



Structures of Education,
Initial Training
and Adult Education
Systems in Europe

BELGIUM

Flemish Community

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If you wish to have more detailed information on education systems in Europe, we warmly recommend that you consult the EURYBASE database (<http://www.eurydice.org>) and the CEDEFOP monographs (<http://www.cedefop.gr>)

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FOREWORD

Europe is characterized by a very wide variety of education and training systems. In order that this diversity should be fully appreciated, EURYDICE, the information network on education in Europe and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) jointly published *Education and Initial Training Systems in the European Union* for the first time in 1990. This book was updated in 1995 and then again in 1999/2000. Given the number of countries it now covers¹ and the amount of data available, this most recent update has been placed for consultation on the EURYDICE Network website (<http://www.eurydice.org>), instead of being distributed in printed paper form. In this way, it may be accessed by a maximum number of readers and updated on a more regular basis.

Descriptions relating to individual countries in turn include basic information on the administration and structure of their systems of education and initial vocational training at all levels, as well as brief accounts of their higher education and systems for initial and in-service teacher training, and of the status of teachers. EURYDICE and CEDEFOP have also used this latest update to add a chapter on adult education, which is an important topic in relation to the development of lifelong learning in Europe.

As in the previous edition, the information is structured with respect to a common table of contents to facilitate inter-country comparisons while ensuring that special features peculiar to each system are duly emphasized.

The first chapter within each country section is devoted to a short presentation of the country concerned, together with the basic principles governing its education and training, the division of responsibilities and then more specific information (relating to administration, inspection, financing, private schooling and advisory bodies). The major reforms of education systems are also considered.

The other chapters deal in turn with pre-school education, compulsory and post-compulsory education (general, technical and vocational), the initial vocational training of young people and higher education. Here also, the way these chapters are structured depends on each national context. Where pre-school education is not in reality separate from primary education, or where compulsory education spans different levels, no artificial division has been created. In the case of all countries, a brief description of the aims and structure of the level of education concerned is followed by further headings devoted to the curriculum, assessment, teachers and statistics.

Initial vocational training is the subject of a chapter in its own right, as it is generally provided outside the ordinary education system, whether as part of schemes for apprenticeship, the special training of young people or vocational integration. This is followed by a chapter on higher education, in which a summary description is supplemented by sections on admission, fees, the academic year, courses, qualifications and assessment.

As indicated above, this latest updating also provides for the first time a general description of the way formal systems of general education and vocational training for adults are organized. The legislative framework and financing of this kind of education are also covered.

¹ The European countries taking part in the Community Programme in Education, Socrates.

The situation regarding teachers is dealt with in a specific section for each level of education discussed. Also provided are statistics on the number of pupils, students, teachers and educational institutions and, where figures are available, on pupil or student/teacher ratios, attendance and attainment rates or, yet again, on the choice of branches of study or areas of specialization.

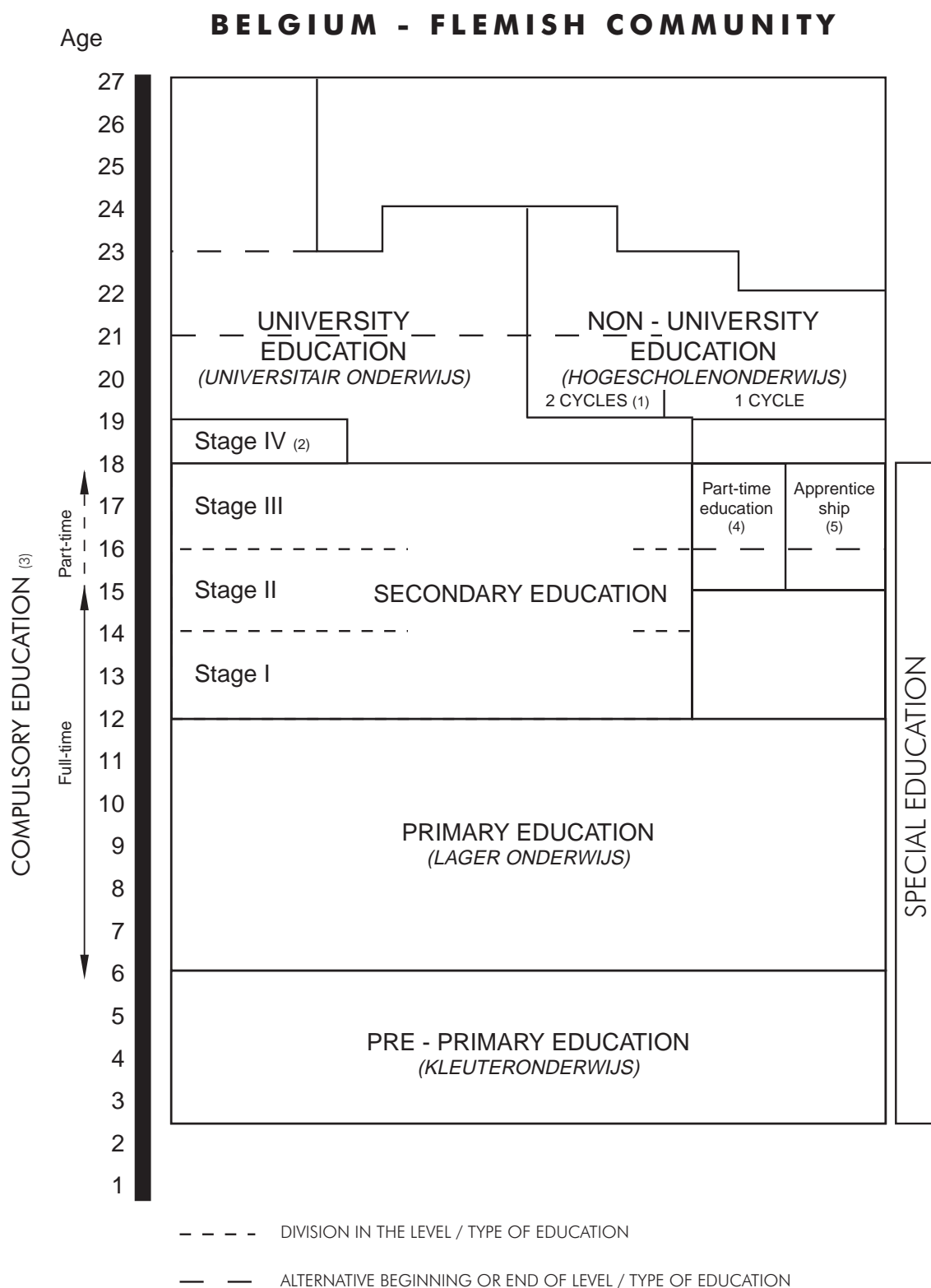
The description for each country is preceded by a diagram of its education system with explanatory notes. Here again, the way the diagrams are presented has, as far as possible, been standardized so that common – and differing – features of the various systems can be more easily identified and compared.

The National Units in the EURYDICE Network have drafted the descriptions for their countries, each using the same proposed outline of content as a common framework. The information on initial vocational training and on adult education has been prepared in close collaboration with members of the documentary information network of CEDEFOP (in the case of the European Union and EFTA/EEA countries) and the National Observatories of the European Training Foundation – ETF (as regards the ten countries of central and eastern Europe). We are extremely grateful to them and to all those who were involved in this project, both in the EURYDICE European Unit in Brussels and at CEDEFOP in Thessaloniki, for their invaluable contribution to this fundamental source of information which is vital to a better understanding of education and training systems in Europe.

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March 2000



1. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Background

See General Introduction (Belgium).

1.2 Basis of education system: principles – legislation

See General Introduction (Belgium).

1.3 Distribution of responsibilities for the organisation and administration of the education and training system

As a consequence of the recent reforms of the State, education policy is the responsibility of the *Vlaams Parlement* (Flemish Parliament, legislative power by means of *decreet*) and the Flemish Government and the Flemish Minister of Education (executive power by means of *besluit*). The Minister heads the Education Department, which is part of the Ministry of the Flemish Community.

The concept of organising body (*inrichtende macht*) is central to the organisation of Flemish education. The organising body is the natural or legal person taking the initiative to provide education and being responsible for it. It defines the "character" of the education provided (except for Community education), and develops the school educational plan.

According to the type of organising body, there are three educational networks:

- Community education: education set up by the Autonomous Council for Community Education (*Het Gemeenschapsonderwijs*) on behalf of the Flemish Community. The Constitution stipulates that Community education must be neutral.
- Subsidised "public" education: provincial education, organised by the provincial authorities, and municipal education, set up by the municipal authorities. Schools in this network can be denominational or neutral.
- Subsidised (private) education: education set up at private initiative by a private person or organisation. It consists of denominational (mainly Catholic) schools, non-denominational private schools (including schools based on rationalist/humanist principles) and independent schools applying specific theories such as the Freinet or Steiner schools.

Education organised by the first two networks (the authorities) is called public education. Education provided by the third network is called "free" education.

A school is subsidised by the Community when it complies with legislation and regulations concerning the organisation of studies and with legislation on language.

The organising body receives the financial resources required to provide education. It is responsible for the correct management of these resources. The organising body owns or rents the school buildings. The organising bodies of subsidised education can apply for building grants for school construction.

The organising body is free to appoint school staff within the limits of the personnel statute and the regulations concerning financing and subsidy.

It is also free to determine its teaching methods, and draws up curricula on the basis of centrally defined minimum goals (*eindtermen*). The curricula are not developed centrally. The minimum goals are the final aims to be achieved at each level of education and are determined by the Flemish Government. They are prepared by the education development service (*Dienst voor Onderwijsontwikkeling* -

DVO) and, upon the unanimous recommendation of the Flemish Education Council (*Vlaamse Onderwijsraad - VLOR*), the Flemish Parliament ratifies them.

The school is responsible for assessment and can award certificates and diplomas on condition that the minimum goals are achieved.

