REPORT ON REFERENCING

THE

FRENCH-SPEAKING QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

TO THE

EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

COCOF

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Developing a qualifications framework is a process that reflects the institutional and social realities of the entities in which it applies.

It is for this reason that, prior to examining the ten criteria[i] of the EQF-AG, the chapters[2][3] 2 and 3 deal with the institutional context in Belgium and, in particular, that of the French-speaking federated entities and the educational and vocational training structures within those entities.

Chapter 4[1] then describes the process for developing the French-speaking qualifications framework for lifelong learning.

Aspects relating to learning outcomes, credits, the recognition of non-formal and informal prior learning and quality assurance are primarily developed according to the corresponding criteria of the EQF-AG (criteria 3[5.3] and 5[5.5]). All of the criteria are examined in Chapter 5[5].

In this report, some information is covered on more than one occasion and references, giving the numbering of the text concerned in brackets, provide links between the various sections of the document.

References in Arabic numerals (in superscript and without brackets) refer to details given in footnotes. References in Roman numerals relate to the references given at the end of the document [8]. Finally, a list of designations, abbreviations and acronyms is given in Point 7[7].

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Belgium is a federal state[2]. Education and vocational training are a quasi-exclusive competence of the three linguistic communities: the Flemish Community, the French Community and the German-speaking Community. This explains the developments of three qualifications frameworks.

The situation in the French-speaking Belgium[2.4] is even more complex than in the other two communities: education is still governed by the French Community (or Federation Wallonia-Brussels) while competences in vocational training were transfred to Wallonia and, for the French-speakers in Brussels, to the COCOF[1].

Therefore, it's three executive bodies that have initiated the implementation of the French-speaking qualifications framework for lifelong learning (CFC). They mandated a working group[4.2] to prepare the development of the qualifications framework. This group, so-called Experts Group, is composed of representatives from all levels of education as well as regional bodies for vocational training.

Those members come from a highly diversified education and training landscape in the French-speaking Belgium[3]. Education is traditionnaly structured and organised by very precise legal provisions. Vocational training is close to the world of work, thus linked to employment public services and made up public bodies under management contract with their competent authorities. Their missions are different too. In addition to professional development, education focuses on the individual, cultural and social development as citizen. Vocational training focuses mainly on the access to employment, maintenance in the labour market and the professional specialisation.

Those distinctive approaches and managment schemes can also be observed in the qualifications. In education, the awarded certificates, diplomas and degrees have generally legally-binding effects. In vocational training, acquired competences are certified after assessment. Those qualifications are not dully included in a predefined structured[2] and have mainly reputation effects.

It is thus two worlds apart that have convened within the working group. Experts had to learn to know each other, to understand the professional realities of each, to appreciate the quality of the work done by the other. This has been achieved progressively, through the contacts and exchanges but also the collaborative work in building the framework.

Two main results have thus been achieved: mutual trust has been established between education and training providers and solid blocks have been built for the implementation of the CFC [4.3].

This rapprochement between providers during the development of the CFC happened simultaneously and contributed to a transformation movement in education and vocational training. All providers are now fully engaged in the learning outcomes approach[5.3.1], which remains essential to the implementation of the framework. Inter-operators structures were set up. The Skills Validation Consortium[3.7] (CDVC), which groups adult education and vocational training, organises the validation of professional competences, according to common standards and leading to recognised credentials by all partners. The French-speaking service for occupations and qualifications[3.8] (SFMQ) develops common references based on the ECVET model for qualifying secondary education, adult education and vocational training.

The CFC is the result of a bottom-up process, led by the stakeholders while respecting the initial mandate given by the governments. On-going developments have been constantly submitted to the governments that have made clearer some specific items or defined further orientations during the process.

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[1] The list of designations, abbreviations and acronyms can be found in chapter 7.

[2] Excluding the apprenticeship certificates and business leadership diplomas awarded in the training and of the self-employed and SMEs [3.6]

This report is based on the results achieved by the experts groups; those results having been summarized in a note in November 2013 and approved by the governements. The governments will specify the competences, the composition and the operations of the authority responsible for steering and positioning the qualifications[4.3.6]. They are thus preparing a legislative text that will formalise the framework by early 2014.

Formally, no qualification can be positionned in the framework until the legal text is adopted. However, a large number of qualifications (the majority of education qualifications[3] and qualifications linked to the SFMQ references) will be immidiatly positioned "by block"[5.4.4], as soon as the framework is legally established. For the other qualifications, the work positioning them "qualification by qualification" [5.4.3] has already started. The criteria, procedures as well as request from for the proposal positioning are elaborated and detailed enough, so that providers will be able to propose the positioning of their qualifications as soon as the framework is effectively established.

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[3] All qualifications of compulsory education and all higher education qualifications, excluding qualifications of conintuing training..

2. THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT IN BELGIUM AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

2.1. The federal structure in Belgium

In 1970, a first revision of the Constitution[ii] led to the creation of the three Cultural Communities. This marked the start of the process of State reform.

As their name suggests, the birth of the three cultural Communities was the sign of a certain degree of autonomy in terms of culture. Their powers remained extremely limited, however.

The 1970 revision also provided for the creation of three Regions, each assigned a territory and intended to act primarily in the economic field.

The second State reform took place in 1980. The Cultural Communities were converted into **Communities** in the proper sense of the term since their powers were no longer restricted to the administration of culture, but also to other areas directly affecting their populations.

As a consequence of the extension of their competence into these new areas, the Communities lost their epithet "cultural" and from 1980 onwards were known as: the Flemish Community, the French Community and the German-speaking Community. Each of these Communities was endowed with a Council (a parliament) and an Executive (a government).

The 1980 reform also saw the creation of two **Regions**: the Flemish Region and the Walloon Region. These each had a Council and a Government.

It should be noted that in Flanders, the Government and the Council of the Flemish Region "merged" at the outset with the Government and Council of the Flemish Community[4]. In practice, therefore, there is just one Government and one Council in Flanders.

The French-speaking Community maintained the separation between the bodies of the French Community and those of the Walloon Region[5] because there are many more French-speakers in Brussels compared with French-speaking Walloons than there are Dutch speakers in Brussels compared with Dutch speakers in Flanders.

In 1988-1989, the Region of Brussels-Capital in particular emerged from the third State reform. Like the other two Regions, it boasts its own institutions and, more precisely, a Council - now called the Parliament - and a Government.

In 1988-1989, the third State reform also broadened the powers of the Communities and further bolstered the Regions. In particular, **the Communities acquired responsibility for education**, while the

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[4] Constitutionally, the two assemblies are still distinct but in practice the Assembly of the Flemish Region, made up of the 118 Flemish Regional Deputies, sits with the six Dutch-speaking Brussels Region deputies and together they constitute the Assembly of the Flemish Community. The six Brussels parliamentarians only take part in voting on decrees falling within the competence of the Community.
The two "merged" assemblies jointly adopted the single title "Vlaams Parlement", and this appoints a single President, a single Bureau and a single Extended Bureau.
Similarly, the sole Flemish Government manages both regional and community matters; the Brussels minister(s) only take part in decisions affecting the Community.
[5] The parliament of the French Community is made up of 75 Walloon regional deputies and a proportion (19/72) of the French-speaking Brussels deputies. The two institutions and the community and Walloon governments are distinct and each has its own Seat, Presidency and Bureau, etc. The parliament and government of the French Community are established in Brussels and those of the Walloon Region in Namur.

Regions were assigned, among other things, public works, transport and significant powers over employment matters. **Regional public employment services were set up** in 1989.

1993 saw the fourth State reform, the last phase of the process started in 1970. The Belgian State became a fully-fledged Federal State in which the Communities and Regions, established under the earlier reforms, received their full powers.

From that point onwards, Belgian federalism became a legal reality formally recognised as such.

Since then, Belgium has been a **federal State comprising three Regions**, Flanders, Wallonia and the Brussels-Capital Region **and three Communities**, Dutch-, French- and German-speaking.

The Flemish Community incorporates the inhabitants of Flanders and the Dutch-speaking inhabitants of the bilingual Brussels-Capital Region. The French Community incorporates the inhabitants of the French-speaking area of Wallonia and the French-speaking inhabitants of the Brussels-Capital Region. The German-speaking Community incorporates the inhabitants of the German-speaking area of Wallonia.
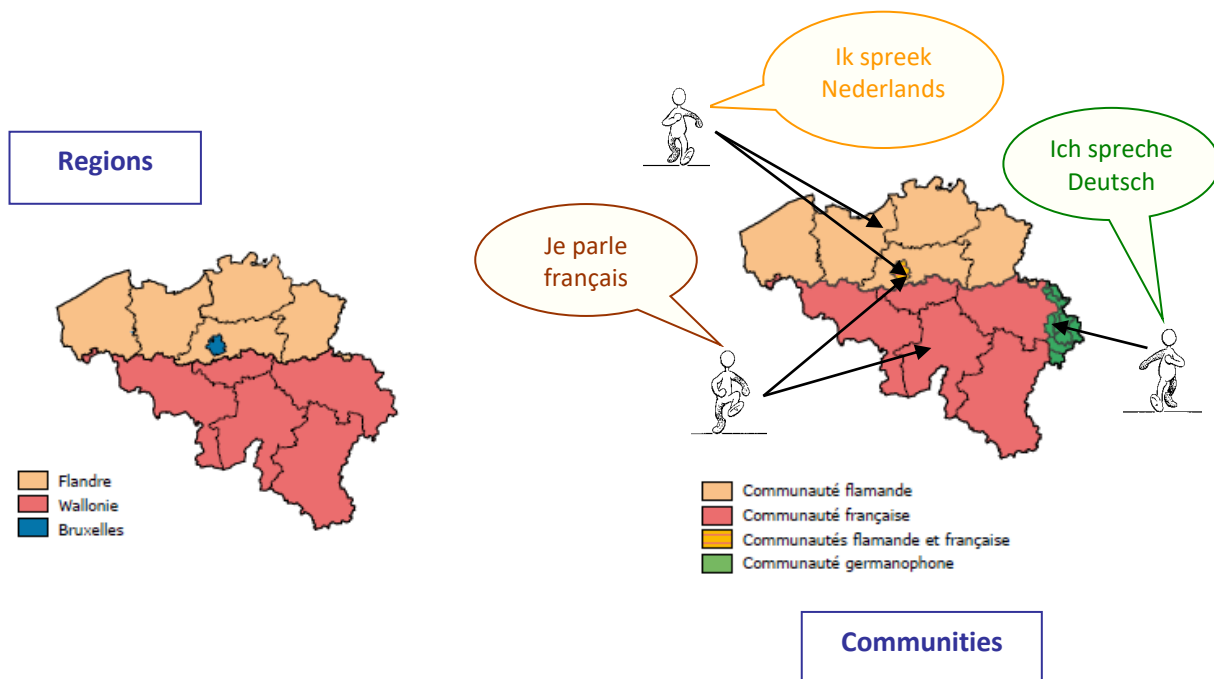
A fifth State reform in 2001 transferred new powers to the federated entities and an ongoing sixth reform is continuing this process.

2.2. Consequences for education and vocational training

Since 1989 education has been an area of competence almost exclusively governed at Community level. Each community is responsible for financing and organising its educational system. Therefore, the definition of programmes and reference systems as well as the certification process are the sole responsibility of the communities.

Originally, continuing vocational training for workers and jobseekers was delivered by the ONEM (National Employment Office), a body that also provided the public employment service. In 1989, many of the powers relating to employment were transferred to the Regions, and this led to the creation of the VDAB (Vlaamse Dienst voor Beroepsopleiding en Arbeidsbemiddeling) public employment service in Flanders, the FOREM (Office de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi) Community and Regional

agency for employment and vocational training in Wallonia and the ORBEM (Office Régional Bruxellois de l'Emploi) public employment service (now ACTIRIS) in the Brussels-Capital Region. However, vocational training is an issue linked to individuals and therefore falls under the auspices of the Communities. The VDAB is therefore the public employment service for Flanders and the public vocational training operator for the Flemish Community. Likewise, the FOREM[iii] [3.5.1] was initially the public employment service for Wallonia and the public vocational training operator for the French Community. Subsequently, the powers relating to vocational training in French-speaking areas of Belgium were transferred from the French Community to Wallonia for the French language area (the French-speaking part of the Walloon Region) and to the French Community Commission of the Brussels-Capital Region for the French-speaking inhabitants of Brussels (COCOF). This led, in 1994, to the creation of Bruxelles Formation[iv] [3.5.2], an institution with competence for vocational training for the French-speaking inhabitants of the Brussels-Capital Region. In addition, employment powers were transferred by Wallonia to the German-speaking Community, which in turn led to the establishment in 2000 of the *Arbeitsamtes der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft* (ADG)[v], with competence for employment and vocational training in the German-speaking territory of the Walloon Region.

The result of these institutional changes is as follows:

- the bodies having competence with regard to employment are

  - the VDAB in Flanders
  - the FOREM for the French-speaking part of Wallonia
  - ACTIRIS for the bilingual Brussels-Capital Region
  - ADG for the German-speaking part of Wallonia

- the bodies having competence with regard to continuing vocational training are

  - the VDAB for Flanders and the Dutch-speaking inhabitants of the Brussels-Capital Region
  - the FOREM[3.5.1] for the French-speaking part of Wallonia
  - Bruxelles Formation[3.5.2] for the French-speaking inhabitants of the Brussels-Capital Region
  - ADG for the German-speaking part of Wallonia

Training for small and medium sized enterprises, originally the responsibility of the Ministry of Small Enterprises and Traders, has also changed under the State reforms.

It was initially Community-based, leading to

- the SYNTRA agency for entrepreneurial training, for the Flemish Community

- the IFPME training institute for SMEs, for the French Community

- the AIWM, for the German-speaking Community.

The IFPME was later split into two separate institutions,

- the IFAPME[3.6.1] for the Walloon Region (French-speaking area) and

- the SFPME [3.6.2], under the umbrella of the COCOF, for the French-speaking inhabitants of the Brussels-Capital Region.

2.3. Why three qualifications frameworks?

The institutional changes in Belgium conferred powers over education and vocational training to the Communities, since these are issues linked to individuals, although certain powers held by the French Community were later transferred to the competent Regional authorities.

Given the autonomy of the federated entities in the field of education and vocational training, the initiative in this regard falls to them.

Furthermore, a qualifications framework must reflect the reality of the qualifications system in line with the cultural and socio-economic aspects of the entity to which it applies. For Flanders and for the German-speaking Community, the institutions with competence for education, vocational training and employment fall under the auspices of the same political authorities. The situation is more complex for French-speaking Belgium, as will become clear below.

The federal structure of the Belgian State has resulted in three distinct political authorities with competence for qualifications in French-speaking Belgium, linked either to the Communities or to the Communities and the Regions.

This justifies the establishment of three distinct frameworks reflecting the realities specific to each Community, seeking points of convergence between them.

2.4. The particular case of French-speaking Belgium

Three distinct political authorities are involved in the establishment of the French-speaking qualifications framework:

- The French Community or "**Federation Wallonia-Brussels**" (FWB)[6], having competence for education;

- The Walloon Region or "**Wallonia**"[7], having competence for continuing vocational training for workers and jobseekers and for training for small and medium sized enterprises for the French-speaking part of the Region;

- The French Community Commission (**COCOF**) which has the same powers with regard to training as Wallonia for the French-speaking inhabitants of Brussels.

Three executive bodies

- the government of the FWB
- the government of Wallonia
- the College of the COCOF

that have power of action in implementing the French-speaking qualifications framework.

