part-time artistic education and/or (adult education).

On federal level the Generation Pact (Bill) of 2005 has been modified in 2009 regarding internships for pupils aged (15-18). If they complete successfully an internship in a company, the employer can get a starting premium of the national employment agency (RVA-ONEM). During the period September 2007- August 2008, RVA-ONEM had already reimbursed 8,485 of these starting premiums. By this modification- extension towards a successfully completed internship- the starting premium already existed-, the federal minister for Labour and equal opportunities will certainly increase these internships agreements.

In Flanders a management agreement was concluded with the ICT training network REN-Vlaanderen (Regional Expertise Network) on ICT training in 2007, 2008 and 2009; their activities will also be assessed.

With the Decree of 7 July 2005 on a vocational-immersion agreement the Flemish decretal legislator has assigned various responsibilities to the school communities. These responsibilities can consist of compulsory agreements, mandatory advice formulation or the option to enter into a cooperation agreement.

Employment opportunities for young people have been reinforced under a vocational-immersion agreement with Flemish, provincial and local authorities (Basis Act is the Federal Program Act of 24-12- 2002).

In the 2003/04 school year, 5,693 pupils (aged 15-18) were enrolled in part time secondary vocational education. . Part-time secondary education (for age 15 to 18 year) is provided during 40 weeks a year and comprises 15 weekly teaching periods of 50 minutes each. (In practice, often 1 day of 7 teaching periods is dedicated to general education and 1 day of 8 teaching periods to vocational training.) It comprises a number of sections (such as 'construction', 'caring', 'clothing and 'ready-to wear') which have been further subdivided into courses of study. Part time secondary vocational education was attended by 649 pupils aged 18-25. Six pupils are enrolled in part-time fishery education.

The Part time secondary vocational education centres set their own training programmes (no curricula). Training consists of general education, social and personal development, which are intrinsically linked to the youngster's social and professional context + vocationally-oriented training + (in principle) employment.

ON-THE-JOB-LEARNING' COMPONENT OF PART-TIME SECONDARY EDUCATION (FOR 15 TO 18 YEAR-OLDS)

Since 1991, and especially since the 1993 VLOR initiatives and the initiatives taken by Flanders' Social and Economic Council in 1995, collaboration between education and the business community has enjoyed enhanced structural support through employment and training covenants with the sectors. At the end of 2006, all 26 sector covenants with the world of enterprise were renewed and shall henceforth contain clear objectives regarding supply and quality. Around 103.5 full-time sector consultants are being subsidised for the implementation of the agreements and also for the follow-up of actions in the field. The sector covenants specify, amongst others, how many internship places will be created for part-time and full-time education; how many training programmes can be followed; how many jobs can be created; and how prior learning will be appraised. In a number of cases this leads to negotiations on specific education covenants. Employment opportunities for young people can be reinforced also via sector covenants and education covenants.

4.3 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IVET AND ORGANIGRAM

The roles and impacts of the key administrative and regulatory bodies can be summarised as follows:

IVET TABLE (FULL-TIME AND ALTERNANCE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING)

Responsible Level	Implementation level & Institutions	Decision-making level	Role social partners
European level	European schools	European Commission Policy VET	Policy vocational profiles advisory role
Community level	School: technical and vocational sections Centres for part-time education Syntra Flanders, Flemish agency for independent entrepreneurship, L'Institut wallon de formation en alternance et des indépendants et des petites et moyennes entreprises - Walloon Institute For Alternance Training, Self-Employed And Short And Medium-Sized Enterprise IFAPME Centre, Institut für Aus- und Weiterbildung im Mittelstand IAWM in the German-speaking Community IAWM	legislative level VET	Important advisory role for setting up vocational profiles together with educational councils
Region and Community level	Syntra Flanders IFAPME Centre, IAWM Joint Committee Employers + trade unions	legislative level	Important advisory role for setting up vocational profiles profiles assure close linkage with the labour market

EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union has its impact on the kind of qualifications that are valid in the three communities of Belgium. The European Union has initiated a number of educational and training systems and frameworks in view of the promotion of the European dimension and the improvement of educational quality through cooperation between countries a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (**ECVET**), European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF), Europass.

The further development of educational programmes on Community level (establishment of Epos for European educational programmes, the continuation as from 2007 of the former educational programmes, ex - Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci via Lifelong learning programmes for life) to follow four partial aspects of European cooperation regarding vocational education and training:

- European dimension;
- Recognition of competences and qualifications;
- Transparency, information and guidance;
- Quality control.

CENTRAL OR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The federal legislator retained responsibility for establishing the beginning and end of compulsory education as well as setting minimum conditions for the award of diplomas and certificates.

SOCIAL PARTNERS IN IVET IN FLANDERS

In the modular system, every school programme consists of general education and of vocation-oriented modules in which general educational elements are integrated and attention is paid to core skills. This way the pupil is prepared for specific vocations and also for personal and social functioning. The final objectives set up by the government for each stage and each educational form as well as the vocational profiles set up by the social partners are also important. These profiles assure close linkage with the labour market.

SOCIAL PARTNERS IN IVET IN WALLONIA

Similarly to Flanders, the vocational profiles set up by the social partners are rather important. Social partners are involved in the development of competences for pupils in IVET, relating to the core competences (*socles de compétences*) to be achieved at ages 15-18. These are references designed to determine the notion of education level and to serve as the basis on which to elaborate curricula linked with the labour market or with higher education for those pupils.

4.4 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR CVET

Federal legislation (few legislation due to the constitutional revision of 1988 declaring that education and training became Community matter)

The Law of 7 July 1970 introduced the term Social-Advancement Education.

Royal Decree of 20/07/1971 determining the conditions and procedure for granting equivalence to foreign diplomas and study certificates.

The amending law of 22 January 1985 deals with paid educational leave.

It has replaced the former system of credit hours for continuing training of employees. This law has been modified several times by Royal Decrees (amongst others, access for workers in SME's). The last time when it was modified was in 2009.

Royal Decree No. 495 establishing a system combining work and training for youth to 18 until 25 years (a temporary reduction in employers' social security contributions)

LEGISLATION CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION IN FLANDERS

Decree of 12 June 1991 concerning universities in the Dutch - speaking Community.

Decree of 13 July 1994 concerning university colleges in the Dutch - speaking Community.

Decree of 4 April 2003 laying down the restructuring of higher education in Flanders (Higher Education Reform Decree).

Decree of 19 March 2004 regarding the legal status of students, participation in higher education, the integration of certain departments of higher education for social advancement into university colleges and the support for the restructuring of higher education in Flanders (Decree on participation).

Special Decree of 19 March 2004 regarding participation in higher education, the integration of certain departments of higher education for social advancement into university colleges,

the coordination of the higher education regulations and the modernisation of regulations on Flemish autonomous university colleges. This special Decree implements the principles of the Decree on participation in the community institutions for higher education.

Decree of 30 April 2004 concerning the flexibilisation of higher education and laying down urgent higher education matters (Decree on flexibilisation), amended by the Decree of 20 May 2005. As of 2005-2006, all programmes are being governed by the Decree on flexibilisation. For programmes which are being phased out a deviation is possible.

The Decree of 31 March 2004 defined the Higher Education for Belgium and promoted its integration into the European area of higher education.

Decree of 27 January 2006 ratifies the regulations of the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation regarding the laying down of management principles applicable to accreditation decisions and testing of new programmes vis-à-vis higher education programmes in the Dutch - speaking Community.

Decree of 8 June 2007 concerning study financing in the Dutch - speaking Community. A comprehensive review can be found on:

<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/regelgeving/>

Adult basic education - Specific legislative framework

Decree of 12 July 1990 regulating adult basic education for poorly-educated adults.

Decision of the Flemish government of 18 July 1990 implementing the decree regulating adult basic education for poorly-educated adults. As of 1 September 2008 this decree & decision will be completely abolished.

The Decree of 15 June 2007 concerning adult education.

Decision of the Flemish government of 19 July 2007 concerning the modular structure of the areas of learning within adult basic education.

Decision of the Flemish government of 19 July 2007 concerning the organisation of the course offer in adult education.

Decision of the Flemish government of 19 July 2007 concerning certification in adult education.

Decision of the Flemish government of 12 October 2007 regulating a number of matters

concerning the Centres for Adult Basic Education in implementation of the Decree of 15 June 2007 concerning adult education.

Decision of the Flemish government of 10 November 2007 specifying the accreditation criteria and the curricula submission terms.

Social-Advancement Education - Specific legislative framework

The Law of 7 July 1970 introduced the term Social-Advancement Education (see also federal legislation).

The Decree of 2 March 1999 regulates Social-Advancement Education in relation to its educational mission, its classification, programme regulations, the courses offered, the admission requirements, exams and programme certification, financing or subsidies, the appointment and salary terms and conditions of staff, and the claim-backs and sanctions.

Since the Decree of 2 March 1999 the institutions for Social-Advancement Education are called Centres for Adult Education.

The Decision of the Flemish government of 10 January 2003 more particularly amends the specification of subjects and the classification of subjects in secondary social-advancement education.

Decision of the Flemish government of 30 April 2004 concerning structural changes in higher social-advancement education.

Decision of the Flemish government of 17 September 2004 concerning the transformation of some departments of higher social-advancement education into the Bachelor-Master structure of higher education in Flanders.

The Decision of the Flemish government of 17 September 2004 relates to the reform of some departments of higher social-advancement education into the Bachelor-Master structure of higher education (HO) in Flanders.

Decision of the Flemish government of 18 November 2005 concerning the modular structure of Social-Advancement Education a whole range of different Flemish government decisions.

Circular letter PV/2004/04 Structure of the linear and modular language courses in adult education.

The Decree of 15 June 2007 concerning adult education.

VDAB Vocational training - Specific legislative framework

Decision of the Flemish government of 21 December 1988 concerning the organisation of job placement services and vocational training.

Decision of the Flemish government of 18 July 2003 concerning training and guidance vouchers for employees.

VDAB Decree of 7 May 2004.

Entrepreneurial training SYNTRA Flanders

The Flemish Agency for Entrepreneurial training - SYNTRA Flanders was set up by the Decree of 7 May 2004, in implementation of the framework Public Management Decree of 18 July 2003 which was crystallised by the Organisation Decision of 3 June 2005. It was brought under the remit of the Flemish Minister for Work, Education and Training by the Decision of the Flemish government of 23 December 2005.

Decision of the Flemish government of 24 July 1996: Apprenticeships - basic Decision.

Decision of the Flemish government of 23 February 1999 Entrepreneurial training - basic Decision.

Decision of the Flemish government of 4 April 2003 Continuing training - basic Decision.

Part-time artistic education, Decree of 31 July 1990 (Education Decree II).

Decision of the Flemish government of 31 July 1990 laying down the organisation of part-time artistic education, course of study "Visual Arts". Idem for "Music, Word Craft and Dance".

The Decision of the Flemish government of 15 July 2002 determines the allocation percentage of the number of teacher hours.

The Decision of the Flemish government of 23 March 2007 concerning the organisation of temporary projects in Part-time Artistic Education.

Circular letter ond/13ea/SBT 2001/05 (more flexible learning pathways, updating of courses offered, more autonomous boards).

Circular letter PV/2002/7 skills certificates for part-time artistic education.

Socio-cultural adult work

Decree of 6 July 2001 laying down support for the federation of recognised organisations active in popular (non-formal) adult education (FOV-decree).

Decree of 4 April 2003 concerning socio-cultural adult work.

Decision of the Flemish government of 13 June 2003 laying down the implementation of the Decree of 4 April 2003 concerning socio-cultural adult work.

After an initial assessment the regulations were adjusted by the implementation order of 17 March 2006 and the Decree of 2 June 2006.

After a second assessment the regulations will be adjusted in the course of 2008 by means of an 'amendment decree' which was ratified by the Flemish Parliament at the end of February 2008.

The decree is limited to socio-cultural adult work. It lays down the organisation of the sector, which areas of work will be recognised and subsidised and which terms and conditions should be met.

FRENCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Cooperation agreement on the validation of competences in the field of vocational training, concluded between la French Community, the Walloon Region and French Community Commission (*Accord de coopération*): 24/07/2003

This cooperation agreement creates a system which enables the persons with competencies but without any school certification, to make their competencies officially acknowledged.

Higher education

The [Decree of 5 August 1995](#) foresaw mergers of the Higher Education in the French Community to obtain an optimization of the training, resources and operations but also the consistency and clarity for better integration in the European Higher Education

The Decree of 31 March 2004 defined the Higher Education for Belgium and promoted its integration into the European area of higher education and universities refinancing

Decree of 16/06/2006 regulating the number of students in certain courses in the first cycle of tertiary education.

Decree of 2 June 2006 establishing the academic degrees awarded by the high schools organized or subsidized by the French Community.

Decree of 12/01/2007 on the strengthening of education for responsible citizenship.

Decree of the Government of the French Community 19/05/2004 setting the conditions for admission to university studies for holders of certificates issued in non university institutions.

Decree defining higher education, promoting its integration into the European higher education:

Decree of 31 March 2004 In addition to the legislative achievements of implementing the Bologna Process in the French - speaking Community (in particular the development of “centers of excellence” among the three academies).

Decision of the Government of the French - speaking Community of 17/09/2003 that is organizing the “Agrégation” (professional qualification, which provides access to the profession of teaching) of higher secondary education in the High Schools of Arts.

Decree of 17/07/2003 which relaxes mainly the requested full certification for the immersion education.

Decree of 12/06/2003 holding and organizing the university students’ participation.

A decree dated 21 February 2003 laid down the academic degrees awarded by colleges of higher education.

Decree of 14 November 2002 on the Agency for the Evaluation of Quality of Higher Education in the French - speaking Community Decree of 14/11/02 establishing the Agency for the Evaluation of the quality of higher education organized or subsidized by the French Community.

Decision in the framework of Article 462 of Decree of 20 December 2001 laying down specific rules for Higher Education held in artistic High Schools.

Decree of 17/05/1999, on the organization of higher education for arts Decree of 17/05/1999 on Higher Education for Art.

Decree of 28/10/1999 on the registration, financing and redirecting of students of Higher Education.

Decree of 4/02/1997 modifying legislation in the field of education and educational reform regarding the organization and financing of higher education.

Decree of 09/09/1996 on the financing of the High Schools organized or subsidized by the French - speaking Community.

Decree of 25/07/1996 on charges and professions in High schools organized or subsidized by the French - speaking Community.

Decree of 5 August 1995 establishing the organization of higher education in high schools.

CVET

Decree of the Government of the French Community of 18/12/1984 regarding the concept of distance education The decree also instituted the High Council on Distance Education.

Decree of the executive of 12/11/1991 organising higher full time and non - university education. This Decree completes the list of the departments and options that can be organized in High Schools of Music Arts which are organized or subsidized by the French - speaking Community.

Decree of 12/07/1990 on the organization of the short type higher education.

Decree of the executive of 12/05/1987 establishing the FOREM; and

Decree of 6/05/1999 on the Walloon Service of vocational training and employment.

Decree of the Government of the French Community of 16/04/1991 regarding the organisation of social advancement education.

This decree gives social advancement education a truly specific character, by basing its structures, organisation and orientations on appropriate legal and regulatory foundations.

Decision Government of the French - speaking Community du 8 septembre 1997 what determines areas of training in social advancement education in the French - speaking 8/09/1997.

Decree of 12/07/2001 on vocational training in agriculture.

Decree of 17/07/2003 on reaffirming and regulating the French Community's support for the associations sector.

- Decision of the Government of the French-speaking Community holding the list of the 13th grades (7th year of secondary education) of proficiency and specialization, 30/04/2003
- Decree of 17/07/2003 which redefines the frame in which the associative action is carried out in the domain of in-service training
- The Decree of 31 March 2004 defined the Higher Education for Belgium and promoted its integration into the European area of higher education and universities refinancing
- Decree of 12/01/2007 on the strengthening of education for responsible citizenship

Decree of 07/12/2007 regarding the organization of structural differentiation for mastering all core skills of students

Role of collective agreements in CVET

Up until now 9 inter-professional agreements have been concluded in which the social partners played a leading role in employing and training risk groups: the social partners put the emphasis with regard to financing, the educational package, and others. There are also regional regulations and measures with involvement of social partners such as an apprenticeship agreement and vocational training at the Flemish Independent Enterprise Institute in Flanders (Syntra Flanders) and the Institute of continuing vocational training for the small and medium-size enterprises in Wallonia (IFAPME) (Modifications on the Decrees of 1991 for Syntra Vlaanderen and IFAPME). For the VDAB there is the Flemish Economic and Social Consultative Committee (VESOC) agreement.. This yearly renewed agreement deals with policy issues with a socio-economic dimension. VESOC is empowered to conclude employment agreements. For FOREM (Wallonia): in Training plan - involvement Equipment fund for technical and vocational education; training vouchers (Wallonia and Flanders: Basic Decrees of the Flemish (14-11-2001) and Walloon Government (23-07-1998) on training vouchers); support for the training in business (Wallonia); language vouchers for Brussels training - education (Brussels Capital Region - September 1998). The social partners, main actors for collective agreements in CVET are also represented in the management bodies by

the above-mentioned training institutes: VDAB, FOREM, involved with the implementation of training vouchers.

The 6 inter-sectoral agreements include the Inter-professional agreement of November 1988, the Inter-professional agreement of December 1990, 1992, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2003 and 2007-2008, 2009-2010 and certain Royal Decrees on the national level that deal with financing of training measures for risk groups. Federally there is also the Employment Fund that can also give the sector funds some financial support. Further more there is paid educational leave (recovering law of regional level there are leverage credits and the training vouchers (Flanders and Wallonia).

Interprofessional, inter-sectoral and collective agreements are not binding in the sense of narrow legislation (they could be brought for a labour court and there is no right for a compensation in case of non-application).

The following legislation at federal, Community and regional level is binding in a narrow and broader sense. Federal level legislation is binding for the whole of Belgium, legislation at community level is binding for the concerned community or communities, and legislation at regional level is binding in the regions.

4.5 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CVET AND ORGANIGRAM

The roles and impacts of the key administrative and regulatory bodies can be summarised as follows:

EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union has its impact on the kind of qualifications that are valid in the three communities of Belgium.

The European Union has initiated a number of educational and training programmes in view of the promotion of the European dimension and the improvement of educational quality through cooperation between countries.

Actions are taken in each Community for following four partial aspects of European cooperation regarding vocational education and training:

- European dimension;
- Recognition of competences and qualifications;
- Transparency, information and guidance;
- Quality control.

DUTCH -SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Continuing education and training for young school leavers and adults

Shortly we could say that in the Dutch-speaking Community the institutional framework consists of the following different systems

1. Adult education (*volwassenenonderwijs*)
2. Social-advancement education (Onderwijs voor sociale promotie - OSP) & Adult basic education (basiseducatie).
3. Part time artistic educations DKO
4. Vocational training by the Flemish Public Employment and Vocational Training Agency (Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding - (VDAB)
5. Entrepreneurial training SYNTRA Flanders
6. Training in agriculture
7. Socio-cultural adult work
8. Policy-implementing entities like Diva & Epos (coordinating the co-operation with IVET and CVET institutions)

DIVA is a Training and Alignment Information Service, which is a non-profit organisation and not an agency (*DIVA Dienst Informatie, Vorming en Afstemming* vzw). It unites the public CVET training partners:

- 1) VDAB (vocational training),
- 2) Syntra (entrepreneurial training),
- 3) CBE (Centra voor Basiseducatie - Centres for adult basic education) (adult basic education)
- 4) SoCius (Support Point for non-formal adult work) (socio-cultural adult work),

and the the public training partners responsible for IVET and CVET

- 1) GO! (community education),
- 2) VSKO (Vlaams Secretariaat van het Katholiek Onderwijs - Flemish Secretariat of Catholic Education) (subsidised private Catholic education),
- 3) OVSG (Onderwijssecretariaat van de Steden en de Gemeenten van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap - Secretariat of Education of the Cities and Municipalities of the Flemish Community) (urban and municipal education),
- 4) POV (Provinciaal Onderwijs Vlaanderen - Provincial Education Flanders) (provincial education)

EPOS (European programmes for Education, Training & Cooperation) is an agency that coordinates the “Lifelong Learning Programme” (LLP) (, i.e. the new European action programme in the area of lifelong learning and other programmes such as Erasmus undus and Erasmus Belgica. The National Europass Centre is also part of EPOS. EPOS is the successor to the former Flemish Leonardo Da Vinci Agency. It is a joint venture between the Department of Education and Training, VDAB and SYNTRA Flanders.

The legal basis for this LLP is the Decision of the European Parliament and the Council which was published on 24 November 2006.

ADULT EDUCATION		COMPETENT MINISTER
Adult education	Adult basic education	Education
	Secondary adult education	
	Higher vocational education of adult education	
Vocational training	Vocational training for job-seekers and employees(VDAB)	Labour
	Entrepreneurial training(SYNTRA Flanders)	Agriculture
	Training in agriculture	
Adults and youngsters formal and non-formal	Part-time artistic education(DKO)	Education
Adult work (non-formal)	Socio-cultural adult work	Culture

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND CVET PROVIDERS IN THE FRENCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Tertiary education

Tertiary education encompasses university education, non-university higher education organised in the hautes écoles, and artistic higher education organised in the art colleges and architecture colleges.