Community education (*gemeenschapsonderwijs*) was reformed by decree of July 14, 1998. This decree introduced a governing structure in 3 levels (schools, school groups and a general council). The main organisational and financial competencies are within the school groups, which group all community schools of a particular area. An elected council (*raad van bestuur*) has the main competencies, and the general director (*algemeen directeur*) exerts the main executive powers, together with the board of school principals (*college van directeurs*). The central level deals with the building projects, develops the general strategy of community education and ensures its presence in the entire country. It also offers service to the school groups and represents the whole of community education towards the government. At the local level, each school principal is autonomous within the limits set out by the school group (staff recruitment, pedagogical matters, material and financial matters). An elected school council (staff, parents and local social, economic and cultural circles) advises the school principal on wide range of matters that concern the school.

In **subsidised public education** each organising body enjoys full autonomy in conducting its local policy for the school or schools that come within its responsibility. There are two bodies co-ordinating the different organising bodies of this network: *Cel voor het Vlaams Provinciaal Onderwijs (CVPO)* for the provinces; *Onderwijssecretariaat van de Steden en Gemeenten van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap (OVSG)* for the municipalities.

In **subsidised private education** the autonomy of the organising bodies is the same. There are also bodies uniting the organising bodies. As regards Catholic education, there is the *Vlaams Secretariaat van het Katholiek Onderwijs (VSKO)*, responsible for the whole Flemish territory, the *Diocesane Planificatie- en Coördinatiecommissie (DPCC)* at diocesan level and the *Regionale Coördinatiecommissie (RCC)* at regional level.

In subsidised public and free education, there is a Participation Council (*participatieraad*), composed of representatives of the organising body, parents, staff members and the local community. The Council has the right to information about all matters involving school life. It provides advice with regard to the general

organisation and operation of the school, planning at school level and general criteria for the counselling and assessment of pupils, and is consulted about the criteria for applying the capital-periods system (number of periods per teacher), the determination and modification of school rules, school transport, and the safety and health of pupils. In subsidised free education, in a limited number of matters, the organising body cannot make decisions without the consent of the Participation Council.

1.4 Inspection/supervision/guidance

The inspectorate (*Inspectie*) works under the authority of the Minister of Education and supervises the quality of all levels of education up to non-university higher education with a one-cycle programme.

Half of the members of the inspectorate are recruited from teaching staff (for at least ten years) from the official schools and half of them from the grant-aided free schools. They are subdivided into several groups: elementary education, secondary education, higher education (one cycle-programme), adult education and part-time art education. Furthermore there is also an inspectorate for the guidance centres.

The inspectorate has to examine whether the minimum goals are properly achieved and whether the other organisational obligations are correctly observed. The inspectorate as a team has full responsibility for all the subjects taught at school with the exception of religious or philosophical courses, the teaching methods and the school development plan. It is not subject-related or meant to check out individual teachers. It operates through team visits aimed at the systematic evaluation of the total functioning of the school.

The inspectorate has an advisory function towards educational policy on whether the school may be recognised or subsidised or not.

The Decrees related to the institutions of non-university higher education and the universities have established the framework of the quality assurance system. This system of quality control differs greatly from the system for pre-primary, primary and secondary level. The institutions of higher education are imposed with a dual (internal and external) quality-assurance structure. They monitor the quality of the education by themselves.

In the near future, this will also apply to non-university higher education with one cycle.

The education development service (*Dienst voor Onderwijsontwikkeling - DVO*) can be considered as a scientific staff service. It defines the minimum goals, and develops the instruments required to measure the functioning of these.

The pedagogical support services (*pedagogische begeleidingsdiensten*) contribute to educational quality and provide external support -concerning general pedagogical and methodological fields- for the teachers and schools. They are established separately for each educational network. As far as moral and religious courses are concerned, these support services have no authority. In this case special procedures apply.

Psycho-medico-social guidance centres (*Psycho-medisch-sociale centra - PMS*)² deal with assistance and (non-binding) advice to pupils, parents and schools. The task of these centres consists in helping schools to offer their pupils the best possible chances of developing a balanced personality. PMS guidance is therefore multidisciplinary. The centres are also involved in some aspects of health care. This has to be done in collaboration with the health supervision in schools (*Medisch Schooltoezicht*). The centres follow pupils from nursery school up to the end of secondary education. PMS-centres belong to one of the three educational networks.

1.5 Financing

As far as public spending is concerned, it should be repeated that education is a Community matter. In Flanders, the Community and the Region coincide politically and therefore the Community and the region finance Community and regional matters in total. In addition to Community spending, contributions are made by the provinces and the municipalities (in subsidised public education) and by ecclesiastical authorities and private persons (in subsidised free education).

The basic principle is that the Community covers all the costs of Community schools, and awards the subsidised schools grants to cover the running, maintenance and replacement costs of equipment and buildings. All school heads and

² The Decree of 18 November 1998 concerning the Centres for Educational Guidelines (CLB's) defines the tasks and role of the present PMS – Centres within the framework of the new integrated Centres for Educational Guidance.

members of the teaching staff and of the paramedical staff are paid for directly by the Community. Only the subsidies-wages for part-time art education are still being issued in a lump sum to the municipalities. The financing or subsidising of schools is regulated by a number of conditions that have to be met by the schools.

Access to education is free of charge until the end of compulsory education. However, in practice many schools have to cater for additional expenses, to which parents do make some financial contribution. Textbooks are free of charge only in elementary education.

1.6 Advisory and consultative bodies

The Flemish Education Council (*Vlaamse Onderwijsraad - VLOR*) is the advisory and consultative body for all educational matters. All draft decrees in the field of education must be submitted to the VLOR. Furthermore, the VLOR can give advice to the Flemish Government at its own initiative. The VLOR consists of a general council and separate councils for primary, secondary, higher and adult education. The general council is composed of representatives of the organising bodies, school staff, parents and socio-economic organisations, university experts and Education Department representatives.

Within the VLOR there are two so-called "participation boards": one for subsidised public education and the other for subsidised free education. Their composition is analogous to that of participation councils in schools. The boards have a mediating role when conflicts arise and they have to identify violations of the participation rules.

The Flemish Socio-Economic Council (*Sociaal-Economische Raad van Vlaanderen - SERV*), composed of representatives of employers and employees, must give advice on all draft decrees, including those in the field of education.

The Flemish Interuniversity Council (*Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad - VLIR*) is an autonomous body of public utility with its own corporate status. It acts as a defender of the universities and as an advisor to the Flemish Government on university issues (consultation, advice and recommendations).

A similar body has been established for the institutions of non-university higher education - the Flemish Non-University Higher Education Body (*Vlaamse Hogescholen Raad – VLHORA*).

1.5 Private schools

Article 24 of the Belgian Constitution guarantees freedom of education. This means that each person has the right to establish education autonomously.

However, there are a few really private institutions that receive no government subsidies whatsoever. They are not entitled to award officially recognised certificates and do not accept the conditions of article 24 of the School Pact Law. This article stipulates that a school or a section of an establishment for pre-primary, primary, secondary or higher education is grant-aided if it conforms to the legal and statutory provisions concerning the organisation of studies and the application of the language laws.

2. PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION (*Kleuteronderwijs*)

The Flemish Community organises the pre-primary education in nursery schools. Those nursery schools are integrated in the educational system. Pre-primary education is not compulsory and is provided for children aged between two-and-a-half and six years, exceptionally seven years. In general the age is the only entrance requirement for the nursery school. The attendance rate is 92% among three-year-olds, 97% among four-year-olds and 100% among five-year-olds (and above). The nursery school has on average 115 children.

Pre-primary education has a social function and is a preparation for primary education. The general aim of pre-primary education is to develop the child's:

- mental and physical equilibrium;
- intellectual skills;
- expression and communication skills;
- creativity and independence.

There are special nursery schools for children with serious mental or physical handicaps. The children need documents related to the kind of handicap as an entrance requirement.

Nursery schools are coeducational and are in general attached to a primary school. Together they form a primary school. There is a minority of autonomous nursery schools.

2.1 Organisation

Pre-primary education is free of charge. The two educational networks (private and official education) have their nursery schools. Each age group of children has his class for the whole day. The daily programme in nursery schools has more importance than the availability of school buildings. School buildings are adopted to realise the daily programme. Nursery schools organise pre school education during twenty-eight hours a week. Nursery schools are open five days a week, morning and afternoon, except for Wednesday afternoon. A school year has three terms: September-January, January-Easter, Easter-June. The school year is organised as at primary level (see chapter 3A.). Nursery schools organise their groups by age. In general pre-primary education contains three groups of children by age. Teachers are allocated to a different group of children each year.

2.2 Curriculum/Assessment

The compulsory elements of the curriculum are Dutch, worldorientation, mathematical initiation, physics, and music. Schools can add other elements. Each nursery school has the freedom

to choose his own pedagogic and educational methods. The nursery schools work with a great range of materials. Each nursery school buys the needed materials.

The teacher assesses the progress of the children by observation and tests. The results of the assessments are used to prevent and help learning problems. In general the children move up automatically. The children, who are not enough prepared for primary education, can stay a year longer in the nursery school.

The parental choice determines the choice of school. There are no regulations on the minimum or the maximum of pupils per teacher. Educational guidance is delivered by psycho-medico-social guidance centres (*Psycho-medisch-sociale centra – PMS*)³.

2.3 Teachers

In nursery schools teachers are allocated by group. Each year they take up a new age group of children. Nursery teachers receive training for three years in non-university higher education. They are no subject specialists, but specialised in pre-primary education. The nursery teacher is not a civil servant and the status is mixed: some are permanent, others temporary, some are full time, others part time. The in-service training is compulsory on the school level. Each nursery school has money to develop an in-service training scheme for the teachers.

There is no pupil/teacher ratio in the proper sense in pre-primary education. Since September 1984, the rules that govern the pupil/teacher ratio have been based on a subsidizable set of units known as the system of *lestijden* (capital periods). It puts a certain number of periods at the disposal of the school in accordance with its total number of pupils. Each unit of 24 periods entitles the school to a full-time teacher. The system enables the school to adapt its structure partially to its pupils' needs.

³ Cfr. Footnote no.1, chapter 1.

