

ifa ECP Monitor At a Glance

Belgium

PRÉCIS

In Belgium’s different language communities, ECP is generally approached through targeted project support and additional “cultural officers” in the Belgian embassies and Flemish and Wallonian foreign representations. Their work is complemented through a small number of targeted cultural centres and a network of educational institutions. In Wallonia, this group of institutions has been expanded and become more established in recent years. Flanders’ “follow the actor” model highlights the agency of individual artists or groups in the international realm.

Outstanding Fact:

Belgium’s strong federal structure allows its subnational regions to sign their own bilateral and multi-lateral treaties and have independent approaches to foreign policy with different models and partnerships in culture, education, research and media

KEY INDICATORS 2019

Population	Rank/number	80 th / 11.5 million
GDP	Rank/number	24 th / €476.2 billion
GDP per capita	Rank/number	21 th / €41,460
Cultural Economy	As share of GDP	0.5
Education economy	As share of GDP	6.2
R&D economy	As share of GDP	2.68
Media economy	As share of GDP	0.2
Geopolitical position	Hard power	70 th
	Sharp power	19 th
	Soft power	18 th
	Diplomacy rank	26 th

OVERVIEW OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY 2019

Number of countries present	24
Number of institutions abroad	31 (incl. schools & universities)
FTE staff	> 6,000 (incl. teachers)
Freelance and local staff	-
Financial scale	> € 22 million
Government support	> € 12.5 million
Comparative ECP ranking	medium

Main Objectives

Flanders:

- Support Flemish creative industries.
- Strengthen Flemish visibility and reputation.
- Use culture as vehicle of values.
- Using culture as “positive soft power”.

Wallonia-Brussels:

- Increase the visibility of W-B.
- Promoting the French language.

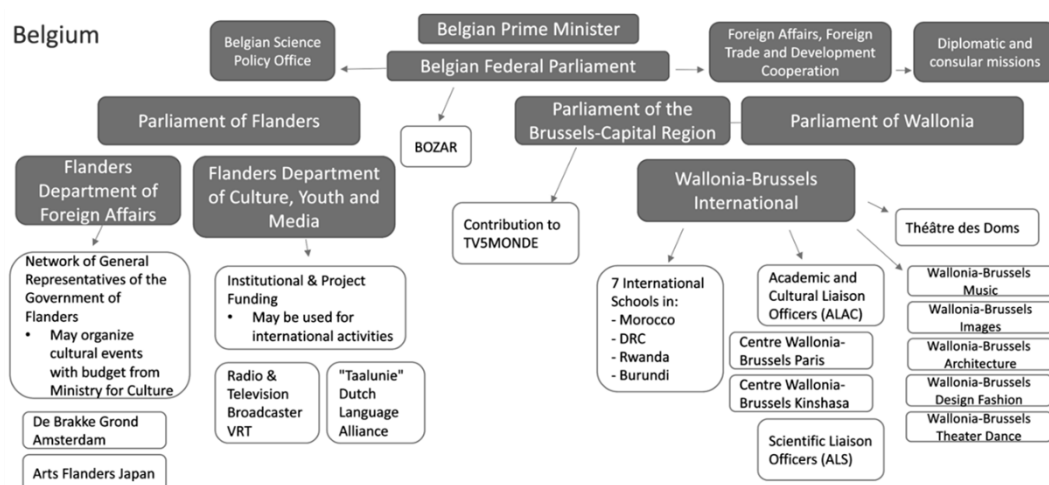
Policy Context

- The communities foster close ties with their linguistic counterparts, (primarily Netherlands and France).

Regional focus

- Sub-S. Africa: 6
- South-East Asia: 0
- East Asia: 4
- Europe: 14
- Middle East/NA: 2
- North America: 2
- South America: 3

INSITUTIONAL MAP



In the field of culture, education and trade, the Belgian regions (Flanders and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation) possess competence and engage in bilateral and multilateral activities individually. Although some cultural partnerships are also coordinated at the federal level through the Belgian embassies, Wallonia-Brussels is primarily represented through Wallonie-Bruxelles International and Flanders via the Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the relevant domestic agencies.