The process of legalising the French-speaking framework requires a cooperation agreement.

A common legislative text for the three political competent authorities, drafted by the three executive bodies, will have to be adopted by all three legislative assemblies.

The three executive bodies are preparing this cooperation agreement to be adopted by early 2014, based on the governements' agreement reached in November 2013.

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[6] In May 2011, the Parliament of the French Community passed a resolution introducing the name "Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles" for all its communications and campaigns and administrative affairs. The new name is not referred to in the Belgian Constitution; it is used as an alternative name for the Community and is not used in official texts published in the Belgian Official Gazette (the Moniteur Belge).

[7] In October 2011, the Walloon Parliament passed a resolution inviting the use of the term "Wallonia" instead of the Walloon Region, except for official texts.

Parliament of the FWB
Parliament[8]

Walloon Parliament

Brussels French-speaking

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[8] Officially the Parliament of the French-speaking Community, Parliament of the Walloon Region and Assembly of the French Community Commission of the Brussels-Capital Region.

3. EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN FRENCH-SPEAKING BELGIUM

3.1. Overall scheme
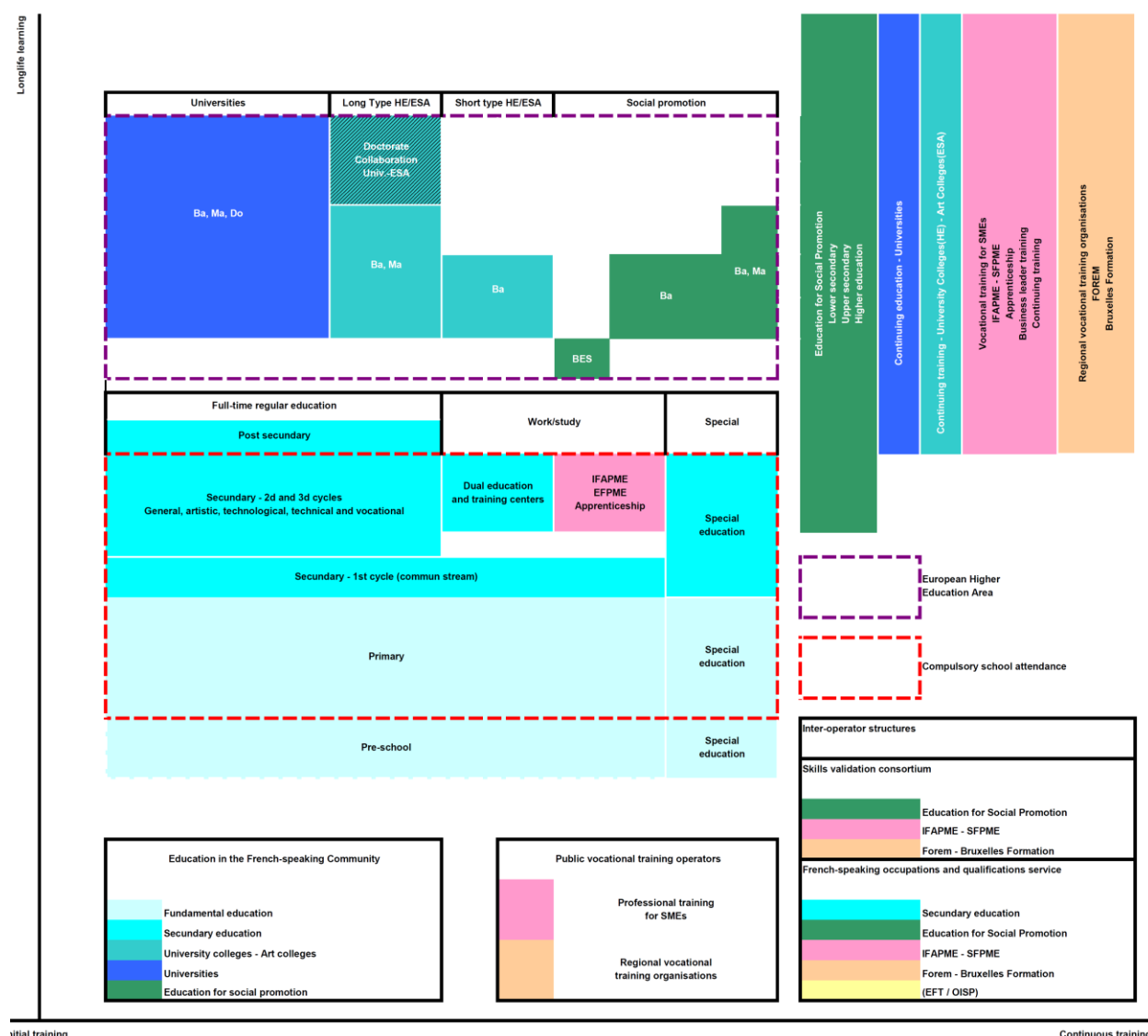
The scheme[vi] is limited to education and training providers identified by the governments to develop the French-speaking qualifications framework; that is, education that is organised and funded by the FWB and regional public vocational training providers.

At the time of writing this report, this is a snapshot reflecting a developing and changing situation, as explained below.

The scheme is founded on a perspective of lifelong learning, covering initial pre-school education to higher education as well as continuing training delivered by the education and vocational training systems.

In a structured way, we can find on the left-hand side the organisation of education from pre-school education to higher education[9]. A detailed description of those structures is explained later in the report. The right-hand side covers the vocational training sector, which is less structured to some extent and offers training programmes to adults for their insertion, maintenance and progression in the labour market.

The education for social promotion has a key role in this scheme. It offers equivalent or specific secondary education programmes, equivalent or specific higher education programmes as well as programmes quite similar to those of vocational training.

The higher education awards not only qualifications sanctioned by degrees, but also continuing training or specialisation programmes, thus contributing to the lifelong learning dynamic.

Additionally to continuing training and training for the creation of businesses, training for self-employed delivers apprenticeship and business leadership qualifications. It covers part-time compulsory education for apprentices aged 15-18.

Vocational training offered by regional public bodies, targets adults, jobseekers and workers.

The dotted-line box in red refers to programmes in compulsory education; the dotted-line box in purple refers to programmes fully integrated within the EHEA.

Bottom boxes list all providers, considering the features of the competent authorities (FWB or Regions).

It also indicates the existence of inter-provider structures which fall within the remit of both the FWB and the Regions: the skills validation consortium (CVDC)[3.7] and the French-speaking service for occupations and qualifications (SFMQ)[3.8] which groups qualifying secondary education, education for social promotion and vocational training providers. Those inter-provider structures play a crucial role in bringing closer education and training providers in this highly diversified landscape of the French-speaking Belgium.

3.2. Fundemental and secondary education[vii]

3.2.1. Regular education

Fundemental (pre-school and primary) and secondary education covers the majority of compulsory school attendance (from the academic year in which the child reaches six years of age up to the academic year in which the young person reaches 18 years of age) but exceeds this at either end, as shown by the enrolment rates[viii]:

1.1 Taux brut de scolarisation par niveau dans l'enseignement en Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles en 2010-2011
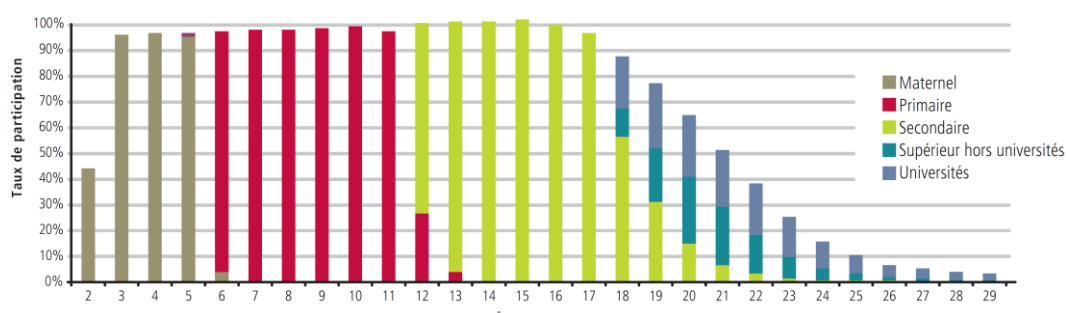
Although not compulsory, the level of pre-school attendance is very high. This educational provision is open to children from the age of two and a half years old.

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[9] The fully detailed scheme is provided later in this report.

Furthermore, young people over the age of 18 who are behind in their educational attainment continue to attend secondary school even though this is no longer compulsory for them.

In 2010-2011, nursery education catered for 177,488 pupils. There were 307,637 pupils in primary education and 334,973 in secondary education[viii].

The missions[ix] of basic and secondary education in the FWB are to pursue the following objectives simultaneously, in no particular order of priority:

- to promote the self-confidence and personal development of each individual pupil;

- to motivate pupils to acquire the knowledge and skills that will render them capable of learning throughout their lives and to take an active place in economic, social and cultural life;

- to prepare all pupils to be responsible citizens, capable of contributing to the development of a society that is democratic, inclusive, pluralist and open to other cultures;

- to provide all pupils with equal opportunities for social emancipation.

This wide range of objectives is set for all pupils within the Federation Wallonia-Brussels. They therefore extend beyond the mere certification of pupils' achievements; indeed, to this is added the development of the citizenship of the individual and the acquisition of skills in the broad sense of the term. These objectives are pursued through general education, whether or not it is of value for a future occupation, and also through the determination to offer equal opportunities to all children within the Federation Wallonia-Brussels.

The structure[viii] of fundemental and secondary regular education has a **common core curriculum** up to the end of the first cycle of secondary school (reached at the theoretical age of 14) and attested by the CE1D (certificate of completion of the first cycle) which evidences the acquisition of required **foundation skills** at 14 years of age, as provided for by the "Mission" Decree[ix], and which allows the continuation of studies in all streams. At the end of primary school, all pupils having obtained the CEB (certificate of basic studies) are enrolled in the first two common years of the the first cycle (1C and 2C). The first and second differentiated years (1D and 2D) are for pupils who have not achieved the required foundation skills at 12 years of age (attested by the CEB, certificate of basic studies) by the end of primary education; these provide for a repeat of the core curriculum years or access to the second cycle with possible restrictions in pathways. In the first cycle, in 2010-2011, there were 106,530 pupils in 1C-2C and 8,310 in 1D-2D.

Education is then sub-divided into transition streams (the purpose of which is to prepare for higher education) and qualification streams (the purpose of which is to qualify for a trade whilst gaining a general education in accordance with the missions of education).

Transition education is sub-divided into general, technical and arts education. Qualification education includes technical, arts and vocational education.

Secondary studies are attested by the CESS (certificate of upper secondary education), which opens access to higher education for all streams except for the vocational stream[10], or by qualification certificates (vocationally oriented) gained at the end of the 6th or 7th study years (CQ6 and CQ7). In the second and third cycles, numbers in the transition section (117,187 pupils) exceeded numbers in the qualification section (102,876 pupils).

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[10] A CESS allowing access to short type higher education may nevertheless be gained at the end of a 7th vocational year, organised with this intention.

L'ENSEIGNEMENT FONDAMENTAL ET SECONDAIRE
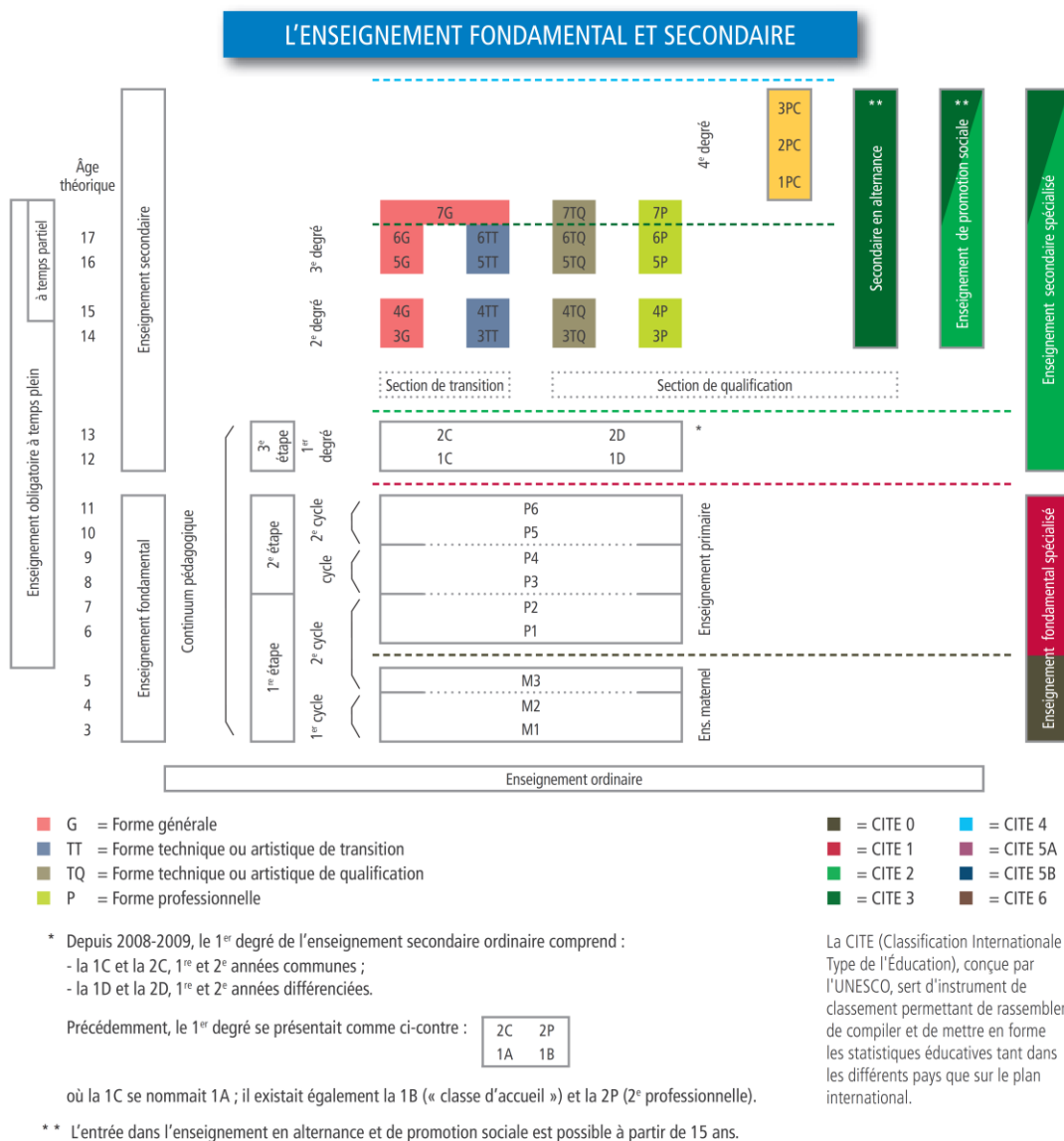
Structure[viii] of fundamental and secondary regular education

Since 2012-2013, the third cycle of qualifying education has undergone a significant reform: certification by units (CPU)[5.3.2.3]x. Training profiles are broken down into learning outcome units (based on the ECVET[xi] principles) and within the SFMQ [3.8] development framework, common to qualifying education, social promotion education and vocational training. The aim is to increase the motivation of young people by recognising achievements on an ongoing basis and to promote individualised pathways as well as possibilities for remedial study. By making training profiles common across different providers, this should enable pupils who leave school early to continue their learning by recognising their achievements, albeit partial. CPU is currently being trialled in all establishments organising training for the trades of automotive mechanic, automotive technician and beautician.