2.4 Statistics

Pupils enrolled in pre-primary education⁴

	Boys	Girls	Total
Regular education	128,895	122,364	251,259
Special education	1,153	631	1,784
Total pre-primary education	130,048	122,995	253,043

Number of pre-primary education institutions⁵

Regular education	2,088
Special education	87
Total pre-primary education	2,175

Managing and teaching staff in pre-primary education in January 1997⁶

Number of budgetary full-time equivalents

	Men	Women	Total
Regular education	118	13,473	13,592
Special education	8	377	385
Total pre-primary education	126	13,850	13,977

Number of staff members

	Men	Women	Total
Regular education	131	15,390	15,521
Special education	8	422	430
Total pre-primary education	139	15,812	15,951

⁴ In order to avoid double counts, the pupils enrolled in special education due to a long-time disease (type 5) are not included in the figures of special education.

On February 1, 1997 there were 212 pupils in special nursery education of type 5.

⁵ Besides these schools there are 7 schools providing special education of type 5 (for pupils with a long-time disease). These 7 schools are not included in the figures.

⁶ Statistics dealing with staff only register staff members paid directly by the Education Department or those whose wages are covered by the block-grant funding system s of higher education.

These data refer to the teaching staff and the managing staff. The number of staff members is expressed by indicating the number of physical persons. Replacements for periods shorter than one year are taken into account. The number of staff members expressed in budgetary full-time equivalents is the sum of all partial tasks of all staff members (i.e. including replacements shorter than one year).

3. COMPULSORY EDUCATION/TRAINING

There is a federal law regulating beginning and ending of the compulsory education. Compulsory education lasts for 12 years, from 6 to 18 years of age. It is divided into primary and secondary education.

Children are required to attend school full-time up to the age of 15, completing primary education and at least the first two years of secondary education. Pupils who have not completed the first two years of secondary education are required to attend full-time education until the age of 16. Those who do not wish to continue full-time until 18 may then follow compulsory part-time education up to the age of 18.

The general aims of compulsory education may be summarised as follows:

- to encourage the personal development of each child whilst respecting its identity, to stimulate its initiation into society and to participate actively in its education;
- to help the child acquire basic knowledge and skills;
- to overcome inequalities with regard to the school and education.

Part-time compulsory education is defined as studies in a recognised establishment, in the form of either part-time study or a recognised training course.

3A Primary education (*Lager onderwijs*)

The two educational networks (private and official) have schools for primary education. Primary education is for children aged six to 12 years and is divided into three stages of two years each. Primary education is free of charge. These are usually coeducational; however, a rather limited number of schools are still single-sex. From 1 January 2000, each elementary school in the official educational network is coeducational. There are some special elementary schools for handicapped children.

Classes are usually organised by age. As in nursery schools, there is no pupil/teacher ratio in the proper sense, since standards are based on the system of *lestijden* (capital periods). The primary school has on average 180 pupils. In most cases, elementary schools form a pedagogical unit with nursery schools, but there are also autonomous elementary schools. Each elementary school has a board or a participation commission. In each of them the local community is represented.

In general, the age is the only entrance requirement for the elementary school. In special elementary schools, the children need documents related to the kind of handicap

The attendance for elementary education is compulsory. The attendance for an elementary school is not compulsory: a child can attend elementary education at home.

The attendance rate for pupils from 6 until 12 years, at schools financed by the Flemish Community is 96%. The other 4% attend French speaking schools, schools in other countries or education at home.

3A.1 Organisation of the school

In primary schools, each group has his class for the whole day. The daily programme has more importance than the availability of school buildings. School buildings are adopted to realise the daily programme.

Instruction is provided five days per week, morning and afternoon, with the exception of Wednesday afternoon, for a total of 182 days per year. There are 28 weekly lessons of 50 minutes each. The school year starts on 1 September and ends on 30 June. There are three main holidays (two weeks at Christmas, two weeks at Easter and two months in the summer) and one shorter mid-term holiday each term. A school year has three terms: September-January, January-Easter, Easter-June.

The classes are organised by age. There are also subject groups (religion). A lot of schools organise groups of children by level of competence.

The elementary schools work with a great range of materials. Each school buys the needed materials and chooses his teaching materials, helped by his educational network.

3A.2 Curriculum

The compulsory elements of the curriculum are: Dutch, worldorientation, mathematics, physics, music, learning to learn and social skills. Schools can add other elements. Some schools are obliged to teach the French language. In Brussels, the teaching of French is possible from the first year on and compulsory from the third year on. In all other Flemish schools, French may be taught in the third stage (5th and 6th years). In linguistic border municipalities, the teaching of French is compulsory in the second stage (3rd and 4th years). It is also possible to teach consumer education. The same subjects are taught to all pupils, except for classes about religion.

In general, subjects are taught at the same level. However, in a lot of classes, teachers work with differentiation or remedial classes. Elementary education does not know options or transition periods. Each elementary school has the freedom to choose his own pedagogic and educational methods.

3A.3 Assessment/certification/guidance

As mentioned above, assessment is an area in which the pedagogical freedom of the organising body is guaranteed; each organising body can define the type and method of assessment it wishes to use and the way it communicates the results, as long as the relevant laws and regulations are respected.

Throughout the year, teachers use a continuous formative assessment to monitor the progress of their pupils on the basis of all written and oral work and homework. At the end of the school year, the teacher makes a summational assessment, and can use tests to assess pupils. In elementary education, tests and examinations are not compulsory. But, if they are held, they are compulsory for all pupils.

The teacher or team of teachers assesses the year's work and the results of the tests at the end of the year to decide whether or not to allow a pupil to move on to the next class. They also use

the results of the assessment for prevention or remedial of learning problems. In the assessment, the pupil's analytical skills, ability to think independently, co-operative spirit and taste for work and for working well must all be taken into account. Report cards regularly keep the child and his or her parents informed of test results, academic progress, behaviour in class and personal development.

Pupils do not move automatically to the next class. It is possible for a child to repeat classes each year and thus within a stage. Pupils who experience learning difficulties can receive special and individualised assistance from a remedial teacher. Educational guidance is also delivered by psycho-medico-social guidance centres (*psycho-medisch-sociale centra – PMS*)⁷.

There is no leaving examination. When the pupils have successfully completed their primary education, pupils receive a certificate of primary education (*Getuigschrift van het Basisonderwijs*). Schools may award this certificate themselves as long as they respect the terms of the law.

A certificate of primary education is necessary for entrance in secondary education. Pupils without the certificate of primary education can enter secondary education under certain conditions.

3A.4 Teachers

Teachers are not subject specialists, but specialised in primary education. They are allocated by group. Each year they take up a new age group of children.

However, especially in the third stage, instruction may be broken down by subject area. Some courses may be given by specialised teachers (religion, language, physical education or artistic or manual activities) or remedial teachers.

The initial training of primary school teachers is organised in non-university higher education. It entails three years of study comprising academic and theoretical and practical teacher training. Successful students are awarded a diploma of qualified teacher for primary education (*Onderwijzer*). The teacher is not a civil servant and the status is mixed: some are permanent, others temporary, some work full-time others part-time. In-service training is compulsory on the school level. Each school has money to develop an in-service training scheme for the teachers.

⁷ Cfr. Footnote no. 1, chapter 1.

3A.5 Statistics

Pupils enrolled in primary education⁸

	Boys	Girls	Total
Regular education	199,963	194,285	394,248
Special education	14,364	8,757	23,121
Total primary education	214,327	203,042	417,369

Number of primary education institutions⁹

Regular education	2,189
Special education	189
Total primary education	2,378

Managing and teaching staff in primary education in January 1997¹⁰

Number of budgetary full-time equivalents

	Men	Women	Total
Regular education	9,702	18,505	28,208
Special education	1,125	2,972	4,125
Total primary education	10,854	21,477	32,331

Number of staff members

	Men	Women	Total
Regular education	10,015	21,330	31,345
Special education	1,196	3,319	4,515
Total primary education	11,211	24,649	35,860

3B Secondary education (*Secundair onderwijs*)

Secondary education, like primary education, is included in the period of compulsory schooling. Full-time schooling may last until age 18, or up to the age of 15 or 16, when part-time schooling is followed up to age 18.

⁸ In order to avoid double counts, the pupils enrolled in special education due to a long-time disease (type 5) are not included in the figures of special education.

On February 1, 1997 there were 246 pupils in special primary education of type 5.

⁹ Cfr. Footnote no. 4, chapter 2

¹⁰ Cfr. Footnote no. 5, chapter 2

Pupils must have reached the age of 12 before they are admitted to secondary education. They may enter the first year A on obtaining the certificate of primary education. After spending a year in the sixth year of primary education without obtaining the certificate, pupils may be admitted to the first year A with their parents' consent and on the advice of the PMS centre, on condition that the first year A admission Class Council (*Toelatingsraad*) gives a favourable opinion. Without the certificate of primary education, pupils may be admitted to the first year B from the age of 12. The same holds true - with parental consent and on the advice of the PMS centre - for pupils who do not seem to be suitable for the first year A, even though they have the certificate. Transfer from the first year B to the first year A is possible until 15 November and from the first year A to the first year B until 15 January, if the child's parents agree and the Class Council so advises.

In accordance with the Decree of 31 July 1990, the new structure is composed of three stages of two years. This structure can be completed - optionally - by a third year in the third stage of ASO, TSO, KSO or BSO or by a third year in the second stage of BSO. The second and third stage comprising four different forms:

- General secondary education (*Algemeen secundair onderwijs - ASO*), which emphasises broad theoretical training and provides a strong basis for attending higher education.
- Technical secondary education (*Technisch secundair onderwijs - TSO*), which focuses mainly on general and technical-theoretical subjects, and leads to employment or higher education. Practical courses are also included.
- Artistic secondary education (*Kunstsecundair onderwijs - KSO*), which links general and broad development with active art practice, and leads to employment or higher education.
- Vocational secondary education (*Beroepssecundair onderwijs - BSO*), which is practical education combining the acquisition of specific skills with general education. It may provide access to higher education, but it normally leads to employment.

For certain specializations in vocational training, there is also a fourth stage.

The purpose of the first stage is to provide a broad general basis. This stage should enable pupils to be oriented in the most suitable way towards the different courses available in the second stage.

Only from the second stage, the pupil selects a certain line of study within ASO, TSO, KSO or BSO.

Throughout the first two stages and to a lesser extent in the third stage, it is possible to transfer from one form of education discipline to another, and there are "bridges" from vocational education to other types of education.