A) Non-university tertiary education institutions (hautes écoles)

At the latest by March 31 of each year, the authorities of each haute école submit a complete activity report to the Community Educational Committee, which includes a chapter on the *haute école's* conformance with its educational, social and cultural plan.

A.1. Artistic higher education

Art colleges (17) Two decrees dated 17 May 1999 and 20 December 2001 provided the framework for **B. Universities**

A decree, which became partially effective at the beginning of the academic year 1995-1996, regulates university education. education given in the art colleges, which is henceforth part of higher education.

The French Community is the pouvoir organisateur for the public grant-aided universities. except the

private grant-aided non-denominational universities.

Continuing education and training for young school leavers and adults

A. Education for social advancement

In Education for social advancement training programmes can be associated with others with a view to obtaining an overall set of skills related to a profession, a professional qualification, or an academic title.

B. Part-time artistic education

C. Vocational training for job seekers and workers

In their training centres, the FOREM and Bruxelles-Formation organise a variety of training modules in many different sectors: At Bruxelles-Formation, training programmes are broken down by “poles” that tally with the trade sectors in Brussels. Training programmes provided by FOREM and Bruxelles- Formation are ISO9001 certified.

D. Industrial apprenticeships

The greatest training needs arise in three areas: language proficiency (proficiency in at least two languages other than French), general and specialised technology including information technology, and communication-cooperation.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CVET IN THE GERMAN - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

In the German-speaking Community of Belgium there is only one higher education institution, the Autonome Hochschule. At this time, only three programmes of cycle 1 non-university higher education *kurzer Studiendauer* (ISCED 5B) are provided : one in the department *Health and Nursing Sciences* (initial and further training of graduated nurses and of specialised graduated nurses) and two in the department *Educational Sciences* (initial and further training of teachers in pre-primary education and of teachers in primary education).

Continuing education and training for young school leavers and adults

Some institutions for adult education are oriented towards people in work as well as job seekers, others offer special curricula in order to enable job seekers, both young and old, as well as those who have special difficulty finding work, to become better prepared for the job market. Others offer targeted vocational training or re-training programmes in specialised fields.

ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS IN CVET IN BELGIUM

In recent years, a range of measures has been taken to finance job creation and initiatives to foster training and *occupational integration of ‘at-risk’ groups*. The prime role of these measures has been confirmed by the legislator, and all of the social partners, through a federal law dated 5 September 2001. The *social partners specify in sectoral or company level collective labour agreements* what is to be understood by *‘at-risk’ groups*: long-term unemployed persons, *poorly qualified* unemployed persons, handicapped persons, persons who receive the minimum social allowance (*minimex*), etc. The federal legislator retained responsibility for the following area: setting minimum conditions for the award of diplomas and certificates.

ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS IN CVET IN FLANDERS

In a Flemish employment agreement of 2004 (Vlaams Werkgelegenheidsakkoord) the social partners and the government decided that in 2005, 10 certificates were to be worked out and from 2006, 15 every year. Only financial means are allocated for standards development, which form the basis of the certificates, and for the working of the assessment institutions. The agreement concerning the allocation of this financial means is also the outcome of the common decision of the social partners and the government. There is a limited participation cost for the course participants.

The social partners do also have a great influence on the modifications of educational programmes in high schools and at universities. Jobseekers and those attending part-time compulsory education do not have to pay anything. The VDAB subregional employment committees connect social partners, the principal training providers, and the occupational sectors. They develop synergies between training and employment. Employment-training-education consultative committees, which have been established at the subregional committee level, analyse training needs, develop a directory of education and training offers, and function as employment observatories.

In the modular system, every school programme consists of general education and of vocation-oriented modules in which general educational elements are integrated and attention is paid to core skills. This way the pupil is prepared for specific vocations and also for personal and social functioning. The final objectives set up by the government for each stage and each educational form as well as the vocational profiles set up by the social partners are also important. These profiles assure close linkage with the labour market.

The competence centres are the result of partnerships between the Dutch-speaking Community, VDAB, VLAO-SYNTRA, the social partners from the professional sector, research centres, and universities.

ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS IN CVET IN WALLONIA

As in Flanders the competence centres are the result of partnerships between the Walloon Region, the FOREM, the IFAPME, the social partners from the professional sector, research centres, and universities. They benefit from the support of European structural funds. The Management Committee, which convenes the public authorities in charge, unions, and management, determines training policy within the framework of a three-year management contract.

The majority of amounts are allocated to training. Depending on intersectoral agreements, there can be very different approaches with regard to the amount and allocation of the contributions.

The Regions have set up various procedures for the approval of training and occupational integration bodies: non-profit-making associations for occupational integration, on-the-job training enterprises (*Entreprises de Formation par le Travail, EFT*) in the Walloon Region; On-the-job-training workshops (*Ateliers de Formation par le Travail, AFT*) in the Brussels-Capital Region, Socio-occupational integration agencies (*Organismes d'Insertion Socioprofessionnelle, OISP*), etc..

Since 1993, the regions administer vocational education. For example, the policy of the Walloon government includes in its priorities the development of dual vocational education and training (industrial and commercial apprenticeships) and synergies between schools and enterprises. In 1991, a French Community Decree established a permanent structure for dual education and training on an experimental basis for a period of two years. A charter for dual

education and training was signed in March 1993 between the Ministry of Education, the representatives of the different *réseaux* that provide education, representatives from the teachers' unions, representatives from the parental organisations, and representatives from the employers' unions. This charter defined the respective roles of schools and companies. In dual vocational education and training, the educational institution and the company work together to fulfil a double educational role: education and vocational training.

The core skills (*socles de compétences*) are defined as a “reference that presents, in a structured manner, both the basic competencies to be taught until the end of the eight years of compulsory education and those, which are to be acquired at the end of each of the stages of the latter; because they are considered necessary for social integration and the continuation of studies”. These core skills are a group of reference points, which determine the notion of level of instruction, and around which the curricula are structured, devised or approved by the body that regulates and subsidises education. They play the role of learning guides and assessment watchdogs. These general objectives are identical for all schools and they complement the traditional curricula, which in turn outline the learning activities needed to attain these *socles de compétences*.

5: INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5.1. BACKGROUND TO THE INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

In the Belgian Constitution Article 24 lays down the following principle: Access to education is free until the end of compulsory education". In Belgium, both primary and secondary education is obligatory.

The Belgian education and training system has three main levels:

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

- Pre-school or nursery: three years from the age of 2 ½ to 5. Almost all children attend school from the first year of nursery education;
- Primary: 6 years from the age of 6 to 12.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Secondary education, from the age of 12 to 18, includes three two-year cycles:

- an initial common cycle or *gemeenschappelijke* (in the Dutch - speaking Community) / *observation* (in the French Community);
- a second cycle where education is organised in four streams: general, technical, art and vocational;
- a third two-year cycle (eventually three years as a seventh complementary course of secondary education might be added -especially in the Dutch - speaking Community).

The purpose of each cycle is to guide the pupils to the right educational stream (general, technical, art and vocational). The system will be renewed due to its weakness for discovering talents, useful for the labour market.

While most young people attend technical and vocational streams, these streams have less standing than general education. 15.2% of young people aged between 18 and 24 in Belgium have left the education system after the initial cycle of secondary education (not a good trend for the Lisbon benchmark).

Special education, taking the form of eight types of education, is available for children and adolescents with physical, mental or instrumental disabilities and it is organised at primary and secondary levels. At the secondary level, students are prepared for social-occupational integration. *Pupil assessment* takes place within the class. Primary teachers are educators, assessors and judges. At secondary level, assessment and guidance are the task of the Class council made up of the school's principals and class teachers.

Pupils obtaining the Certificate of Upper secondary education may enter higher education (university and non-university). In the Dutch - speaking Community, this certificate is called a "*diploma*".

In theory there are bridges between streams; in practice, transition generally takes place in one direction: downwards as a result of failure. From the age of 15/16, students can attend alternance education.

ALTERNANCE EDUCATION

Alternance education accounts for a minority of young people: from the age of 15/16 after attending two years of secondary education.

It is organised in three ways:

- Alternance education and training centres: Centrum voor Deeltijds Onderwijs CDO in the Dutch - speaking Community; Centre d'éducation et de formation en alternance - CEFA) in the French Community; and Teilzeitunterrichtszenter in the German-speaking Community. Students attend classes at these centres for two days per week and for three days they are involved in work experience.
- The industrial apprenticeship contract (industriële leerlingwezen contract contrat d'apprentissage industriel - CAI) or apprenticeship contract (contrat d'apprentissage) for workers in employment;
- Apprenticeship organised for self-employed occupations, with practical training, in trade skills, commercial training and training for service occupations (tertiary sector)

HIGHER EDUCATION

Non-university higher education consists of a short type (a three-year cycle or **bachelor / *graduaat***) and a long type (two cycles over four or five years). High Schools are organised in 11 disciplines (in the Dutch - speaking Community) and eight streams (in the French Community). After the completion of the long type of non-university education, students are granted with a master or ***baccalauréat*** certificate (which corresponds to the master certificate granted by universities). Higher education of the short type is geared towards the practical and prepares students directly for working life. The long type leads to advanced scientific and/or technological qualifications. *University education* consists of three cycles:

- Cycle 1 (two or three years): bachelor - a qualification which opens the door to the second cycle or to the long type of non-university higher education;
- Cycle 2 (two or three years including the submission of a dissertation): master - a qualification which opens the door to working life;
- Cycle 3 (several years including the submission of a thesis which is defended in public): doctorate.

It is possible to move between the various types of higher education (non-university and university) subject to specific conditions. Universities have an information and guidance service, but High Schools do not.

ORGANIGRAM: THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN BELGIUM

Level	Age	Year	Compulsory	stages and cycles*	Additional information
Kindergarten/ Nursery/pre- primary kleuteronderwijs (NL)/ enseignement maternel (FR)	3-5	3		stage 1, 1 st cycle ISCED level 0	children that are 2 years and 6 months on 30 September can enter Kindergarten
Primary education / or basisschool/ lagere school (NL) primaire (FR)	6-11	6	c	stage 1, 2 nd cycle stage 2, 3 rd cycle stage 2, 4 th cycle certificate primary education ISCED level 1	Note: in the French Community, the schools where Kindergarten and primary education are combined are called les écoles fondamentale (FR)
Secondary education (secundair/ middelbaar onderwijs (NL); enseignement secondaire (FR))	12-17	6	c	Lower secondary education ISCED level 2 stage 3, 5 th cycle certificate (upper) secondary education (ISCED level 3) = having completed the last three yrs of 6 yrs with a certificate diploma secundair onderwijs (NL)- diplôme enseignement secondaire (FR)	general (algemeen (ASO) (NL) (FR)) technical (technisch (TSO) (NL) (FR)) artistic (A) (kunst) (Kunst Secundair Onderwijs (KSO) (NL) ; Enseignement artistique secondaire (FR)) vocational (P) (professionnel (FR); beroeps (BSO) (NL)) special needs (buitengewoon secundair onderwijs (BuSO) (NL); Enseignement spécial secondaire (FR))
Higher Education hoger onderwijs (NL) / or enseignement supérieur (FR)	18-25	1-7		Cycle 1 Cycle 2 Cycle 3	in Flanders: Universities, University Colleges and Colleges (Hogescholen) in Wallonia: Universities, Colleges, Colleges of Arts and Higher Education Institutions of Architecture

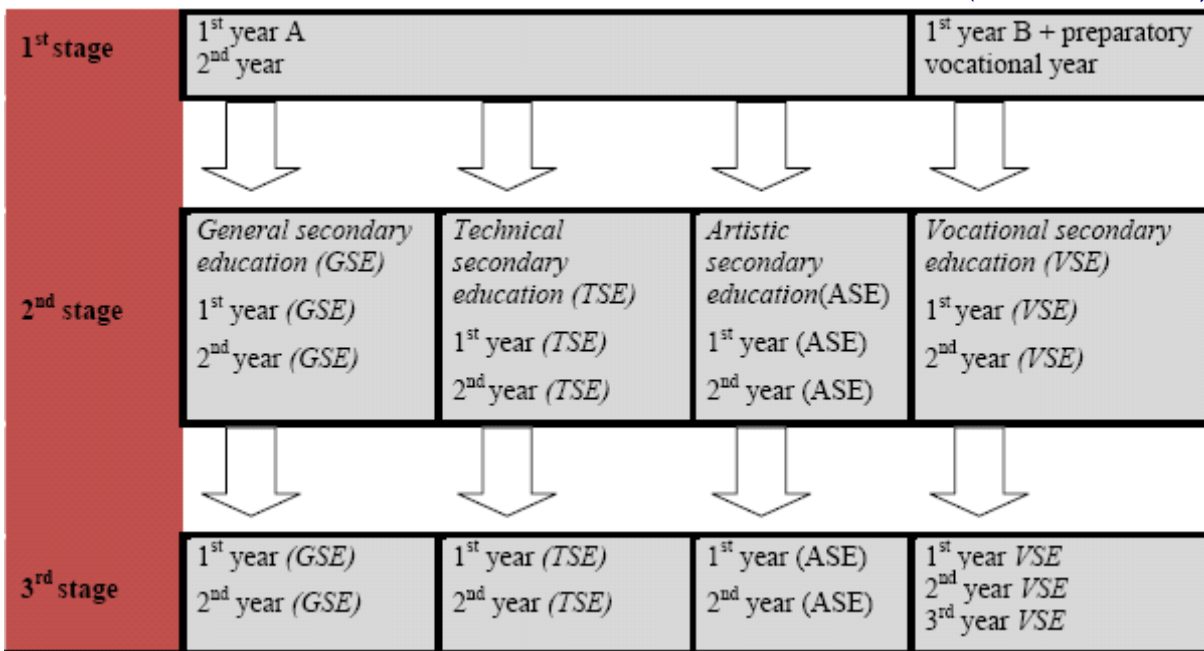
Cycle 1: Bachelor (3 yrs); graduaat (NL); baccalauréat (FR); Bachelor courses (Professional bachelor courses and Academic bachelor courses), Degree or certificate: ISCED level 5

Cycle 2: Master (1-2yrs); Master courses, Degree or certificate: ISCED level 5-6

Cycle 3: Doctor (1-4yrs); Doctorate programmes; Degree or certificate: ISCED level 7

Other courses like postgraduates and the updating and in-service training courses and further training programmes are provided under higher education in the Dutch - speaking Community. In the French - speaking - Community distinctions are made between: University education at Universities (Universités) & University-Faculties (Facultés Universitaires) and Non-university education at Colleges (Hautes Ecoles), which are equivalents of the Flemish “Hogescholen”, Institutes of Higher Education, Colleges of Art/Art Academies (Les écoles supérieures des arts) and Higher Institutes of Architecture (Les Instituts Supérieur d’Architecture).

CHART: THE FLEMISH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: SITUATION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (1 SEPTEMBER 2009)



Source: Flemish ministry of education: Education in Flanders, 2010

5.2. IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL

Type of educational programme	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED level and orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance between school-based and work-based training	Average duration of studies	Transfer to other pathways
Lower secondary general	All sectors asking for low qualified or non qualified workers	ISCED 2 Orientation to ISCED level 3	$\frac{3}{4}$ general subjects and $\frac{1}{4}$ vocational subjects	$\frac{2}{3}$ school-based $\frac{1}{3}$ work-based training	Normally two stages lasting two years each.	educational pathways in Upper secondary general second & third cycle
Lower secondary vocational	All sectors asking for low qualified or non qualified workers	ISCED 2 Orientation to ISCED level 3	$\frac{3}{4}$ vocational subjects and $\frac{1}{4}$ general subjects	$\frac{2}{3}$ work-based training $\frac{1}{3}$ school-based	Normally two stages lasting two years each.	educational pathways in Upper secondary vocational second & third cycle

Secondary education, like primary education forms part of compulsory education. Full-time education may last until the age of 18 or combine full-time education until 15/16 with part-time education from 15/16 to the age of 18.

In general, children are aged 12 when they enter secondary education. They can begin their first year of secondary education if they have obtained their certificate of primary education.

Parents can freely choose their child's school. Access to compulsory education is free of charge and the costs of some school materials are reimbursed by the educational providers. Nevertheless some items of expenditure are borne by parents, including swimming pool admission costs, purchase of the class tasklist, and expenditure linked to cultural and sports activities.

Secondary education institutions offer 28 to 32/34 lesson periods, each lasting 50 minutes, per week and in some cases up to 36 periods where practical work linked to vocational training is involved. Classes are theoretically organized by age group and subject. However, due to pupils repeating a failed year, classes often include pupils of different ages.

Each organizing body is free to select the teaching methods of its choice within the limits of the key stages and core skills to be achieved by the end of cycle 1 of secondary education and the final skills required at the end of secondary education.

In lower secondary education, a compulsory common curriculum for the first two years (cycle 1 or observation cycle) is primarily intended to provide individual pupils with a broad basic education, enabling them to acquire all the skills they require at their own rhythm. This common curriculum includes the following subjects: religion or ethics, mother tongue,

mathematics, history and geography, a foreign language, sciences, physical education, technology, artistic education.

In cycle 1 an additional year is organized for pupils who are seriously lagging behind. This additional year can not under any circumstances be regarded as the equivalent of repeating the previous year.

For pupils who have experienced difficulties in primary school, a first year B with a specially adapted curriculum is organized. This special year concerns around 7,5% of pupils in the first year of secondary education. The objective is to restore pupils' self-confidence and, if necessary, to enable them to come to terms with school and to consolidate their basic knowledge. After the first B year, pupils can either enter first A or second year of vocational education, enabling them to become acquainted with at least two vocational sectors.

In the Dutch - speaking Community there is an agreement concerning the LEARNING DISABILITY FRAMEWORK as from March 2007. After ten years of discussions, the Flemish government reached a political settlement about reforming the care system for pupils with a disability. This system, known as the learning disability framework, should ensure that every child in the Flemish education system gets tailor-made care. This includes both special needs and ordinary education. On the basis of in-depth discussions, including with the Flemish Educational Council, the plan has been expanded with additional guarantees for a successful outcome.

Students enrolled in lower secondary education by programme orientation

TABLE 5.2.1.: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION (VALUES AND .SHARE OF THE TOTAL), 2007							
GEO	TOTAL ISCED2	ISCED2GEN (NUM)	ISCE2 GEN (%)	ISCED2PV (NUM)	ISCE2PV (%)	ISCED2VOC (NUM)	ISCED2 VOC (%)
EU 27	2228386	21716207	97.5	291250	1.3	276408	1.2
BE	426276	240737	56.5	16672	3.9	168867	39.6
BE-WA	182998	97709	53.4	14660	8.0	70629	38.6
BE-VL	243278	143028	58.8	2012	0.8	98238	40.4

Source: Eurostat (UOE); Extracted on: 30-04-2010; Last update: 19-02-2010

BE-WA = French speaking community in Belgium (including small german- speaking community)

BE-VL = Flemish speaking community in Belgium

Description: Students at ISCED level 2 by programme orientation (values and share of the total)

5.3 IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)

Type of educational programme	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED level and orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance between school-based and work-based training	Average duration of studies	Transfer to other pathways
Upper secondary general (last three years of secondary education or the last year of second cycle and the full third cycle)	All sectors asking for low qualified or non qualified workers	ISCED 3 Orientation to ISCED level 4-5A	$\frac{3}{4}$ general subjects and $\frac{1}{4}$ vocational subjects	$\frac{2}{3}$ school-based $\frac{1}{3}$ work-based training	2 years Normally one stage lasting two years.	educational pathways in higher education (in the Dutch-speaking Community as from 2008: higher vocational training)
Upper secondary vocational	All sectors asking for qualified workers	ISCED 3 Orientation to ISCED level 4-5B	$\frac{3}{4}$ vocational subjects and $\frac{1}{4}$ general subjects	$\frac{4}{5}$ work-based training $\frac{1}{5}$ school-based	2- 3 years Normally one stage lasting two years and the possibility of a third year	educational pathways in higher education

Pupils who leave full-time education at the age of 15/16 (full time compulsory education) have to remain in block release training (based on sandwich course arrangements), or undergo apprenticeship or training until they reach the age of 18. The age of 15-18 is part-time compulsory education.

Pupils aged 16 (or those aged 15 who have completed two years of secondary school) may embark on technical education or block release training (sandwich courses), or training covered by the period of compulsory schooling. At this level, education is free (subject to the above-mentioned conditions relating to full-time education) and parents may choose the school or other institution their child attends.

The management of institutions involved in block release training are responsible for their curricula. Courses for pupils receiving this kind of training combine general education with preparation for employment. Apprentices receive practical training three or four times a week, and the rest of the time, they attend theoretical classes.