FIELDS OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY

	2019	2015	Comment
Culture and the Arts			
Number of cooperation agreements	52 countries	-	Cumulative number of countries with which Belgium, W-B

	2019	2015	Comment
			or Flanders have entered a bilateral cultural agreement.
Number of countries present	Total: 14	Total: 4	Cumulative number including W-B and Flanders' institutions and liaison offices.
Number of institutes	5	5	Cumulative number including W-B and Flanders' brick-and-mortar institutions.
Staff	-	-	
Artists in exchange programmes	W-B: 612	W-B: 566	Artists/groups supported through exchange programs or mobility schemes in Wallonia-Brussels International's sub-agencies.
Budget € million	W-B: 7.4 BOZAR: 4.2	W-B: 5,7	Consolidated numbers for the Belgian national government and Flanders currently unavailable.
Government support	W-B: 7.4	W-B: 5,7	See above.
Language			
Number of countries courses offered	40, incl. 14 with teacher platforms	-	Data refers to Dutch language instruction, primarily through the "Taalunie".
Number of students enrolled	> 400,000*	-	*In neighboring countries alone
Government financial support € million	Flanders: 3.7	Flanders: 3.3	Data refers to Flanders' contribution to the "Taalunie".
Education – Primary & Secondary			
Number of countries present	W-B: 4	W-B: 4	Numbers reflect Wallonia-Brussels network of international primary and secondary schools "AEBE".
Number of schools	W-B: 6	W-B: 5	
Number of students	W-B: 3.362 (2017)	-	
Number of staff / teachers	W-B: 240 (2017)	-	
Government financial support € million	-	-	
Education – Tertiary			
Number of universities / colleges	One transnational university, one campus abroad	One transnational university, one campus abroad	Transnational university Limburg in cooperation with neighbouring Netherlands.
Number of students	-	-	
Number of government scholarships	-	-	
Budget €	W-B: 277.372,34	WBI: 4.03 million	2015 data refer to research & higher education combined

	2019	2015	Comment
Science and Research			
Institutes abroad	W-B: 6 Belgium: 1	Belgium: 1	W-B institutes refer to the network of scientific officers
Number of projects	W-B: 66 FWO: 87 (2020)	-	FWO refers to Flanders' Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek.
Government financial support	W-B: 319,541€ Belgium: > € 500,000	-	Refers to support for the scientific officers
Media			
TV			
Weekly television audience in million	TV5Monde: 59	-	Wallonia-Brussels is part of the TV5Monde group.
Number of channels	11 (BVN: 1, TV5Monde: 10)	TV5Monde: 11	
Weekly radio audience in million	-	-	
Total weekly TV and radio audience for all services and languages in million	> 59 million	-	Number only reflects TV5Monde, not the Flemish alternative "BVN".
Number of languages broadcast	2 (Dutch, French; 13 subtitled)		Subtitled languages refer to TV5Monde's televised programmes.
Budget in € million	-	-	
Government support in € million	VRT/BVN: € 266,324,000	-	

CURRENT ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

- ECP efforts originating in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation have gained in professionalization in recent years, with stronger formalization of actors available abroad.
- Flanders' current Minister-President is in charge of Foreign Affairs as well as Culture, Education and Youth. He has listed the internationalization of culture as a priority for his term (2019-2024). In line with his nationalist party's ideology, this trend indicates closer collaboration with the Netherlands.
- Current domestic politics in Belgium show a drifting apart of the two regions and their domestic, as well as external policy approaches and ideologies. Although a governing coalition of Belgium was found, the 16 months of negotiations indicate a country with severe political cleavages. This makes the assessment of a "Belgian" approach more and more nonsensical.

FURTHER INFORMATION, SOURCES, AND REFERENCES

- A user-friendly summary of with additional data and data sources is here: "*Belgium – External Cultural Policy: Data Fact Sheet*"
- A full set of references are presented here "*Belgium – External Cultural Policy: References*"
- A fuller report with a descriptive analysis is found here: "*Belgium – External Cultural Policy: A Report*"

Imprint

The External Cultural Policy Monitor

Developed by Helmut K Anheier, Hertie School & UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, and ifa Competence Centre. Supervised by Helmut K Anheier. Coordinated by Sarah Widmaier for ifa.

This paper is a summary of the respective Country Report.

Preferred citation

Winkler, Katrin (10/2021). "Belgium. At a Glance," in: Helmut K. Anheier and ifa (eds.). The External Cultural Policy Monitor. Stuttgart: ifa.

The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the ifa.

Publisher:

ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen):

Charlottenplatz 17,

70173 Stuttgart,

Postfach 10 24 63,

D-70020 Stuttgart

www.ifa.de

© ifa 2021

Author: Katrin Winkler

Copy-editing by:

ifa's Research Programme "Culture and Foreign Policy"

Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17901/ecp.2021.001>