The fourth cycle concerns only the training of registered nurses, involving 5,575 students.

From the age of 15, a young person can continue his or her training through a work/study programme, either in an educational establishment - in CEFAs (dual education and training centres) - or with the IFAPME or SFPME, who are thus involved in compulsory education. CEFA training programmes lead either to qualification certificates identical to those in the qualifying pathways in full-time education, or to specific qualifications. The IFAPME and SFPME issue learning certificates accredited by the FWB.

Some will be recognised as equivalent to qualification certificates in education. In 2010-2011, work/study programmes involved 8,482 young people[viii] in CEFAs, 5,323[xii] with the IFAPME and 999 with the SFPME.

Education for social promotion can also be followed from the age of 15, but in addition to full-time attendance of at least second-cycle education. It is not part of compulsory school attendance.

3.2.2. Special education[xiii]

Special education[xiv] is organised on the basis of the nature and extent of educational needs and the psychoeducational abilities of pupils. It develops their intellectual, psychomotor, emotional and social abilities whilst at the same time preparing them, as appropriate, for:

- integration into a suitable living or working environment;
- the exercise of trades or occupations compatible with their disabilities and which make possible their integration into ordinary living and working environments;
- continued studies up to the end of higher secondary education, whilst offering opportunities for an active life.

There are eight types of special education, according to pupils' difficulties (see diagram below[viii]).

Special education is composed by

- fundemental education (full-time or home-based pre-school education and primary education) which prepares for secondary education; it is attested by skills assessments and, where appropriate, by the CEB (certificate of basic studies);
- secondary education, full-time, home-based or home/school based, which can take four forms
  - Form 1: "Social adaptation", organised in education types 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; it aims at integration into a suitable living environment and the development of sensory-motor skills, independence, communication and socialisation; it does not lead to a qualification and is recognised by an attendance certificate;
  - Form 2: "Social and occupational adaptation", organised in education types 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; it aims at general, social and vocational training and integration into a suitable living and working environment; it is recognised by an attendance certificate with skills acquired and, in some cases, the CEB;
  - Form 3: "Special secondary vocational education", organised in education types 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; it aims at general, social and vocational training to make integration into an ordinary living and working environment possible; it is recognised by a Qualification Certificate in a trade and, in some cases, the CEB or CE2D (Certification of second cycle secondary studies);
  - Form 4: "General, technical, arts and vocational education, transition or qualification", organised with an adapted supervision, appropriate methodologies and specific tools, according to the same programmes, the same timetables and the same conditions for admission into the years of study and the same structures as mainstream education; it leads to the same certificates as mainstream education and, for the trades concerned, also involves certification by units (CPU).

In 2010-2011, special education catered for 1,291 children in nursery school (0.7% of nursery-age children), 16,595 children in primary school (5.1% of primary-age children) and 15,934 pupils in secondary school (4.4% of secondary-age children).

One of the main characteristics of special education is the adaptation of pathways to the specific needs of pupils. An individual support plan is put in place, assessed and monitored in collaboration with the educational team and the specialist psycho-medico-social centres.

L'ENSEIGNEMENT SPÉCIALISÉ

Type d'enseignement	Niveau maternel	Niveau primaire	Niveau secondaire	s'adressent aux élèves atteints
1	non	oui	oui	« retard mental léger »
2	oui	oui	oui	« retard mental modéré ou sévère »
3	oui	oui	oui	« de troubles du comportement et/ou de la personnalité »
4	oui	oui	oui	« de déficience physique »
5	oui	oui	oui	« de maladies ou convalescents »
6	oui	oui	oui	« de déficiences visuelles »
7	oui	oui	oui	« de déficiences auditives »
8	non	oui	non	« de troubles des apprentissages »

L'enseignement fondamental spécialisé est organisé en quatre degrés de maturité (pour l'enseignement de type 2, les degrés de maturité diffèrent)	- maturité I :	niveaux d'acquisition de l'autonomie et de la socialisation
	- maturité II :	niveaux d'apprentissages préscolaires
	- maturité III :	éveil des premiers apprentissages scolaires (initiation)
	- maturité IV :	approfondissements

L'enseignement secondaire spécialisé est organisé en quatre formes, prenant en compte le projet personnel de l'élève	- la forme 1 :	enseignement d'adaptation sociale	CITE 2
	- la forme 2 :	enseignement d'adaptation sociale et professionnelle	CITE 2
	- la forme 3 :	enseignement professionnel	CITE 2 CITE 3
	- la forme 4 :	enseignement général, technique, artistique ou professionnel	CITE 2 CITE 3

Structure[viii] of special education

3.3. Higher education[xv]

Higher education comprises

- university education;
- higher education in Hautes Ecoles (university colleges);
- higher education in the arts;
- higher education for social promotion.

The main missions of higher education were redefined in March 2004[xvi]. They are:

- to deliver high level education and training
- to develop scientific research (basic and applied)
- to provide services to society
- to transmit creative and innovative traditions and values
- to develop the autonomy, responsibility and personal growth of students
- to ensure international openness
- to contribute to lifelong learning.

Its recent development has been marked by the Bologna Process, whose main action lines it has adopted:

- a system of clear and comparable degrees: in the academic year 2004-2005[xvi], the Federation Wallonia-Brussels launched a process leading to the award of Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees;

- a structure in three cycles: Bachelor's – Master's - Doctorate: higher education is structured into three cycles, each allocated a defined number of ECTS credits[xvii] and upon completion of which a degree is awarded;

- the issuance of a Diploma Supplement: each higher education establishment issues a Diploma Supplement which sets out, in particular, the courses followed and the results obtained;

- mobility of students and academic staff: mobility in higher education is a priority; a range of measures encourages this, including joints degrees, agreements between establishments, research grants and a special student mobility fund;

- the quality assurance in higher education: the Agency for Assessment and Quality in Higher Education (AEQES)[5.5.1.1], created in 2002, provides independent, external and regular assessment of Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes.
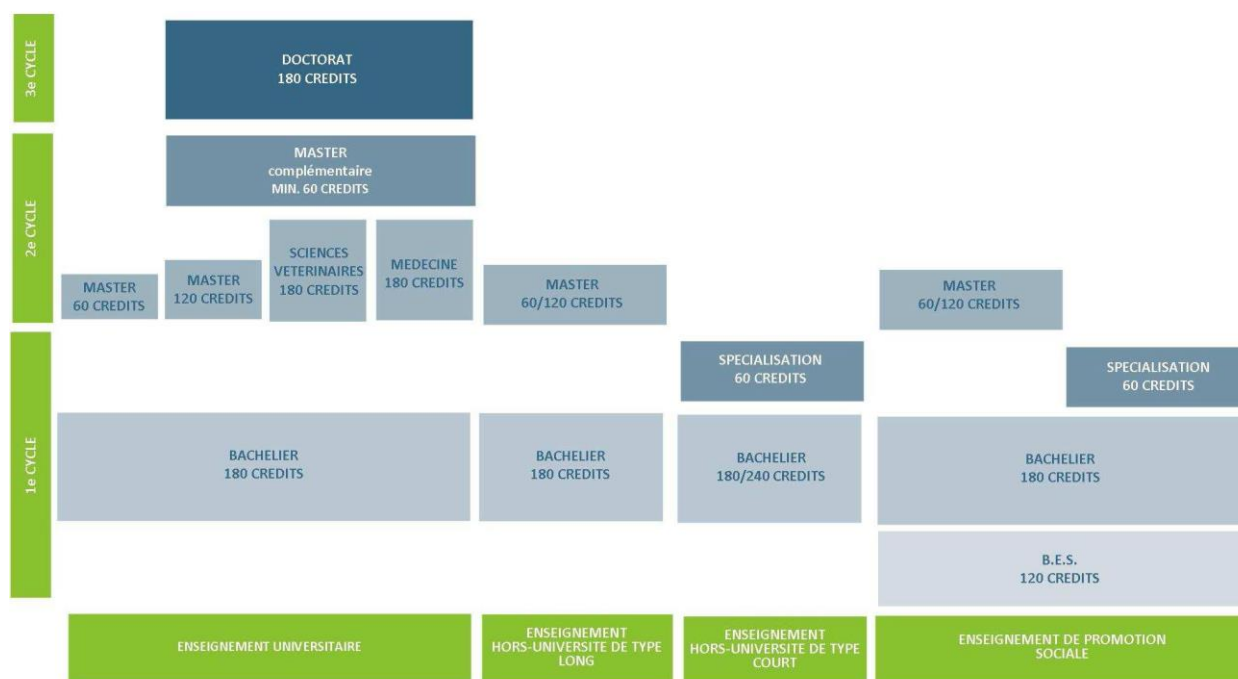
Note: in the table above, the term "non-university education", short type or long type, refers to education in University Colleges or Arts Colleges.

Structure[xv] of higher education

Since 2008, higher education has been formally linked to the EQF by a Decree[xviii] introducing a Higher Education Qualifications Framework for the French Community[11]. The Framework strictly replicates the generic descriptors of the EQF for each of the three higher education levels (levels 6 to 8). Each level is

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[11] This Framework concerns higher education provision organised or subsidised by the French-speaking Community and should not be confused with the French-speaking Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, which forms the subject of this report and which is broader in scope, encompassing all education and the vocational education organised by the Regional public authorities concerned. The relationship between these two frameworks is similar to the relationship between the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area and the European Qualifications Framework.

related to the academic degrees awarded by the higher education institutions of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels.

The higher education for social promotion qualifications [xix] are fully part of the European Higher Education Area and correspond to levels 5 to 7 of the EQF. Level 5 is the equivalent of the BES (Certificate of Higher Education) organised in a short professionalizing cycle as defined by the Bologna Process.

The decrees governing higher education are currently undergoing revision regarding, among other things, the definition of the descriptors by cycle (inspired by the Dublin Descriptors) and measures for the operation of the learning outcomes approach[5.3.1.1]. This revision is being taken forward in line with the construction of the CFC (French-speaking qualifications Framework), and is part of a broad reform of the higher education system and manner in which studies are organised in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels.[12]

The various types of higher education are not compartmentalised: legally defined "bridging procedures" enable students holding a qualification obtained from one type of institution to have their prior studies recognised in other study programmes in the same type of educational provision or in a different type of educational provision. The bridging system applies both to students having undertaken studies within the Federation Wallonia-Brussels and to those students who benefit from full or partial equivalence in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels after undertaking all or some of their studies abroad.

Other types of prior achievement reognition are possible:

- Through individualised admissions, whereby the possibility of granting dispensations to students who have already completed certain years of study is left to the discretion of the admission panels;
- through recognition of personal and professional prior achievements[5.3.3.1]

Finally, higher education is not limited to the academic grades described in the diagram above. It also delivers continuing training, recognised by certificates corresponding to a set of ECTS credits and enabling the award of these credits.

3.3.1. University education

There are currently six universities in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, attended in 2010-11 by 83,977 students.

The missions of the universities are to organise:

- high quality education and training,
- research (basic and applied),
- services to society.

The Bologna reform has been implemented gradually, starting in 2004-2005:

- First cycle studies are of 3 years' duration (180 ECTS credits) and lead to the academic degree of Bachelor, known as the "transition" degree.
- Second cycle studies lead to the academic degree of:
  - o Master after 2 years (120 ECTS credits) or 1 year (60 ECTS credits), as the case may be;
  - o Doctor or veterinary doctor after 3 years (180 ECTS credits).

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[12] The new decree organising the higher education was adopted by the Parliament of the FWB on the 6th of November 2013. It will come into force from the academic year 2014-2015.

The 120 ECTS credit courses are divided into '*finalités'*, or approaches (each consisting of a minimum of 30 specific ECTS credits). Up to three types of approach may be organised:

- o Specialist (professional training)
- o In-depth (research training)
- o Didactic (teacher training, which only exists in courses provided for by legislation).

- The academic degree of Complementary Master offers a specialist professional qualification. This requires at least 60 ECTS credits after first completing training of at least 300 ECTS credits.

- Third cycle studies consist of doctoral training (60 ECTS credits), which leads to the award of a research training certificate, and also work connected with the preparation of a doctoral thesis, which leads to the academic degree of Doctor after defence of the thesis. This work corresponds to at least 180 ECTS credits, 60 of which can be acquired during the doctoral training. In the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, the Scientific Research Fund manages the twenty doctoral schools which include the subject-specific doctoral schools; in theory, these are inter-university, inter-disciplinary and international.

The university courses fall under a field and a sector of study:

Sectors	Fields
Human and social sciences	Philosophy
	Religious sciences and theology
	Languages and literature
	History, art and archaeology
	Information and communication
	Political and social sciences
	Legal sciences
	Economic sciences and management
	Translation and interpretation
	Psychological and educational sciences
	Art and science of art
Health	Medical sciences
	Public health sciences
	Dental science
	Biomedical and pharmaceutical sciences
	Motoricity sciences
Science and technology	Art of building and town planning
	Sciences
	Agronomic sciences and biological engineering
	Engineering

3.3.2. Higher Education in the Hautes Ecoles (University Colleges)

In the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, the Hautes Ecoles are historically providers of short type or long type qualifying higher education. The landscape of the Hautes Ecoles has changed significantly over the last 20 years. Higher education in the Hautes Ecoles was reorganised in 1995, when the number of institutions was reduced from 110 to 30. Other amalgamations were started in 2007. There are currently 20 Hautes Ecoles in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels attended by 79,071 students in 2010-2011.

Today, the Hautes Ecoles organise two higher education alternatives.

Short type higher education consists of a single cycle recognised by the academic degree of Bachelor, known as "professionalising" (180 to 240 ECTS credits). Training is both practical and theoretical.

Some Hautes Ecoles also organise a year of specialisation upon completion of the first cycle (60 ECTS credits).

Long type higher education consists of two cycles: a transition Bachelor cycle (180 ECTS credits) followed by a professionalising Master cycle (60 or 120 ECTS credits).

In the FWB there is only one bachelor grade incorporating both "professionalising" Bachelor degrees, giving access to practice of a profession, and "transition" Bachelor degrees which prepare for the Master's degree.

Studies in Hautes Ecoles are classified into eight categories:

Categories	Short type	Long type
Agronomic	.	.
Applied arts	.	
Economical	.	.
Paramedical	.	.
Pedagogical	.	
Social	.	.
Technical	.	.
Translation and interpretation		.

3.3.3. Higher education in the Arts

Higher education in the Arts was completely reformed by Decrees handed down in 1999[xx] and 2001[xxi]. Since then, the Arts Colleges (ESAs) delivering higher education in the Arts have been subject to the same organisation of studies.

There are currently 16[13] Arts Colleges in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, attended in 2010-2011 by 6,913 students.

In addition to the general missions set for higher education in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, higher education in the Arts has also been assigned specific creativity and research missions. These primarily recognise the fact that the arts and art education are inseparable and are also:

- to develop a multi-disciplinary space for research and creativity;
- to envision the arts as social agents;
- to promote critical and reflective thinking;
- to build creative autonomy and uniqueness;
- to enhance the international dimension of education in the Arts.

The ESAs organise long or short type higher education.

Short type education is organised in a single cycle of 180 ECTS credits and is accredited by the award of the academic degree of Bachelor, called the "professionalising" Bachelor.