Block release training is recognized and may result in the award of a certificate equivalent to the one obtained at the end of full-time schooling. Apprenticeship leads to a “vocational aptitude” certificate and/or a “certificate of apprenticeship” awarded on the basis of

continuous assessment and a final examination in the vocational stream. The teaching staff decides which students can receive these qualifications.

In **cycle 2** of the **transitional stream** (general education), in addition to the core education, a certain number of compulsory options may be selected from the following: a second modern language, Latin, Greek, economics, social science, technical and technological education, physical education or art.

In **cycle 3** of the **transitional stream** (general education), an education system incorporating integrated themes (sciences, modern languages, physical education, classics, economics, human sciences, art) or combining options was introduced at the start of the 1993/1994 school year.

In **cycles 2 and 3** of the qualification stream (technical or vocational education), in addition to general education, groups of options representing 17 to 25 periods a week in cycle 2 and 23 to 25 periods a week in cycle 3 are organized.

The group options organized within the framework of *technique de transition* courses, *technique de qualification* courses and vocational courses cover the following ten areas: agronomy, industry, construction, hotel and catering, clothing, applied arts, fine arts, economics, social services and applied sciences.

TABLE 5.3.1.: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL), 2007							
GEO	TOTAL ISCED3	ISCED3GEN (NUM)	ISCE3 GEN (%)	ISCED3PV (NUM)	ISCE3PV (%)	ISCED3VOC (NUM)	ISCED3 VOC (%)
EU 27	22085482	10719847	48.5	1130868	5.1	10234767	46.3
BE	794517	241640	30.4	: (-)	:	552877	69.6
BE-WA	330774	123428	37.3	0	0.0	207346	62.7
BE-VL	463743	118212	25.5	0	0.0	345531	74.5

Source: Eurostat (UOE); Extracted on: 30-04-2010; Last update: 19-02-2010

BE-WA = French-speaking community in Belgium (including small German-speaking community)

BE-VL = Flemish-speaking community in Belgium

Description: Students at ISCED level 3 by programme orientation (values and share of the total)

CERTIFICATION

The certificates are awarded by the schools. Since the start of the 1997/1998 school year, a - Secondary Education Certificate is awarded to pupils who have successfully completed cycles 1 and 2. In the technical and vocational categories of type I education, a “certificate of qualification” is awarded at the end of the sixth and seventh years. A certificate of upper secondary education is awarded to pupils who successfully complete the sixth year of secondary education in the general and technical categories. In the vocational category, pupils who opt for a seventh year (type B or C) may apply for a Secondary Education Certificate. This certificate is ratified by the Homologation Committee.

These certificates are awarded to pupils who have regularly attended and successfully completed the course they chose to follow.

If all forms of VET are considered together, approximately 57% of all young people in upper secondary education are in post-compulsory VET (age 15-18). There are regional differences between the Dutch - speaking Community (61%) and the French-speaking and German-speaking Community (50%).

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION

Within the framework of the open method of coordination for 'Education and Training 2010', the Communities pursued their efforts to guarantee equal access to education and to improve the quality technical and vocational education. The French Community worked on implementing its sizeable reform plan until 2013 by bolstering - and promoting equality in compulsory and higher education.

Flanders introduced a bonus system in order to put pressure on the cost of expensive courses of study.

TABLE 8 A: GRADUATES AT ISCED LEVEL 3 AND LEVEL 4 BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, PROGRAMME ORIENTATION AND SEX (NUMBERS), 2005 AND 2007													
YEAR		2005						2007					
GEO	S	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC
EU 27*	F	1015169	108171	984823	22749	0	215435	1298881	98757	1176169	25386	0	212113
	M	743694	157951	1157304	22432	0	189312	965600	134924	1374844	23488	0	177657
	T	1758863	266122	2142128	45182	0	404747	2264481	233681	2551014	48874	0	389770
BE	F	25380	:	37453	9	:	12920	26350	:	36028	21	:	15080
	M	19491	:	35505	46	:	11110	20334	:	35011	72	:	13011
	T	44871	:	72958	55	:	24030	46684	:	71039	93	:	28091

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection); Extracted: 01-05-2010; Last update: 13-01-2010

• Available total - calculated by Cedefop;

S= sex; M=males; F=females; T= total; GEN=general; PV=pre-vocational; VOC=vocational

In the three communities the school population of secondary education is the largest compared to all other educational levels. The school population reflects also the representing percentage of the Belgian population (60 % for the Flemish speaking community in Belgium, 39,2 % for French speaking community and 0,08 for the German speaking community). There is a high preference for technical and vocational secondary education (40 % and 38 % in the Flemish and French communities respectively compared to the 59 % and 54 % of the general stream). The vocational and pre-vocational orientations represents 43 % in Belgium , a much higher figure than the European average of 2%.

TABLE 5.3.3.- STUDENTS IN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION 2006							
	Total isced3	isced3gen	%	isced3pv	%	isced3voc	%
EU 27	22205390	10723395	0,48	1185480	0,05	10296515	0,46
Belgium	784899	239604	0,31	-	-	545295	0,69
Flemish - speaking community in Belgium	460338	116249	0,25	0	0,00	344089	0,75

Source of information: Eurostat, Date of extraction: 26 Feb 09

gen - general; pv - pre-vocational; voc - vocational

As shown in table 5.3.3, the rate of attendance in vocational secondary education in the Flemish-speaking community (75 %) and also the 62 % in the French-and German-speaking community is higher than the European average 46%. One can also observe a considerable difference between the upper general secondary education in the Flemish-speaking community (25%) and the French and German-speaking community (38%). The shift towards upper vocational secondary education in the Flemish-speaking community (75 %) and in the French and German-speaking community (62 %) explains why attendance rates in the upper general secondary education in Belgium (31%) are below the EU average (48%).

5.4. APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

The admission requirement for apprenticeship training: 1) to have completed full time compulsory education (age of 15) and not having reached the age of 25 years.

Apprenticeships comprise theoretical training for a minimum of 30 weeks per school year which includes general education (minimum 4 hours a week) and vocational technical training (minimum 4 hours a week). This may be supplemented by other courses, such as language courses or remedial courses for pupils who have fallen behind in their education. The training is provided by trainers at a SYNTRA /IFAPME and IAWM campus and takes 1 day a week (1.5 days for 15-year olds).

A practical training (4 days a week) with a self-employed person or within a small or medium-sized enterprise is provided by the employer.

When the pupil successfully completes his apprenticeship he will receive a recognised certificate (Apprenticeship certificate) which gives him access to entrepreneurial training. Once he has obtained this certificate, he immediately meets the licensing conditions regarding professional knowledge for the majority of the regulated professions.

The following certificate /diploma /proofs of study may be conferred by Apprenticeship training:

- Modular certificate: if the youngster successfully completed a module of a modular course.
- Certificate: if the youngster successfully completed a modular or non-modular course.
- A certificate of basic knowledge of business administration: if the youngster has followed a minimum of 4 school years of secondary education, the first grade not included, or basic knowledge of business administration

Type of educational programme	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED level/orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance between school-based and work-based training	Average duration of studies	Transfer to other pathways
Apprenticeship	All sectors	ISCED 2 - 3	$\frac{3}{4}$ vocational subjects $\frac{1}{4}$ general subjects	$\frac{3}{4}$ work-based $\frac{1}{4}$ school-based training	3 years certificate	Vocational profession & educational pathways in possible entrepreneurship
Industrial apprenticeship	All sectors	ISCED 2 - 3	$\frac{4}{5}$ vocational subjects $\frac{1}{5}$ general subjects	$\frac{4}{5}$ work-based $\frac{1}{5}$ school-based training	2 years (Modular) certificate	Vocational profession
Employment-training agreement	All sectors	ISCED 2 - 3	$\frac{4}{5}$ vocational subjects $\frac{1}{5}$ general subjects	$\frac{4}{5}$ work-based $\frac{1}{5}$ school-based training	1-3 years (Modular) certificate	contract for part-time work
Socio-occupational integration agreement	Socio-economic sectors	ISCED 2 - 3	$\frac{3}{4}$ vocational subjects $\frac{1}{4}$ general subjects	$\frac{2}{3}$ work-based $\frac{1}{3}$ school-based training	2-3 years (Modular) certificate	Occupational integration
Education for Social Advancement Level secondary education	All sectors	ISCED 2 - 3	$\frac{3}{4}$ vocational subjects $\frac{1}{4}$ general subjects	$\frac{2}{3}$ work-based $\frac{1}{3}$ school-based training	3 years (Modular) certificate	apprenticeship contract for independent professions

A) ALTERNANCE EDUCATION

Alternance education accounts for a minority of young people: from the age of 15/16 after attending two years of secondary education.

It is organised in three ways: Alternance education and training centres; the industrial apprenticeship contract (industriële leerlingwezen contract *contrat d'apprentissage industriel - CAI*) or apprenticeship contract (*contrat d'apprentissage*) for workers in employment

Alternance education and training centres: *Centrum voor Deeltijds Onderwijs CDO* in the Dutch - speaking Community; *Centre d'éducation et de formation en alternance - CEFA*) in the

French Community; and *Teilzeitunterrichtszenter* in the German-speaking Community. Students attend classes at these centres for two days per week and for three they are involved in work experience.

Under this agreement there is alternance between training in enterprise and theoretical training given by a CDO /CEFA. It is aimed at students in part-time compulsory education and students regularly registered in a CDO / CEFA prior to 31 December of the year in which they reach the age of 18. The agreement lasts 12 months but may be renewed in order to enable students to complete their training cycle (2 or 3 years). Theoretical training and practical training may not exceed 38 hours per week. Students receive pay from the enterprise equivalent to 40% of the guaranteed minimum wage in year 1, 50% in year 2 and 58% in year 3, unless the joint commission decides to align pay with the minimum wage in the industry. Part-time compulsory education was introduced in 1984 for young people who have either reached the age of 15/16 and have already received two years of secondary education. Pupils who no longer wish to follow full-time education can study on a part-time basis. Part-time education is a form of lower- or upper-level vocational secondary education. It consists of both general education (including social and personal development) and preparation for employment. Part-time education leads to an attendance certificate, and may also lead to a qualification certificate equivalent to the certificate awarded for full-time study.

B.) INDUSTRIAL APPRENTICESHIP

In 1983, apprenticeships in occupations exercised by salaried workers were recognized under the “industrial apprenticeship”. This type of apprenticeship is intended for young people, aged between 16 and 21, with a poor school record, who have lost interest in attending school. Practical training may take place in several firms successively and theoretical training is provided in school. The apprentice receives an allowance, a percentage of the minimum wage in the chosen sector. The apprenticeship leads to a vocational aptitude certificate.

C.) APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeship organised for self-employed occupations, with practical training, in trade skills, commercial training and training for service occupations (tertiary sector)

Apprenticeship is a recognized form of part-time compulsory education. It is available to 15-year-olds who have successfully completed two years of general secondary education or vocational secondary education, or have passed an entrance examination, or to 16-year-olds. The institutions which are responsible for the organization of apprenticeship for the middle classes are: *Syntra Vlaanderen* in the Dutch - speaking Community, IFAPME in the French Community and IAWM in the German-speaking Community.

Apprenticeship lasts for one to three years. There are theoretical and vocational training courses. Apprenticeship contracts may be concluded for occupations related to commerce, trade, small industries, craftsmanship and non-manual occupations in the services sector. According to the apprenticeship contract, a monthly minimum salary is paid to the apprentice by the head of the firm on a progressive basis.

A project of SYNTRA FLANDERS / VLAANDEREN called: Making Young People More Entrepreneurial Through Attractive Training Materials with SABIEN (Successful Apprenticeship Building on ICT and Entrepreneurial Needs). Those working with young people (aged 15 - 19 years old), in particular young people who have experienced disadvantage and have had negative educational experiences, will be aware of the need to employ alternative approaches to the delivery of education and training. Furthermore, there is a need to recognize the strengths of young people and to build on such strengths. The SABIEN Project 1 is a

transnational partnership with representation from educational and training organisations from seven European countries. SABIEN supports the development of new training modules that link social and life skills to personal and entrepreneurial competencies for young people in apprentice training, on alternative education programmes or on vocational training courses. In order to motivate young people and to develop their social and (soft) entrepreneurial skills (further), the focus of SABIEN has been to consider the quality and relevance of course materials and training methodologies for socially oriented educational courses.

Type of educational programme	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED level/ orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance between school-based and work-based training	Average duration of studies	Transfer to other pathways
Entrepreneurial education action plan framework Competence agenda	All sectors	ISCED 3-4	4/5 vocational subjects and 1/5 general subjects	4/5 work-based 1/5 school-based training	2-3 years	Independent profession

D) EMPLOYMENT-TRAINING AGREEMENT

Set up in 1986, this type of training is available to all young people between the ages of 18 and 25 who are seeking employment, and do not already possess a diploma of long or short higher education or university education, or of technical upper secondary education . The agreement is signed by the apprentice and the employer and lasts for a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years. This agreement includes a contract for part-time work of indeterminate duration and training.

F) EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT LEVEL SECONDARY EDUCATION

Students enrolled in Dual Vocational Education and Training Centres and apprenticeship contracts for Independent professions to fulfil their part-time scholastic obligation may also enroll in education for social advancement.

Type of educational programme	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED level/ orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance between school-based and work-based training	Average duration of studies	Transfer to other pathways
first-job agreement	Public sector	ISCED 2 orientation to a job	4/5 vocational subjects and 1/5 general subjects	mainly work-based training	2 years	Offer of a job and vocational training

5.5. OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS

Part of the Lifelong Learning Programme, Comenius seeks to develop knowledge and understanding among young people and educational staff of the diversity of European cultures, languages and values. It helps young people acquire the basic life skills and competences necessary for their personal development, for future employment and for active citizenship. It comprises the Grundtvig programme, which aims to provide (young) adults with ways to improve their knowledge and skills, keeping them mentally fit and potentially more employable. It not only covers learners in adult education, but also the teachers, trainers, education staff and facilities that provide these services. Specific aims of these programmes are to: increase the number of people in adult education to 25,000 by 2013, and improve the quality of their experience, whether at home or abroad, to support innovative ICT-based educational content, services and practices and motivation for learning and learning-to-learn skills.

Youth education attainment level (% 20-24 year-olds obtaining a certificate of secondary education)	Belgium	81.8	82.4	82.6	82.2
	EU-15	74.7	75	75.2	75.8
	EU-27	77.5	77.9	78.1	78.5

Source: Eurostat, 2006

Other aims regarding these alternative pathways are to ensure that people on the margins of society have access to adult education, especially older people and those who left education without basic qualifications, give key competences: improving language learning; greater literacy; making science more attractive; supporting entrepreneurship; and reinforcing creativity and innovation (cfr. Elements of Flanders in action plan and the Walloon Marshall plan), addressing socio-economic disadvantages and reducing early school leaving, teaching diverse groups of pupils.

In Belgium a lot of schools have projects related to these (youth) programmes. Example given one of the many projects in the framework of Comenius youth programmes “New Media School is a teacher training institution which specialises in ICT related training”. (Digital educational content and services)It is currently working alongside the University of Gent and Sint-dimpnalyceum and their associated training courses.

Youth unemployment action plan are also stimulated indirectly via the Competence agenda - Covenants with certain professional sectors & Flanders in action -Job Tonic (VDAB - Le F OREM and Actiris)-Marshall Plan- for vulnerable target groups on the labour market (youngsters more than 1 year unemployed- low qualified)

YOUTH PROGRAMMES

Successive governments have launched many measures to help low-skilled young people and the long-term unemployed. Many of these initiatives involve a training element.

Programmes at federal level. At federal level, the “first-job agreement” took effect on 1st April 2000. The objective of this measure is to offer young people, at the earliest possible stage, a job and vocational training in conformity with European employment guidelines, and

in turn to provide them with the necessary vocational skills for long term integration in the labour market.

Characteristics: the employers targeted are public-sector employers (obliged to employ young people to comprise at least 1,5% of their workforce) and private-sector employers (obliged to employ enough young people to make up 3% of their workforce, in the case of businesses with at least 50 employees). The target groups are firstly, young people aged from 18 to 25 who ceased attending courses or participating in employment integration measures within the preceding six-month period; secondly, job-seekers aged under 25; and thirdly, job-seekers aged under 30.

PROGRAMMES AT COMMUNITY LEVEL

FLANDERS 2007-2009

The competence agenda consists of 10 priorities that aim to recognize and deploy the capacities and competences of students, job-seekers and employees alike. 38 million Euros is earmarked for these actions in the period of 2007-2009.

The Government of Flanders and the social partners wish to achieve these priorities with broad support from various stakeholders, in particular in the educational sector.

1. Informed choice of studies and profession.
2. Entrepreneurial education action plan.
3. Youth unemployment action plan.

WALLONIA:

In the Walloon Region, the Institute of Part-Time Training, the Self-Employed and Small and Medium-Sized-Enterprises (IFAPME) was set up by the Decree of the Walloon Government of 17 July 2003. The training courses organized by the IFAPME offer attendees the general and vocational knowledge required to practise a self-employed occupation.

Pathways to integration

These pathways are part of a scheme fulfilling an ESF requirement aimed at a global concept of the processes of hosting, guidance, advice, monitoring, training, job-seeking and employment. The integration pathways are arranged in stages, which are not necessarily successive, since some training strategies combine several approaches. These pathways comprise different components in Wallonia and Brussels. A number of actors are involved in creating and sustaining these pathways. The aim of this approach is to offer support to all young people aged under 25 within three months of their leaving school without upper secondary qualifications. They will also benefit from specific measures designed to improve their chances of labour market integration, particularly in the context of a first-job agreement. Specifically, young job-seekers in the target group are invited to visit the relevant regional employment service before the end of the third month of registration as a job-seeker. An integration agreement is concluded with the young people concerned, taking into account their specific needs for a first-job agreement.

FLANDERS:

More opportunities for work experience in the private, public and social profit sectors are sought for by means of covenants with certain professional sectors (Flanders in Action & Competence Agenda). This should enable young people from different types of education to

gain genuine work experience to move more easily from education to the labour market. In September 2006, a web-forum on practical training opportunities was launched, where applicants and providers of traineeships can meet. This web-forum of traineeships is intended for prospective trainees and companies but also for the intermediaries, such as schools, training institutes, learning secretaries, interim offices. This forum is a good example of cooperation between adult education, compulsory and higher education.

WALLOON AND BRUSSELS REGION:

A distinction must be made between actors in the field of socio-occupational integration in the Brussels region and those in the Walloon Region. Actors providing education/training intended for poorly qualified people have multiplied in a difficult economic environment in which youth unemployment rates are particularly high. The various bodies have their own specific features. Increasing efforts have been made to coordinate the various initiatives. In addition to and supplementing “traditional” institutional training providers, the association sector has developed a number of training centres primarily aiming at socio-occupational integration measures and providing training experience through work. These measures aim to give access to a vocational qualification and gainful employment, covered by social security. Socio-occupational integration mechanisms are designed for all poorly qualified people (those not holding a certificate of upper secondary education) who have no job, are available for work and are actively seeking employment.

Job Tonic: Youth unemployment remains a major concern in the Walloon region. To break the vicious spiral of hopelessness, the Forem has adjusted the programme of support for young people aged under twenty-five. Job Tonic is now arranging for every young person under twenty-five to be supported from the moment they register as a job-seeker.

5.6. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL

Type of educational programme	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED level/ orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance between school-based and work-based training	Average duration of studies	Transfer to other pathways
fourth stage of secondary education	Private sector	ISCED 4	4/5 vocational subjects and 1/5 general subjects	4/5 work-based 1/5 school-based training	2-3 years	Vocational profession

In the fourth stage of secondary education consisting mainly of nursing education, no core curriculum is imposed because of the specificity of the training. For upper secondary school and college graduates there are a number of post-secondary, non-university education pathways in Belgium.

The fourth stage of vocational secondary education originated from Complementary Vocational Secondary Education which for a long time was simply a collection of training programmes, hovering somewhere in between secondary and higher education. After the 1995 higher education merger operation, these programmes were assembled and grouped under the denominator ‘fourth-stage vocational secondary education’ (ISCED 4 level).