In accordance with the structure there are the following types of secondary schools:

- schools which organise only the first stage;
- schools which organise the first and the second stages;
- schools which organise the second and the third stages;
- schools which organise the second, the third and the fourth stages;
- schools which organise the first, the second, and the third stages;
- schools which organise four stages;
- schools which organise only the fourth stage.
- Schools which organise technical and vocational secondary education in the three stages.

All Community schools are coeducational. The vast majority of subsidised schools are also coeducational, and it is expected that the remaining single-sex schools will become coeducational in the years to come. Secondary schools do not charge fees.

3B.1 Organisation of the school

The smallest schools have some 200 pupils. They can be attached to primary schools or to teacher training institutions. Classes are generally organised by age and sometimes by subject. In some schools classes can be organised by level of ability.

The timetable in secondary schools may vary between 32 and 36 periods of 50 minutes. There is a short break of 10-15 minutes in the morning and in the afternoon. The break at noon must last at least 50 minutes. The school week consists of 5 days, except Wednesday afternoon. The school itself can determine the start and the end of the school day (usually from 8.30 a.m. to 12.00 noon and from 1.30 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.).

The school year is organised as at primary level (see chapter 3A.).

3B.2 Curriculum

In the first year, all pupils follow a common curriculum of at least 27 periods per week consisting of the following subjects: Dutch, French, (English may also be included), mathematics, history, geography, art education, science, technical education, physical education and religion or ethics. In addition, five periods a week are left available to each school to allocate as they wish within a defined and legally fixed framework.

In the second year, almost all pupils follow a basic course of at least 24 lessons per week, consisting of the following subjects: religion or ethics, Dutch, French, English, mathematics, history, geography, art education, science, technological education and physical education. All pupils follow at least 14 of the 24 periods.

Special arrangements exist for pupils who follow the pre-vocational year. They study the same subjects provided in the basic course, except for French and English. Apart from the basic course, 8 to 10 periods are available for each school to develop its individual character. In the pre-vocational year, the basic course is limited to 16 periods. Two groups of subjects (a total of 14 lessons) are added to this package. Each of these groups provides an introduction to the theory and practice of the main vocational sectors.

The remaining periods are free for optional courses (e.g. Latin, Greek, modern languages, additional mathematics, and technology).

From the third year up to and including the sixth year, the four forms of education (listed at the beginning of this section) are organised separately, with a common and an optional package. The common part consists of the basic course. Optional subjects are either fundamental (depending on further choices) or complementary.

Basic education from the third to the sixth year consists of the following subjects: religion or non-denominational ethics, Dutch, a second modern language, mathematics, history, geography, science and physical education. General secondary education also includes a third modern language. In vocational education the basic training from the third up to and including the sixth year consists of the following subjects: religion or non-denominational ethics,

Dutch, only in the second stage – mathematics or applied sciences, history and geography (the last two subjects may be replaced by an integrated social education course) and physical education.

A wide range of subjects is offered in the optional section to supplement the basic course.

Curricula can contain a list of recommended **textbooks**, but there is no obligation to use a textbook from these lists. The same applies to **teaching materials**.

3B.3 Assessment/certification/guidance

The essential instrument in assessment is the Class Council (*Klassenraad*), which is the committee consisting of the entire managerial and teaching staff responsible for the education of a specific group of pupils. It assesses pupils' school progress and makes the decision regarding their promotion to a higher class, and issues certificates where appropriate. The Class Council bases its decisions on various factors, such as:

- the past school career of each pupil;
- the intermediate results from lessons, assessments and oral and/or written examinations;
- information from the guidance centre;
- interviews with the pupil and parents, as necessary.

Each Class Council has to establish, at regular intervals, an intellectual, social and moral assessment of each pupil. The results of assessments carried out during the year are taken into account in the end-of-year assessment. Tests are compulsory for all pupils.

At the end of the year, the Class Council decides whether pupils should be promoted to a higher class, with or without restriction, or whether promotion should be delayed or refused. Unsuccessful pupils repeat a year, but pupils with learning difficulties may get some help from remedial teachers.

At the end of the 6th year of secondary education or at the end of the 7th year of vocational education, pupils receive a secondary education certificate (*Diploma van secundair onderwijs*), which provides access to higher education.

3B.4 Teachers

Teachers are subject specialists and are allocated to teach one or more subjects. They can be full-time, part-time, permanent or temporary. There is no obligation to follow in-service training.

There are different forms of teacher training.

Teacher training in full-time higher teacher training institutions

This course lasts 3 years, and comprises concurrent general and pedagogical training, together with the study of one or two specific disciplines in the case of future lower secondary teachers. In the third year of studies, half the time is spent on teaching practice. Students completing the course are awarded a diploma qualifying them to teach in lower secondary education (*Diploma van geaggregeerde voor het secundair onderwijs – groep 1*, graduated before 2000: *diploma van geaggregeerde voor het lager secundair onderwijs*). They may teach in the 1st stage (1st and 2nd years) and the 2nd stage (3rd and 4th years) and in vocational secondary education.

Teacher training at universities

Students enrolled in university education in certain specialised subjects may obtain a supplementary certificate entitling them to teach. Training comprises an introduction to some of the theoretical aspects of pedagogy, and teaching practice. Students who successfully complete this course are awarded a diploma qualifying them to teach in upper secondary education (*Diploma van geaggregeerde voor het secundair onderwijs – groep 2*, graduated before 2000: *diploma van geaggregeerde voor het hoger secundair onderwijs*). This diploma also entitles them to teach in non-university higher education with one cycle.

Teacher training through social advancement courses (part-time education in the form of evening or weekend classes based on a credit system).

This type of teacher training is meant for teachers giving vocational training courses and certain technical courses, for which no full-time training is available. Courses focus on both the theory and practice of teaching, and students give lessons under the supervision of an instructor. Training leads to a certificate of pedagogical aptitude (*Getuigschrift Pedagogische Bekwaamheid*), which entitles the holder to teach technical and practical subjects at lower or upper secondary level.

3B.5 Statistics

Pupils enrolled in full-time secondary education¹¹

	Men	Women	Total
Regular education	219,677	212,550	432,227
Special education	9,653	5,895	15,548
Total pre-primary education	229,330	218,445	447,775

¹¹ In order to avoid double counts, the pupils enrolled in special education due to a long-time disease (type 5) are not included in the figures of special education. On February 1, 1997 there were 192 pupils in special secondary education of type 5.

Number of institutions – full-time secondary education¹²

Regular education	966
Special education	113
Total pre-primary education	1,079

Managing and teaching staff in secondary full-time education in January 1997¹³

Number of budgetary full-time equivalents

	Men	Women	Total
Regular education	26,466	27,783	54,250
Special education	2,145	2,183	4,328

	Men	Women	Total
Regular education	26,466	27,783	54,250
Special education	2,145	2,183	4,328
Total full-time secondary education	28,611	29,966	58,577

Number of staff members

	Men	Women	Total
Regular education	27,709	31,976	59,685
Special education	2,252	2,428	4,680
Total full-time secondary education	29,961	34,404	64,365

¹² Besides these schools there are 4 schools providing special education of type 5 (for pupils with a long-time disease). These 4 schools are not included in the figures.

¹³ Statistics dealing with staff only register staff members paid directly by the Education Department or those whose wages are covered by the block-grant funding system of higher education.

These data refer to the teaching staff and the managing staff. The number of staff members is expressed by indicating the number of physical persons. Replacements for periods shorter than one year are taken into account. The number of staff members expressed in budgetary full-time equivalents is the sum of all partial tasks of all staff members (i.e. including replacements shorter than one year).

4. POST-COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION

Compulsory education covers the whole period of secondary education. There is no post-

compulsory secondary stage as such.

5. INITIAL/VOCATIONAL TRAINING

In the framework of compulsory education, the training of young people under 18 years of age comes under two types of measures conforming to requirements for part-time compulsory schooling up to age 18:

- part-time education; with the possibility of industrial apprenticeship;
- apprenticeship in the SME (Small and Medium Enterprises) sector;
- limited curriculum experimental secondary education.

5.1 Part-time secondary vocational education (*Deeltijds beroepssecundair onderwijs*)

Pupils who are no longer required to follow full-time education can study on a part-time basis in a centre for part-time education (*Centrum voor deeltijds onderwijs* - CDO) or in a recognised training centre.

The centres for part-time education provide courses combining general education (including social and personal training) with an emphasis on preparation for an occupation. The content of courses is limited and designed to be a continuation of the full-time education system. The centres are linked to a school providing full-time technical and/or vocational secondary education.

Part-time education is provided for 40 weeks a year with an average of 15 weekly periods of 50

minutes (minimum 6 periods of general subjects and minimum 6 periods of technical/practical subjects of which at least 5 periods of practical subjects).

Part-time education leads to a qualification certificate (*Kwalificatiegetuigschrift*).

Within part-time education, there exists also the possibility of industrial apprenticeship (*industrieel leercontract*).

This concerns apprenticeships in occupations exercised by salaried workers. It was initially intended for young people aged between 15 and 18, who had lost interest in full-time school attendance. The representative committee of the sector can provide modalities in their training regulations to allow young people older than 18 to establish an apprenticeship agreement.

The length and content of the apprenticeship is established on the basis of a proposal put forward by the representative committee of the sector concerned. Successive apprenticeship contracts may be concluded with several different firms if required for training in a given occupation. Firms with 20 to 50 employees have been entitled to train young people by means of an industrial apprenticeship.

Pupils spend two days in a recognised part-time training centre where they acquire the necessary theoretical and general knowledge, and spend the other three days of the week working in a firm under the guidance of an experienced employee.

Training in a firm lasts an average of 21 hours per week. Training in a centre for part-time education lasts 15 weekly periods of 50 minutes (minimum 6 periods of general subjects and 6 periods of technical/practical subjects of which at least 5 periods of practical subjects).

In the case of the unskilled occupations, training must last no less than six months and no more than two years. The representative committee has established a longer period of training for the skilled occupations. The trainee is deemed to be an employee and receives a percentage of the minimum wage in the business sector concerned.

When training has been completed, the employer provides the apprentice with a certificate indicating the period covered by the training and its content.

The yearly number of industrial apprenticeship agreements in Flanders is 500-600, half of which are 1-year contracts, the other half are 2-year contracts.