Long type education is organised into two cycles: a "transition" Bachelor[14] cycle (180 ECTS credits), followed by a Master cycle of 60 or 120 ECTS credits. The 120 ECTS credit Master's degrees must be organised according to one of the following three approaches: specialist, didactic (which includes teacher training) or in-depth (which prepares for research). The organisation of an in-depth Master's degree assumes that a collaboration agreement is concluded with one or more universities.

Upon completion of initial courses worth at least 300 ECTS credits, studies worth at least 60 ECTS credits acquired in one year can lead to the award of the specialist Master's Art Degree. At present, no ESA is in practice organising this specialist Master of Arts degree.

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[13] When theses statistics were drawn up, there were still 17 ESAs, as the merger of the Conservatoire Royale de Mons and the Ecole Supérieure des Arts Plastiques et Visuels of the French-speaking Community in Mons had not yet taken place.

[14] As explained above[0], in the FWB there is only one Bachelor grade incorporating both the "professionalising" Bachelor degrees giving access to the practice of a profession, and the "transition" Bachelor degrees, which prepare for the Master's.

Upon completion of their initial training, ESA graduates can enrol in a third cycle course (Doctorate) organised by the universities. In this regard, the ESAs collaborate with the universities for doctoral training and the supervision of doctoral work.

Studies are classified into five fields:

- the plastic, visual and spatial arts (short and long type);

- music (short and long type);

- drama and speech (long type);

- the performing arts and broadcasting and communication techniques (short and long type);

- dance; this field is not offered at present.

3.3.4. Education for Social Promotion

Targeting an adult public, higher education for social promotion is organised in the same way as all other EPS provision[3.4] and is fully part of the European Higher Education Area, as specified above[3.3].

115 of the 164 EPS establishments offer higher education, with 32,160 participating students in 2010-2011.

The higher education for social promotion sections are accredited:

- either by the degrees of Bachelor, Master or specialist degrees equivalent to those awarded by full higher education institutions;

- or by qualifications specific to higher education for social promotion (social promotion certificates of higher education, certificates and other diplomas in higher education for social promotion falling within the scope of particular regulation).

The EPS degrees that are equivalent to those awarded by full-time higher education institutions are designed on common references but organised specifically to each structure. Those degrees give similar legal rights. A student, having followed part of a full-time higher education programme, might thus continue in EPS. In the same way, a graduate from EPS will have its learning outcomes recognised when starting back a full-time higher education programme offered by a university or university college.

EPS also awards the CAP (certificate of teaching competence)[15] and organises the CAPAES (certificate of teaching competence adapted to higher education)[16].

The Bachelor's degrees organised within EPS are classified into the following sectors:

- technical: Chemistry, Computing and Systems, Management Computing, Construction, Graphics, Electronics, Electromechanics, Optics and Optometry;

- agricultural: Agricultural Science;

- economic: Foreign Trade, Management Computing, Marketing, Tourism, Law, Insurance, Executive Secretarial Studies, Accounting, Public Relations, Transport Management and Business Logistics;

- applied arts*:* Plastic, Visual and Spatial Arts, Advertising;

- social: Human Resources Management, Marriage and Family Councillor, Librarian-Information Scientist;

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[15] The CAP is a teaching qualification for practising teachers or those teaching special courses, authorising them to teach their specialist subject. It is awarded by EPS or can be obtained through Jury Central examination.
[16] The CAPAES is awarded by universities, the Hautes Ecoles and EPS.

- teaching*:* Special Education in Psychological Educational Support;
- paramedical: Nursing, Psychomotricity.

Upon completion of some "professionalising" Bachelor's degrees (Chemistry, Electronics and Electromechanics), abstraction training units can be followed by students. These aim to bring them up to the level of knowledge and skills necessary for admission to the second cycle of the same course that leads to the Master's degree. They are worth 60 ECTS credits.

Together, the skills of the "professionalising" Bachelor and the additional abstraction training is recognised by a "transition" Bachelor's degree giving access to a Master's in the social promotion stream in question.

EPS offers Master's degrees in Industrial Engineering in the following areas: Chemistry, Electromechanics and Electronics.

3.4. Education for social promotion[xxii]

The goals[xxiii] of education for social promotion are:

- to support individual development by promoting improved vocational, social, cultural and educational integration;
- to meet the training needs and requirements expressed by enterprises, administrations, education and, in general, socio-economic and cultural areas.

Since 1991, Education for Social Promotion in the FWB has been characterised by:

- an approach based on capabilities (or learning outcomes)[5.3.1.2];
- a modular organisation[5.3.2.2];
- recognition of achievements, including those gained through professional or personal experience[5.3.3.2].

EPS has therefore long constituted a form of *lifelong learning*, the main characteristics of which EPS acquired at an early stage and which have since been developed at European level.

EPS is aimed at

- individuals who already have a professional qualification but who want to hone their skills, specialise, update their knowledge, retrain, train;
- workers who anticipate changing professions, either because they wish to or because they might have to;
- jobseekers, qualified or otherwise, looking for training that will enable them to find or get back into work;
- young people in part-time education, who are seeking to further their training;
- young people in mainstream secondary or higher education who are seeking to develop skills in subjects not covered by their normal timetables;
- individuals wishing to acquire new knowledge for their personal enrichment;
- teachers, within the context of continuing training.

En 2010-2011, EPS was catering for approximately 160,000 students.

The EPS training offer includes

- basic training;
- continuing training;

- upskilling training;

- reskilling training;

- supplementary training.

It covers all educational levels and is divided into lower and upper secondary education and short type and long type higher education.

The qualifications awarded (secondary education certificates or qualification certificates, higher education diplomas) are either equivalent to the qualifications in full-time education or are specific to EPS.

They cover the following fields:

- Basic Skills, Literacy, etc.;

- Economic Sciences;

- Languages;

- Computing;

- Agricultural Science;

- Industry (Mechanics, Electricity, Electronics, Welding, etc.);

- Construction (Bricklaying, Building Equipment, Building Completion, Joinery, etc.);

- Hotel and Catering - Food;

- Clothing;

- Applied Arts;

- Social, Family and Paramedical Services, Hairdressing, etc.;

- Psychology, Teaching;

- Chemistry, Physics, Biology, etc.

3.5. Continuing vocational education for workers and jobseekers

As explained above[2.2], missions of vocational training for workers (employed or seeking work) have historically been the responsibility of the National Employment Office. They were subsequently transferred to Community level and finally, for the French-speaking part of Belgium, to Regional level.

For the French-speaking part of Wallonia, the FOREM constitutes both the public employment service (SPE) and the body with responsibility for vocational training.

In Brussels, the SPE and the vocational training bodies are separate. The public employment service is ACTIRIS, a bilingual body under the umbrella of the Brussels-Capital Region, while vocational training is organised by Bruxelles Formation, under the umbrella of the COCOF for French speakers and the VDAB for Dutch speakers. Although separate institutionally, ACTIRIS and Bruxelles Formation operate in close collaboration; this has been reinforced in 2013 by a cooperation agreement between the Region and the COCOF[xxiv].

The FOREM et Bruxelles Formation offer training programmes for jobseekers and, to a lesser extent, to active workers in order to make them acquire the necessary competences for their access, maintenance or professional development linked to the needs of the labour market. Initially, those training programmes are not structured as in education. The implementation of the CFC will thus enhance the visibility and better structure the offer.

Training programmes for self-employed and SMEs organises work/study training programmes and provides:

- Apprentice training, sanctioned by an apprenticeship certificate
- Business leaders training, sanctioned by a business leadership diploma

as well as continuing training for self-employed or employees in SMEs, and training for business development.

The apprenticeship certificates and business leadership diplomas are common to regional providers (IFAPME[3.6.1] for Wallonia and SFPME[3.6.2] for the COCOF). Quite recently, some apprenticeship certificates are now recognised as corresponding to qualifying certificates awarded in education. The establishment of the SFMQ[3.8] will boost this correspondance process.

Apprenticeship is accessible from the age of 15 in the framework of the part-ime compulsory education (till the age of 18). The business leaders training is accessible for adults aged 18.

The FOREM and Bruxelles Formation collaborate with one another and with the Regional training operators for SMEs, the IFAPME[3.6.1] and the SFPME[3.6.2].

For a number of years, these various operators have pursued a policy of learning outcomes, although the vocabulary has changed over time, and also under the influence of the European recommendations. They broadly share common principles of action, one vocabulary, methodological elements and certain procedures.

Collaboration between operators have intensified in recent years, in particular on engineering and methodological components, especially assessment and certification procedures[5.3.1.4].

They also have common procedures on training trainers and quality assurance[5.5.1.3], and they are frequently involved in a number of European projects concerning, for example, the ECVETs.

3.5.1. The FOREM

The FOREM is a public interest body (OIP) instituted by a Decree of the Walloon Region[xxv] [17]. The government oversees the body which is managed by a joint management committee (constituted by an equal number of employer representatives and worker representatives). A management contract [xxvi] jointly signed by the government and the management committee defines the objectives of the institution and how it is to be organised for five-year periods.

Six organic missions are stipulated in the 2011-2016 management contract. Two missions cover the training dimension:

- the development and identification of the skills of jobseekers;
- additionally: the training of workers in order to meet the economic development challenges facing the Region.

The management contract defines the development and identification of skills as follows:

- development: the professional training of jobseekers, in particular jobseekers receiving individualised support, with the aim of promoting their access to employment;
- identification of skills: identification of skills by processes of selection, screening, recognition of skills acquired in training, certification or skills validation.

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[17] The relevant Decree now concerning the FOREM was issued in 1999[xxv]. This text repeals the above-mentioned 1989 text[2.2] which initially instituted the office[iii] .

Alongside missions specific to vocational training, the FOREM also plays a management role in both employment and vocational training. This mission involves adapting, diversifying and broadening the existing offer in the Region's territory, through the intermediary of third parties, so that it more closely matches the needs of users in terms of quantity and quality. The FOREM's relationships with these third party operators can be organised in three ways: partnership, public contract and subsidisation. Among these operators, an important role has been devolved to OISPs (socioprofessional integration agencies) and EFTs (workplace training enterprises) that participate in the socialisation, pre-training, career guidance and qualifying training of jobseekers. They are grouped under the umbrella of the Interfédé [xxvii](Interfederation of EFTs and OISPs). Their authorisation and subsidisation are decided by decree[xxviii].

All these missions are incorporated into regional development policies and in particular the Marshall Plan 2.Green[xxix] [18]. They are also part of the cooperation with the Federal State (activation of jobseekers), the FWB (CVDC[3.7], SFMQ[3.8]) and also fall within the European context (ECVET[xi], EQAVET[xxx]).

FOREM Formation[19] has over 50 training centres involving over 150 professions divided into 11 fields:

- Construction and Wood

- Industry

- Transport and Logistics

- Non-market (personal care and services, socio-educational and cultural services)

- IT and Telecoms

- HORECA, Professional Cleaning, Security Services and Tourism

- Quality, Safety, Environment

- Languages and Communication Techniques

- Management and Secretarial Services

- Business Administration and Commerce

- Office and ICT

The FOREM is also involved in the network of skills centres[xxxi], managing them/in the capacity of a manager or partner. The skills centres – centres for training, monitoring and awareness-raising – subscribe to a development approach in order to meet the needs expressed by enterprises and workers. These centres are open to all publics: jobseekers, workers, heads of companies, apprentices, teachers and students, among others. They contribute to integration through their qualifying training activities but also play an upstream role through their monitoring, information and awareness-raising activities. The skills centres operate on the basis of a collaboration of partners who perform a variety of functions: training operators, universities, research centres, industrial sectors and social partners. They cover the following fields:

- Construction and Wood

- Industry

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[18] In 2009 the regional development plan Marshall Plan 2.Green succeeded the Marshall Plan initiated in 2005, which aimed to:
- create competitiveness clusters;
- stimulate business start-ups;
- reduce the tax burden on enterprises;
- boost research and innovation, in collaboration with enterprise;
- stimulate skills for employment.
It adopts these same objectives, placing them in the perspective of employment-environment alliances and sustainable development. It also adds a new green technology cluster to the already-existing competitiveness clusters.

[19] A part of the FOREM responsible for vocational training, with its own Governing Board.

- Transport and Logistics
- HORECA
- Quality, Safety and Environment
- IT and Telecoms
- Business Administration and Commerce

Under the process of the recognition of skills acquired through training (RECAF)[5.3.1.4], 18 occupations are currently subject to certification exams, developed on the basis of a methodology applied by all three vocational training operators (IFAPME, Bruxelles Formation and the FOREM) and based on an assessment of learning outcomes. Since the introduction of this certification process, 1,819 certificates have been awarded (April 2013).

In 2011, the FOREM's training activity involved[xxxii]:

Job seekers

Number of people trained by the Forem	29,693
Number of people trained in partnership	8,124
Number of training hours by the Forem	5,136,821
Number of training hours in partnership	2,687,905

Workers

Number of workers trained by the Forem	4,884
Number of workers trained in skills center	35,091
Number of training hours by the Forem	86,284
Number of training hours in skills center	578,920

3.5.2. Bruxelles Formation

Bruxelles Formation is public interest body created by Decree in 1994[iv] and has a joint management committee. It falls under the political control of the COCOF. A management contract [xxxiii] jointly signed by the competent executive and the management committee defined its objectives and organisation for the period 2012-2016.

The priority missions of Bruxelles Formation are:

- the training of jobseekers with a view to promoting their access to employment, giving priority to jobseekers under the age of 25 and to other categories of jobseekers concerned by a mandatory support arrangement with the public employment service Actiris and whose career development requires a training action;
- the training of workers in order to meet the regional development challenges in Brussels;
- identification of jobseekers' skills through processes to recognise skills acquired through training, skills certification or validation, selection or screening;
- organisation and oversight of partnerships with other players offering training services, with the aim of improving the training offer in Brussels, in terms of quality and quantity, and also monitoring the implementation of these actions;
- oversight of socio-professional integration agencies, with the aim of increasing the chances of finding work for unemployed jobseekers who are not highly skilled, under coordinated socio-professional

integration schemes, as well as providing the qualifications necessary for jobseekers to enter qualifying vocational training or to seek complementarities between the socio-professional integration sector and Bruxelles Formation;

- observation and analysis of the training field, in order to support guidance for its publics and to inform decision-making, in particular with regard to services to be developed in the Brussels area.

These missions form part of the Brussels regional policy: the Regional Sustainable Development Plan[xxxiv], the New Deal (Sustainable Urban Growth Pact)[20], including the Employment-Environment Alliance and the Languages Plan for Brussels. These missions also fall within the context of cooperation with the Federal State (activation of jobseekers), the FWB (CVDC[3.7], SFMQ[3.8]) and within the European context (ECVET, EQAVET).

The socio-professional integration agencies, controlled by Bruxelles Formation, are federated within the FEBISP[xxxv] (Brussels Federation of Socio-Professional Integration and Social Economy Integration Agencies) and are accredited and subsidised as laid down by Decree[xxxvi].

Bruxelles Formation has eight training centres involving forty or so occupations, and an information centre:

- Bruxelles Formation Construction

- Bruxelles Formation Industrie (industry)

- Bruxelles Formation Logistique (logistics)

- Bruxelles Formation Bureau et Services (office and services)

- Bruxelles Formation Management et multimédiaTIC (management and multimedia ICT)

- Bruxelles Formation Langues (languages)

- Bruxelles Formation Entreprises, primarily for workers and enterprises in the fields of information technology and communication.

- Bruxelles Formation Tremplin ('Springboard') with responsibility for:

    o the selection and upskilling of applicants for qualifying training programmes;
    o the organisation of a training pathway for jobseekers who have signed a career development agreement with ACTIRIS;
    o the delivery of training programmes in partnership;
    o the delivery of upskilling and short training programmes for jobseekers under the age of 25 (Tremplin Jeunes – Springboard for Young People).