TABLE 5.6.1.: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN POST SECONDARY NON TERTIARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL), 2007					
GEO	TOTAL ISCED4	ISCED4GEN (NUM)	ISCE4 GEN (%)	ISCED4VOC (NUM)	ISCED4 (%)
EU 27	1516312	174028	11.5	1342284 (s)	88.5
BE	70839	495	0.7	70344	99.3
BE-WA	24239	363	1.5	23876	98.5
BE-VL	46600	132	0.3	46468	99.7

Source: Eurostat (UOE); Extracted on: 30-04-2010; Last update: 19-02-2010;

BE-WA = French speaking community in Belgium (including small german- speaking community)

BE-VL = Flemish speaking community in Belgium

Description: Students at ISCED level 4 by programme orientation (values and share of the total)

5.7. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

TABLE 5.7.1.: STUDENTS AT ISCED LEVEL 5 BY PROGRAMME DESTINATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL) AND AT ISCED LEVEL 6 (VALUES), 2007						
GEO	TOTAL ISCED5	ISCED5A (NUM)	ISCED 5A (%)	ISCED5B (NUM)	ISCED 5B (%)	TOTAL ISCED 6
EU 27	18359029	15893156	86.6	2465873	13.4	525809
BE	386298	185363	48.0	200935	52.0	7389
BE-WA	176627	83354	47.2	93273	52.8	4202
BE-VL	209671	102009	48.7	107662	51.3	3187

Source: Eurostat (UOE); Extracted on: 30-04-2010; Last update: 19-02-2010

BE-WA = French-speaking community in Belgium (including small German-speaking community)

BE-VL = Flemish-speaking community in Belgium

Description: Students at ISCED level 5 by programme destination (values and share of the total) and at ISCED level 6

Additional note: Totals and percentage are Cedefop's calculation

HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (AS FROM 2008)

In the future, not only adult education centres but also secondary schools and colleges of higher education will be allowed to organise courses of higher vocational education. Typical of those courses is the close co-operation with the professional sectors. Moreover, workplace learning plays a key role in these courses. Those courses will also distinguish themselves by creating transparent and flexible pathways.

The courses of higher vocational education do not only focus on immediate employability , - but they can also be a step towards a professional bachelor.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

Professional Bachelor's programmes are, in the first place, professionally oriented and their objective is a general and specific knowledge level for the student, as well as competencies which are necessary for the independent practice of a profession or group of professions. As such, a professionally oriented Bachelor's programme provides direct entrance into the job market.

The main objective of Academic Bachelor's programmes is the transition to a master's programme. Their objective is to provide a general knowledge level as well as the acquisition of competencies specific to scientific or artistic functioning in general and competencies for a specific scientific or artistic domain in particular. For these programmes, entrance into the job market is a secondary objective.

Master's programmes aim to provide an advanced knowledge level as well as for competencies specific to scientific or artistic functioning in general and competencies for a specific scientific or artistic domain in particular, which is a prerequisite for the autonomous practice of sciences or the arts or for the use of this scientific or artistic knowledge for the independent practice of a profession or group of professions.

Some Bachelor's programmes follow another (professionally oriented) bachelor's programme. This advanced programme aims at the deepening or specialization of the competencies acquired during the initial Bachelor's programme.

Some Master's programmes follow another master's programme.

Bachelor's programmes link up with secondary education. As a rule, master's programmes at universities link up with (academic) Bachelor's programmes. Master's programmes can also be accessible for professionally oriented bachelors after successful completion of a bridging programme.

A bridging programme is organized for graduates wishing to enrol in a master's programme on the basis of a Bachelor's degree issued through professional higher education.

In case a student does not hold a degree which allows direct access to the programme he/she wishes to enroll, a preparatory programme can be imposed.

The general objective of long-type tertiary education: to provide scientific and more technical training (cfr. industrial engineering compared with civil engineering) geared more directly for practical applications.

The general objective of short-type tertiary education consists of a programme that provides technical training designed to acquire an occupational skill in a specific field.

Short-type tertiary education courses (agriculture, economics, paramedical, and educational, social and technical sciences) are provided as part of education for social advancement. Long-type education in industrial chemistry, electricity, electromechanics, and electronics are also offered. This refers to short and long types of non-university education.

6. CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS

6.1. FORMAL EDUCATION

6.1.1. GENERAL BACKGROUND (ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND FINANCING)

A structural basis has been developed for an integrated policy on education, training and employment, geared towards stimulating lifelong learning and towards tightening the link between education, training and non-formal education, on one hand, and the labour market, on the other.

Formal education comprises the structured education at school (IVET), high school and university (CVET). Non - formal education is education outside a structured school context. This is the case on the labour market in companies. Adults can follow CVET via an in - plant training in enterprises (education in another institutional context than a class room).

This is why a competence agenda with the social partners in Flanders, the Marshall plan (1 & 2) in Wallonia (see section 2.3) has been set so that educational, training and non-formal education organisations and the corporate sector would identify and develop the essential competences for employability. Also recognition and accreditation of prior learning, will be reinforced.

CVET OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of CVET are the promotion of active citizenship and the promotion of vocational skills in order to adapt to the demands of the new knowledge-based society and to allow full participation in social and economic life.

CVET is providing (young) adults with the essential tools they require for self-development and in order to play an active part in modern society, including the skills needed in the field of new technologies.

The main differences between initial vocational education and training (IVET) and continuing vocational education and training (CVET) lie in the ages of the learners (IVET ends at the age of 18, CVET starts at 18) and their previous educational attainments (having obtained a certificate of secondary education).

CVET has a long history in Belgium, dating back to the 19th century.

In the past 50 years, the development of CVET has been characterised by the involvement of the national (and then later in the 1980s) federal and regional governments, as well as by employers' and union associations. There are various types of CVET in Belgium, initiated by public authorities, enterprises, social partners or individuals.

A training provider is any agency offering courses or work experience periods to adults. Associations of high schools and universities take the form of a whole range of non-profit-making institutions, whose common feature is that they work in direct contact with an adult population with few qualifications who are experiencing problems and help them to improve their occupational integration. Continuing vocational training includes initiatives by: enterprises (employers' training; please see scheme below); authorities (training for civil servants); social advancement education (level higher education); and workers, jobseekers or those receiving minimum income support (Minimex).

The individual vocational training (IBO)- Interim scheme

As from September 2006, with the introduction of the “Meerbanenplan” (a job creation scheme), the Flemish External Autonomous Agency for Employment and Vocational Training or VDAB (*Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding*) and the temporary employment sector launched the individual vocational training (IBO)-Interim scheme. This initiative combines temporary work with a subsequent training within the same company. The temp agency notifies the VDAB of the name of the jobseeker and the company where individual vocational training will be provided; draws up a training plan together with the employer; and provides guidance. The programme aims to ensure a higher level of employment opportunities for immigrants, disabled workers and people over the age of 50.

The training for adult newcomers (migrants) scheme of VDAB

Training for newcomers is a relatively new scheme which is to some extent unknown among employers. However, it offers a number of significant additional opportunities. After completing at least 400 hours of training, the jobseeker may further develop his or her skills within a company through this programme of on-site learning. Early school leavers may also benefit under the scheme. There are therefore a number of similarities with the IBO scheme but there are also some notable differences. Firstly it concerns migrants and most of the training courses are language courses. Secondly there is no need for compiling a training plan and the financial advantage for the employer remains optimal during the newcomer training period. Once the conditions have been met, the jobseeker receives a newcomer card specifying the period of validity. In 2006, 438 newcomer training periods were started up. End 2007 73.2% or 2,390 persons of the 3,266 of the newcomers found a job in Flanders. A comparable training for newcomers scheme is still in developing phase in the French - speaking Community and the Walloon region (co-operation COCOF and FOREM). For the Brussels Capital region ACTIRIS is involved. This policy is not mandatory for Brussels.

Cooperation between the VDAB and higher education

The implementation of the EQUAL project “United Colours of Nursing” (UCN) started at the beginning of 2006. The project was developed in Flanders by a partnership of 15 organisations, including the Catholic colleges of higher education for nursing, the Leuven integration service, employers and the VDAB. This project offers skilled immigrant jobseekers (holding a diploma in the care sector that is not recognised in Belgium) the chance to do fast-track training and get a job as a Bachelor of Nursing. The VDAB provides candidates prior Flemish language training which prepares students for their nursing course.

The skill-based vocational guidance scheme

The skill-based vocational guidance scheme is used as an instrument to better guide jobseekers towards a suitable occupation and then to a permanent job. The scheme first requires jobseekers to indicate the schooling level for the job they would like to have. Subsequently they try to assess to what extent they master 73 key skills generated from a professional profile classification system (*Competenties en Beroepen Repertorium voor de arbeidsmarkt (CO.BR.A)*). In the framework of the ESF project for e-job guidance, the VDAB has developed an online tool for jobseekers examining their occupational interests on the basis of the self-evaluation of the own competencies. This tool is part of the skill-based vocational guidance scheme.

With the help of this tool jobseekers can determine the most eligible occupations for themselves. (<http://www.vdab.be/beroepsorientatie>)

Training and guidance on the shop floor (module 6)

As soon as jobseekers have sufficient vocational knowledge, skills and attitudes, they can continue their training on the shop floor. Here they learn how to apply what they have learnt in practice and they can further develop their skills and attitudes. Jobseekers may also acquire the necessary work experience and technical skills through training and guidance on the shop floor also without prior technical training at a centre. This module comprises various formulas such as alternating training periods, individual vocational training within the company, integration companies, sheltered workshops and training completion periods. Access to this training and guidance on the shop floor is assessed via prior modules. If jobseekers have sufficient vocational, technical knowledge and skills, they will be allowed for this training module.

Individual vocational training (IBO)

Individual vocational training within companies is gradually becoming more popular than any other form of traineeship. The in-house individual vocational training scheme offers the employer and the jobseeker a number of unique advantages in comparison with other forms of training. By providing a specific training within the company, the employer makes sure that the trainee will acquire the specific competencies for the job by the end of the traineeship and, in turn that he/she will operate as a fully fledged employee within the company. This is because induction will be completed through immersion in the company culture during the IBO traineeship. Not only is the jobseeker given an opportunity to learn a new occupation on the shop floor within a real environment, but he or she is also assured of a permanent job at the end of training.

Other training schemes

Reception, Guidance and Socio-Occupational Integration Centres (*Centres d'accueil, d'orientation et d'initiation socio-professionnelle (CA/COISP)*) are an integral part of the Walloon Office for Vocational Training and Placement (FOREM) and Bruxelles-Formation. They are offering also guidance for jobseekers.

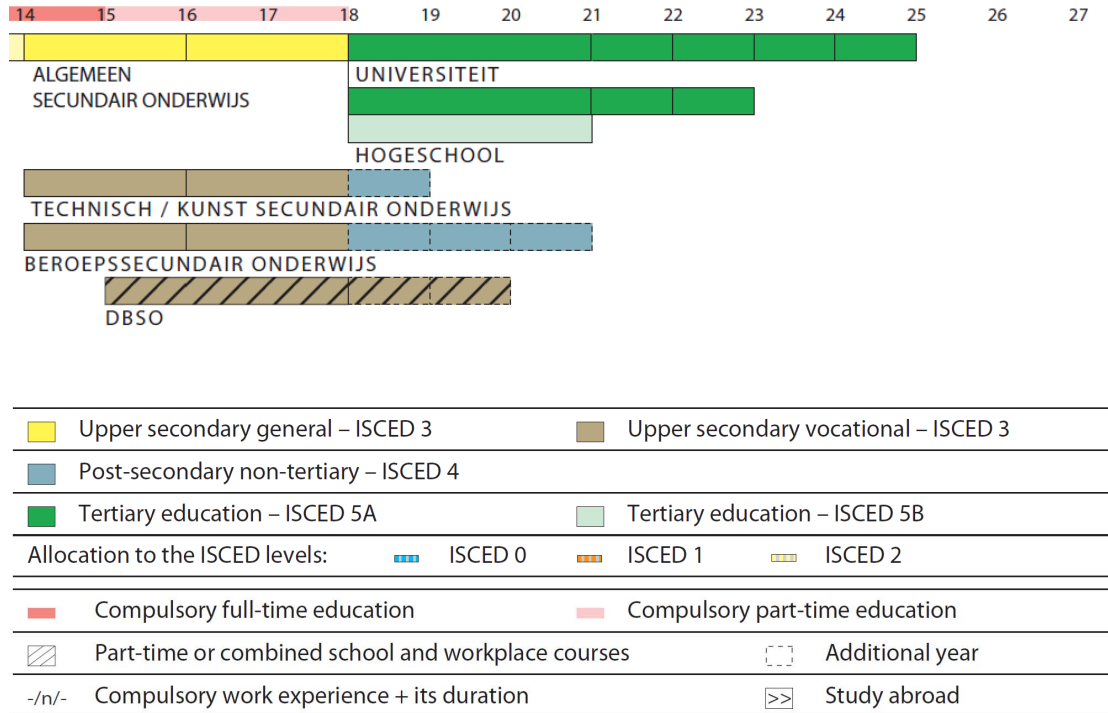
Training schemes in agriculture: these schemes are available for a few hundred people.

Distance learning schemes: a supervised individual study scheme is also available (*Begeleid individueel studeren - BIS*). It supports individual learning of adults without any requirements via distance learning (learning of a new language, computer courses, preparing on exams, etc....). The specialty of the scheme is that timing and pace can be set by the individual. It is organised by the Agency of higher education and adult education of the Dutch-speaking Community.

6.1.2. MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF FORMAL CVET

LEVELS OF QUALIFICATIONS

CHART 1: ORGANISATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE DUTCH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY, 2007/08



Source: Eurydice.

ISCED level 5A programmes are tertiary programmes that are largely theoretically based and are intended to provide sufficient qualifications for gaining entry into advanced research programmes and profession with high skills requirements.

ISCED level 5B are programmes at the tertiary level that focus on practical, technical or occupational skills for direct entry into the labour market.

CVET PROVIDERS

A) Adult education for higher education level

With its more than 600 or so different training schemes, its flexible organisation and its moderate enrolment fees, adult education is the largest operator: around 256.000 adults in the Dutch - speaking Community and around 150, 000 adults in the French -speaking Community.

B) Training providers CVET

Training and employment services as the VDAB - *Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding* (Flemish External Autonomous Agency For Employment And Vocational Training) in the Dutch - speaking Community and for Flemish-speakers in the Brussels Region and FOREM - *Office wallon de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi* (Walloon office for

vocational training and employment) in the Walloon Region and *Bruxelles-Formation* (Bxl-F, Brussels-Training) for French-speakers in the Brussels Region are responsible public institutions for the training of employees and jobseekers. The *Arbeitsamt der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft* (Employment Office of the German-speaking Community) has been the responsible placement office in the German-speaking Community since January 2000. These public institutions are managed on a joint basis by the social partners (employers' and trade union organizations) under the supervision of the Region concerned.

By referring to colleges (hogeschools) and universities, also providers of CVET, the following distinction is made. Some institutions are set up by the state, other are private institutions receiving financial aid from the state, subject to certain conditions.

The middle classes institutions (Syntra Vlaanderen, IFAPME; and IAWM) also organise two-year training schemes for people who want to set up their own businesses and become the head of an SME, as well as modular continuing and further training schemes for heads of an enterprise.

Curricula in higher vocational adult education (CVET)

CVET starts at the age of 18. Within higher vocational adult education the former categories have been replaced by areas of study (biotechnology, health care, trade and business sciences, industrial science and technology and social and agogic sciences). These programmes are organised on the level of higher education and in modular form.

Key competences are cognitive, psycho-motor or affective skills which appertain to the core of any vocation while transcending them at the same time and which contribute to the overall personal development of a course participant. include certain key competences. The boards of the centres of adult education can freely draw up the curricula and choose their own pedagogic methods provided that they take into consideration the course profiles approved by the government. Moreover, all curricula must be approved by the inspectorate (a special committee established via the Draft Decree on higher vocational adult education).

The curricula should leave enough space for centres, trainers, training teams or course participants to have their own input.

The final objectives (specific objectives or basic competences) are clearly indicated in the curricula. The Centers for Adult education offer courses at elementary (basic) education level and at the level of the first stage of secondary education.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms: close co-operation between actors and directors of the labour market, social partners and all responsible actors and directors for education and training ensures practically immediate employment after qualification (higher vocational adult education is not leading to a qualification of bachelor or master). There are also two main challenges for the full implementation of ECTS: measuring credits in terms of student workload and linking them with learning outcomes. VET possibilities for adults of Higher vocational adult education are organized in combination with VDAB, VLAO - SYNTRA sectors and other recognized high schools.

VET Entry Requirements: having complied with part-time compulsory education (18 years old)

It is unlikely that someone with an academic background will opt to VET, since she or he can always learn a profession via an entrepreneurial training (18 + year olds). An entrepreneurial training prepares participants for general, technical, commercial, financial and administrative management in self-employment or within a small or medium enterprise and comprises theoretical training on professional knowledge and business administration and may be

combined with practical training (through an internship) in a company. Students in internships receive guidance from a counsellor. VET possibilities for adults are organized by VLAO - SYNTRA in Flanders, IFAPME and IAWM in Wallonia (French -speaking and German - speaking Community).

The VDAB and the FOREM organise hundreds of practically-oriented vocational training programmes in almost all vocational fields and they even offer language, ICT and management courses (basic and advanced training). These courses are taught both during working hours and at night time and also on Saturdays for workers and unemployed people. These may be organised in various ways such as courses in VDAB training centres or with third parties, work experience in companies, training in recognised centres, individual vocational in-company training or individual training at an educational institution, open learning, distance learning and e-learning.

Distance Learning

Centres for Adult Basic Education (IVET level or secondary education level) can also assess course participants following distance-learning programmes. These centres are qualified to teach and assess the vocational competence of those who acquired their skills through formal or non-formal learning if they wish to obtain a certificate of vocational competence. However, for this assessment, centres need to have an accreditation. Centres for Adult Education (IVET and CVET secondary education level and higher education level) which offer general education can also assume the task of regional examination commission. Recognised as a Centre for Adult Education there is no requirement to fulfill to assume this task.

Fostering the Access to CVET

Consortiums of Adult Education must optimize and adjust the course provision of the centres and promote mutual cooperation. They will also have to work with other public adult-education programme providers and will have to act as a go-between, even with the socio-cultural and socio-economic actors. They must also optimize services for course participants (adults). To that end, they must draw up a five-year training plan (which shall include an analysis of the training needs within their area) and set up an ombudsman for course participants. The consortiums shall also support the Centres of Basic Education (IVET level or secondary education level) and Centres for Adult Education (IVET and CVET secondary education level and higher education level): in the development of an education and training policy for detainees.

TABLE 6.1.2.1.: PARTICIPATION RATE IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2007				
ISCED97/ GEO	0-2	3-4	5-6	TOTAL
EU 27	2.5	5.7	12.2	6.3
BE	6.6	11.8	19	12.5

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 03-05-2010

Description: The indicator represents the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by highest level of education attained

WSTATUS / GEO	EMPLOYMENT	INACTIVE POPULATION	TOTAL	UNEMPLOYMENT
EU 27	6,2	6,4	6,3	6,3
BE	13,5	8,3	12,5	16,3

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 03-05-2010; Last update: 13-01-2010

Description: The indicator represent the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by labour status

6.2. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

6.2.1. GENERAL BACKGROUND (ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND FINANCING)

Continuing education comprises both formal and non-formal education and training and can be either vocationally oriented or not. It is in any case far broader than adult education which is only geared towards adults. The term "adult education" can also be referred to as 'lifelong learning'.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY

National training institutions must develop activities in at least 4 provinces or must address people living in a minimum of 4 provinces. There are 26 recognised training institutions. Training institutions which focus on people with disabilities have, pursuant to governmental directives, grouped themselves into 3 federations. Through their non-formal educational programmes, they must develop socio-cultural activities for people with disabilities and for their environment. One quarter of their programmes may be directed at counsellors from the non-profit sector.

On basis of the Flemish decree socio-cultural adult work (4 April 2003), the government also recognises and subsidises one federation of training institutions for people with disabilities. This federation groups 5 former services for socio-cultural work. Alongside educational programmes, they also provide additional activities in the area of awareness, guidance and social activation.

Stimulating people to develop their competences through non-formal education (e.g. in the areas of social integration, active citizenship, and so on). Socio-cultural adult work: since the start of 2004, 13 folk high schools or Training-plus centres are operating in as many regions (different parts of Flanders, in the capital cities of the 5 Flemish provinces) . Decree socio-cultural adult work (4 April 2003) resulted in a thorough redrafting of the landscape, including, national training institutions and folk high schools or Training-plus centres. They must cover non-formal education sought within their region by organising their own programmes and coordinating the programmes offered by other cultural providers. These kinds of programmes will not lead to qualification.

6.2.2. MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-FORMAL CVET

Via the Decree on the flexibility of higher education (2004), via the Decrees on adult education (1999& 2007), a legislative framework for recognition of acquired competences and knowledge, via the Decree on career services (2003) for career guidance and via the Decree

on a professional title (2004) recognition of acquired competences was created in the Dutch - speaking Community (in-company training). These Decrees describe methods to accredit non - formal and informal learning. Although non - formal and informal learning are recognised via these Decrees, it will not give access to further formal education, to access regulated professions. It can improve a professional position.

NON-FORMAL CVET PROVIDERS

- Recognised national training institutions (Cevora, The Belgian American Educational Foundation)
- Centres for training in agriculture;
- Academies for part-time artistic education;
- Socio-cultural associations;
- Socio-cultural movements;
- VDAB and FOREM training centres
- SYNTRA -VLAO, IFAPME, and IAWM campuses;
- Centres for Adult Education: centres offering secondary education and higher education.
- Folk high schools (Several adult education centres joined forces and this is how the folk high schools came into life. They developed especially in the cities of the Dutch - speaking Community)
- Centres for Adult Basic Education: centres offering secondary education

STATUTE OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Socio-cultural adult work has besides its mainly cultural function a.o. an educational function and particularly a non-formal educational function. In the programmes offered an emphasis is put on informal and non-formal learning. It fosters both incidental and intentional learning.