In part-time vocational secondary education there are more or less 4.500 youngsters, who are in principle potential clients for an industrial apprenticeship agreement. In reality most of them unfortunately don't have the right attitudes to conclude an industrial apprenticeship agreement.

5.2 Apprenticeship in the SME sector (Leerovereenkomst in de Vorming van Zelfstandigen – KMO)

Young people can conclude an apprenticeship contract with an employer-instructor from the age of 15 or 16. They then spend 4 days a week gaining practical experience in the firm with which they have the apprenticeship contract and one day in a training centre supervised by the Flemish Institute for Independent Entrepreneurship (*Vlaams Instituut voor het Zelfstandig Ondernemen - VIZO*). In the training centre, the apprentices follow a technical/vocational training course and a general social education course. These courses are strongly oriented towards practice.

Apprenticeship in the SME sector is thus a form of alternating training and practical training is an essential part. The head of the enterprise-instructor is responsible for ensuring that the apprentices get a general and technical basic training in the practice of the occupation concerned. The pupils are bound to take the additional courses in the training centre.

Apprentices have the status of pupils since they are still fulfilling their compulsory education obligations. However, apprentices are entitled

to a fixed apprenticeship fee from their employer.

The number of occupations covered by apprenticeship is virtually unlimited and includes all occupations that can be practised as a self-employed person. The education service of VIZO and the VIZO centres continually adjust the apprenticeships available to take into account new developments in SMEs or in educational techniques.

The apprenticeship lasts three years (or less if apprentices have followed preliminary training). At the end, apprentices obtain an official certificate (*Getuigschrift van Leertijd*).

They can then opt to find a job as an employee or go on to entrepreneur training. A lot of young people who do not intend to become self-employed prefer to follow vocational training within the training programme for the self-employed.

There are 120 hours each of general social education and technical/vocational training in all three years. General social education comprises thematic project work and separate language and mathematics periods. It aims to develop the apprentice's personality. Technical/vocational training is aimed at the acquisition of the basic knowledge needed to practise an occupation. The course is supplementary to the practical training in the enterprise.

In accordance with the legislation regarding compulsory education, 15-year-olds must take an additional course in general social education of 120 hours in the first year. This means that they attend the training centre an extra half-day a week.

Apprentices are subject to continuous assessment throughout the course year. At the end of the first and second years, they have to take a transitional examination, which consists of A and B tests. This examination is intended to assess their progress and determine whether they can continue the apprenticeship.

At the end of the third year, there is a final examination, which consists of A, B and C tests. The A test concerns general social education (Dutch, mathematics, social legislation, civics, history, geography and hygiene), and the B test assesses theoretical technical/vocational knowledge of the occupation concerned. The C test is the practical part of the examination; the apprentices have to carry out a piece of work or an assignment. In both the transitional and final examinations apprentices must obtain 50% in each part of the examination in order to pass. They are informed of the results of the transitional examination by a certificate. At the end of the course, the apprentices who pass the

final examination obtain an apprenticeship certificate, signed by the VIZO. This certificate provides access to the entrepreneur training and also complies with the legal requirements for most regulated occupations.

Each year, the VIZO provides education and training to more than 10,000 young people.

5.3 Part-time education – Limited curriculum experimental secondary education

(Experimenteel secundair onderwijs met beperkt leerplan)

Since 1 September 1999, it isn't experimental any longer, but definitive.

In addition to education and training organised as part of compulsory part-time education, there is also what is known as the 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 certificate of long or short higher education or university education, or of technical upper secondary education.

This initiative is based on granting a temporary reduction in the employer's contribution to the State Social Security system when they hire young job seekers involved in an employment-training scheme.

The employment-training agreement involves industrial and commercial firms, non-profit-making associations and the liberal professions. The agreement is signed by the young person and the employer and lasts for a minimum of one year or a maximum of three years. It has two parts: a contract for part-time work of indeterminate duration (at least half time) and training. The training provided under the employment-training agreement must involve courses and establishments that are recognised or subsidised.

Legislation on the employment-training agreement falls within the competence of the Employment Minister.

In June 1998 there were 1.109 current employment-training agreements in the Flemish Community of Belgium.

5.4 Statistics

Pupils enrolled in part-time secondary education

	Boys	Girls	Total
Part-time vocational secondary education	3,25	1,689	4,814
Limited curriculum experimental sec. ed. (ages 18 to 25)	368	167	535
Part-time offshore fishing secondary education	12	0	12
Total part-time secondary education	3,505	1,856	5,361

Number of institutions – part-time secondary education

Part-time vocational secondary education	46
Limited curriculum experimental sec. ed. (ages 18 to 25)	31
Part-time offshore fishing secondary education	1

Managing and teaching staff in secondary part-time education in January 1997¹⁴

Number of budgetary full-time equivalents

	Men	Women	Total
Total	139	121	260

Total part-time secondary education		
Men	Women	Total
139	121	260

Number of staff members

Total part-time secondary education		
Men	Women	Total
138	132	270

¹⁴ Cfr. Footnote no. 12, chapter 3.

6. HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education in Flanders is offered at *Hogescholen* (non-university higher education institutions) and at *Universiteiten* (universities).

The institutions of higher education in Flanders may have different philosophical backgrounds. Recent changes in the Flemish educational legislation gave all of them their autonomy. But whatever the origin, all institutions accept candidates of any philosophical conviction.

6.1 Admission requirements

The general entrance requirement for higher education studies is the Flemish '*Diploma van secundair onderwijs*' (diploma of secondary education).

Undergraduate studies

Any student (Flemish or other) who wants to take up study for the programmes of Nautical Sciences and Fine Arts (non-university level studies) and for the programmes of Civil Engineering, Civil Engineering-Architect, Dental and Medical Sciences (university level studies) must pass entrance examinations.

If a foreign diploma is recognised on the basis of a Flemish decree, a Belgian law, a European Directive or an international convention, the holder will have direct access to higher education.

Admittance may also be granted to students, after individual assessment of their secondary education diploma, if it gives access to higher education in the student's country of origin.

Academic recognition of the foreign higher education diploma may allow the holder to obtain reduction of the total study load of a programme.

Postgraduate studies

A student can be admitted to postgraduate studies at *Hogescholen* if he/she already holds a diploma of higher education.

Postgraduate studies at universities are only open to holders of a final university degree, or, in some cases, a final *Hogescholen* degree of academic level.

Nevertheless, admission may depend on a preliminary examination and/or a specific final qualification.

As is the case for the undergraduate programmes, foreign students can be accepted on the basis of equivalent degrees.

Doctoral studies

'Doctor' is the highest level of specialisation. It is based on original research that takes at least two years, resulting in the public presentation of a doctoral thesis.

Doctoral studies are only open to holders of a final university degree or some specific final *Hogescholen* degrees of academic level.

As is the case for the postgraduate programmes, foreign students can be accepted on the basis of equivalent degrees. Nevertheless, admission may depend on a preliminary examination.

Some universities also require participation in an additional 'doctoral training' covering a number of courses, seminars, congresses, etc. related to the chosen specialisation. A certificate is received at the end of the training.

Continuing education

Continuing education in *Hogescholen* and in universities comprises a broad range of courses, life-long learning, education in brand new and/or fast developing fields of study, in-service training, additional or specialist training. The

duration of and the admission to these programmes are very flexible.

Students participating in one of the many European exchange programmes, have access to Flemish studies on the basis of these programmes and the corresponding contracts.

6.2 Fees/financial support for students

If the student decides to enrol for a full programme outside an exchange programme, he/she has to pay a tuition fee at the Flemish institution.

Tuition fees for degree students are fixed by Flemish Law and indexed on an annual basis. For most courses the tuition fee does not exceed EURO 500 per year. The tuition fee for some postgraduate courses may be considerably higher.

If the facilities offered by the institutions are used, personal living expenses of a single student, including accommodation, meals, study materials and travelling in Flanders can amount to approximately EURO 750 per month. It can be less as some institutions offer accommodation for about EURO 150 and meals for about EURO 7.5 a day. Renting a flat is much more expensive (EURO 300 per month).

Having an adequate insurance (health, accident, third-party liability insurances, etc.) is obligatory for registering at all institutions.

In the case a student participates in European Exchange programmes such as Socrates, Tempus or Leonardo da Vinci, he/she can obtain a mobility scholarship and is exempted from all tuition fees, since he/she is registered at his/her home institution. Still, one has to consider other costs, e.g. language courses.

There are limited possibilities to obtain scholarships from the Belgian Authorities, such as the ABOS (Belgian Administration for Development Co-operation) and the Ministry of the Flemish Community. Other grants are subject to international cultural exchange programmes (for advanced studies only) and should be applied for a full year before the academic year begins, at the local authorities, such as the Ministry of Education.

If the student stays for longer than 3 months and he/she is not an EU-citizen, he/she has to obtain a Temporary Residence Permit (TRP), type D – visa for students, at the Belgian embassy in

the home country. The student will need proof of solvency in order to obtain the TRP. Some of the institutions make this a precondition for enrolment.

6.3 Academic year

Depending on the institution, the academic year starts between mid-September and the 1st of October. All programmes start on the first day of the academic year.

Consequently, it is not possible for the individual student to start a new programme during the course of the year. Each programme consists of relatively fixed curricula, which are clearly spread over several academic years.

One year of study consists of 1500 to 1800 hours of study related activities, including lectures, practical work, seminars, examinations, private work (library + home), practical placements and thesis.

The total for each year of study is 60 credit points, which means that each credit point corresponds to a total of 25 to 30 hours of study time. Each course gets at least 3 credits and a whole number. The quantity of each course is related to the total quantity of a full year. Students help to correct the estimated study time.

And even though ECTS is introduced and the optional subjects become more numerous in the final years of education, Flemish higher education institutions do not have a modular system.

A number of the subjects remain obligatory and success in the current year's examination is a condition to progress to the following year of study.

6.4 Courses

The study programmes at the *Hogescholen* are divided into one-cycle and two-cycle programmes.

One-cycle higher education covers a study period of three years. The courses prepare students for specific professions in industry, commerce, agriculture, health and rehabilitation, social work, teaching, informatics, applied arts or the media.

Courses are therefore practice-oriented and include several periods of work placement.