- Bruxelles Formation Carrefour, an information and advice centre on the training offer for adults in the Brussels Region, catering for approximately 27,500 people per year.

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[20] Signed in April 2011, the "Pacte de Croissance Urbaine Durable" (Sustainable Urban Growth Pact), renamed "New Deal Bruxellois", mobilises the public authorities and social partners in Brussels to promote access to employment for the people of Brussels and sustainable urban growth.

In 2011, the activity[xxxvii] of Bruxelles Formation was as follows:

Total activities of BRUXELLES FORMATION and its partners						
	Job seekers		Workers		Total	
	Hours	Trainees	Hours	Trainees	Hours	Trainees
BRUXELLES FORMATION	1,425,570	6,130	73,026	3,389	1,498,596	9,496
Partners	1,954,205	4,918	16,907	93	1,971,112	5,010
Total 2011	3,379,774	10,780	89,933	3479	3,469,708	14,202

3.6. Training for small and medium sized enterprises

Although training for SMEs was regionalised, giving rise to the IFAPME in Wallonia and the SFPME for the French-speaking public in the Brussels-Capital Region, structural links remain at FWB level: a joint structure (IFPME-ALTIS) aims to:

- check for consistency between the apprenticeship and business leadership programmes offered by the IFAPME[3.6.1] and the SFPME[3.6.2], and to check for consistency between the procedures whereby they are implemented;

- represent the continuing training SMEs in the Skills Validation Consortium;

- represent continuing training in all committees set up by the FWB tasked with dealing with bridges between secondary education and continuing training;

- prepare the work of the Continuing Training Certificates and Diplomas Approval Committee SMEs.

3.6.1. The IFAPME

The IFAPME is a public interest body in Wallonia, governed by Decree[xxxviii] and run by social partners within a management committee, on the basis of a management contract[xxxix].

The purpose of the institute is the professional integration of its beneficiaries by offering comprehensive training pathways, from compulsory schooling to continuing training for adults – including the promotion of entrepreneurship – by developing training in the creation and take-over of businesses. This has a perspective of lifelong learning and a specific feature – work/study training – and is offered to a wide range of publics in order to deliver general and technical skills in tailored training pathways.

The primary mission of the IFAPME is to coordinate the network made up of non-profit training centres and to develop training programmes and teaching tools.

The IFAPME has eight training centres with 14 sites.

7,000 training enterprises work in collaboration with the IFAPME. Their motivation is to share know-how and to train their future employees.

The institute trains tutoring staff; the people who deliver enterprise training follow training programmes organised by the IFAPME.

The activity of the IFAPME is organised according to four focuses for action:

- apprenticeship training: work/study training for young people from the age of 15 in order to learn a trade, to gain qualifications and to integrate into the world of work – 5,323 young people in 2011;

- business leadership training: training for those aged 18 and over, in order to become a close co-worker of a company manager or to become self-employed or to set up one's own business – 9,159 learners in 2011

- continuing training: for the self-employed, heads of SMEs, workers and a wide public from local authorities in particular... 17,246 people in 2010 for a volume of 38,307 hours in 2011;

- enterprise start-up training: 7,281 people in 2011 took part in entrepreneurship development and business start-up modules.

The training programmes cover over 100 occupations in the following fields:

- the construction trades, from structure construction to interior finishing (roofer, bricklayer, tiler, heating engineer, painter and decorator, etc.);

- the automotive and mechanical trades (garage owner-car mechanic, body repair worker, etc.);

- the electrical trades (electrician-fitter, refrigeration mechanic, etc.);

- the catering trades and HORECA (restaurateur, butcher, baker-confectioner, etc.);

- the sales and commercial trades;

- the personal care trades (hairdresser, beautician, dental technician, etc.);

- the IT and graphics trades (installer-repairer of mini- and microcomputers, etc.);

- the wood, metal, craft and heritage trades (joiner, cabinetmaker, etc.);

- the green sector trades (garden contractor, nurseryman, florist, etc.).

3.6.2. The SME training service (SFPME)

The EFPME is the only French-speaking work/study training centre in the Brussels-Capital Region. It is under the control of the Service Formation des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises, a distinct management service of the COCOF.

Like the IFAPME centres, the EFPME organises apprenticeship training, business leadership training and continuing training programmes.

Training is offered in the following fields: personal care, commerce, the catering trades, the building trades, the green trades and the automotive trades.

In 2011, 999 young people were in apprenticeships and 1,820 people took part in business leadership training.

3.7. The Skills Validation Consortium

The Consortium de Validation des Compétences – the Skills Validation Consortium – which was created by the cooperation agreement of 24 July 2003[xl] and which has been active in practice since 2005, groups together 5 education and vocational training operators (the EPS, the FOREM, Bruxelles Formation, the IFAPME and the SFPME) whose aim is to award skills credentials by the validation of prior learning on behalf of the three executives of the FWB, Wallonia and the COCOF.

The validation tests consist in reconstructed professional scenarios. They are held in the accredited validation centres organised (directly or in partnership) by one of the five operators participating in the scheme. The centres are subject to quality control. The assessment rules are defined by validation reference systems. These are drawn up by reference system committees made up of representatives of the five education and training operators, representatives of sector funds and representatives of employers, workers and public employment services.

The accreditation of the centres, the assessment of the scheme and the orientations for the development of the scheme fall under the responsibility of the Consultative and Accreditation

Committee made up of the social partners and public employment service representatives. A management committee composed of representatives of the 5 operators leads the consortium.

The Recognition of Training Outcomes (RAF) is an alternative path to award skills credentials. According to a specified quality scheme and based on a methodological analysis by an ad-hoc working group, this process aims at allowing the award of skills credentials for candidates that already obtained a credential from another provider. In 2012, 585 skills credentials were delivered through the RAF process.

Some information taken from the 2011 activity report[xli]:

- 1,931 tests carried out;
- 1,301 skills credentials issued;
- 66.37% success rate;
- 36 trades and 72 skills units for which tests have been carried out;
- 50 trades with reference systems produced since 2005;
- 49 active validation centres for 57 accredited centres.

The following sectors are covered:

- Administration-economy-management
- Arts and culture
- Automotive
- Chemistry
- Commerce and distribution
- Construction
- Electricity
- Environment
- Food industry and trade
- Technological industry
- Information technology
- Logistics
- Care services

In French-speaking Belgium, the creation of the Consortium constitutes a significant experiment in collaboration and in the development of mutual trust between operators from different horizons. It was – and still is – a laboratory for joint development in both education and collaborative thinking.

3.8. The French-speaking service for occupations and qualifications (SFMQ)

The SFMQ is a structure that groups together various education and training operators. The service is governed by a cooperation agreement concluded in 2009[xlii] between the FWB, Wallonia and the COCOF.

For education, firstly, it includes mainstream and special qualifying secondary education and Education for Social Promotion and secondly, for vocational training it includes the FOREM, Bruxelles Formation, the IFAPME, the SFPME and representatives of the OISPs[3.5.1][3.5.2], both Walloon and from Brussels.

The SFMQ replaces the CCPQ (Community Commission for Professions and Qualifications), which was tasked with defining the qualification profiles for qualifying secondary education only. The new service produces common profiles for all of the above-mentioned operators, divided into learning outcome units.

The SFMQ comprises two separate principal chambers:

- The chamber for occupations, manned by representatives of the social partners and public employment services, which defines Occupation Profiles

- The chamber for education and training, made up of representatives of the operators, which sets out Training Profiles from the Occupation Profiles, broken down into learning outcome units.

The learning outcome units approach is developed in more detail in the point dealing with the third criterion of the EQF-AG[5.3.1.6].

3.9. Other qualifications

Even though this report focuses on the qualifications designated by the governments for the construction of the CFC (French-speaking qualifications framework for lifelong learning), there are other qualifications capable of meeting the criteria defined by the Experts Group[4.3.5][5.4.1] enabling them to be positioned.

In the field of education, ESAHR[xliii][xliv] (reduced-timetable secondary education in the Arts) awards specific certificates. In general, these qualifications do not lead to the practice of a profession. Some of them, however, allow the holder to teach within that sector.

Other administrations or government departments may also be involved. These include, but are not restricted to, the ADEPS (general administration for assistance to young people, health and sport) and the School for Public Administration for civil servants of the FWB and Wallonia, etc.

The question of opening up the CFC to other public providers awarding qualifications, which might be positioned based on the agreed criteria, will then be asked in the near future.

4. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FRENCH-SPEAKING QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (CFC)

4.1. Introduction: the historical context

The two previous chapters[2] [3] show the institutional complexity of French-speaking Belgium and the significant spread of education and vocational training.

At the end of 2005, during the European consultation on the future European qualifications framework (EQF), the only space for effective collaboration between education and training operators was the brand new Skills Validation Consortium (CVDC)[3.7]; the SFMQ[3.8] was only in the planning stage.

Certification was perceived as a monopoly of education organised or subsidised by the FWB, while training for apprentices and business leaders was accredited by diplomas approved by the same political authority[3.6].

The future EQF, therefore, was perceived by some as an opportunity to close the gap between disparate bodies and, by others, as risking a loss of control on the part of the public authorities.

A joint response to the European consultation was finally drafted, following three Advices from the Education and Training Council (CEF)[xlv xlvi xlvii], a cross-disciplinary advisory body covering the entire field of education (from nursery to university) and vocational training.

In the immediate aftermath, an inter-departmental working group was set up, at the joint request of the three governments concerned, to study the implementation of a French-speaking framework. The conclusions of its October 2006 report were not adopted by all the governments.

This resulted in two separate lines of development:

- higher education adopted formal referencing to the EQF depending on its links to the European Higher Education Area qualifications framework, as discussed above[3.3];

- the vocational training operators, the CVDC and Education for Social Promotion developed a methodology to position qualifications according to the EQF (work of the Scribes group).

Meanwhile, higher education took on the necessity of developing learning outcomes as part of the Bologna reform; new collaborations were developed between Education for Social Promotion, qualifying secondary education and vocational training (creation of the future SFMQ, collaborations between SME-based work/study training and education, etc.); vocational training formalised the methodologies for assessing learning outcomes and the certification thereof, etc.

It was against this evolving background, yet one still marked by scant links[21] between education and vocational training, that the new Community and Regional governments put the French-speaking framework back on the agenda by adopting the principle of constructing a qualifications framework and, to this end, setting up a working group (the Experts Group[4.2]).

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[21] Relations limited to the participation of Education for Social Promotion in the CDVD and the Scribes Group and to the involvement of qualifying secondary education in Education for Social Promotion in the SFMQ.

4.2. The Experts working group

4.2.1. Governmental memorandum

In a memorandum dated 16 September 2010, the governments proposed:

- as is the practice in Flanders[22] [xlviii], to create a French-speaking qualifications framework with a double doorway: the first way for education qualifications, the second way for vocational qualifications; this shared dual framework offers the advantage of meeting the objectives of the EQF by maintaining objective differences between the two types of qualifications, in particular the fact that the education system targets broader objectives than employment.

- to gradually develop shared "quality" procedures, so as to guarantee the quality of the positioning of learning outcomes in the French-speaking qualifications framework; these procedures contribute to the transparency and consistency necessary for an area of shared mutual trust in the Wallonia-Brussels area, in Belgium and at European level;

- to create an inter-cabinet working group formed by representatives of the Regional Prime Ministers and Ministries for Education and Training who, with the assistance of designated experts[23], are responsible for the methodological management and implementation of a working plan to a strict schedule aiming, in particular, to prepare a draft cooperation agreement on the creation and management of a French-speaking qualifications framework.

The memorandum also notes, on the basis of a CEF Advice[xlix], the partial initiatives carried out, first, in higher education[24] and, second, by the Scribes Group[4.2.3].

The governments thus proposed, on the basis of a project co-financed by the European Commission on the implementation of a "national contact point" and the preparation of the French-speaking qualifications framework, to rely on the results produced by the Scribes Group. The aim of this project will be to have the methodology scientifically and pedagogically validated by a university authority.

4.2.2. The Experts Group

The governments fixed the distribution of experts as follows:

- 3 representatives of higher education (universities + Hautes Ecoles + higher education in the Arts)
- 1 representative of secondary education
- 1 representative of special education
- 1 representative of Education for Social Promotion
- 1 representative of the IFAPME
- 1 representative of the Skills Validation Consortium
- 1 representative of Bruxelles Formation
- 1 representative of the SFPME
- 2 representatives of the FOREM

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[22] On 30 April 2009, Flanders adopted a Decree[xlviii] concerning the structure of qualifications (Vlaamse kwalificatiestructuur-VKS) which includes an eight-level, dual entry qualifications framework: one for education qualifications and the other for vocational qualifications.

[23] In determining working group participants, the Ministers excluded sectors such as sport, culture, youth, reduced-timetable arts education, etc.

[24] The positioning by decree, of the higher education degrees at levels 6 to 8[xviii].

For education, the representatives were appointed by the corresponding Councils:

- the CIUF, Conseil interuniversitaire de la Communauté française

- the CGHE, Conseil général des hautes écoles

- the CSESA, Conseil supérieur de l'enseignement supérieur artistique

- the Conseil général de concertation pour l'enseignement secondaire ordinaire

- the Conseil général de concertation pour l'enseignement spécialisé

- the Conseil supérieur de l'EPS

The Experts Group adopted a working method in stages, made up of exchanges between technicians and members of the Ministerial Cabinets for endorsement of decisions and evaluation of the end product. The representatives also constantly informed their respective educational councils, the CVDC steering committee, the vocational training management committees, by seeking their endorsement for the key stages of the process.

The expert chosen in compliance with the governmental memorandum is Michel Feutrie. His expertise far exceeds the initial requirement and he has monitored the entire process by participating at the group's meetings.

4.2.3. A difficult start

At the beginning, the perception of the role and challenges of a qualifications framework was not shared. Those around the table were not at all, or only partially, aware of the others' situations.

The governments' proposal to start on the basis of the work of the Scribes Group did not facilitate the task. Irrespective of its quality, this collaborative work involved only some of the players: those used to cooperating within the CVDC steering committee. For education, only Education for Social Promotion had a presence. It was difficult for those who had not participated to take ownership of work which was, understandably, marked primarily by the concerns of those partners who had drafted it.

Furthermore, the work of the Scribes Group had not been carried out with the specific aim of constructing a qualifications framework. In the absence of a French framework, their aim was to establish a methodology for referencing qualifications to the European framework, on a case-by-case basis. Of course, this methodology contained elements of use for the construction of a framework, elements which did indeed inspire the later work of the Experts Group, but it was not conceived with this intention.

4.2.4. Difficulties overcome

These difficulties were overcome thanks to:

- **a reframing of the work to be carried out**

    The view and expertise of Michel Feutrie were crucial in this regard, by reformulating proposals

- intended very clearly to separate the CFC clarification procedure from the qualifications positioning procedure and from the referencing process, by finding agreement between the various operators and the players concerned

    o on the structure of the framework, by revisiting the generic descriptors in order to more closely match the reality of the field of qualifications in French-speaking Belgium;
    o on a method of positioning qualifications within this framework;

    before starting to reference the French-speaking framework to the European framework;

- aimed at the positioning process:

  o initially, to fit the existing qualifications into the Framework, as they stand, taking account of the history of these qualifications, the use to which they are currently put by individuals and employers, agreements existing between institutions, processes that are not completely convergent initiated under the Bologna and Copenhagen processes, etc.

  o secondly, to show explicit positioning procedures for each type of operator, guaranteeing the appropriateness and quality of the qualifications. This presupposes that a prior agreement has been reached on the definition of the descriptors by level; that operators adhere to the principle of a gradual shift for all qualifications to a description based on learning outcomes; that operators provide the holder of the qualification and potential users with a guarantee as to the abilities possessed.