In the list of educational priorities and challenges for 2020 is one of those the assessment of competences acquired in formal, informal and non-formal learning contexts (and translated towards learning outcomes) must be made possible in every learning trajectory

Quality Assurance Mechanisms:

Directing and monitoring the training-programme market: developing a quality-assurance system for the training and non-formal education market, defining the priorities on instrument development (e.g. expanding the 'become-what-you-like' database -*wordwatjewil*-databank-towards a wider training market).

Programmes (e.g. Higher Vocational Education) will have to display the following characteristics:

- Flexibility as regards offer: possibility of joining the course in progress, facility to temporarily discontinue a training programme, fast-track training on account of accreditation of prior learning , evening and day classes, face-to-face instruction, distance learning and on-the-job learning, and modular set-up with modular certificates; transparent learning pathways, necessary competences, study load and follow-up programmes;
- collaboration between the sectors on labour-market rapport and on-the-job-learning opportunities;

- cooperation with the other levels of education and with the public training providers SYNTRA VLAO, IFAPME, IAWM and VDAB, FOREM who will be able to look after certain aspects of training programmes; and

Moreover, an ‘on-the-job-learning’ component where training skills are applied to a work situation and where prior learning acquired through working are incorporated within the training programme.

Participation in non formal education/training by educational attainment for all categories (unemployed, unemployed and inactive, for all ISCED levels) in Belgium is higher than the average of Europe (Table 6.2.2). This means a great activity and great involvement of Belgians in socio-cultural work.

WSTATUS / GEO	EMPLOYMENT	INACTIVE POPULATION	TOTAL	UNEMPLOYMENT
EU 27	40.5	13.2	32.7	20.4
BE	41.9	11.8	33.5	23.2

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 03-05-2010; Last update: 13-01-2010

Description: The indicator represents the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by labour status. Specific rates are calculated by labour status.

6.3. MEASURES TO HELP JOB-SEEKERS AND PEOPLE VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

DUTCH -SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Personal Development Trajectories for vulnerable youngsters in problematic situations

The promotion of self-support and social competences through intensive individual guidance aims at a further trajectory towards employability (7.81%). Since 1 September 2009, the courses followed in a centre for part-time education and the work experience have to be fully integrated in order to achieve the targets set for the professional programme. This is a very important step in turning part-time education into a system of alternance training. The data from VDAB show that 75% of the pupils coming from the part-time education system are employed after 1 year (compared to 90% in the apprenticeship system). In the apprenticeship system, only 0.6% did not gain any work experience in this period, compared to 4.4% of pupils having left the part-time educational system. The difference in employment results between the apprenticeship system and the part-time education system in 2007-2008 is substantial. When evaluating this, one has to keep in mind that youngsters can only enter the apprenticeship system once they have a signed contract with an employer. It remains to be seen whether the new Act will change this difference.

Competence Agenda & Sector covenants

The Flemish government and the social partners approved a Competence Agenda on 14 May 2007. One important keynote in the elaboration of the Competence Agenda’s objectives is

that the development of competences is a shared responsibility of individuals, employers, the social partners, and career-service providers, specially focused on jobseekers and people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market. Among the 10 priorities specified are:

- Action Plan 'entrepreneurial education';
- Reinforcing the accreditation of prior learning;
- Action Plan on the influx of unqualified people;
- Stimulating the competence policy, in all its aspects, in companies and organisations (including a focus on literacy problems).

Covenants were concluded between the Flemish government and the sectors' social partners. Each covenant runs for a period of two calendar years, but the starting dates vary from vocational sector to vocational sector. Until now 22 of the 24 vocational sectors have included an article in their sector covenant regarding basic competences. Only the artistic and graphic sectors deemed these to be less relevant to them in view of the sectors' employee profiles. The other sectors give priority to actions on literacy for the long-term and educationally disadvantaged unemployed, the 45-year olds and over seeking employment, returners, receivers of subsistence wage/benefits, educationally disadvantaged employees, workers who have been repeatedly faced with dismissal, reorganisation or the introduction of new technologies.

Community level: Step-in training for rapid employment after training in Flanders (this kind of training could be seen rather more as an employment measure than as a training type of non - formal CVET)

The links between schools and the labour market

From the 1 September 2005 on, jobseekers and low skilled school leavers can go straight into a step-in training. They must have followed a training or have been in compulsory education in the previous four months.. Step-in trainings are attractive for the employer, since the National Service for Work Provision, (*Rijksdienst voor Arbeidsvoorziening*or RVA) pays most of the wages for the first two months. The step-in training is also attractive for the jobseeker, since after the training he or she must be given an employment contract.

Target groups

Step-in trainings are possible for:

- jobseekers after having taken a professional training lasting a minimum of 400 hours (regardless of age);
- low skilled school leavers with a maximum diploma of first degree (first two years of secondary education) in general secondary education or a second degree (third and fourth year of secondary education) in technical, professional or art secondary education; the training of the self-employed; part-time professional secondary education; alternating professional education or extraordinary secondary education;; and
- youths who have attained a diploma of technical or professional secondary education.

The longer that jobseekers and school leavers remain unemployed, the further away they get from what they have learned. Employers are therefore less interested in them, even for job vacancies with too few candidates. The Flemish government and the social partners want to approach this problem via step-in trainings. This was already agreed at the start of 2005 in the

Flemish Employment Opportunity agreement. This has been made possible via the Youth Unemployment plan (2004) set up by the federal Ministry of Employment.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION OF LESS-FAVoured GROUPS IN FLANDERS

The Flanders region is striving for the proportional representation of less-favoured groups in the labour market and is taking steps to rectify the exclusion of these groups within the training provided by the employment service. In 2005, jobseekers who were migrants, work-disabled and unskilled were already positively represented in the courses provided for jobseekers, but the marked under-representation of people aged 50 and over increased. In Wallonia, these target groups have access to an integrated course and individual support for two years, which also continues after their integration into the labour market. In addition and more specifically, the fight against illiteracy was stepped up.

In order to boost the low employment rate of people of foreign nationality or origin, action was taken through education and within the labour market.

STRATEGIC LITERACY PLAN

At the end of June 2005 the Flemish government approved a Strategic Literacy Plan. It covers 35 actions in which a whole number of partners are involved: the training providers (Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB), Flemish Agency for Training in Enterprises (SYNTRA), Centres for Basic Education, Centres for Adult Education and compulsory education), employers and employees and welfare organizations. One of the ten objectives was determined: 8. Differentiation of Literacy towards the different (risk) target groups: young school leavers, long-term unemployed people, seniors, the underprivileged; migrants, etc...

Flanders is paying extra attention to dealing with diversity in teacher training; also an action plan on truancy was developed. In 2006, French language education focused on bolstering lessons in French in the initial years of secondary education.

Diversity plans have an important place in labour market policy. In diversity plans, businesses draw up a personnel policy that does justice to the diversity within society. The Regions made arrangements on this with the various sectors, too. These plans are supported by the employment services, including through the provision of diversity consultants.

In the Brussels-Capital Region, the elimination of illiteracy among - and instruction of French to - people of foreign origin are considered key elements of a consistent social cohesion policy. On 31 October 2008, the Cocof adopted a social cohesion decree to integrate the specific provisions of the Brussels plan for the elimination of illiteracy. For the Walloon Region, the Alpha Plan boosts the training offer (intended to reach at least 20,000 a year by 2010) and raises awareness among employment advisers at FOREM and social welfare workers at the Public Welfare Centres (known by the initials "CPAS" and "OCMW" in French and Dutch respectively) for detecting illiteracy.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

Various groups are lagging behind in the Belgian labour market. These include, in particular, the disabled, the unskilled, the long-term unemployed and migrants. In addition to guaranteeing equal access to all services, special actions were also undertaken by the employment services on the flexibilisation and optimisation of the educational offer in adult basic education for efficiency enhancement and minimization of the cultural difference between adult basic education centres and other training providers. More attention must be

paid to the literacy problem in teacher training, application of the possibilities of alternating learning and on-the-job literacy trainings.

In 2008 a new kind of educational pathway has been introduced: the so-called “higher professional education” (to be compared with the so-called “short degrees”). It offers short professional programmes to achieve a relevant labour market qualification at EQF-level 4&5.

New VET qualifications have been introduced at level 4 (i.e. specialised qualifications awarded after 1 year of post-secondary VET) and at level 5 (i.e. qualifications awarded after approx. 2 years of post-secondary VET).

In the Dutch - speaking Community the transferability of learning outcomes is not regulated within a credit system, but there are a lot of possibilities to transfer learning outcomes by the way of certificates.

Personal Development Trajectories for vulnerable youngsters in problematic situations: promotion of self-support and social competences through intensive individual guidance, aimed at a further trajectory towards employability (7.81%) Since 1 September 2009, the courses followed in a centre for part-time education and the work experience have to be fully integrated in order to achieve the targets set for the professional programme.

In Brussels, the employment service developed a partnership with various organisations in order to provide enhanced support for less-favoured groups. Accordingly, the unit that coordinates awareness-raising actions for businesses was bolstered.

Wallonia’s evaluation of the Marshall plan: for the in-demand professions the aim is to provide more than 17,000 complementary specific trainings between 2006 and 2009.

In 2006, there were already 4750 intensive trainings organised and 3787 in 2007 for unemployed people. There are no admission criteria of these training programmes. The main objectives are employment for in -demand professions. The participants receive a certificate for these trainings.

Within the frame of the Marshall Plan 1, the Walloon Government has foreseen the opportunity for young people who are in qualifying education to attend an advanced 7th year in Flanders or benefit from short training courses in Flanders.

7. TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

7.1. TYPES OF TEACHER AND TRAINER OCCUPATIONS IN VET

7.1.1. TEACHING AND TRAINING OCCUPATIONS IN VET

The main difference between Belgian VET teachers and VET trainers is their workplace. Generally spoken, teachers are employed in IVET institutes (schools) and trainers are employed in CVET institutes (high schools, universities). This is linked to the distinction between regular and non-regular education. In Belgium, most teachers are employed in regular education while trainers are employed in the non-regular system.

COMMON ISSUES in the three Belgian Communities:

- Teachers in primary education give lessons in all subjects, except those responsible for physical education, languages or philosophy classes, who are subject specialists. As a rule, primary school teachers give classes in all subjects.
- In secondary education, each class corresponds, in principle, to an age-group. However, as a result of school failure and pupils repeating grades, classes may sometimes be very mixed.
- The teachers are subject specialists.
- Differences between VET teachers and VET trainers in terms of entry requirements, professional experiences and background and qualifications can be reduced to the difference between regular and non-regular education. In regular education (formal education in schools and during the day) entry requirements and qualifications are defined by the Ministries of Education.
- Teachers in university education generally hold a doctorat.

7.1.2. RESPONSIBLE BODIES

DUTCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Universities, colleges and centres for adult education

During 2007, teacher training was thoroughly reformed in order to make the profession of VET teachers more attractive.

From 1 September 2007 a distinction is made between 3 clusters of teacher-training programmes:

- 1) The integrated teacher-training programmes, organised by university colleges, include subject-specific and pedagogical-teaching components throughout the entire 3-year training programme.
- 2) The specific teacher training following a subject-specific study itinerary or professional experience, organised by university colleges, universities and centres for adult education.

- 3) The advanced teacher training (Advanced Bachelor's special education and Advanced Bachelor's special-needs provision in mainstream schools and remedial teaching) further explores or fine-tunes basic competences. All educational staff have access to this programme.

To boost co-operation, support teacher-training programmes and encourage cooperation between these programmes, 4 expertise networks were established (each within the framework of an association) and a cross-association regional platform was set up.

- Brussels Expertisenetwork
- Expertisenetwork "School of Education, Association.Leuven"
- Expertisenetwork **teacher training** Antwerp
- Expertisenetwork **teacher training** Ghent
- Regional Platform **teacher training** Limburg

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The initial training of general teachers (*enseignement fondamental*) (nursery and primary school teachers, and secondary education teachers (*AESI, agrégés de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur (AESS)*), is a preparation to teach in both ordinary and specialised education. There is no distinct study stream that specifically prepares teachers to work in specialised education. A Decree of 12 December 2000 regulates the initial training of pre-primary, primary and lower secondary teachers, furthermore, it accommodates the possibility of organising a module for specialised education. This module is a 15-hour informative course on the organisation and operation mode of specialised education and on teaching methods that are adapted to the target public. Some large schools (*hautes écoles*) organise a year of specialization in special education.

Lower secondary education

Initial training of future *régents* used to be delivered in four years, which followed the first three years of secondary education (*école moyenne*): it was a general training, already focussed on teaching, and supplemented by a course in psychopedagogy.

In 1984, initial training of *régents* increased from 2 to 3 years. The reform was justified by the introduction of a general training course and by a reinforcement of the subjects that the future teachers will be teaching.

In 2000, teacher training of primary school teachers and *régents* was reviewed with reference to the Decree on the missions of school.

Initial teacher training for teachers who deliver technical courses and/or practical exercises given in education for social advancement and need a CAP (Teaching accreditation certificate) has not been reformed to date.

Upper secondary education

Since the beginning of the 20th century, initial teacher training to teach in the last three years of secondary education has been delivered in universities.

In 2001, initial training of the *agrégés de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur (AESS)* was reformed. Gateways were foreseen: conditions are defined under which non-university tertiary education graduates may access second-cycle university programmes corresponding to their qualification.

Source: *Décret définissant la formation initiale des instituteurs et des régents.*

7.1.3 RECENT REFORMS TO VET TEACHER/TRAINER TRAINING

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Every graduated teacher must have the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to function in good way as a beginning teacher.

Basic skills are the final objectives for the profession of a teacher.

The occupational profile of a teacher indicates the knowledge and skills of an experienced teacher.

The renewed basic skills and occupational profile were approved end 2007 by the minister of education and the Flemish government.

NEW QUALITY ASSURANCE

At universities & high schools

As from 2007 integrated teacher training within the framework of a master qualification of minimum 120 credit study load will not only be assessed within the visitation committee, but this training will also be part for the part 30 credit study load by the review committee that the Master degree should assess

Adult education centre

As from 2007: in every adult education centre there will be a quality controlled care system established (it includes the supply of the educational system and the organization with learning guidance for a trainee on individual level). Adult secondary education programmes are screened by the inspectorate of education.

By virtue of the reorganisation, the former diploma denominations "pre-primary school teacher", "teacher", "group-1 secondary education teacher", "group-2 secondary education teacher", "proof of pedagogical competence", as well as the "Bachelor's in education" are all replaced by one "*professional degree*". This reform does not alter the existing system of skills certificates in any way. So, therefore, people who did not obtain a proof of pedagogical competence will be able to continue to work as teachers.

Various reforms of assessment have also been scheduled for teacher-training programmes. The first external evaluation of the Advanced Bachelor's programmes in education and the specific teacher-training programmes must be completed by the end of 2012. From 2013, evaluations will take place at least every 8 years. The system of trainee-teacher positions (*leraar-in-opleidingsbaan*), as a form of in-service training, will be assessed at the end of the school years 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 and thereafter every 5 years. A committee of independent experts shall conduct an assessment of the secondary education integrated teacher-training

programmes before the end of 2012 regarding the change from 3 optional subjects to 2. Aside from the teacher training reforms, a fully-fledged training programme for Islam teachers and imams will also be offered within education.

Adult education teachers

The teaching staff in centres for adult education (secondary adult education and associate degree) are governed by the Act concerning legal status (27 March 1991). Their legal status and qualifications are similar to those required in mainstream secondary and university college education.

Legislation about staff in centres for adult education only changed in a minor way in the Act on Adult Education of 2007, and was mainly adapted to the modular education system. In January 2008, 5,423 management and teaching staff were appointed for secondary adult education. 1,262 management and teaching staff were appointed for the associate degree programmes in centres for adult education .

7.2. TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINERS IN IVET

7.2.1 TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN IVET

TABLE 7.2.1: OVERVIEW OF THE TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET

TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET	TYPES AND LEVELS OF EDUCATION	WORKPLACE
REGULAR EDUCATION		
- General subject teacher (FL: Leraar algemene vakken; W: Professeur de matières générales) -Technical subject teacher (FL: Leraar technische vakken; W: Professeur de matières techniques)	lower sec. technical ed.	School for secondary education
	lower sec. vocational ed.	
	upper sec. technical ed apprenticeship training.	
	upper sec. vocational ed. apprenticeship training	
- Practical teacher (FL: Praktijkleraar; W: Professeur de cours pratiques/ d’atelier)	complementary vocational ed./apprenticeship training	School for special education
	special sec. education	Centre for part time education
- Teacher FL: lesgever - lector; W: chargé de cours - formateur) -Practical teacher (FL: praktijk-lesgever lector; W: maître de formation pratique)	part time education apprenticeship training	College of higher education
	one cycle higher education	
-	block release education for entrepreneurship	Training centre In-company
- Entrepreneur-trainer (FL: ondernemer-opleider ; W: patron- formateur)		

7.2.2. PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF IVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

DUTCH SPEAKING COMMUNITY

There is no specific training track for VET teachers. It is the same as for teachers in general education. A Decree of December 2006 has thoroughly reformed teacher training. Since 1 September 2007, a distinction is made between two clusters of teacher training programmes:

- 1) The integrated teacher-training programmes
- 2) Specific teacher-training programme

The practical component of Initial training of teachers can not only be acquired

- 1) through pre-service training, i.e. teaching practice,
- 2) but also through in-service training, as a Trainee Teacher (*Leraar-in-Opleiding* - LIO), which is a 500 hour a year teaching assignment.

Again one must distinguish provisions for teachers working in the regular education system from provisions in the non-regular educational system.

There are no particular regulations for in-service training of IVET teachers: the same regulations apply for the whole regular education system.

In Flanders, Law on Teacher Education (December 2006) specifies:

- 1) the mentors' job description,
- 2) financial recognition,
- 3) desired profile and
- 4) definitions of responsibility, especially evaluation in relation to the Department of Teacher Education, the broader context is drawn

Equivalence of training programmes

All the various training programmes will become equivalent and shall be based on the same basic teaching competences.

They will take prior qualifications and prior learning into consideration and shall all lead to the same degree of teacher. They will also fall under the same quality assurance system, i.e. the external reviews.

The practical component includes all practical educational activities, the most important one is a traineeship.

The new teacher training programmes improve the training of so-called uncertified teachers (people with professional experience in other sectors), though it has also made it more taxing. Through secondments and outplacements, the government wishes to promote transfers amongst teachers. Transfers of permanently-appointed staff between schools are rather limited. If uncertified teachers start the teacher training, accreditation of prior learning and prior qualifications will be taken into account.

Practical component of teaching

The practical component of teaching practice can be acquired through pre-service training via a trainee teacher position or a teaching assignment of 500 hours per annum. The trainee teacher receives a salary (the salary of a teacher who does not possess a pedagogical-skills

certificate) and is supported by the teacher-training college, a member of staff of the centre, the institution or the school he/she is employed by, in charge of mentoring.

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Teachers are obliged by law to attend the meetings for teachers, as well as courses organised in order to update their pedagogical skills necessary for the educational practice. These meetings and educational and vocational skills update programmes are organised on a regular basis (yearly). However, the number and the duration of these update programmes are variable. Teachers and trainers are also obliged to update themselves on the techniques and the vocational knowledge necessary to get access to the vocation. The same requirements (to update themselves on the techniques and the vocational knowledge) also hold when teachers or trainers want to maintain their teacher's or trainer's job.

7.3. TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET

7.3.1. TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN CVET

There is no general framework in Belgium for continuing vocational training. To make clear how CVET has been structured, one needs to make a distinction between different types of education and training schemes:

- 1) Adult education (FL: *Volwassenenonderwijs*; W: *Enseignement pour les adultes*);
 - 1a) Training for independent entrepreneurs and for small & medium enterprises (FL: *ondernemersopleidingen*; W: *Formation Permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises*)
 - 1b) Distance learning (FL: *Afstandsleren of begeleid individueel studeren BIS*; W: *Apprendre à distance*) In Flanders this kind of learning will be called web learning.
- 2) Adult vocational training and guidance (FL: *Bedrijfsopleidingen voor volwassenen, VDAB*; W: *Formation professionnelle pour adultes, the FOREM*);
- 3) Training for independent entrepreneurs and for small & medium enterprises (FL: *Middenstandsopleidingen*; W: *Formation Permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises*);
- 4) Training in agriculture (FL: *Permanente vorming in de landbouwsector*; W : *Formation professionnelle en agriculture et secteur connexe*);
- 5) Sectoral initiatives (FL: *Sectorale initiatieven*; W: *Initiatives de formation sectorielles*);
- 6) Training in the profit and non-profit sector;
- 7) Training for disabled people (FL: *Training ter bevordering van de sociale integratie van personen met een handicap*; W: *Formation à l'avancement de l' integration des personnes handicapées*).

The table below offers a general overview of the types of teachers (regular education) and trainers (non-regular education) in CVET according to the type and level of education, as well as their place of work.