Two-year cycle higher education at *Hogescholen* is divided into two periods of minimum two years each and covers more or less the same sectors as the one-cycle education. These studies are of academic level; i.e. based on scientific knowledge and less linked to specific professions. The programmes include lectures as well as practical exercises, and mostly also applied research. The two-cycle graduates often start as researcher, middle managers or civil servants. Some become teachers after further studies.

At **Flemish universities** studies are academic and characterised by the integration of education and research. Fundamental research is one of the Universities' competencies and is to be considered as a major goal. University graduates have the knowledge and skills to become researchers, top managers or civil servants. They can also become teachers in upper secondary education (after a supplementary diploma) or in higher education.

The study programmes in the Flemish Community are categorised in different fields of study. The names of these fields of study are different for universities and *Hogescholen*. The number of study fields in which an institution offers study programmes is different from one institution to another, and is stipulated by law.

6.5 Assessment/ qualifications

An examinee is awarded an examination mark of maximum 20 for each programme component. The pass mark is 10 out of 20. A student can only succeed in a given year of study provided he or she has taken all the examinations that are included as part of that particular year of study. Students are not allowed to sit the same examination more than twice in the course of an academic year. If a student obtained 10 or more out of 20, a transfer to the 2nd examination period in the same academic year is possible.

If a student fails in a certain year of study, he or she can get a transfer for each programme component for which he or she obtained 12 or more out of 20 to the next academic year of the same year of study. However, there are two conditions: the student has participated in all the examinations of the year's programme and he or she obtained at least ½ of the total maximum of the points.

Non-university level qualifications

One-cycle programmes:
Gegradueerde
Kleuteronderwijzer (Pre-School Teacher)
Onderwijzer (Primary School Teacher)
Geaggregeerde voor het secundair onderwijs-groep 1 (Lower Secondary Education Teacher)
Maatschappelijk Assistent (Social Worker)
Two-cycle programmes:
Kandidaat (intermediate degree)
Licentiaat
Industrieel Ingenieur (Engineer in Industrial Sciences and technology)
Handelsingenieur (Commercial Engineer)
Architect (Architect)
Interieurarchitect (Interior Architect)
Meester
Postgraduate degrees:
Geaggregeerde voor het secundair onderwijs-groep 2, only in some fields of study (Qualified teacher's degree)
Gediplomeerde in de voortgezette studies (degree in Advanced Studies)
Continuing education:
Getuigschrift Posthogeschoolvorming (Certificate in Post-Hogescholen Studies)

University level qualifications

Undergraduate degrees:
Kandidaat (intermediate degree)
Baccalaureus (intermediate degree) in the fields of Philosophy, Theology and Canon Law
Licentiaat
Arts (Physician)
Dierenarts (Veterinarian)
Burgerlijk ingenieur (Civil Engineer)
Burgerlijk ingenieur-architect (Engineer-Architect)
Bio-ingenieur (Bio-Engineer)
Apotheker (Pharmacist)
Tandarts (Dentist)
Handelsingenieur (Commercial Engineer)
Postgraduate degrees:
Geaggregeerde voor het secundair onderwijs – groep 2 (Qualified teacher's degree)
Gediplomeerde in de gespecialiseerde studies (Degree in Specialised Studies)
Gediplomeerde in de aanvullende studies (Degree in Complementary Studies)
Continuing education:
Getuigschrift Postacademische Vorming (Certificate in Post-University Studies)

6.6 Teachers

Teacher training is organised at different levels.

One-cycle teacher training at the *Hogescholen* takes three years and leads to a diploma entitling the holder to be a pre-school Teacher, a Primary School Teacher or a Lower Secondary Education Teacher.

It is possible to upgrade these teachers' degrees by following a specific study.

At the *Hogescholen* offering two-cycle programmes a qualified teacher's degree can be obtained simultaneously with or after the second cycle degree. The qualified teacher's degree entitles the holder to teach one or several subjects in upper secondary education.

Next to the above teacher's degrees, any graduate can obtain a qualified teacher's certificate (*Getuigschrift Pedagogische Bekwaamheid* (GPB)) which entitles the holder to teach.

At the **universities** a qualified teacher's degree can be obtained simultaneously with or after the second cycle degree. The qualified teacher's degree entitles the holder to teach one or several subjects in upper secondary education.

6.7 Statistics

Students enrolled in non-university higher education (1997)

	Men	Women	Total
One cycle			
Architecture	901	843	1,744
Audio-visual and visual arts	32	61	93
Biotechnology	450	137	587
Health care	2,561	8,985	11,546
Business studies and management	10,831	13,085	23,916
Industrial sciences and technology	7,135	1,302	8,437
Music and Performing Arts	3	31	34
Teacher training	3,454	10,215	13,669
Social-pedagogic work	1,901	5,208	7,109
Total one cycle	27,268	39,867	67,135
Two cycle			
Architecture	1,450	1,124	2,574
Audio-visual and visual arts	1,859	1,841	3,700
Biotechnology	260	164	424
Business studies and management	3,591	2,372	5,963
Industrial sciences and technology	7,435	1,308	8,743
Music and Performing Arts	775	893	1,668
Product Development	227	110	337
Applied Linguistics	939	2,657	3,596
Total two cycle	16,536	10,469	27,005
Total	43,804	50,336	94,140

Students enrolled in university education¹⁵

	Men	Women	Total
Philosophy and ethical Sciences	636	304	940
Theology, Religious Studies and Canon Law	241	176	417
Language and Literature	1,320	2,380	3,700
History	967	811	1,778
Archaeology and Art Sciences	461	828	1,289
Law, Notary and Criminology	4,137	4,102	8,239
Psychology and educational Sciences	1,358	3,799	5,157
Economic and Applied Economic Sciences	4,567	2,383	6,950
Political and Social Sciences	1,993	1,897	3,890
Social Health Sciences	206	813	1,019
Physical education, Motor revalidation and Physiotherapy	1,044	1,123	2,167
Science	3,470	1,941	5,411
Applied Sciences	3,136	725	3,861
Applied Biological Sciences	1,526	1,116	2,642
Medicine	2,720	3,432	6,152
Dentistry	255	337	592
Veterinary Medicine	575	807	1,382
Pharmaceutical Sciences	485	1,097	1,582
Combined lines of Study	419	852	1,271
Total	29,516	28,923	58,439

Managing and teaching staff in non-university higher education in January 1997¹⁶

Number of budgetary full-time equivalents

Men	Women	Total
4,346	3,056	7,402

Number of staff members

Men	Women	Total
5,174	3,639	8,813

¹⁵ Academic training programmes and doctorates.

¹⁶ Statistics dealing with staff only register staff members paid directly by the Education Department or those whose are covered by the block-grant funding systems of higher education.

These data refer to the teaching staff and the managing staff. The number of staff members is expressed by indicating the number of physical persons. Replacements for periods shorter than one year are taken into account. The number of staff members expressed in budgetary full-time equivalents is the sum of all partial tasks of all staff members (i.e. including replacements shorter than one year). For non-university higher education neither the teaching tasks of guest professors nor the mandate reimbursements are included.

Staff of universities paid through "operation" allowances

Number of full-time units on February 1998

	Men	Women	Total
Autonomous academic staff	2,025.3	295.0	2,320.3
Assisting academic staff	948.6	711.7	1,660.3
Administrative and technical staff	1,963.7	1,625.3	3,589.0
Total	4,937.6	2,632.0	7,569.6

Number of persons on February 1998

	Men	Women	Total
Autonomous academic staff	3,110	450	3,560
Assisting academic staff	1,299	982	2,281
Administrative and technical staff	2,018	1,901	3,919
Total	6,427	3,333	9,760

Number of non-university institutions: 29

Number of university institutions: 8

7. ADULT EDUCATION

In the Flemish Community one can make a distinction on the level of adult education between:

- Adult Basic Education (Department of Education);
- Social Advancement Education (Department of Education);
- Distance Learning (Department of Education);
- Part-time Artistic Education (Department of Education);
- Training offered by VDAB;
- Training offered by VIZO.

GENERAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

For the Flemish Community, there exists no general legal framework for VET regulation purposes. On the federal level, however, regulation does exist, for example, the law on paid educational leave and the interprofessional agreements. The paid educational leave system is based on the reinstatement law of 1985, along with further adaptations (a.o. in 1998), which replaces the former system of credit hours for workers in the private sector, who take up specific vocational training or general training. Thus, the worker is granted the right to be absent for a limited number of hours while maintaining the normal salary. Annually, the employer can ask the State (Paid Educational Leave Service) for a 50% refund of the salary and social contribution costs generated by the worker's absence (maximum salary: 68,000

gross), on the condition that the employer has notified the PEL Service earlier of the planned PEL activities in the company. The number of hours a worker can take up is limited to 120 hours for vocational training and to 80 hours for general education if the teaching time does not coincide with the normal working hours. The types of training that can be followed in the PEL framework are also strictly defined (one will notice a trend of reducing the general courses in favour of a stimulation of the vocational/professional oriented ones). Further details on the restrictions (which type of SMEs can benefit, full list of accepted types of training etc.) are made available by the Federal Ministry of Labour. In SMEs up to 50 workers, a worker is entitled to a refund for a maximum number of 100 training hours per school year followed outside normal working hours.

The legal basis for the organization and the functioning of the major VET actors (VDAB, VIZO, Department of Education) in the Flemish Community will consequently be described in a separate way underneath. Other actors in the fields of agriculture and disabled persons ought to be mentioned as well as numerous, rather small profit and non-profit organisations. Very important to mention are the sectoral training funds.

- Role of the Social partners

Apart from their activities on the national level (via the National Labour Council [NAR], via their participation in the recognition process of training courses within the framework of the Paid Educational Leave [BEV] system and via

their managing function regarding the National Employment Fund), the social partners are also active on the Community /regional level. There exist two advisory bodies, namely the Flemish Social and Economic Council (SERV), which gives advice on Community training matters, and the Flemish Educational Council (VLOR). Inside VLOR, a specific Council for Adult Education comprises separate sections for Social Advancement (OSP), Distance Learning and 'Second Chance' Education. The Social partners are represented in all sections.