- concerning the authority to be put in place, which would support the framework, handle implementation difficulties, maintain the framework and allow it to evolve over time. This authority must not be linked to an operator; rather, it must be transversal. It must also take account of external partners with an interest in the Framework who are likely to make an effective contribution to its implementation, effectiveness and evolution.

- **the organisation of a seminar day**

The aim of the day was to share the various operators' practices in relation to learning outcomes and quality assurance practices, factors identified as vital for the construction of the framework. This seminar was a crucial step in establishing mutual trust between operators. The documents produced that day[l] also constitute a resource for this report.

- **the establishment of technical groups**

Following the reframing of the work to be carried out, four technical groups were set up:

- the **Descriptors** technical group, tasked with drafting common descriptors,

- the **Quality** technical group, tasked with defining common quality assurance principles in connection with the CFC,

- the **Positioning** technical group, tasked with developing methodologies for positioning qualifications in the CFC,

- the **Communications** technical group, tasked with preparing communications on the CFC.

As time went on, practical work in sub-groups produced results shared by all players, permitting the gradual creation of a shared view of the future CFC in all its various aspects and components. This collaboration was fostered by the co-chairing of the technical groups by representatives of education and vocational training.

4.2.5. The issue of size

An additional difficulty arose as work progressed: the qualifications to be fitted into the framework had not clearly been defined. In particular, the question arose of the minimum "size" or "importance" a qualification must achieve in order to be positioned in the CFC.

The question primarily concerned vocational qualifications, where two approaches seemed to be at odds:

- on the one hand, within the context of the CPU[5.3.2.3] and the training profiles of the SFMQ[5.3.2.5], it had been agreed not to position the units (which merely constitute steps on a learning pathway) but rather only the final qualification corresponding to an occupation;

- on the other hand, the mission of training with a view to employment, which is incumbent upon vocational training operators, could be fulfilled through training that does not necessarily cover an entire occupation.

The question was settled by a second governmental guidance memorandum which specified that vocational qualifications will be positioned within the Framework if they meet the criterion of a consistent set of skills leading to employment in a given professional sector.

The governmental guidance memorandum also addresses considerations that support the results achieved in the meantime by the Descriptors and Quality groups. It also contains guidelines enabling the Positioning group to start its work.

4.3. The results achieved by the Experts Group

4.3.1. The definition of the French-speaking qualifications framework

In accordance with the decision of the governments, the CFC is an **eight-level framework** compatible with the EQF and the VKS[4.2.1] [xlviii] and has a **double doorway**: first way for **education qualifications**, second way for **vocational qualifications**.

The European definitions[liError! Bookmark not defined.] serve as the basis for the concepts of learning outcomes, qualification and qualifications framework, namely:

- **Learning outcome:** statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process;

- **Qualifications framework**: an instrument for classifying qualifications according to a set of criteria corresponding to given learning outcome levels;

- **Qualification**: the formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards;.

An **education qualification** is a qualification made up of a consistent and significant set of learning outcomes aimed at personal development, the continuation of studies or training, access to professional life, participation in and contribution to the economic, social and cultural development of society.

A **vocational qualification** is a qualification made up of a consistent and significant set of learning outcomes aimed at the continuation of training, integration or maintenance in the labour market or professional specialisation.

Although it is dual entry, the French-speaking qualifications framework is an **integrative framework**: the qualifications, be they education based or vocational training based, are ranked according to the same generic descriptors. All qualification levels are, *a priori*, open to both types of qualification.

Although, by contributing to it, the CFC is part of an evolution of the landscape of education and training intended to enhance the transparency of qualifications and the mobility of citizens, it is a **framework that describes the existing situation**. The CFC makes the qualifications awarded by the FWB, Wallonia and the COCOF more transparent without altering the legal effects associated with them and without introducing new ones.

The CFC is a **public interest framework** and is **regulated by the public authorities**: the CFC ranks qualifications that are recognised and validated by the public authorities, as the competent authorities, and that originate from public institutions or those pursuing public interest missions.

4.3.2. Expected outcomes of the CFC

The CFC aims to

- promote continuity and progression in the public's learning pathways

    o by facilitating the management of these pathways between education, vocational training and validation operators,

    o by reinforcing the link between initial and continuing training,

    o by promoting within these pathways the recognition of all learning, be it formal, non-formal or informal;

- enhance the readability of qualifications awarded in the FWB, Wallonia and the COCOF

    o by ensuring that citizens receive overall information within the context of their initial and continuing training and by supporting the process of career guidance and life-long learning,

    o by strengthening the link between education and training, on one hand, and the socioprofessional world on the other,

    o by positioning the qualifications of the FWB, Wallonia and the COCOF at international level and by, among other things, referencing the CFC to the EQF;

- to enhance the intrinsic quality of the processes of education, training and validation by ensuring that each qualification is positioned appropriately at a given level of the framework.

4.3.3. The generic descriptors

The Descriptors technical group has produced descriptors at eight levels, characterising

- first, knowledge and skills;

- second, the context, autonomy and responsibility.

Both the number of levels and the categories selected are identical to those adopted by Flanders in the VKS[xlviii].

These descriptors express progression systematically against various criteria which render them workable in order to justify a positioning, compared with the two adjacent positionings, on the basis of an analysis of the learning outcomes of a qualification. They are also drafted in a way that makes them relevant to both education qualifications and vocational qualifications.

The descriptors are globally consistent:

- they are homogenous: the same elements are found at all levels;

- they exclude repetition: the levels are cumulative; the outcomes mobilised at one level can be carried over to higher levels without being repeated in the table;

- there are no contradictions;

- their elements are linked: the descriptors do not consist of a list of characteristics but rather form a structured set of the elements they include;

- their elements explicitly set out the progression between levels.

The elements used in the description of knowledge and skills answer the following questions:

- What? (What type of knowledge and skills?)[25]

- For what purpose? (What type of activity do they open the way to?)

- About what? (To obtain what type of result?)

- In what perspective? (In what type of situation, to what degree of complexity?)

The elements used in the description of the context, autonomy and responsibility answer these questions:

- With what degree of autonomy?

- In what situations? (With what degree of complexity?)

- With what responsibility?

Combining the gradations of these seven elements permits the eight levels to be distinguished.

Levels	Knowledge, skills	Context, autonomy and responsability
1		
2	What	With what degree of autonomy
3	For what purpose	
4	About what	In what situation
5		
6	In what perspective	With what responsability
7		
8		

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[25] Note: knowledge and skills refer to knowledge, know-how and behavioural skills. Behavioural skills encompass required attitudes for pursuing a job or an occupation; those attitudes are integrated in the learning outcomes and are expected to contribute to the assessment of the learning outcomes.

Levels	Knowledge, skills	Context, autonomy and responsibility
1	Knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how not referenced to a specific field of work or study, enabling the performance of simple and repetitive tasks in the reproduction of simple processes.	Acting under direct supervision within a structured and defined context that is part of a non-specific work environment and/or field of study.
2	Basic knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the performance of a set of tasks with no requirement to choose the methods/tools/equipment, in the application of simple and standard processes.	Acting under supervision in known and defined situations relating to a specific field of work or study, with a degree of responsibility limited to the execution of tasks.
3	General knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the performance of a set of tasks involving the choice of methods/tools/equipment in the application of complex processes.	Acting with a degree of autonomy and responsibility limited to the choices presented and deployed in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which a limited number of factors vary.
4	General knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the learner to seek out and select relevant information with the aim of mobilising and integrating knowledge/methods/practices in solving concrete problems where the indications are clear and where there are a finite and limited number of possible solutions.	Acting with a limited margin of initiative in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which a large number of predictable factors are likely to change, and with full responsibility for one's work.
5	Specialised knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the learner to demonstrate the capacity for analysis, completion and articulation of information on the basis of the knowledge/methods/practices in one's specialised field, with the aim of reorganising it and of devising appropriate solutions to solve abstract problems, where the indications are not clear and where multiple solutions are possible.	Acting with a wide margin of initiative in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which changes are unpredictable, with full responsibility for one's work.
6	In-depth knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the learner to demonstrate understanding and critical use of the knowledge/methods/practices in his or her specialised field as well as the various dimensions and constraints of the situation, with the aim of formulating and/or implementing relevant (or new) solutions in solving complex problems or situations.	Acting with autonomy and full responsibility in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which changes are unpredictable.
7	Highly specialised knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the learner to demonstrate mastery and critical thinking in relation to the knowledge/methods/practices within his or her specialised field and at the interface with other specialised fields, with the aim of formulating and/or implementing innovative solutions in developing knowledge, plans (or procedures).	Acting with autonomy and full responsibility in new situations in a field of work or study and/or at the interface with several fields.
8	The most advanced knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study, or at the interface with several fields, enabling the learner to demonstrate recognised expertise in relation to the knowledge/methods/practices within his or her specialised field and at the interface with other specialised fields, with the aim of extending or redefining existing knowledge (and procedures) in research and/or innovation in a novel and significant way.	Acting with autonomy and full responsibility in the most advanced situations, at the forefront of a field of work or study and/or at the interface with several fields.

4.3.4. Quality assurance

The Quality technical working group focused primarily on Annex III of the European recommendation[li] with the dual aim of clarifying it within the context of the CFC and analysing the quality assurance policies of the various operators, in connection with the principles of the Annex. The working group focused its attention primarily on the processes relating to the definition, assessment and certification of learning outcomes.

This work of description and SWOT analysis supplemented the presentations given by the various operators at the above-mentioned seminar[4.2.4], by broadening them, and made a significant contribution to the climate of mutual trust.

Three types of quality assurance systems, described below[5.5.1], were identified. Within their context, these quality assurance systems or approaches appear appropriate and relevant for the purposes of satisfying the specific needs of each operator.

Considering the diversity of the education, training and validation operators, regarding in particular their missions, their target public(s), their resources and above all the existing quality assurance systems or approaches, it seems appropriate at present to retain different quality assurance systems and approaches.

Annex III of the European recommendation was clarified within the context of the CFC[5.5.2], and the points for improvement that were required in order to be fully consistent with these principles were identified.

With a view to retaining three quality assurance systems for each main sector in education and training (compulsory education, higher education and vocational training), it is proposed to develop a common structure internal to the authority responsible for steering and positioning the qualifications within the CFC, which will pursue two main missions:

- to pursue the convergence/harmonisation of the quality assurance systems, approaches and procedures, with regard to common general principles for quality assurance within the CFC, based on the sharing of good practice, consultative mechanisms, inter-operator cooperation pilot projects, etc.

- to guarantee the quality of the qualifications positioning process within the CFC.

4.3.5. The positioning methodologies

Two positioning methodologies will be applied:

- **a methodology by "blocks"**

  This methodology is applied when a set of qualifications characterised by a generic diploma meet, *ex ante*, criteria that determine their positioning. In this event, the appropriateness of the positioning, and the degree to which the learning outcomes match the generic descriptors of the corresponding CFC level, are guaranteed by the qualification preparation and accreditation procedure and by the definitive equivalence established between the descriptive elements specific to the qualification blocks and the generic descriptors of the CFC. For example, higher education qualifications are positioned at level 5 for the BES (Certificate of Higher Education), 6 for Bachelor's degrees, 7 for Master's degrees and 8 for doctoral degrees, because the qualification preparation procedure guarantees that they meet the generic requirements corresponding to the different kind of diplomas; these requirements are covered by the generic descriptors of the CFC.

  This methodology applies both to existing qualifications and new qualifications.

- **a "qualification by qualification" methodology**

Where a level is not defined *a priori* by belonging to a "block", qualifications will be examined on a case-by-case basis and the following verified:

- the appropriateness of positioning the qualification: the qualification must contain a significant and coherent set of learning outcomes consistent with the missions of the operator; the learning outcomes must be assessed and they must be subject to a quality assurance system that is compliant with the principles set for the CFC[5.5.2];

- the alignment between the learning outcomes of the qualification and the generic descriptors of the corresponding CFC level.

The positioning methodologies and procedures are explained in detail below, in the examination of criterion 4 of the EQF-AG[5.4].

4.3.6. The steering and positioning authority

A single, independent steering and positioning authority will be created.

The primary mission of this authority, made up of representatives of the education and training operators, will be to steer the CFC and, in particular:

- to promote and, where necessary, organise cooperation between training and education operators;

- to assent to the positioning of qualifications;

- to ensure the development and approval of the generic descriptors;

- to ensure the transparency and quality of the positioning methods;

- to act as a national coordination point with regard to the European Qualifications Framework;

- to manage the register of qualifications open to the public;

- to provide external information and communication.

4.4. A progress report

The process of constructing the CFC is completed. But, the results achieved by the Experts group will be embodied in a cooperation agreement between the three competent political authorities. It is only when this legislative process has been completed that the steering and positioning authority can be set up and that the CFC will exist formally.

However, the CFC is already taking effect. Operators are henceforth developing their qualifications in terms of learning outcomes according to the general descriptors. Developments in the processes of assessment, qualification and quality assurance are being designed in line with the principles underlying the future framework.

The CFC is also, as of now, consistent with the development of related systems:

- the recognition of non-formal and informal learning[5.3.3]

- credits (ECTS, ECVET – CPU, SFMQ)[5.3.2]

- quality assurance.[5.5]

The gestation of the CFC is therefore an integral part of the evolution of the education and vocational training landscape in French-speaking Belgium towards greater transparency, improved collaboration between institutions, enhanced mobility and opportunities to construct lifelong learning pathways for its citizens.

When formally introduced, the CFC will not be a 'foreign body', a structural element grafted onto the existing structure. On the contrary, it will be a structuring element in itself, fully integrated with the systems in place which have already been prepared for it. By dint of its requirements concerning the definition, assessment and certification of learning outcomes and through its underpinning "quality" principles that enable positioning, the CFC is a structural and structuring element capable of strengthening the intrinsic quality of the processes of education, training and validation.

Once legally established, the CFC will not be an empty framework: a large number of qualifications (the majority of education qualifications[26] and qualifications linked to the SFMQ references) will be immediately positioned "by block"[5.4.4]. For the vocational qualifications, the work for positioning them "qualification by qualification" [5.4.3] has already started. The criteria, procedures as well as positioning request form are elaborated in details, so that providers will be able to request the positioning of their qualifications as soon as the framework is effectively established..

This has been made possible thanks to the work of the Experts Group, which has not been reduced to a minimal consensus on the implementation of the framework but rather, in spite of the difficulties encountered, consists of a consensual construction of the system which is already looking to the future and its effective operation.

Alongside the legislative work and the formal implementation of the system, external communication is now necessary: for the attention of operators, career information and guidance agencies, the social partners[27], potential users and the general public.

This report represents just one stage in a process that has been judged sufficiently advanced to permit its results to be presented at this point in time.

4.5. The legal fomalisation of the framework

The conclusions of the experts group were approved and taken up in the governments' agreement.

The agreement specifies the positioning provisions. Positioning request for any qualification will be sent respectively to the SFMQ for levels 1 to 4, to the ARES for levels 6 to 8 and to both bodies for level 5.