TABLE 7.3.1: OVERVIEW OF THE TYPES OF TEACHERS, MENTORS AND TRAINERS IN CVET

TEACHERS	TRAINING SCHEMES	TRAINING CENTRES
	TEACHERS (REGULAR EDUCATION)	
- General subject teacher - Technical subject teacher - Practical teacher	1. adult education. (upper sec.) 1. adult education ed. (higher ed.)	Centre for adult education
- Practical subject teacher - General subject teacher	1a) training for independent entrepreneurs and for small & medium enterprises	Centre for adult education in co-operation with training centres of Syntra / IFAPME/IAWM
- Instructor/web coach	1b) Distance learning/web learning	Centre for adult education
- Instructor/mentors	2. adult vocational training and guidance	Competency centres VDAB - FOREM
- Workplace trainer/mentor	3. training for independent entrepreneurs and for small & medium enterprises	In-company
- Trainer	4. training in agriculture	Jointly managed training centre
- Trainer- Training staff	5. sectoral initiatives	Jointly managed training centre
- Trainer or instructor/mentor- Training staff	6. training in the profit and non-profit sector	Profit organization Non-profit organization
- Trainer or instructor	7. training for disabled people	Centre for vocational training

7.3.2. PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF CVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

NEW BASIC COMPETENCIES AND PROFESSIONAL PROFILES FOR TEACHERS IN THE DUTCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY AS FROM DECEMBER 2006

In April 2007, based on the decision of the former Minister of Education, Frank Vandebroucke, the basic competencies and professional profiles has been defined:

Basic competencies describe which skills and attitudes a new teacher is expected to have. Professional profiles do the same for teachers who have already worked in education for some time. The four earlier professional profiles have been replaced by one single common professional teacher profile. The basic competencies and the professional profile are more closely aligned with the policy objectives and the needs of each Community. The focal point is the language, provided that all teachers should be able to speak Flemish correctly. Furthermore, they should be able to deal with diversity in the classroom and have adequate computer skills.

Teacher training should therefore lay sufficient emphasis on the policy objectives, including equal opportunities and language. At the same time, the decision provides more clarity through one single common professional profile for all levels of education (from nursery to upper secondary education). This reform introduces one single professional title: no distinction is made between teachers who have studied at a college of higher professional

education, a university or in adult education centres. A common set of basic competencies for teachers in secondary education has also been developed. The distinction between an SO1 teacher (formerly teachers with a diploma of secondary teacher training, lower level) and SO2 (formerly teachers qualified for higher secondary education) no longer exists.

Another major focal point is the fact that teachers have to be thoroughly prepared for challenges typical of large conurbations, e.g. dealing with diversity.

IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

There is no official in-service period, the decree of December 2006 introduced a new mentoring system for non graduated students during their in- classroom experiences and recently graduated students during their first years appointment.

The decree also stated the development of a job profile, which describes the knowledge, skills and attitudes an (experienced) teacher needs for his professional activities. It is composed of the responsibilities with respect to the learners, towards the school/ the educational community and responsibility with respect to the society. The basic competences of a teacher /mentor/ instructor are also mentioned in this Decree.

All teachers, but especially VET teachers have the opportunity to do an internship in an enterprise.

QUALITY CONTROL FOR ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE AS FROM 2007:

As from 2007: in every adult education centre there will be a quality controlled care system established (it includes the supply of the educational system and the organization with learning guidance for a trainee on individual level). Adult secondary education programmes are screened by the inspectorate of education.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR CVET TRAINERS AND LEARNING FACILITATORS

Flanders - Flemish Externally Autonomous Agency for Employment, Vocational Training and Guidance (VDAB)

Many bodies in Flanders offer education and training for adults. As well as in educational institutions, adults are also taught by the VDAB, Syntra Flanders, on an inter-sectoral level, in the social sector, in driving schools, etc. In total, it amounts to many thousands of trainers.

Teachers in Centres for Adult Education must have a specific teacher-training programme (replaces the pedagogical-skills certificate). The training leading up to this certificate is being integrated in the updated specific teacher training due to start at the beginning of the school year 207-2008. This remodelling will make the training considerably more extensive, with plenty of emphasis on practical experience. The workload in the updated training amounts to 60 study points, 30 of which are for practical training.

Although VDAB has its own training service, which ensures the instructors' initial and continuing teacher training (usually professionals from the world of business), it also recruits trainers who have attended a teacher-training programme.

VDAB hires trainers by means of comparative recruiting exams. They are organised inter-regionally, on the initiative of one or more regions or of the central organisation of VDAB.

The recruiting exams include:

- Theoretical and general knowledge required for the position
- One or more practical tests that are relevant for the function
- An interview with the examination board related to psychological tests.

In 2008, VDAB had 1,008 trainers (562 male and 446 female). VDAB has its own training service (Track 21). For all teaching staff, a yearly evaluation is held, linked to the competences required for the job. In this evaluation, training plans for the next year are discussed.

Trainers at SYNTRA Vlaanderen

Apprenticeship instructors are expected to have teaching qualifications. If this is not the case, they attend an initial additional course (120 hours), organised by SYNTRA VLAANDEREN, for didactic training. This basic training is later refreshed and completed with periodic additional training sessions on various topics. The other instructors (in entrepreneurial and additional training) can attend the additional training voluntarily. The range of courses also includes additional courses in the field of professional knowledge. These can be organised either by SYNTRA Vlaanderen or by the SYNTRA centres. Every SYNTRA centre also organises a “welcome package” for instructors.

The instructors too are trained on a permanent basis. This is a guarantee for quality. The teachers receive internal follow-up and support (by a SYNTRA coach) and external evaluation (student satisfaction = customer satisfaction).

Employers who provide 4 days/week apprenticeship training within the SYNTRA network are given a sequential training of 12 hours, called ‘Estafette’. This training programme is organised by a SYNTRA trainer and an apprenticeship counsellor. The training is focused on welcoming apprentices, issuing instructions to them, coaching (feedback and evaluation), conflict management, etc. The whole SYNTRA network has more than 4,000 teachers. Some of them only give a few hours of training per year, depending on their time and specialisation. Most of them get a payment per teaching hour. When they attend additional teaching training, SYNTRA has to pay them for their attendance to that training/additional schooling.

Training programme for trainers of adults

In September 2007, a training programme for trainers of adults was launched OOV (*Opleidingen voor Opleiders van Volwassenen*) in five Centres for Adult Education. This programme offered professional training (consisting of 280 teaching periods, 120 of which were dedicated to practical training) to VDAB and SYNTRA trainers and to other organisers of continuing education and adult education. The programme led to a ‘Training for Trainers of Adults’ certificate.

Pedagogical preparation for employers offering other types of workplace training

The Flemish Government has made a ‘**Competence Agenda**’ together with the social partners in order to contribute to sustainable and innovative growth. One of the ten action programmes on this agenda aims at more and better workplace learning, another one at the improvement and development of a sense of entrepreneurship.

Through **sector covenants**, many sectors organise training and education for employees/employers who provide assistance to pupils, trainers, jobseekers and new employees. These sector covenants contain a clause about ‘the support for more and better workplace learning’. In this clause, sectors make a commitment about the quantity and quality of workplace learning, for all pupils - including those in the dual learning system, vocational and technical secondary - teachers, jobseekers and employees.

Often, a system of “godfathers” and “godmothers” is set up in order to provide a proper welcome and support on the workplace. Approximately half of the 28 sectors with a sector covenant have ever organised or offered a “**godparent**” training (short-term or long-term).

Some small sectors even organise this training jointly so that they have sufficient trainees. In this case, they partly rely on the professional profile of instructor/counsellor that is developed by Social Economic Council.

WALLONIA - THE FOREM

The Walloon vocational training and employment office - FOREM

The FOREM's trainer training unit, '*Formation des formateurs*', provides in-service vocational training for beginning and experienced instructors, at both the didactical and technical levels. The in-service vocational training for the FOREM instructors includes five parts:

1. Pedagogical in-service training for new instructors (for practical subject trainers as well as for workplace trainers);
2. Technical in-service training for instructors;
3. Pedagogical in-service training for instructors ('la gestion-évaluation');
4. Training concerning administrative and computer skills; and
5. In-service training for the executive staff.

This training programme is compulsory for every new FOREM instructor. Objectives of the programme are twofold:

- To inform the instructor about his/her new working environment; and
- To train the instructor with regard to the basis of the pedagogy of adults.

Objectives are translated into a modular based in-service training course including:

- Working environment and the mission of FOREM FORMATION;
- Adult education;
- Human resources.

In-service training for experienced FOREM instructors (technical and pedagogical)

FOREM-instructors have 15 credit days per year to be used as educational leave. Yearly, every trainer has the opportunity to have 15 days of in-service (technical, pedagogical or didactical) training courses. This measure is in line with the lifelong learning policy of the organisation. Instructors have to fill in a special application form for this kind of training where they express their motivation for the training course. After a favourable decision of FOREM FORMATION instructors can take the training at the expenses of the FOREM. A recent study (1) points out that, on average, instructors only take up to 5 out of the 15 credit days (2043 days in 2002 and 5505 days in 2003).

Exchange programmes and quality assurance

There is no exchange programme (multinational) for FOREM instructors. Nevertheless, every year a small number of instructors (10 to 15) participate in study-visits organised by CEDEFOP. The FOREM also participates in a number of international projects (such as SOCRATES, Leonardo da Vinci and ESF). The FOREM operates in accordance with the quality assurance system of ISO. At the beginning of March 2004, FOREM FORMATION received the ISO 9001 certificate (version 2000). Together with this external quality assurance system, the FOREM has also its own quality manual.

Vocational training for job seekers and workers

Training officers from FOREM and Bruxelles-Formation are selected both from the educational and from the professional environment

(Source: Bruxelles Formation Rapport annuel 2008 & Rapport d'activités du FOREM 2007).

9. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR LEARNING, CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT

9.1. STRATEGY AND PROVISION

LIFELONG GUIDANCE IN THE NATIONAL LLL AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

Through several policy briefs, notes, action plans (through the skills and competences agenda in Flanders and through the Marshall plan in Wallonia, lifelong learning (LLL) strategies have been designed and implemented. Aim of policy briefs notes and action plans is involving all stakeholders: public authorities as well as social partners, education and training providers and the public employment service. Meeting the twin challenges of efficiency and equity is central in all these policy briefs, notes, action plans.

Until recently, guidance policies and systems focused separately on target groups like pupils, unemployed people or employed people. In 2007 the Flemish “**Competence Agenda 2007-2010**” has been signed by **all stakeholders**: public authorities as well as social partners, education and training providers and the public employment service. This agreement not only means a significant progress in involving the stakeholders, it also gives a boost to the Flemish LLL strategy by aiming to recognize and deploy the skills and competences of students, job-seekers and employees alike. An extra budget of € 38 million has been allocated for these actions in the period 2007-2009. With the elaboration of the Skills Agenda, study and career guidance initiatives will be better coordinated and aligned strategically toward a **lifelong guidance approach**. For example: pupils, teachers and parents must be better informed about the world of work and its opportunities; and a portfolio, useful for all policy domains and for the whole lifecycle, will be developed. The employment services in the three regions (VDAB, FOREM, ACTIRIS and Bruxelles-Formation) also offer opportunities for information, guidance and skill reviews for young people and adults.

Related to the Marshall Plan (2005), the Walloon Government offers the opportunity to follow an advanced 7th year secondary education in Flanders or to participate in short training courses in Flanders for young people/adults (total 4, 487 in 2008).

In Belgium mainly the two eldest employment services, the VDAB and FOREM, provide a platform for jobseekers and employers. To perform this important social task as well as possible, the VDAB and FOREM provide a relatively accessible, high quality and free service to all jobseekers and employers. The VDAB’s and FOREM’s mission is to exercise an impact on the labour market in keeping with the economic situation and society.

The VDAB and FOREM need to find a way to reconcile economic and social goals. Economically, job vacancies need to be filled quickly and correctly. Socially, the VDAB and FOREM want to guarantee a smooth integration of jobseekers in the labour market and help anyone who has difficulties finding a job. In this way, for the Dutch - speaking Community, the VDAB plays an important role in boosting the Flemish employment level to 65% in 2004 and to 70% in 2010, increasing the participation of under-represented sections of the population in the labour market and aspiring to more individual and social development for everyone. In November 2002, a specific Task Force for information and guidance, in which the social partners were represented, advised the Flemish government on the implementation of a right to career counselling. Through co-financing from the European Social Fund (and some sectors) a network of centres for career counselling of workers will be developed. Some of these centres are being developed by trade unions for their members and by the VDAB.

On 22 January 2003, the Flemish social partners agreed that the “system of training vouchers” should be developed for adult workers in Flanders in order to raise the participation of adults in lifelong learning. With these vouchers, the worker can buy training or career guidance (including recognition of prior learning), with some restrictions: only training or career guidance in institutions recognised by the Flemish government or the sectoral social partners; only general training; training out of working time or during education leave; and only for the payment of direct costs (not child care or transport). Furthermore, non-profit-making associations, such as the *Service d’information sur les études et les professions* (or *SIEP*, the information service on education and occupations) and *Infor-Jeunes* (or *Info Jeugd* in the Dutch - speaking Community) offer information on trade, education and young people’s rights. (Belgium is also a member of the network of national vocational guidance resource centres (*Euroguidance*) of the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

The Walloon unemployment rate stood at 11.9% in 2005 and it remains high at 10.1% in 2009. As from April 2009, a Marshall Plan 2 has been launched and it will be developing and boosting a green economy through additional research and training in green technologies, with advantageous tax reductions for green construction projects. Marshall Plan 2 will also reinforce the link between school programmes and the needs of the labour market.

POLICY AND STRATEGY DESIGN

To achieve the employment level, the VDAB and FOREM contribute to improving the balance between demand and offer in the labour market; pay attention to the proportional participation of all sections of the population; take the necessary measures to counteract every form of direct or indirect discrimination in the labour market; encourage and stimulate life-long learning for jobseekers and employees and makes its range of tools more transparent, efficient and effective.

As outcomes of cooperation agreements (see below) 827 (64%) jobseekers started in 2008, a Cevora-VDAB training and nearly 44% of the French-speaking jobseekers in Wallonia started a job training in 2008. In the framework of such partnership agreements, concluded already in 2001, (this time the Auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar workers CPNAE = national and the French -speaking community had collaborated in the framework of one of these cooperation agreements) 4,671 employees followed a training in 2008 as result of this agreement.

COOPERATION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SECTORS IN THE AREA OF LIFELONG GUIDANCE

A sectoral collective agreement is an important policy that encourages and supports training in companies of the Auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar workers [CPNAE](#), the auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar workers. To attain these objectives, the social partners - mainly via Cevora, the sectoral training organization - together with several partners who have their own complementary resources and expertise. Through these partnerships, the social partners of the Auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar workers [CPNAE](#) want to achieve greater efficiency and quality by bringing together expertise and services. The aim of cooperation through partnerships is to use their own resources and know-how in the fields of education, employment and lifelong guidance as leverage.

This explains the large number of networks and partnerships of the Auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar workers [CPNAE](#) with public regional services like VDAB, FOREM, ACTIRIS, SYNTRA, IFAPME and IAWM, Bruxelles-Formation, institutions for adult and day education, other sector funds and sectoral training centres and other partners.

To achieve the whole of the federal training and employment section in the sectoral collective agreements, the social partners of the Auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar workers [CPNAE](#) are aiming at a new regional interpretation of their objectives via protocols (agreements) of cooperation with regional or community authorities. The outcome is the bridging of the federal collective bargaining agreements and public policy regarding employment and training (regional and community matters).

In Flanders, there is an emphasis on entrepreneurship training (Entrepreneurial Education Action Plan (Flanders) for the sensibilisation on entrepreneurship):

Interested jobseekers can be screened electronically on their entrepreneurial competencies at the VDAB. Those who satisfactorily complete the screening will be given the opportunity to follow a free business management training course with Syntra. The Union of Independent Entrepreneurs in Flanders (*Unie voor zelfstandige Ondernemingen - Unizo*), Syntra Flanders, cities, and the VDAB co-operate to address more immigrants. “Bottleneck professions” are also addressed among entrepreneurs. Jobseekers requiring more intensive and personal assistance are referred to the pathway-to-work principle, where they receive tailor-made guidance taking into account his/her opportunities and requirements.

In Wallonia, the Job Tonic initiative has three priority areas: more frequent follow-up, instant action, and speedy contact with the job market in its widest sense. In real terms this means that during the first week in which the young people register, they will be invited to the FOREM for a personal interview/assessment and will be given a description of the services offered by the FOREM and its partners. There will also be a specialist youth counsellor, who will be the young person’s contact during the whole process. In the second week, the young people will be invited to take part in a group module where they will be coached in writing a CV and cover letter; initiated into the techniques of job-finding; and, if they need it, in how to introduce themselves to an employer. Following this, they will take their place in a jobs panel on a fortnightly basis to receive job offers, fine-tune their search procedure, and draw up and polish an action plan.

The so-called “opportunity groups” (jobseekers, immigrants) are targeted via several, specific projects and actions.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROVIDERS

The VDAB, FOREM, ACTIRIS are responsible for providing guidance and counselling of the unemployed.

SYNTRA, IFAPME and IAWM, the Union of independent entrepreneurs in Flanders (social partner) for independent entrepreneurs/professions, Bruxelles Formation, employment agencies in the private sector, and the non-profit sector deliver guidance services.

9.2. TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

Entrepreneurial Education Action Plan (Flanders) for the sensibilisation on entrepreneurship:

- IVET - Secondary schools can use the optional part of the curriculum to supplementary subjects. In the third stage, the specific training component can be filled up with entrepreneurial competences;
- New federal law on the basic elements of the Business Management Certificate is integrated in the curriculum.
- (Entrepreneurial Class Week): is meant to highlight actions on entrepreneurship in schools and training centres (including a scription-contest);

- Funding of some initiatives on Mini-enterprises in school
- CVET - Knowledge Centre: the development of a virtual Knowledge Centre on initiatives (including materials, information, events, etc) to stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurship for all the mentioned target groups (see below).

TABLE 9.2.1: OTHER TARGET GROUP SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

OTHER TARGET GROUP	OBJECTIVES
<p>Jobseekers</p> <p>Expansion of business management paths, preliminary paths and guidance, in permanent cooperation with the VDAB, for both higher-educated and lesser-educated people. For the lesser-educated, an additional preliminary path will be developed and tested.</p>	<p>Objective: 400 new business management students via this path work.</p> <p>A preliminary path and extra guidance are provided for 25% of the students.</p>
<p>Immigrants</p> <p>Further expansion of transition courses on the one hand and courses with interpreters on the other hand, to meet the demand.</p> <p>The initiatives already developed will be continued and evaluated.</p> <p>New projects will be developed as required. These projects run in collaboration with UNIZO and in close consultation with the cities involved and the organisations on the spot.</p>	<p>Objective: reach 250 students (immigrants) who are currently not being reached.</p>
<p>Disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Job seekers and immigrants will certainly be represented in this target group, but so will other groups (benefit claimants, lesser-educated people).</p> <p>Additional paths will also be provided for these groups, lowering the threshold and raising the chances of successfully completing the business management course and starting a business.</p>	<p>Objective: Reach 150 students via specific preliminary paths and guidance.</p>
<p>Caravan residents</p> <p>Business management</p>	<p>Objective: 15 students</p>
<p>Non demanded professions</p> <p>In cooperation with (among others) sectors, customised paths will be provided to help professions that currently attract few people to attract more. In line with this, a network management initiative has already been started with SYNTRA, in which day training courses are provided for unemployed people.</p> <p>Initiatives have been provided for a minimum of 3 sectors in 2006.</p>	<p>Objective: at least 100 students in Flanders to follow training courses for bottleneck professions.</p> <p>The students will subsequently be monitored to measure effectiveness.</p>
<p>Cultural sector - artists</p> <p>Employment agency sector</p> <p>Non-profit</p> <p>Social Economics</p> <p>With regard to new market segments, in line with entrepreneurship (this include informing, guidance and if needed supporting and counselling towards an independent profession)</p>	<p>Objective: 100 Cultural sector - studentss</p> <p>primarily experimental projects in line with a strategic approach.</p>

FRENCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Young people with qualifications

As from 2005 the Job Tonic plan aims to include 33,000 mainly newly registered jobseekers, and in 2007 the priority went to the 8,300 young people who did not obtain the secondary school leaving certificate (drop outs). Young people with qualifications (school examination certificates or some further education qualification) will be offered their own personal balance sheet, plus information about the state of the job market and will be directed towards the tools freely available to all. If they wish, they can also benefit from the support system offered to those with no qualifications. Young people who remain jobless after three months will be invited to come to the office for a personalised remedial programme. Partnership pilot projects are to be launched in some of the larger centres and areas seen as suffering most in the employment field (highest employment rate compared to other centres and areas), with the aim of developing special approaches targeting young people (job coaching, frequent backup contacts) through the structures where they are to be found most often.