They are also represented in VDAB's equally-represented Managing Committee and in VIZO's Managing Council (there is representation of Middle Class Organisations and enterprises on the one hand, and trade union representation on the other).

On the subregional level, the social partners have an advisory function in the so-called Subregional Employment Committees (STCs), which are equally-represented (employer/worker organisations). These 'STCs' provide recommendations on vocational training, which are presented to VDAB's Managing Committee. Via the STCs, the social partners can also give recommendation on Adult Education matters, which are presented concretely to the Flemish Minister of Education. Most recommendations concern planning of courses and curricula.

On the sectoral level, the social partners control Sectoral Funds, used for the financing of training initiatives which are fully focused on a specific economic sector. The national imperative levy of 0,10 % on the wage mass (per sector) is effectively spent on this level via training initiatives for disadvantaged groups (Interprofessional Agreements '99-2000).

Sectoral training funds play the following roles according to the specific needs of the industrial branch :

- For jobseekers: an intermediary role between the qualification needs of the industrial branch and the training suppliers, a supporting role via information and sensitization actions, a supplier's role (practical organization of courses, recruitment of teachers, recruitment of trainees), a subsidizing role (via a financial incentive framework) and, finally, a certification role (including quality control).
- For workers (similar): a subsidizing role (stimulating enterprise participation in VET), a training supply role (complementary to the existing VET supply), an intermediary role (matching training supply and demand), a supporting role (detection of training needs, training supply databases) and,

finally, certification (attributing a quality label after screening of the training supply).

On a more general level, social partners willingly participate in the drawing up and in the application of job profiles (and consequent training policy decisions) (cf f.i. the Job Profile project, developed by SERV).

In conclusion, the social partners perform the following VET-related activities: planning (definition of objectives, target groups and trends), financing, implementation and follow-up, advice and control.

- Non-formal VET co-ordination (policies)

In order to improve co-operation, mutual consultation and co-ordination between the different training providers on the local Flemish level, the Flemish Government accepted a proposition on the creation of 'Edufora', educational forums where local training providers are represented.

VDAB and VIZO, along with its regional middle class training centres, as well as the Adult Education framework (called 'Social Advancement Education') all have two representatives in the forums; smaller providers such as social-cultural organisations, agricultural training providers, basic (elementary) education institutions and miscellaneous training organisations all have one representative.

The 13 Edufora (12 for the different Flemish subregional employment areas, 1 for Brussels) started up in the autumn of '98 - within 18 months each of them is to establish an Educational Objectives Plan, which will be regarded as the long-term strategy for the specific region. Furthermore, a co-operation agreement between the Flemish Government and the VDAB, VIZO and Education authorities will determine how the Educational Objectives Plans will be integrated into the existing recognition procedures for new training programmes.

In order to support this new initiative, the Flemish Community will appoint two co-ordinators for the central management of the Edufora, a steering committee will be in charge of the project's strategic orientation and yet another core group will see to the daily follow-up. On the financial level, there will be a central budget for scientific support along with a local budget for each forum, consisting of 1 million Belgian Francs per year and to be augmented with 2 Belgian Francs per year per inhabitant. After a five-year period, the Edufora should be able to operate by their own resources.

7A Adult Basic Education (Department of Education)

7A.1 Specific legislative framework

The decree of July 1990 established the Centres for Adult Basic Education in Flanders.

These centres are aimed at providing a broad and varied range of basic education, which contains different programmes provided in a balanced and interrelated way.

In particular, attention is devoted to the following areas:

- language and arithmetic skills: the acquisition or improvement of reading and writing skills, speaking and listening skills in Dutch as a first language and as a second language. In this way, the centres play an important role in teaching Dutch to immigrants;
- social awareness and skills and an orientation towards society: the acquisition of areas of competence which are useful for the different roles in social life, and which are basic skills to survive and function as a competent adult;
- orientation and preparation for further learning, vocational training or work;
- stimulation and introduction: activities and programmes to motivate potential participants to make use of basic education.

7A.2 Administration

The competent authority in this case is the Ministry of the Flemish Community.

7A.3 Funding

The sector is directly funded via public grants formulated in the decree of July 1990. These grants are based on the number of participants.

7A.4 Organisation

A significant number of Flemish adults lack the basic skills necessary for employability, social participation and integration. Literacy groups and classes were already functioning in the late seventies. After a period of very limited funding and an experimental recognition of this kind of work, in 1990 a decree gave an official status to a system of adult basic education. This decree established a network of 29 centres for adult basic education in Flanders, which nowadays form a specific but integrated part of the system of adult education depending on the department of education. These centres have open access to low-schooled adults and provide basic skills courses (literacy, numeracy, basic social skills, basic vocational skills) for low-schooled adults, but also the classes 'Nederlands tweede taal' (Dutch as a second language) for immigrant people and refugees are integrated in these centres as far as it concerns low-schooled participants. The centres have close relations with other social services, educational institutions and welfare provisions in the local community, so that these can refer people with deficient basic skills to the centres. The 'Flemish Support Centre for Adult Basic Education' functions as a support, guidance and resource institute for adult basic education in Flanders.

At the moment some 13 333 low-schooled adults participate each year in the courses. Besides the literacy and numeracy courses, a large proportion of the activities of the centres concerns programmes 'Dutch as a second language' for low-schooled migrants. Recently also workplace literacy programmes are developed stressing the importance of basic skills relevant for the workplace or further vocational education and training. Since inadequate schooling and functional illiteracy are very close related to deprivation and social exclusion, the system of adult basic education in Flanders is the most important institutional educational provision in the struggle against exclusion.

7A.5 Statistics

Number of course participants (Department of Education)

Men	Women	Total
5,681	7,909	13,590

Number of adult basic education centres: 29

7B Social Advancement Education (Department of Education)

7B.1 Specific legislative framework

The origins of this type of education for adults can be traced back to the old "evening courses" and "Sunday schools", which were established to enable adults to catch up with the education to which they did not have access during their initial schooling.

The rapidly changing society renders retraining and additional training indispensable. Learning as a continuous activity is made possible and is also encouraged.

The basis of the legislation of the system of social advancement education is situated in 1957. This regulation (several times adapted) aims at providing course participants (older than 18 years) with knowledge, skills and attitudes required for:

- holding a job through retraining or specialization programs
- mastering a language
- entering further education
- functioning in society
- second chance studies

The courses are organised on the secondary level as well as on the higher education level.

In 1999 the regulation has changed. The new decree offers a new platform to organise this form of education for adults. Over organisation and overlap have to be avoided and blind spots have to be filled in. Tele-teaching and a modular structure will be introduced.

7B.2 Administration

Schools that want to present officially acknowledged certificates and diplomas and want to be granted subsidies by the Community, they must observe legal stipulations and rules.

The constitutional freedom renders the organisation of autonomous educational networks possible.

Traditionally, three networks are distinguished:

- community education (on behalf of the Flemish Community);
- subsidized official education (provincial and municipal education);
- subsidized private education.

The networks have extensive autonomy. They are free to develop their own curricula and schedules. They are free to choose their instructional methods.

New guarantees regarding the quality of the Flemish education are introduced by the 'minimum goals' concept. These are minimum aims that must be strived for and reached by the majority of the students in the level and disciplines they are in.

School advisors and the inspectorate of the Flemish Community have the task of supervising the educational quality.

Social partners and professional bodies meet each other in the Flemish Educational Council.

Within the Ministry of the Flemish Community, the Education Department is responsible for nearly all aspects of the education policy.

Within the Education Department, the Administration of Continuing Education (division Adult Education) is vested with the powers and responsibilities for the implementation and correct application of the legislative provisions relating to adult education.

7B.3 Funding

The basic principle is that the Community provides the entire funding for schools with grants which are intended to cover teachers' salaries on the one hand and the running, maintenance and replacement costs of equipment and buildings on the other hand. The subsidy will directly depend on the number of pupils, varying according to the type of education provided.

The number of teaching posts in a school is derived from a calculation that includes 'norms' per class.

The Administration of Continuing Education is responsible for these tasks.

A minimum contribution is required from individuals who attend training. The authorities laid down a minimum enrolment fee depending on the number of periods included in the programme. As a rule, the enrolment fee amounts to 10 Belgian francs for each weekly period.

A number of categories (such as unemployed persons) are exempt from paying.

7B.4 Organisation

The adult-education-offer spreads over all levels of technical and vocational education and higher education.

The courses usually take place after finishing the normal working hours. The increasingly important short training usually takes one year.

Two organisation models exist in social advancement education.

– **Classic training programmes**

These are programs that take at least one school year (short programme) or else several years (long programme). Courses are spread over 40 weeks from early September to late June and each period lasts 50 minutes.

– **Modular training programs**

In a modular programme, the subject matter is split up into a number of modules into which theory and practice are integrated. A further training programme in units enables the participants to determine their own study package. The students determine the duration of their own studies.

A modular system is organised according to semesters. One semester covers half of a school year and starts on the first of September or February.

The only condition to admit somebody to take a course is the established level of previous education. Training institutions for adult trainees are free to organize an entrance examination and decide freely in the exemptions.

The success of the 'evening schools' is not only the result of the latest evolution on the labour market. The current supply of the adult courses reveals a more delicate difference in its mass character: no less than half of the registrations on the secondary level concerns foreign languages. Besides, less than 20% of the registrations concerns clothes and domestic economy.

The supply on the higher level remained in proportion to the secondary level modest. Most of the sections recently were given a new order and the structure of the courses gained uniformity. Top of the bill is the higher economic section, (more than half of all trainees), whereas the technical level remained limited.

Most of the participants are also active participants on the labour market. The rest of the trainees are predominantly housewives, pupils or students and people retired on pension.

The Social Advancement Education is in its structure based on studying for a degree, whereas only a small minority of the participants believes it important to obtain a degree.

7B.5 Statistics

Number of course participants in social advancement secondary education

	Men	Women	Total
Traditional system	12,614	28,095	40,709
Languages	20,759	33,375	54,134
Modular system (2nd semester)	16,611	15,796	32,407

Number of course participants in social advancement higher education

	Men	Women	Total
Traditional system	4,959	4,607	9,566
Modular system (2nd semester)	1,886	1,851	3,737

Number of institutions

Social advancement secondary education: **188**
 Social advancement higher education: **72**

7C Distance Learning (Department Education)

7C.1 Specific legislative framework

Distance learning (in the form of correspondence courses and tele-teaching by new technologies) gives adults an opportunity to follow a form of (in-service) education or (re)training based on supervised self-study.