The steering and positioning authority will basically serve as a single "window" managing the positioning requests (entrance and exit door of those requests) and liaise the SFMQ and the ARES (and their respective providers). It might be a positive option to integrate this authority in the Lifelong Learning Programme Agency of the French-speaking Belgium (AEF-Europe), so that it can play its role as European contact point for the qualifications framework.

The authority will be composed an operational unit (coordination and secretariat tasks) and steering committee (made of the head of the operational unit – acting as secretary and with advisory capacity, two representatives of the SFMQ – one at least coming from the vocational training sector, two representatives of the ARES and one independent expert – those five last members are entitled to vote).

The draft cooperation agreement will foresee decision-making based on consensus for this authority, while ensuring that no partner is discriminated.

The operational unit will be in charge of:

- Managing the positioning requests (on a daily basis);

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26 All qualifications of compulsory education and all higher education qualifications, excluding qualifications of conintuing training.

27 The social partners have been kept informed of the ongoing process on many occasions
- through their presence at Council and Management Committee meetings concerning the operators involved in the Experts Group[4.2.2];
- through an information session organised for the SFMQ and its Occupations Chamber in particular[3.8].

More formal reporting is the responsibility of the governments.

- Ensuring the secretariat of the steering committee;
- Serving as national coordination point at the EQF level;
- Managing the publicly available register of qualifications.

The executive committee will be mandated with the following taks and missions:

- Facilitating and, when appropriate, organising the conciliation between education and training providers;
- Verifying that the qualification to be positioned fulfils the positioning criteria;
- Approving the positioning of qualifications, proposed by the SFMQ (levels 1 to 4), the ARES (levels 6 to 8) and jointly proposed by those bodies for the level 5;
- Taking a final decision in case of disputed positioning proposals;
- Ensuring the evolution of the generic descriptors and facilitating agreement on possible revision;
- Guaranteeing the quality of the positioning process of qualifications within the CFC;
- Fostering synergies between QA systems, approaches and procedures, with respect to QA principles adopted in the context of the CFC, through exchanges of good practices, consultation, pilot-projects between providers, etc.;
- Ensuring the provision of information and communication to the outside world;
- Transmitting to the governments for approval, an annual activity report including, amongst others, the evaluation and the progress of the positioning process.

Such a scheme allows meeting the objectives of neutrality and transversal expertise (from all education and training sectors in the French-speaking Belgium) of the authority.

Once a year (or more if necessary), the executive committee will meet an experts group with a similar composition as the experts group set up by the government note dated 16 October 2010. Such a meeting will be the occasion for the executive committee to benefit from the advice of experts on future developments and to collect any useful information for improving the operational scheme.

On the other hand, it is essential to ensure that providers have a right to appeal in case of disagreement with the positioning decision. They will then use this right in a dedicated commission, established to this end. The appeal commission with be composed of a representative of the Walloon Region government, a representative of the French Community government, a representative of the COCOF – those three with decision capacity, and a representative of the executive committee, acting as secretary and with advisory capacity. The governments will address recommendations to the commission, when appropriate.

5. THE TEN CRITERIA OF THE EQF ADVISORY GROUP

5.1. Criterion 1

The responsibilities and/or legal competence of all relevant national bodies involved in the referencing process, including the National Coordination Point, are clearly determined and published by the competent public authorities.

The competent public authorities[2.4] are the government of the FWB for education, the government of Wallonia for vocational training in the French-speaking area of the Region and the College of the COCOF for vocational training for the French-speaking inhabitants of Brussels.

By their decision[4.2.1] of 16 September 2010, these three executives tasked the Experts Group[4.2.2] with preparing a draft cooperation agreement relating to the creation and management of a French-speaking qualifications framework. In the second guidance memorandum issued by the governments[4.2.5], the Experts Group is asked to finalise the drafting of the referencing report. If approved, this report will be used as the basis for the draft cooperation agreement relating to the creation and management of the CFC. One of the secretaries of the Experts Group has been officially seconded from their usual duties for this purpose.

Pending the formation of the CFC steering and positioning authority, the SFMQ, whose Director, Alain Kock[28], is Vice-President of the Experts Group, has been designated as the National Coordination Point. The President of the Experts Group is Jo Léonard[29] who has been appointed as the representative of French-speaking Belgium for the EQF-AG.

Members of the Experts working group and of the technical working groups have been designated by the Councils and Committees representing the various components of education and training in French-speaking Belgium. During their work, as explained above [4.4], a space of mutual trust has been installed between them. Shared progresses have been done in areas critical to the establishment of a qualifications framework, namely, a coherent approach for learning outcomes and principles for quality assurance. This work has created a real space for longlife learning in French-speaking Belgium, worn by actors and underpinning political agreements and legal texts brought to formalize the framework.

The formalisation will consist in the adoption of a cooperation agreement between the three competent bodies, based on the agreement of the governements including the results of the experts group but specifying those in what concerns the composition and the operation of the steering and positioning authority, as explained above.[4.5]

5.2. Criterion 2

There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework.

5.2.1. The CFC and the other qualifications framerworks developed in Belgium

As explained above[2.3], the Communities (the FWB, Wallonia and the COCOF in the case of French-speaking Belgium) have full responsibility for education and vocational training. This explains the co-existence of three frameworks referenced to the EQF. The processes of development of the various frameworks have advanced according to differing approaches and non-synchronised agendas. Flanders lost no time in issuing a legal text in 2009, the basis of its referencing report presented to the EQF-AG. The French-speaking area adopted a participative approach, taking longer to develop. Its report came

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[28] Alain Kock is also Director of the CVDC Executive Unit
[29] Jo Léonard is Coordinating Inspector for Education for Social Promotion

much later. This time lag precluded the global presentation of the three reports with a joint introduction, as was the case in the United Kingdom.

However, there were numerous points of convergence. In particular, the CFC was developed in the light of its forerunner, the framework associated with the VKS. From the outset, the governments adopted the same structure: an eight-level framework with dual entries: one for education qualifications, the other for vocational qualifications. They also expressed the wish to depart from the Flemish framework as little as possible.

The generic descriptors were developed according to the same categories[4.3.3]:

- first, knowledge and skills;

- second, the context, autonomy and responsibility.

Both frameworks adopted the same option: to avoid separating knowledge and skills. To permit the definition of a level relating to knowledge and skills, it proved necessary to characterise the context and the complexity of situations in which they are used.

Although they refer to the same categories, the list of descriptors is specific to each framework. Indeed, the descriptors must reflect the reality of each Community and their perceptions of a qualifications framework. As explained above, the CFC descriptors were conceived in operational terms from the outset: they must make it possible to differentiate the levels of the qualifications from an analysis of learning outcomes. They relate to the usages and practices of both education and vocational training in French-speaking Belgium.

Another point of convergence concerns vocational qualifications: the various public employment services in Belgium refer to the same classification of occupations and jobs: ROME V3. The various methods of constructing training and validation profiles all start from the same explicit references, which fosters overall consistency.

Clearly, the CFC and the VKS present very substantial similarities, even though their detail depends on their own specific context. The eight levels of the VKS refer directly to the eight levels of the EQF. This is also the case for the CFC, as further developed in the point below.

This also applies to the qualifications framework of the German-speaking Community.

The German-speaking Community of Belgium is developing its own qualifications framework (QDG), considering its competences in education and vocational training. The main principle of the framework is the equivalence of vocational education and training and general education, that can thus lead to a better comparability and a better permeability of the different educational systems. This equality does not however mean that VET and general education qualifications have the same legal effects (in terms of access to higher education, access to a professional qualification, etc.).

The outline of the qualifications framework is very similar to the CFC and the VKS. The German-speaking qualifications frameworks has eight levels, each defined in terms of generic descriptors related to both professional competences divided in knowledge and skills, and to personal competences divided in interpersonal skills and autonomy.

In this framework, there are two types of qualifications: the 'professional qualification' and the 'educational qualification'. Both types of qualifications refer, for each level, to the same descriptors. All qualifications of formal general education and formal VET awarded by regular schools or regular VET providers are already listed by the decree. Until September 2014, a technical commission will position/classify all other qualifications upon application request by the competent authority. Those qualifications have to fullfill the following criteria: pertinence for the labour market or for further learning, designing the learning programme in terms of learning outcomes, existence of a transperant and clear qualitiy assurance system, submittion of the application by a recognised provider.The Decree

establishing the German-speaking qualifications framework was adopted by the Parliament on 18th November 2013.
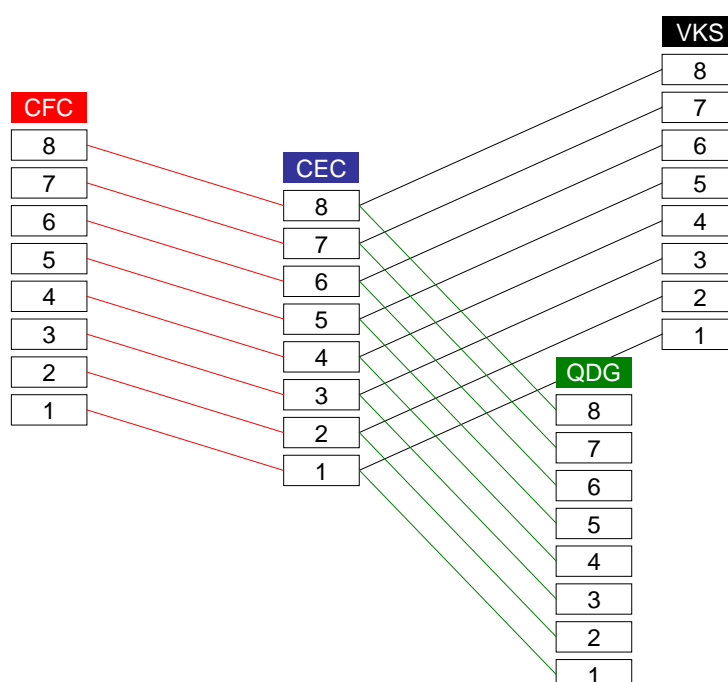
The three frameworks are structurally quite similar but have distincitive descriptors. They are formally linked through their reference to the EQF. However, considering the strong similarities, it is most unlikely to have level discrepancies for comparable qualifications. Contacts are well established between the communities, in particular within the professional sectors. This will allow the necessary regulation in order to harmonise the different level or make more objective the rationale behind potential discrepancies linked to disctinctive realities.

5.2.2. The CFC and the EQF

The descriptors of the CFC were designed with a view to unequivocal correspondence[30] between levels on the basis of the EQF descriptors, those of the VKS and, for Levels 5 to 8, on the basis of the Dublin descriptors. They were not designed abstractly. They were developed by drawing inspiration from the reality of learning outcomes as expressed in the reference systems defining qualifications in French-speaking Belgium.

The descriptors of a national framework are necessarily more detailed than those of a meta-framework[31] such as the EQF, which has to cover the various national realities, creating links between them.

Some elements of the CFC descriptors are not found directly in the EQF descriptors; others are very similar. The tables below summarise, level by level, the expressions that are similar in the two frameworks by highlighting them in the same colour.

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[30] This unequivocal correspondence meets the requirement of the governments, as expressed in the memorandum of 16 September 2010[4.2.1]

[31] Meta-framework : framework which link the national frameworks or systems of certification without any certification refers to it directly.

The CFC has not adopted descriptive elements concerning responsibility for others. This decision is connected with the fact that responsibility for others is not always explicitly assessed even though it is frequently developed in training programmes above level 4. In the CFC, the learning outcomes should reflect the generic descriptors in order to assign a level.

Correspondence can also be detected and verified by comparing the progression between levels for various descriptive elements, by examining each level and the two adjacent levels to identify those elements which, in varying, prove discriminative. The use of colour codes are an attempt to help visualise the parallel progression between the two frameworks.

1

	Knowledge, skills	Context, responsibility and autonomy
CFC	Knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how not referenced to a specific field of work or study, enabling the performance of simple and repetitive tasks in the reproduction of simple processes	Acting under direct supervision within a structured and defined context that is part of a non-specific work environment and/or field of study

	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
EQF	basic general knowledge	basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	work or study under direct supervision in a structured context

2

	Knowledge, skills	Context, responsibility and autonomy
CFC	Basic knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the performance of a set of tasks with no requirement to choose the methods/tools/equipment, in the application of simple and standard processes.	Acting under supervision in known and defined situations relating to a specific field of work or study, with a degree of responsibility limited to the execution of tasks

	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
EQF	basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study	basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools	work or study under supervision with some autonomy

3

	Knowledge, skills	Context, responsibility and autonomy
CFC	General knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the performance of a set of tasks involving the choice of methods/tools/equipment in the application of complex processes.	Acting with a degree of autonomy and responsibility limited to the choices presented and deployed in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which a limited number of factors vary.

	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
EQF	knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study	a range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems

4

	Knowledge, skills	Context, responsibility and autonomy
CFC	General knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the learner to seek out and select relevant information with the aim of mobilising and integrating knowledge/methods/practices to solve concrete problems where the indications are clear and where there are a finite and limited number of possible solutions.	Acting with a limited margin of initiative in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which a large number of predictable factors are likely to change, and with full responsibility for one's work.

	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
EQF	factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	a range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities

5

	Knowledge, skills	Context, responsibility and autonomy
CFC	Specialised knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the analysis, completion and articulation of information on the basis of the knowledge/methods/practices in one's specialised field, with the aim of reorganising it and devising appropriate solutions to solve abstract problems, where the indications are not clear and where multiple solutions are possible	Acting with a wide margin of initiative in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which changes are unpredictable, with full responsibility for one's work.

	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
EQF	comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change review and develop performance of self and others

6

	Knowledge, skills	Context, responsibility and autonomy
CFC	In-depth knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the learner to demonstrate understanding and critical use of the knowledge/methods/practices in his or her specialised field as well as the various dimensions and constraints of the situation, with the aim of formulating and/or implementing relevant (or new) solutions in solving complex problems or situations.	Acting with autonomy and full responsibility in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which changes are unpredictable.

	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
EQF	advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles	advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study	manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decisionmaking in unpredictable work or study contexts take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups

7

	Knowledge, skills	Context, responsibility and autonomy
CFC	Highly specialised knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study enabling the learner to demonstrate mastery and critical thinking in relation to the knowledge/methods/practices within his or her specialised field and at the interface with other specialised fields, with the aim of formulating and/or implementing innovative solutions in developing knowledge, plans (or procedures).	Acting with autonomy and full responsibility in new situations in a field of work or study and/or at the interface with several fields.

	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
EQF	highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields	specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams

8

	Knowledge, skills	Context, responsibility and autonomy
CFC	The most advanced knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study, or at the interface with several fields, enabling the learner to demonstrate recognised expertise in relation to the knowledge/methods/practices within his or her specialised field and at the interface with other specialised fields, with the aim of extending or redefining existing knowledge (and procedures) in research and/or innovation in a novel and significant way.	Acting with autonomy and full responsibility in the most advanced situations, at the forefront of a field of work or study and/or at the interface with several fields.

	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
EQF	knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields	the most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

5.3. Criterion 3[32]

The national qualifications framework or system and its qualifications are based on the principle and objective of learning outcomes and linked to arrangements for validation of non-formal and informal learning and, where these exist, to credit systems.

5.3.1. Learning outcomes[33]

The necessity of founding the CFC on the principle of learning outcomes forms the basis of its design. The creation of the CFC is part of a movement of reforms of the landscape of education and vocational training, one of the main characteristics of which is the **global transition to learning outcomes**.