9.3. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL

DUTCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Personnel in the pedagogical counselling services

The personnel in the pedagogical counselling services consist of pedagogical advisors and pedagogical advisor-coordinators. The latter leads the Pedagogical Counselling Service. Both positions of pedagogical advisor and advisor-coordinator can be full-time or part-time. As regards the admission requirements for a position within the Pedagogical Counselling Service, small differences can be detected between the departments for guidance in subsidized education and those in Community education. Generally, the candidate needs to have at least 10 years of seniority to be eligible for a temporary or permanent appointment. The Flemish government may always define additional diploma requirements (taking into account for example guidance and counselling experience (Decree of 17 July 1991)). A counselling function can also be appointed to educational staff by means of special duty leave.

Personnel of the pupil guidance centres (the former Psychological, Medical and Social Services Agencies) This name is still valid in the French - speaking Community.

The personnel of the pupil guidance centres consists of a number of permanent offices, from governor (promotion office), over physician, consultant, psycho-pedagogical consultant, social worker (higher education certificate ISCED level 4), administrative employee, paramedical worker, psycho-pedagogical worker (higher education certificate ISCED level 4), to collaborator.

Since 1 September 2000 each new governor of a pupil guidance centre - except for the permanent support group (*permanente ondersteuningscel*) - is appointed with a mandate. The administrative employees and the collaborators form the administrative staff of a pupil guidance centre whereas the remaining offices form the technical staff of a pupil guidance centre

Learning path counsellor (university degree)

The learning path counsellor arranges the learning path guidance for the apprentice. This is a new job. Unlike apprenticeship officers (who currently work independently), learning path counsellors will be in the employment of the Flemish Institute for Independent Entrepreneurship (Syntra Vlaanderen). The aim is to strengthen their independent position.

Career guidance

Examples of jobs directly involving career guidance include: VDAB consultant, process counsellor, learning path counsellor, job shop consultant and Eures consultant (internationally oriented).

FRENCH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

PMS centres (Psychological, Medical and Social Services Agencies)

In the PMS centres, the categories of staff are laid down by law: they are psychologists (educational psychologists (*university degree*)), social workers (higher education certificate) and doctors (*university degree*) or nurse (higher education certificate). The technical staff shall consist of a director (*university degree*), an educational psychology counsellor, a social worker and a paramedical worker (higher education certificate).

The FOREM

The people working in the vocational guidance counselling units in “*Forem Conseil*” are vocational guidance counsellors (higher education certificate).

Public vocational training service

In the public vocational training service in the Brussels Region, the personnel consists of training counsellors (higher education certificate), skills audit counsellors and trainers in a vocational guidance and initiation centre.

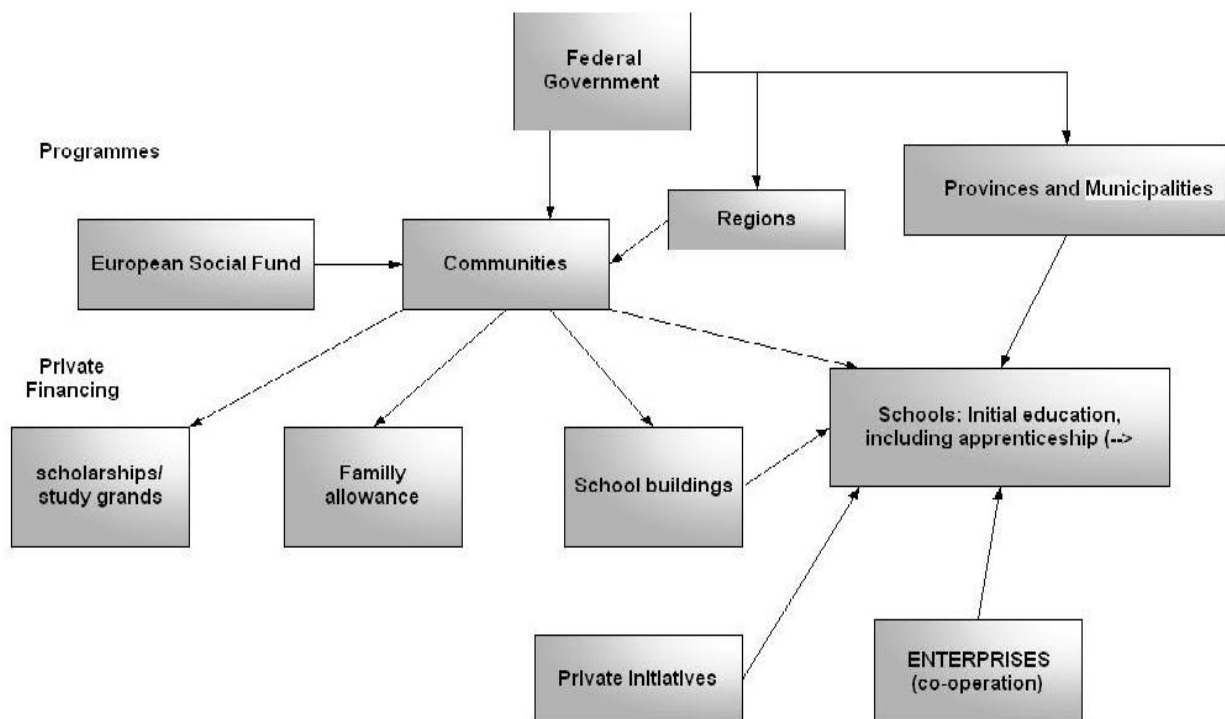
NGOs

In the non-profit-making associations the designations “*agent de guidance et d’orientation*” (higher education certificate), “*intervenant social*” and “*agent de guidance et d’intégration*” (higher education certificate) are used. Education and integration in society for people abroad is the main role of the agents of the NGO’s.

10. FINANCING: INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES

10.1. FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

DIAGRAM 1: FLOW OF FUNDING OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN BELGIUM



The federal government has its financial income from the social security resources. This financial income is transferred to the other governing levels (the Regions, Communities, Provinces and Municipalities), and it represents the public expenditure for education by student in Belgium. The public expenditure for education by student refers to an educational principle stipulated in the Belgian Constitution.

The Belgian constitution stipulates that access to education is free until the end of the compulsory education age (18 years old - part-time compulsory = 18 years old / full-time compulsory = 15 years old). This means that primary and secondary schools that are funded or subsidised by the Community government are not allowed to charge any registration fees.

The federal government also concludes educational agreements with the communities and the regions concerning the transition from school to work.

For these agreements, there is a flow of funding from the federal government to the other governing levels. It concerns policy makers of all the governing levels. Examples of this are the learning agreement with Dutch-speaking Community and the Flemish region;

agreements with the French and German Communities; the revaluation agreement concerning education with the Walloon region; and the agreement for promoting alternating learning with the French Community.

All this explains the educational flows from the federal government to the other governing levels being the Regions, the Communities, the Provinces and Municipalities.

With the 3th state reform (1980) of the Constitution, the powers of the regions and communities were finally set. The regions are responsible for “local” matters (environment, culture ...), the Communities for the “personal” matters (cultural issues, family policy, juvenile protection ...). With the 4th state reform (1988) of the Belgian Constitution Law, the “personal” matters of the Communities were extended: education became a Community competency. This means that education is organised by the Communities for which they receive an annual contribution coming from the federal government and the respective regions.

The Communities, Provinces, Municipalities or other public or private bodies also subsidise the people who organise education in accordance with statutory standards.

The communities are responsible for the personnel cost, scholarships and study grants, family allowance, school buildings and initial education, including the apprenticeship until the age of 18 (part -time compulsory education IVET). The creation of new institutions and providers belongs to the competency of Regions and Communities.

There were no collective funds for IVET. The ministers of education receive each year a global budget that will be divided to all levels of education. The ministers of education are entitled to take decisions regarding this budget, once the budget for education has been approved by the respective governments. Only in the Dutch -speaking Community related to this issue there was a modification on 1 September 2008 with a new Decree on financing compulsory education (i.e. pre-primary, primary and secondary education) that came into force. Among other things, it resulted in the adjusting of the financial resources of the schools to reflect better the socio-economic profile of their pupils. Before, the funding of the schools by the Government was related to the type of network wherein the schools were situated (e.g.: network of official schools or network of free subsidized schools). This Decree foresees an additional budget of € 85 million for primary education and € 41,3 million for secondary education. The philosophy underpinning this decree is that pre-primary, primary and secondary education lay the foundations for lifelong learning and it is particularly important that disadvantaged groups are given the resources and opportunities to participate.

To guarantee the performance of the Regional Technological Centres, the government has formulated some restrictions or conditions in the financial field. For instance, they can spend no more than 30% of government funding to overhead and wages. Actions can only take place when there is at least 25% cofinancing from others than the Flemish government, for instance from a private (training) company. This is to guarantee the actions the RTC takes are also supported by other stakeholders and that this support gets actually translated in a financial support. Interesting to note is that the decision makers in these RTC's are partially composed of members in the education field and of members of the private field (public-private cooperation). They decide together on which themes they will focus and which actions will be developed. The Regional Technological Centres are very popular the last years as they are one of the few organizations that provide opportunities to strengthen the link between education and the labour market in a concrete way.

EDUCATION CONTRACTS WITH ASSOCIATIONS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

To strengthen the relations with the private sector, the Flemish government has made an agreement with representatives of the private sector to increase the attractiveness of VET programmes and to strengthen the alliance with the private sector. Thanks to these contracts schools can cooperate with the private sector to gear their study programmes to the concrete needs of the private companies. This cooperation takes place under the supervision of the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training that fulfils a facilitating role between these two parties.

Traditionally, a distinction is made between three educational networks within each community:

- 1) “Community education”: organised by the public bodies under the authority of the Communities. These are the Dutch - speaking Community education, the French-speaking Community education and the German-speaking Community education;
- 2) “Public Subsidised education”: the subsidised publicly run schools comprise municipal education organised by the municipalities and the provincial education organised by the provincial administrations; and
- 3) “Private Subsidised Education”: the subsidised privately run schools deliver education organised by a private person or private organisation on private initiative. Privately run education mainly consists of catholic schools.

The 5th state reform (2001) gave the different Communities both more financial resources and more powers. This was the first time when Communities were granted genuine fiscal autonomy and the regions were given almost full control over a number of taxes among which road, registration and inheritance tax. In addition, the Communities were also given control over agriculture, foreign trade and development cooperation. The composition and working of the institutions of the Brussels-Capital Region were once again reformed. Since the 2007 federal elections a new state reform once again features on top of the political agenda. The new reform will take place in 2 stages.

Hence, the competent authority receives financial means for the operation of the schools through funding or subsidies.

The Communities in Belgium also receive financial means for the financing of educational and training projects from the European Social Fund.

Financial resources

In 2007, the total expenditure on education at secondary level of education (ISCED 2-4) was 7908.3 million EUR. This amount was 5.3% of the public expenditure and 2.6% of the GDP. (Source: Eurostat UOE Data collection, special data extraction to Cedefop).

10.2. FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING

10.2.1. FUNDING FOR PUBLICLY PROVIDED CVET

- The adult-education consortiums will all together receive a subsidy for staff expenses, operational expenses and investments of no less than 3.6 million euro. Of this, 650,000 euro will have to be allocated to the support and coordination of the development of an educational and training policy for detainees,

- VDAB operations are largely financed by the Flemish government. Within this framework the VDAB concludes a management agreement with the Flemish government. Besides the contributions from the Dutch - speaking Community it also derives an income from the European Union and from invoicing employers. FOREM received in 2008 a subsidy (a ratio and after reducing debts) their for staff and operational costs of 74,960 € per full time staff member (Principle the less subsidy, the less debts that remain) Source: FOREM rapport d'Activités 2008, 98 p.
- The agency SYNTRA Flanders is subsidised and has its own income. It recognises and subsidises regional centres. The centres receive an operational and an investment subsidy of the Flemish government. IFAPME and IAWM receive of their respective Communities (French - speaking Community and German - speaking Community also an operational and an investment subsidy.
- Training in agriculture. Each year, the recognised training centres for agriculture must submit a year programme specifying the number of hours they would like to have subsidised. The minister approves these programmes in function of the budgetary resources available. The centres submit a subsidy application per course (via Internet). They only receive a fixed subsidy per teaching period, subdivided into a trainer allowance and an operational allowance.
- In 2006, the French Community had a budget of just over 7.65 billion euros (for the whole Community). Slightly over three quarters of this budget (76.11%) is used for the funding of education, research and training.

TABLE 10.2.1.1.: SHARE OF THE EDUCATION BUDGET IN THE TOTAL BUDGET OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY IN 2006-2008 (1000 EUR) *

Departements	Budget 2005	Budget 2006	Budget 2007	Budget 2008
Education, Research and training	5,496,031	5,730,393	5,882,482	6,027,532
Public Debt	566,809	141,197	147,639	149,910
Subsidy for Cocof	359,980	381,229	376,289	391,710
Total	7,724,098	7,650,150	7,749,312	8,229,151

Source: ETNIC Statistics Department of the French Community

*Overall education budget/Budget of the French Community 76,11 %

TABLE 10.2.1.2.: BREAKDOWN OF EDUCATION EXPENDITURES BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, TYPE OF EDUCATION AND RÉSEAU, 2006

	Total	French Community	Public grant-aided	Private grant-aided
TOTAL	5,177,830	1,157,072	1,481,902	2,538,856
Full-time education	4,913,057	1,106,210	1,334,720	2,472,127
Specialised education	371,094	114,277	89,417	167,400
Art colleges	55,537	25,192	9,780	20,565
Architecture colleges	13,440	2,352	5,463	5,625
Hautes Écoles	336,396	84,994	99,986	151,416
Universities	536,231	172,726	-	363,505
Part-time artistic secondary education	75,755	-	67,892	7,863
Social advancement education	146,532	39,312	68,663	38,557
Distance education	2,856	2,856	-	-

Source: ETNIC Statistics Department of the French Community, 2006

This table indicates that 49% of the total educational expenditures is for private grant - aided education in the French-speaking Community. 97 % of these expenditures goes to full-time education.

TABLE 10.2.1.3.: SHARE OF THE EDUCATION BUDGET IN THE TOTAL BUDGET OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY IN 2008	
	PERCENTAGE
Overall education budget/Budget of the French Community	74.4
Overall education budget/GDP of the French Community	4.8
Budget of the French Community/GDP of the French Community	6.4

Source: ETNIC Statistics Department of the French Community

Part administered by just the Ministry of the French Community. Training was transferred to the Walloon Region and the COCOF, the Brussels French-speaking Institute for Training. The remaining appropriation for the French Community only includes funds for action programmes or training and job re-entry schemes under the European Social Fund - not including amounts for the 'European Social Fund' unit under the 'Services généraux', which has become a separately managed department.

In 2006 in the French Community's budget reached a total of 475 million euros (not including the special budget for school buildings). These new funds will continue to grow year by year, raising the total by nearly another 561 million euros by 2010. The specific budgets earmarked by the French Community for cultural awareness-raising activities for students -such as *Culture-École*- or the purchase of textbooks and educational software in connection with the *Contrat pour l'école* by education institutions will also have the effect of gradually increasing the effective provision of free schooling. Thus, to take this last point, since 2006, 2 million euros have been paid every year to educational institutions in addition to their traditional operating subsidies. This special budget will also be increased annually, reaching over 2.75 million euros in 2010 and 3.55 million euros in 2013.

To qualify for subsidies or financing, any Centre for Adult Education, affiliated to an adult-education consortium must have attained at least 120,000 teaching periods-course participants per year (in the area of Brussels-Capital, 60,000 teaching periods-course participants per year). Though, if it is not affiliated to an adult-education consortium the minimum number is 720,000 teaching periods-course participants per year.

HIGHER EDUCATION

As from 2008 there is in the Flemish-speaking Community a new financing system for the whole of higher education. This new model does not include resources for academisation or new funds for the research commitments of the academic university-college programmes.

Hence, sub-budgets for the various types of education were settled on. In concrete terms, the operational allowances for higher education consist of an overall education socle for the totality of universities and university colleges which amounts to 100 million euros. This amount is distributed according to the total number of credits taken up by students with a degree contract in view of obtaining a Bachelor's or Master's degree (initial programmes), in a regressive fashion. This means that smaller institutions receive a relatively larger socle; to qualify for the education socle, a minimum institutional threshold of 90,000 taken up credits must be attained in the Bachelor's and Master's programmes. Institutions that do not reach the minimum institutional threshold do not receive the guaranteed minimum amount or a contribution from the Incentives Fund.

FRENCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The operating subsidy for each university includes a fixed component reviewed every ten years (103,260,136 € for the period from 2006 to 2015) and a variable component distributed between universities on the basis of the number of regularly enrolled students (a base amount of 311,578,308 €, adapted every year on the basis of the health consumer price index).

The financing of the *Hautes Écoles* comes from the annual budgetary credits of the French Community.

DUTCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

TABLE 10.2.1.4.: EDUCATIONAL BUDGET IN THE DUTCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY, 2007 AND 2009 (EUR)*

	2007	2009
Education budget	8.86 billion	9.20 billion
University education	810 million	1,633,483 million
Adult education and part-time arts education	467 million	503,9 million
Regardless of levels of education	472 million	592,6 million

*The educational budget is 37,85% of the Total budget of the Dutch -speaking Community

10.2.2. FUNDING FOR CVT IN ENTERPRISES

The auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar workers ([CPNAE](#)) or *Joint Committee 218*, is a very large sector with almost 56,000 companies and approximately 406,000 employees.

More than one quarter of the employees (28%) of the total Belgian private sector belongs to the Joint Committee 218.

Belgium spends 1,9 % of the total wage bill as a standard -like in Europe- on training and education (this has been confirmed several times by the Belgian social partners via inter professional agreements). Moreover, 0.10 % of the total wage bill is aimed to train groups at risk (low skilled people, disabled and migrants).

The social partners commit themselves to enhance the training participation rate 5 % (previous IPA 2007-2008). To finance these actions, the employers will transfer 0,2 % of the total wage bill for the Social Fund.

A study showed that approximately 20% more companies of the CPNAE (*Vanderbiesen & Sels, 2007*) have training on their agenda of social consultation.

Including training in sectoral collective agreements is an important measure for funding.

TABLE 10.2.2.1.: COST OF CVT COURSES AS % OF TOTAL LABOUR COST (ALL ENTERPRISES), 1999 AND 2005								
STAFF	10-49	10-49	50 - 249	50 - 249	250 +	250 +	TOTAL	TOTAL
TIME	2005	1999	2005	1999	2005	1999	2005	1999
EU 27	1.1		1.4		1.9		1.6	
EU 25	1.1	1.5	1.4	2.4	1.9	2.4	1.6	2.2
BE	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.6	2.1	1.9	1.6	1.6

Source: Eurostat (CVTS2 and CVTS3); Extracted on: 30-04-2010; Last update: 19-03-2010

Description: The indicator represents the Cost of CVT courses as % of total labour cost. Calculations are related to all enterprises participating in the survey (staff 10+) regardless of having carried out CVT courses or not.

MEASURES FOCUSED ON DEMAND-LED FUNDING OF CVT

DUTCH - SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The Flemish government and the European Social Fund (ESF) have earmarked 50,344,847 euros for calls to start up actions under the competence agenda in 2007 and 2008. With these resources, applicant companies and sectors can organise training for their employees and develop a policy around their personnel's knowledge and skills. Resources have also been made available for further developing the grant of experience certificates and career guidance (two other spearheads of the competence agenda). The social partners are mobilising companies towards 30,000 traineeships per five-year period for teachers and 75,000 per year for pupils.

Specific policy in support of vocational training

- 1) Exemption of training cost for specific groups of employees. In order to encourage companies to improve the qualifications of certain groups of employees, the VDAB sometimes pays the training of these employees. However, during the training period, the company cannot dismiss the employee or interrupt his/her salary. This measure is aimed at employees belonging to risk groups, as well as employees whose employment is directly threatened by an individual resignation, a collective dismissal or a company reorganisation.
- 2) Exemption of training cost in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises. For small and medium-sized enterprises, the VDAB applies a regressive exemption of the training cost in light of the number of employees. In some cases (companies with less than 10 employees) the training cost is paid in full by the VDAB.
- 3) Investment support: Training vouchers and the former Vlamivorm initiative. Vlamivorm's goal was to encourage investments in vocational training and comprises a reduction of the advance levy on property for companies who are able to prove they have gone to great lengths to train their staff. The benefit needs to be used for vocational training programmes of employees (internal or external training).
- 4) Training and advice vouchers incorporated into the Budget for Economic Advice (BEA). As from 22 May 2006, in Flanders, advice and training vouchers have been incorporated into the Budget for Economic Advice (BEA) and two new subsidy options added, namely mentorship and knowledge acquisition in Flemish knowledge centres. Support of up to 5,000 euros per business can be applied for a period of three years. The business pays for 65% of the service itself and the Flemish government is responsible for the remaining 35%. In February 2006, Brussels launched a study to chart the support structures available for businesses.

Specific policy in support of vocational training

Training-integration programme (PFI).