The basis of the legislation of the system is situated in 1965. In 1999 the regulation has changed by a new decree that aims a "Conducted Individual Study" for adults (*Begeleid Individueel Studeren – BIS*).

7C.2 Administration

The component authority is the Ministry of Flemish Community – Department of Education.

7C.3 Funding

Operating as a public service integrates in the Ministry of the Flemish Community, all costs (salaries, working costs...) are paid by the Flemish authority.

7C.4 Organisation

Distance learning means that it is possible to study individually. The study can be extended over time and is always very flexible.

Distance learning comprises 6 disciplines: languages, mathematics, computer and information technology, commerce-business and administration, sciences and technology. The self-study packs are used for teaching explaining, anticipating possible questions and also serve as a source of looking for further information.

7C.4 Statistics

Number of course participants in distance learning

Men	Women	Total
13,007	17,018	30,025

7D Part-time artistic education

7D.1 Specific legislative framework

Part-time artistic education is aimed at the artistic education of people and aims to make contribution to their overall personal development.

The basis of the legislation of the system of part-time artistic education is situated in 1990.

7D.2 Administration

Within the Education Department, the Administration of Continuing Education is rested with the powers and responsibilities for the implementation and correct on the legislative provisions relating to part-time artistic education.

7D.3 Funding

The basic principle is that the Community provides the entire funding for schools with grants which are intended to cover teachers' salaries on the one hand and the running, maintenance and replacement costs of equipment and buildings on the other hand. The subsidy depends directly on the number of pupils.

7D.4 Organisation

Part-time artistic education comprises 4 disciplines: visual arts, music, spoken word and dance. Each discipline has its own structure with levels and options.

7D.5 Statistics

Number of course participants in part-time artistic education

Adults	Youngsters	Total
33,877	104,387	138,264

Number of institutions: 166

7E The Flemish Employment and Vocational Training Service (VDAB)

7E.1 Specific legislative framework

VDAB's legal framework originated in the Special Law on Constitutional Reform of 8/8/80, placing vocational training under the authority of the different Communities in Belgium (in the case of VDAB, the Flemish Community). Consequently, VDAB's basic competence was created via a decree of the Flemish Government dd. 20/3/1984. Another decree dd. 21/12/88 further specifies VDAB's functioning and field of activities, namely, the offering of labour market - oriented training courses, designed to enable workers and jobseekers to perform salaried labour. Finally, VDAB and the Flemish Government regularly renew a managing contract, which functions as an orientation tool for defining a.o. VET-objectives (usually for a three-year period).

7E.2 Administration

– Competent authorities

The competent authority in this case is the Managing Committee, installed by the Flemish Government, depending on the Flemish Minister in charge of Employment.

– Administrative competencies and pedagogical principles

VDAB's training supply is labour market and function-oriented; the target group are adults (unemployed jobseekers and workers). Traditional training is left for a modular approach, comprising training units, which together form an individual trajectory (pathway). These modules/units are culled from the job profiles demanded on the labour market. The trajectory (or 'route counselling', or 'pathway to integration') is defined taking into account labour market requirements, but also the trainee's aspirations and personal skills. New training concepts such as f.i. multimedia, pc-based training and open and distance learning are fully integrated. VDAB instructors have a diploma ranging from lower secondary education to university levels. In some cases, a number of years of professional experience is required. VDAB's Centre for Pedagogical Training and Studies provides initial and continuing training on both the didactical and technical levels to instructors.

7E.3 Funding

VDAB's vocational training and placement activities include special efforts for disadvantaged groups and long-term unemployed (the so-called route-counselling framework). Personnel, infrastructure, material and activity-related costs, generated by VDAB's training supply function, are partially financed by funds provided by the Flemish Community. Additional funding is generated via European project work (frameworks include a.o. Employment, ADAPT, ESF Objectives 3 and 4, Leonardo da Vinci, etc.). Since 1992, VDAB's training supply for workers is to be paid for by employers; trainees who participate in training for workers on their own account, contribute to the cost themselves. Training for jobseekers implies no cost for the target group. Within the framework of the interprofessional agreements on sectoral training, VDAB has established co-financing schemes with the different sectors. In

1997, the expenditures for training amounted to 3,498,867,000 BEF, the receipts (incl. Flemish Community financing): 3,630,820,000 BEF.

7E.4 Organisation

VDAB organizes training for jobseekers as well as for workers and offers a large variety of specialities. These specialities are organised in different types of centres:

- VDAB's own centres (28, in 14 *Lokale Klanten centra* - LKC's, i.e. sub-regional employment offices) offer short labour market and function-oriented tailor-made courses; outside (i.e. non-VDAB) organisations can collaborate with a VDAB centre (f.i. informatics courses on Saturdays);
- training requested by specific companies ; it can be organised in a VDAB centre or in the company itself;
- individualized training, on-the-job;
- centres created in the private sector can be recognized by the competent Community Minister;
- VDAB (STC-level) gives advice;
- training can be arranged via agreements between VDAB and a group of enterprises (context :
- training for functions for which VDAB does not regularly offer specific training).

Annual training plans include input from sectoral organisations and from social partners on the subregional level.

VDAB courses can mainly be divided into secondary sector and tertiary sector training supply. The first focuses on industrial- technical skills (mainly production sector-oriented), the latter on administrative/office work-related skills (incl. sales, communication, languages, accountancy, etc.).

Target groups are in general jobseekers and workers, more specifically disadvantaged groups on the labour market (poorly educated, long-term unemployed, migrants, women, etc.). These actions are to be situated within VDAB's mission/objectives, as defined by the Government and the Social Partners (social function). Recently, VDAB also focuses on the 'social profit' sector, which includes training oriented towards caring professions.

VDAB provides trainees with a specific certificate, which is not to be compared with official diplomas (cf. educational sector), but, however, which is well appreciated by employers on the labour market.

The main trend for the future will be the so-called 'trajectory' / 'pathway to integration'-approach, by which the client is assessed, trained (when necessary), placed and followed until he is sure to have a stable job on the labour market.

7E.5 Statistics

VDAB			
Centres	28 training centres (for 14 STC's)		
Global staff	3,819		
Trainers	855		
Number of students / trainees	jobseekers	34,485	
	workers	38,090	
	total	72,575	
Age of trainees	18+		
Sex of trainees		Men	woman
	jobseekers	16,783	17,702
	workers	24,802	13,288
Certificate type	VDAB certificate per specific orientation (cfr. transport sector/ e.g. ADR certificate)		

7F The Flemish Institute for Independent Entrepreneurship (VIZO)

7F.1 Specific legislative framework

VIZO was created via a decree of 23/1/91 and thus replaced the Institute for Permanent Training of the Middle Class (IVVM). This decree specifies that VIZO is competent in the areas of apprenticeship and entrepreneur training; VIZO has a managing council, assisted by a Practice Commission. Furthermore, VIZO is involved in the practical development of the Flemish Government's decree of 24/7/96, which stipulates that apprenticeship will have to be stimulated (a.o. via a raise of the apprenticeship allowance), that the quality of the training offered will have to be improved and that the apprentices' legal status will be revised.

7F.2 Administration

- Competent authorities

The competent authority in this case is the

Managing Council, installed by the Flemish Council, depending on the Flemish Minister in charge of SMEs.

- Administrative competences and pedagogical principles

VIZO's entrepreneur training, from a training contents point of view, aims at providing the necessary skills (technical, commercial and administrative) for the management of an SME. The courses comprise management-oriented courses, which are enterprise/economy-oriented and professional-oriented courses, which provide specific job and branch-related (technical) know-how. According to the chosen profession, courses have a 2 to 3 years duration and include practical training periods. The theoretical parts are provided by the Centres for the Training of Self-Employed and SMEs.

On a didactical level, the courses are also modular and usually take place in the evening.

VIZO further offers continuing training options for the self-employed:

- proficiency courses on current SME-related problem solving practices;
- technical continuing training (know-how updating);
- language courses (focus on economic language applications).

Courses are usually seminars, study days or working seminars, organised by the Centres or (sectoral) professional organisations and financed by VIZO (central role).

7F.3 Funding

VIZO's financial resources are mainly funds provided by the Flemish Community. They are used to cover the salaries of the VIZO-instructors and to pay the (activity-related) working costs. The different regional Centres for Training of the Self-Employed and SMEs are also financed by entrance fees to be paid by trainees participating in entrepreneur training and continuing training courses. The centres are free to decide whether or not fees are to be paid and are free to establish the exact amount. In 1997, VIZO's specific training-related expenditures (excluding a.o. guidance activities towards enterprises) amounted to 1,538,419,849 BEF; the receipts (incl. different types of subsidization): 1,919,754,459 BEF.

7F.4 Organisation

VIZO, just like VDAB, has a central office and a regional structure. Contrary to VDAB, however, these regional centres are more autonomous (16 in total). They are actually non-profit organisations (legal status).

The type of training described in the context of this document, is entrepreneur training and continuing training (proficiency courses).

Target groups are potential self-employed/entrepreneurs and real entrepreneurs who have already started up a business.

VIZO does not really aim at poorly educated young adults.

Further aspects (pedagogical/didactical): see part 7A.

What concerns certification, VIZO (central office) recognizes the courses and validates the certificates awarded.

7F.5 Statistics

VIZO		
Centres	16 training centres 1 main office 5 provincial branches	
Global staff	149	
Trainers	5.542	
Numbers of students/trainees	business management	14,149
	occupational knowledge	20,707
	basic language courses	1,005
Age of trainees	18+	
Sex of trainees	not available	
Certificate type	Certificate of entrepreneur training, awarded by regional centres (CMO's), approved by VIZO(central service + provincial departments)	

Remarks on VIZO' trainees: There are also 18+ people (some 5,496), following an apprenticeship, who are not taken into account here because this document focuses on entrepreneur training only

Remarks en VIZO's global staff: There are also other general staff members who work at VIZO's 16 training's centres, who have not taken into account here, because this document focuses on entrepreneur training only.