The PFI remains one of the FOREM Conseil's most successful initiatives. The principle is simple: with this service, a company can provide an unemployed person with on-the-job training, and in exchange, take advantage of reduced labour costs for the duration of the training period. The implementation of the PFI is geared towards a practice that is really in tune with the needs of the FOREM's clients, and is meant as a truly "tailor-made" service, conditioned by the specific relationship between a company, a jobseeker and the FOREM.

Training Vouchers for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Training vouchers should be viewed in a system of vocational training funding by the Region in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises with less than 50 employees. These vouchers can be used as an instrument of payment at the recognised training centres and are offered to the companies in question at a lower price than the nominal value of the voucher.

Encouraging the collective reduction of working hours in the company.

For a number of companies, a reduction of working hours implies an in-depth reorganisation of the work which may warrant the use of vocational training programmes.

Regional level: Brussels, Occupational transition grant.

This grant is given to small and medium-sized enterprises that hire long-term unemployed people with a contract for an indefinite period. At all times, an in-house vocational training needs to be provided which must be approved by the Brussels Regional Service for employment (ACTIRIS) and an in-house vocational training agreement needs to be reached (Royal Decree no. 495).

Guardianship support (Voogdijsteun).

This concerns a guardianship agreement between the company, the employee in training and the ACTIRIS. In pursuance of this agreement the guardian supervises the integration and training of the employee in the company.

Individual training in a company

This measure implies a training agreement between a company and the ACTIRIS regarding the training of a jobseeker for the specific needs of a company provided that a shortage of qualified personnel for these jobs exists and the ACTIRIS does not provide a suitable training. The agreement stipulates a certain training programme that is monitored by the ACTIRIS.

According to the third CVT Survey, around 63 % of all Belgian enterprises provided any type of continuing vocational training to their employees in 2005, which is 7 % less than the 1999 VET provision.

TABLE 10.2.2.2: TRAINING ENTERPRISES AS % OF ALL ENTERPRISES, BY SIZE CLASS (2005 VS. 1999)								
	Size class (number of employees)							
	Total (%)		10 to 49 (%)		50 to 249 (%)		250 or more (%)	
GEO	CVTS3	CVTS2	CVTS3	CVTS2	CVTS3	CVTS2	CVTS3	CVTS2
EU27	60	:	55	:	78	:	91	:
EU25	61	61	56	56	80	80	92	95
BE	63	70	58	66	86	93	99	100

Source: Eurostat; Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS2, 1999 and CVTS3, 2005)

TABLE 10.2.2.3.: TOTAL COST OF CVT COURSES AS % OF TOTAL LABOUR COST (ALL ENTERPRISES) (2005 VS. 1999)								
	Size class (number of employees)							
	Total (%)		10 to 49 (%)		50 to 249 (%)		250 or more (%)	
GEO	CVTS3	CVTS2	CVTS3	CVTS2	CVTS3	CVTS2	CVTS3	CVTS2
EU27	1,6	:	1,1	:	1,4	:	1,9	:
EU25	1,6	2,3	1,1	1,5	1,4	2,4	1,9	2,5
BE	1,6	1,6	0,9	1	1,2	1,6	2,1	1,9

: - Information not available

Source: Eurostat; 2nd and 3rd continuing vocational training survey in enterprises (CVTS2 and CVTS 3)

As described above, approximately 20% more of the enterprises of the [CPNAE](#) (Vanderbiesen & Sels, 2007) have training on their agenda. Social consultation is becoming visible in enterprises whose size class reaches 250 or more employees for CVTS3. To include training in sectoral collective agreements is an important measure for funding.

10.3. FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHER GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

In Belgium, unemployed people and other groups excluded from the labour market are entitled to welfare benefits paid by the National Service for Work Provision (Rijksdienst voor Arbeidsvoorziening - RVA/ Office National de l'Emploi - ONEM). Instead of this benefit, the employment services VDAB, FOREM, BGDA-ORBEM and ADG can also offer mandatory training in order to find an appropriate job.

Measures to finance job creation and vocational training

Employment Fund - Groups at Risk.

The objective of this measure is to finance job creation and vocational training and vocational integration initiatives for risk groups among jobseekers. Financial resource: supplementing the national agreement of 1989-1990, the Finance Law of 30 December 1988 obliges employers to conclude a collective contract of employment for 1989 and 1990 that sets aside 0.18% of their wage bill for employment promotion for risk groups among jobseekers. For 1991 and 1992, this rate was raised to 0.25% of the wage bill. In 2008 this rate is 0.10% of the wage bill. Enterprises which were not bound by such collective contracts had to pay a corresponding amount to the Employment Fund. Other initiatives promoting vocational integration of risk groups were granted subsidies from the resources accumulated in this way.

Support Plan for the Unemployed (VDAB/FOREM/ACTIRIS).

The Support Plan for the unemployed serves two aims: to provide more intensive support to long-term jobseekers when their jobs search motivation appears to be decreasing; and to check the opportunities in labour market for those unemployed people with entitlement to benefits. The Support Plan is financed by employer contributions that equal to 0.05% of the wage bill. It should be added that the resources available from the Employment Fund have also been used to finance support for the unemployed since the beginning of 1995.

For validation, not only of the training followed but also of the work experience acquired, formal recognition is required. It represented an investment of 14 million euros for the period 2005-2008.

The links between schools and the labour market

Training vouchers

Training vouchers are payment means that a company can use in purchasing educational services. A company buys the training vouchers from the Dutch - speaking Community and must pay half the value of these vouchers itself. The other half is subsidised by the Dutch - speaking Community. These training vouchers have a value of 30 euros each. Every company can order up to a maximum of 200 vouchers per year. These vouchers remain valid for a period of one year.

<http://vdab.be/opleidingsvouchers/werknemers.shtml>

10.4. GENERAL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS AND MECHANISMS

Sectoral training funds

Training funds are organizations of sectors responsible for the co-ordination and mapping of training activities for all sector enterprises. The joint training funds manage and centralize some of the contributions of the sector (it concerns contributions that the respective sector is paying for CVET of vulnerable groups in the labour market and sometimes for employees too). The training funds coordinate the training efforts aimed at promoting employment in the sector. So the Training Funds develop and apply the skills needs for the employees related to the market evolutions. The Training Funds develop high-quality training for their sector

(involvement in qualification framework and learning outcomes). Training funds are not only financed by the companies, but also by the Belgian regions and communities, and by the European Social Fund.

Tax incentives

Incentives Fund for policy spearheads

The Incentives Fund was set up to achieve the targets agreed with every institution for higher education in terms of encouraging equal opportunities and diversity. This incentive funding will be distributed amongst the institutions on the basis of management agreements. The first management agreement has a lifetime of 3 years and will subsequently be renewed for 5 years at a time. An assessment will take place in the last year of the agreement. In a first period (2008- 2010) the amount of the Incentives Fund will be distributed on the basis of the share each individual institution has in the education socle. From 2011, the funds will be distributed on the basis of result indicators. During 2008, the fund will have 3 million euros to spend and from 2009, 6 million euros.

Financial support for course participants

The VDAB and FOREM provide a number of allowances for jobseeking course participants. This is a selection of the main ones:

- Incentives premium: To encourage jobseekers from one-income families to follow training. Specific conditions apply to the incentives premium: the jobseeker is entitled to a fixed travel allowance to travel between home and the training/internship venue; an accommodation allowance; and a childcare allowance for course participants with children of childcare age (refund of childcare fees when the course participant is following a training programme or is at his internship place).

Learning accounts and vouchers

Learning accounts could be described as schemes for co-financing lifelong learning to finance direct costs of learning.

In Flanders the development account counts 1000 euros. The followed training, the assessment acquired competence could be financed with this development account.

The use of training vouchers is enjoying growing success in the three Regions. For instance, Brussels expanded the use of training vouchers from language training to other areas, such as ICT, for jobseekers going back to work. Wallonia increased the options for using training vouchers, both for companies and for workers; and it boosted its offering by establishing a special 'language voucher' and by increasing the number of vouchers that a business can order. Flanders is working on adjusting the system in various ways, including on the basis of the conclusion that certain less-favoured groups, such as unskilled individuals and people aged 50 and over, are significantly under-represented in the group of those people who make use of training vouchers. In late 2005, Flanders decided to integrate various instruments in order to support businesses in various areas, including the co-financing of training costs. In doing so, support was more strongly geared to SMEs.

Training cheques

(Decree of the Flemish and Walloon Government on training cheques in 2001 and 1998 respectively); support for the training in business (Wallonia); language cheques for Brussels training - education (Brussels Capital Region - September 1998). The social partners are represented in the management bodies by the above-mentioned training institutes: VDAB, FOREM, Syntra Vlaanderen, IFAPME, and IAWM.

11. NATIONAL VET STATISTICS - ALLOCATION OF PROGRAMMES

11.1. CLASSIFICATION OF NATIONAL VET PROGRAMMES

11.1.1. MAIN CRITERIA USED TO ALLOCATE VET PROGRAMMES

VET programmes are allocated according to the content of learning courses. Pre-vocational education / training is qualified as ISCED level 2 while vocational and technical education are allocated as ISCED level 3.

Even though, in theory, the first stage of secondary education is aimed at a common core curriculum, the options offered at this stage already reflect the choices to be made after that first stage. From the second stage a distinction is made between general secondary education, technical secondary education, vocational secondary education, and artistic secondary education.

General secondary education takes a more theoretical approach to subjects in comparison to other education forms, and its role is clearly to facilitate the pupils' transition to higher education. Technical secondary education (TSE) puts the emphasis on translating theoretical knowledge into practical skills. The objective of TSE is two-fold: on the one hand, it prepares pupils for a vocation and, on the other hand, it prepares them for higher education. Artistic secondary education provides a more 'artistic' range of subjects and thus prepares pupils for higher artistic education, without however excluding non-artistic follow-up courses of higher education or a professional career after graduation. Vocational secondary education is a practically-oriented form of education in which youngsters do not only receive a general education but are also given a specific training in a specific vocation. However, full-time vocational secondary education is not only attended by youngsters with practical talents who want to train in a specific vocation but also by pupils whose previous school career - often as far back as primary education - has been marked by a number of failures or learning difficulties.

11.1.2. VET LEVELS IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

TABLE 11.1.2.1.: VET LEVELS IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

LEVEL	ISCED	MINIMUM DURATION	MAXIMUM DURATION	TYPICAL DURATION*	TYPICAL STARTING AGE OF PUPILS
Lower secondary	2	3 years	3 years	2 years	12
Upper secondary	3	1.5 years	3 years	2 years	15-16
Technical & Vocational secondary education	3		4 years	3 yeras	15-18
Post secondary	4	9 months	12 months	10 months	17-18
Higher education & Academic education	5 5b	4 years	7years	4.5 years	18-20 18-22

TABLE 11.1.2.2. FIELDS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

LEVEL	FIELDS OF EDUCATION/ STUDY
<i>Upper secondary</i>	<p>In 2nd grade A, a distinction is made between the core curriculum, basic optional subjects and an optional component.</p> <p>In the pre-vocational year a distinction is made between the core curriculum, occupational fields and an optional component.</p> <p>In these courses of study one distinguishes between the core curriculum, the core courses, and also a complementary component.</p> <p>1st, 2nd and 3rd stage secondary education</p> <p>Second stage: pupils may choose between the following basic optional subjects:</p> <p>‘agri- and biotechnology’, ‘artistic education’, ‘ballet’, ‘construction- and woodwork techniques’, ‘Greek- Latin’, ‘graphic techniques’, ‘commerce’, ‘hotel-catering’, ‘industrial sciences’, ‘Latin’, ‘maritime education’, ‘mechanics-electricity’, ‘modern sciences’ and ‘social and technical education’.</p> <p>Second grade B, the so-called prevocational year</p> <p>occupational fields which are composed of combinations of ‘construction’, ‘decoration’, ‘electricity’, ‘hair care’, ‘woodwork’, ‘administration and sales’, ‘metalwork’, ‘fashion’, ‘Rhine and inland navigation’ and ‘care-nutrition’. The only exceptions to this “combination rule” are the occupational fields ‘Agriculture and horticulture’, and ‘Industry’</p>
<i>Upper secondary</i>	<p>General Programmes</p> <p><i>Education</i></p> <p><i>Car engineering, Construction, Chemistry, Photography</i></p> <p><i>Glass technology</i></p> <p><i>Graphic techniques Commerce Woodwork</i></p> <p><i>Jewellery</i></p> <p><i>Cooling and heating</i></p> <p><i>Agriculture and horticulture</i></p> <p><i>Personal hygiene</i></p> <p><i>Maritime training</i></p> <p><i>Mechanics and electricity Mechanics and electricity</i></p> <p><i>Fashion Musical-instrument</i></p> <p><i>Construction</i></p> <p><i>Optics</i></p> <p><i>Orthopaedic</i></p> <p><i>Technology</i></p> <p><i>Caring</i></p> <p><i>Performing arts</i></p> <p><i>Sports</i></p> <p><i>Dental technology</i></p> <p><i>Textile</i></p> <p><i>Tourism</i></p>

	<p><i>Nutrition</i></p> <p><i>Agricultural education</i> <i>Artistic education - Industrial Sciences and Technology</i></p> <p><i>Economic education - Commercial and Management Sciences</i></p> <p><i>Maritime education</i> <i>Paramedical education - Health care</i></p> <p><i>Pedagogical education</i></p> <p><i>Social education</i> <i>Social Work</i></p> <p><i>Technical education - Industrial Sciences and Technology</i></p> <p><i>Biotechnology</i></p> <p>The Flemish qualification structure: <i>is tool for coordination & matching of recognition of acquired competences and a tool for educational and a business qualification procedures.</i></p> <p><i>It is also a tool for</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>accompanying of (learning) careers</i> - <i>drawing up of trainings</i> - <i>comparability of qualifications</i> - <i>promoting of lifelong learning</i> - <i>promoting of acquired competences</i> - <i>supporting competence policy of companies</i> <p>Educational qualifications could be acquired through secondary, adult education and higher education</p> <p>Flemish qualification structure indicates specification and classification of educational and business or occupational qualifications: via descriptors of the qualification structure via the use of final objectives, specific objectives and occupational qualifications An occupational qualification that is part of an educational qualification will keep its level of qualification</p> <p><u>(Standard Fields of Education Classification, Belgium)</u></p> <p><i>The Qualification structure of the Dutch -speaking Community is divided into 8 levels of descriptors. Those levels of descriptors define knowledge and competences. Each level indicates also the context for acquiring knowledge, for autonomy and for responsibility.</i></p>
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11.3. LINKS BETWEEN NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OR CLASSIFICATIONS

ISCED is the basis of the Flemish qualification structure. The qualification structure does not only contain education levels but also occupational qualification levels. The Dublin Descriptors as laid down in the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area have been incorporated in the legislation regulating higher education in Flanders. A national qualifications framework encompassing all levels of education is in development.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE

A) BACHELOR'S PROGRAMME (PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION) - LEVEL IN EQF: LEVEL 6, CREDIT RANGE: MINIMUM 180 ECTS.

Learning outcomes:

- general competences such as the capacity for logical thought and reasoning; the ability to acquire and process information; the ability for critical reflection and project-based work; creativity; the ability to perform simple supervision tasks; the ability to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialists as well as laymen; and a positive attitude towards life-long learning
- general professional competences like the ability to work together as part of a team, a solution-oriented attitude in the sense of being able to define and analyse independently complex problematic situations in professional practice, and the ability to develop and apply effective strategies to solve them, and to develop a sense of social responsibility in connection with the professional practice, specific professional competences at the level of a newly-qualified professional

General admission requirements: The general admission requirement is the Flemish secondary school-leaving diploma. If a foreign qualification is recognised on the basis of a Flemish decree, Belgian Law, a European Directive or an international convention, the holder will have direct access to Bachelor's programmes.

B) BACHELOR'S PROGRAMME (ACADEMIC ORIENTATION) - LEVEL IN EQF: LEVEL 6, CREDIT RANGE: MINIMUM 180 ECTS.

Learning outcomes: general competences such as the capacity for logical thought and reasoning; the ability to acquire and process information; the capacity for critical reflection; creativity; being able to perform simple management tasks; the ability to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialists as well as laymen; and a positive attitude towards life-long learning.

Master's degree - Level in EQF: level 7, credit range: minimum 60 ECTS.

Learning outcomes:

- general competences at an advanced level such as the ability to reason and act in an academic manner; the ability to handle complex problems; the ability to reflect on one's own thoughts and work; and the ability to convert this reflection into the development of more effective solutions; the ability to communicate one's own research and solutions to professional colleagues and laymen; and the ability to develop an opinion in an uncertain context.
- general academic competences at an advanced level such as the ability to apply research methods and techniques; the ability to design research; the ability to apply paradigms in the domain of the sciences or the arts; the ability to indicate the limits of paradigms, originality and creativity regarding the continuously expanding body of knowledge and insight; and the ability to collaborate in a multi-disciplinary environment.

Master of Advances Studies - Level in EHEA Qualifications Framework: second cycle - Level in EQF: level 7, credit range: minimum 60 ECTS.

Learning outcomes:

- general competences at an advanced level such as the ability to reason and act in an academic manner; the ability to handle complex problems; the ability to reflect on one's own thoughts and work; and the ability to convert this reflection into the development of more effective solutions; the ability to communicate one's own research and solutions to professional colleagues and laymen; and the ability to develop an opinion in an uncertain context.

PhD degree: doctorate programme - Level in EHEA Qualifications Framework: third cycle - Level in EQF: level 8, credit range: no credit range specified (+/- 4 years).

Content: The degree of ' doctor ' is awarded by a university jury after a public presentation of a doctorate thesis which confirms the capability of the creation of new scientific knowledge based upon independent scientific research. The doctorate thesis should have the potential to lead to publications in scientific journals.

Due to the fact that there are different qualification systems [Standard Fields of Education Classification](#) is, amongst others, based on the standard level descriptions of learning outcomes via the use of the *Dublin descriptors*.

Until 2008, there were many classification systems to distinguish qualifications of education and occupational qualifications; therefore the Flemish qualification structure was developed.

1201 - AUTHORS

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1202 - SOURCES, REFERENCES AND WEBSITES

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VOKA <http://www.voka.be>

1203 - LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

List of acronyms and abbreviations

ACTIRIS: Public employment service in Brussels

ADG The Employment Office of the German-speaking Community

AKOV Flemish Agency for Quality assurance

BUSO: Special Needs Education

CCPQ: ommission Communautaire des Professions et des Qualifications (Professions and Qualifications Agency of the French -speaking Community in Belgium).

CBE Centre for Basic Education

CEFA Dual vocational education and training centres

CESRW : Conseil économique de la Région Wallonne (Walloon Social Economic Council).

CDO : Centre for Part-time Education
 CLB: Pupil guidance centres Centra voor Leerlingenbegeleiding
 COCOF: College of the French Community Commission for schools located in the Brussels Region.
 CPNAE: Auxiliary national joint committee for white-collar workers (CEVORA- CEFORA).
 CVET: Continuing Vocational Education and Training.
 ECVET: European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training.
 EHEA: European Higher education Association.
 EQF: European Qualification framework.
 GDP: Gross Domestic Product.
 HVE-(HVO Dutch) : Higher Vocational Education
 IAWM: Institut für Aus- und Weiterbildung im Mittelstand und in KMU - Institute organizing the apprenticeship for the middle classes in the German-speaking Community.
 IFAPME: Institut wallon de formation en alternance et des indépendants et des petites et moyennes entreprises - Walloon Institute For Alternance Training, Self-Employed And Short And Medium-Sized Enterprises.
 ISCED: International Standard Classification of Education.
 ISO: International Standards to Education and training.
 IVET: Initial Vocational Education and Training.
 FOREM: Office wallon de la Formation professionnelle et de l'Emploi Walloon Office for Vocational Training and Placement
 LLL: Lifelong learning.
 NARIC: recognition and information centre within the framework of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO.
 NEC: National Europass Centre.
 NVAO Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders
 PTVSE Part-time Vocational Secondary Education
 RESOC: Regional Social Economic Consultation Committee (Flanders).
 ROME: Répertoire Opérationnel des Métiers et des Emplois - Directory for Operational Skills and Jobs.
 RVA/ONEM: National Service for Employment / Work Provision (Rijksdienst voor Arbeidsvoorziening- Office National de l'emploi),
 SAE Secondary Artistic Education
 Se-n-Se: Secondary after secondary
 SERV: Social-Economic Council of Flanders.
 SGE Secondary General Education - SME: Small and medium enterprise.
 STE Secondary Technical Education
 SVE Vocational Secondary Education
 SYNTRA Flemish Agency for Entrepreneurial Training
 VDAB: The Flemish External Autonomous Agency For Employment And Vocational Training
 Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding.
 VET Vocational Education and Training
 VIA: Vlaanderen in Actie -Flanders in action.
 VGC Flemish Community Commission (Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie)
 VLAO: Vlaams Agentschap voor Ondernemersvorming - Flemish Agency for independent entrepreneurship.
 VLOR Flemish Education Council
 VOCVO Flemish Support Centre for Adult Education