Depending on the operator, this transition necessitated – and still does – either profound changes in the way qualifications are devised or adaptations to existing practices.

Another characteristic of this evolution consists in the proliferation of collaborations between different operators, collaborations that are based on the recognition of learning outcomes or on the development of shared reference systems.

5.3.1.1. Higher education

The 2008 Decree establishing a Higher Education Qualifications Framework for the French Community[3.3] makes only implicit reference to the notion of learning outcomes: the expression is only used to describe the generic descriptors of the framework[34]. No definition of the concept is present in the legal text. The procedures for implementing and putting a learning outcomes-based approach into practice in higher education are not specified.

Yet numerous field initiatives were already in existence. A number of educational establishments were aware of the need to develop the concept and some were involved in European projects in this area.

The situation has been transformed since then. In collaboration with the office of the Minister for Higher Education, a working group – made up of representatives of the universities, the university colleges, ESAs and the Directorate General for non-compulsory education and scientific research – focused its attention on the definition of new descriptors for higher education and on the procedures for putting the learning outcomes-based approach into practice.

A guide on the use of learning outcomes in higher education in the FWB[lii] was produced by the Bologna Experts Group, under the coordination of the Directorate General for non-compulsory education and scientific research. It consists of

- an explanation of the various frameworks applicable to higher education in the FWB (the European Higher Education Area Framework, the EQF, the Flemish Framework for Higher Education, the VKS, the Qualifications Framework for the French Community for higher education and the future CFC);

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[32] In this section, the official names of the qualifications awarded by the different providers are being used. Considering the diversity of the education and training landscape, there are many different names/terms being used: diplomas, qualifying certificates, skills credentials, apprenticeship certificates, business leader diploma, etc. In the field of the SFMQ, other names can be used for those qualificiations built on common reference systmes but delivered by distinct public authorities. The CFC will thus contribute to enhance the readibility of this complex system.

[33] In the original French version of this report, the French expression chosen as the equivalent of "learning outcomes" is "acquis d'apprentissage", in accordance with usage in French-speaking Belgium. This expression is officially used in legal texts.

[34] As explained above[3.3], the generic descriptors are directly taken from the EQF descriptors 6 to 8, which causes confusion and does nothing to facilitate the practical application of the framework.

- a glossary[35] setting out notions such as learning outcomes, qualifications framework, workload, competency, credit, cycle, etc.;

- bibliographical references;

- a review of experiences and good practice from the three types of higher education in the FWB;

- the identification of non-variables from these good practices.

The aim of the guide is to assist establishments in defining their learning outcome reference systems in accordance with the new decree provisions under preparation. These provisions, specified in the draft decree defining the higher education landscape and the academic organisation of studies, provide that each establishment should draft an **education profile**, a structured set of education units described in terms of learning outcomes and which fit into a **competences reference system**. The competences reference system thus constitutes a structured set of competences that are specific to a particular qualification, commonly shared by establishments offering the same qualification. Above and beyond this shared and structured set, centred on final competences, the establishments would have complete freedom to define the learning outcomes-based education profile specific to the qualification they award. The competences reference systems would be defined by a new body, the Academy for Research and Higher Education (ARES) intended to bring together the existing Councils (CIUF, CGHE, CSESA and the CSEPS). The ARES would also be tasked with verifying the coherence of and linkage between the education profiles, the competences reference systems, the generic descriptors of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework and any other provisions defined by the FWB and by federal and European laws relating to the exercise of a regulated profession.

For the university colleges, the preparatory work for these new provisions has already been carried out on a systematic basis. In September 2009, the General Council of the university colleges (CGHE) created a Competences working group with the aim of preparing a new definition of the Hautes Ecoles training provision. These new **competences reference systems**[36] have been drawn up for all the initial training programmes offered in HEs. They are intended to link to the CFC and to the Dublin descriptors.

5.3.1.2.   Education for Social Promotion (EPS)

The Decree of April 1991[xxiii] organises a modular education focused on student outcomes and permitting the recognition or validation of their outcomes. This structure for EPS clearly promotes the integration of the various European tools into its practices.

The modular organisation is based on the accumulation of learning outcomes.

The educational records common[37] to all EPS establishments are based on:

- the prior abilities required for entry to training;

- the abilities (knowledge, know-how and behavioural know-how) constituting the training programmes;

- **final abilities**, assessed, certified and defined with the **required degree of proficiency**.

The 1991 Decree also includes the notion of an **integrated test**, a study completion task presented at the end of the course, when all training units have been successfully completed. This integrated test combines all the abilities acquired, set in context.

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[35] This glossary was drawn up at the same time as the work of the Education and Training Council on the preparation of its Advice 110: "Learning outcomes, from concept to implementation: for a transparent and consistent approach in practices between education and vocational training providers"[vi]

[36] The competence reference systems developed by the CGHE can be consulted on the following webpage:
http://www.cghe.cfwb.be/index.php?id=1551

[37] Those education records can be consulted, for example, on the following webpage :
http://enseignement.catholique.be/segec/index.php?id=1026

Although the terminology used is different, the abilities-based approach anticipates, *de facto*, the learning outcomes-based approach.

Education for Social Promotion links to full-time higher or secondary education. EPS thus awards diplomas that correspond to full-time diplomas (CEB, CE2D, CQ6, CESS, Bachelor's and Master's, etc.). The correspondence between them is established by means of a comparison of learning outcomes.

EPS also awards specific diplomas, including BESs that correspond to a higher education short cycle qualification. EPS higher education qualifications are included in the Higher Education Qualifications Framework[3.3] where, like other diplomas, the BES will be described in terms of generic descriptors.

EPS is a partner of the SFMQ. It will therefore be required to adapt some if its educational records to the SFMQ training profiles, as they are produced.

5.3.1.3.   Primary and secondary education

Since the "Missions" Decree of 1997[ix], primary and secondary education has adopted a competences-based approach.

The competences to be acquired by various stages in schooling are fixed by the Parliament of the FWB.

These competences-based reference systems are organised into study programmes approved by the Minister following the Advice of a Programmes Committee[38], the Steering Committee, General Consultation councils and trade union organisations.

The study programmes are reference systems of learning situations, learning content, compulsory or optional, and methodological guidelines that an organising authority defines in order to achieve the competences set by the Government for a year, a grade or a cycle.

For the common core curriculum, the outcomes at 12 years of age (certified by the CEB) and at 14 years of age (certified by the CE1D) are defined by **foundation competences**[39]: a reference system presenting in a structured way the basic competences to be exercised up to the end of the first eight years of compulsory schooling, as well as those to be mastered at the end of each stage because they are regarded as necessary for social integration or continued studies.

For general training after the common core curriculum, the **final competences**[40] are defined, for both transition education and for qualifying education, at the end of the third cycle of secondary school. They consist of a reference system presenting in a structured way the competences that are to be mastered to a given level by the end of secondary school.

The final competences are currently undergoing revision. They will make more explicit reference to the knowledge, know-how and behavioural know-how underlying the competences and context in which they are exercised.

For qualifying training, the reference systems have until recently been defined very recently by the CCPQ. A large number of them are still in force[41]. They are made up of **qualification profiles** that describe the activities and competences exercised by skilled workers as found in business and industry

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[38] There are four Programme Committees:
- one for primary education and the first cycle
- one for transition education
- one for qualification education
- one for special education

[39] Those foundation competences can be consulted on the following webpage :
http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=24737

[40] The final competences can be consulted on the following webpage: http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=25189

[41] Those profiles can be consulted on the following page of the SFMQ website:
http://www.sfmq.cfwb.be/index.php?id=productions.

and **training profiles** that present, in a structured way, the competences to be acquired with a view to obtaining a qualification certificate.

The CCPQ profiles will gradually be replaced by the profiles produced by the SFMQ.

5.3.1.4. Vocational training

The basic mission of vocational training is to train for employment. This strong link between training and the practice of a profession leads to a results-based approach. Vocational training has therefore naturally developed its reference systems as learning outcomes defined in response to professional activities and the competences required to accomplish them.

With a view to implementing the CFC, vocational training operators have formalised the procedures for learning outcome definition, assessment and certification.

Since 2010, the FOREM, Bruxelles Formation and the IFAPME have developed a shared system of assessment and qualification, the **recognition of competences acquired through training** (RECAF), on the basis of which a certificate of competences acquired through training can be issued to learners.

The RECAF consists of a competences-based approach:

- the RECAF is based on practical tests and reconstructed work-based scenarios;

- assessment is based on competences and the integration of resources: knowledge, know-how and behavioural know-how;

- the process focuses on results and on learning outcomes with reference to the needs of the labour market, which is in line with the basic mission for vocational training;

- assessment is normative; it is based on criteria, indicators and success levels that define the standard to be attained;

- the process is consistent with a referential approach that links the definition of learning outcomes, their assessment and their certification.

For the IFAPME and the SFPME, the RECAF supplements their certification system which consists of the apprenticeship certificate and the business leadership diploma, a system which is also based on competences.

The approaches in the reference systems of the various public vocational training operators present significant similarities with one another.

The starting point is the occupation. The occupation is described in terms of activities and then in terms of the competences required to perform them. The competences are broken down into knowledge, know-how and behavioural know-how. The training operator then specifies the learning outcomes that will effectively be developed during the training and puts in place teaching activities designed to achieve them. For work/study training, at present this involves defining what is to be acquired at work and at the training centre. Although formative assessments take place during training, integrative normative tests are organised at the end of the learning outcome units that represent a coherent set of competences leading to employment in a given professional sector.

There are at present multiple references permitting the definition of an occupation:

- ROME, version 3, is used as the starting point for all public employment services in Belgium;

- the REM[42], produced by the FOREM;

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[42] The FOREM has developed a directory of occupations, the Répertoire Emploi Métier (REM). This was created on the basis of ROME, following its nomenclature but adding an "occupations" category. The REM is used by the services of FOREM Conseil

- the COROME[43], produced by ACTIRIS;

- the old profiles of the CCPQ;

- sector profiles.

With the formation and development of the SFMQ, the referential approach adopted by operators will be considerably truncated and simplified for the reference systems produced by the SFMQ. Operators will take up all or part of the SFMQ training profile in order to produce their own training and assessment reference systems, defined in terms of learning outcomes.

5.3.1.5. The CVDC[3.8]

Writing validation reference systems is one of the missions of the CVDC.

Before the SFMQ was set up and before the development of shared reference systems, the CVDC had to produce competences reference systems to be used as a basis for the preparation of validation reference systems. They were constructed from the ROME sheets, the CCPQ qualification profiles and the REM and COROME sheets[5.3.1.4].

The competences reference system[44] describes the essential aspects of a profession's key activities and associated competences. Compared with a more comprehensive occupation reference system, only those activities that are indispensable for practising the occupation are included. This competences reference system also shows a breakdown into competency units. The unit breakdown was carried out in collaboration with the public employment services according to the degree of employability corresponding to the competency credential.

The validation reference systems describe the methods for assessing competences. These reference systems describe the test situation and the task, since accreditation involves work-based tests based on reconstructed scenarios. All the resources necessary for the test (material resources, human resources, equipment, consumables), the length of the test, the conditions and the assessment indicators are also defined. The reference systems are shared across all validation centres.

The competence credentials are the culmination of a process of assessment and certification of non-formal and informal learning outcomes.

5.3.1.6. The SFMQ[3.8]

The need for shared reference systems for qualifying education in the FWB and for the regional public vocational training operators had previously been highlighted by the CEF in 1997 in an Advice[liii] on the validation of competences which inspired the formation of the CVDC in 2003[xl]. This need was reasserted in 1999 in an Advice[liv] aiming to redeploy the CCPQ. This was finally given practical expression in a cooperation agreement in 2009, under which the SFMQ was created[xlii].

The production of these shared reference systems broadly follows the diagram below:

(the FOREM's public employment service branch). FOREM Formation and FOREM Conseil group the activities of the REM into competency units. All modules, training certificates and accreditation and screening certificates are referenced to the basic activities set out in the REM and the competency units in the competences reference system category and against the specific activities in the REM or the competences reference system. It is used as one reference among others by the various Belgian employment agencies, by other vocational training operators and by the CVDC

43 ACTIRIS has developed "COROME", a set of occupation sheets adapted to the socio-economic situation of the Brussels-Capital Region, on the basis of the ROME and COBRA sheets used by the VDAB. (COBRA=COmpetenties en Beroepen Repertorium voor de Arbeidsmarkt)

44 Those competences reference systems can be consulted on the following webpage: http://www.cvdc.be/fr/usager/metiers-disponibles/metiers.html

Partenaires sociaux	SFMQ Chambre des Métiers (Coref)	SFMQ Chambre Enseignement Formation (Coprofor)	Opérateurs	Opérateurs	Partenaires sociaux
Profil sectoriel	Profil métier	Profil formation + Profil d'évaluation + Profil d'équipement	Profil de certification	Référentiels + Certificats	Utilisation des certificats

The occupation profiles are drawn up by the social partners in the presence of representatives of the public employment services within the Occupations Chamber. An occupation profile consists of an occupation reference system (setting out the activities relating to the occupation) and a vocational competences reference system. Each occupation fits into an occupations tree structure inspired by ROME.

The education and vocational training operators, grouped together within the Education and Training Chamber, use the occupation profiles to define training profiles which are organised into learning outcome units. Assessment and equipment profiles are also produced by the Education and Training Chamber[45]. The mapping of the training profiles to the occupation profiles is verified by the Occupation Chamber.

Whether concerned with education, training or validation, the operators certify all or some of the learning outcome units on the basis of a certification profile, whose compliance with the training profile has been verified by the SFMQ. It is used as the basis for reference systems or programmes defining in operational terms the learning activities and the normative learning outcome assessment methods or, for the CVDC, the validation reference system

5.3.2. Credits

The CFC is a qualifications framework and does not constitute a system of credits. It is the qualifications that will be positioned within the framework rather than their constituent credits or units. If it is to be positioned, a qualification must consist of a **significant and coherent set of learning outcomes consistent with the missions of the operator**[4.3.5]. A set of credits or units will only be positioned if it satisfies this criterion (or, where appropriate, a unit may be positioned which alone satisfies it and thereby constitutes a qualification).

5.3.2.1. ECTS credits in higher education

Whether full-time or social promotion-related, higher education is organised into ECTS credits corresponding to the time spent by the learner on a learning activity as part of a study programme. Among other goals, this organisation aims to facilitate student mobility.

Although the credits initially corresponded to sets of learning activities, they will gradually come to correspond to sets of learning outcomes upon completion of the ongoing process to define new reference systems in higher education.

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[45] In practice, both Chambers approve the reference systems which are drawn up by committees set up for this purpose: occupation reference system committees (CoRef) for the Occupations Chamber and a training profile committee (CoProFor) for the Education and Training Chamber.

All qualifications awarded in higher education always correspond to a set of credits. Academic degrees are associated with defined numbers of credits[3.3]. Higher education certificates, which recognise continuing or supplementary training outside of an academic degree, also correspond to these credits.

Finally, every learning activity is subject to an evaluation and valorisation in terms of credits whose transferability for study purposes for example, is fully guaranteed, as the credit system applies to all higher education institutions of the FWB and more broadly of the EHEA.

5.3.2.2. Education for Social Promotion (EPS)

Since 1991[xxiii], EPS has been organised in a modular fashion. This type of organisation is first and foremost a pedagogical organisation which makes it possible to offer flexible learning pathways to adults attending EPS. The modular structure is characterised by a set of training units that are inter-connected: some units are prerequisites for those that follow; others can be followed in parallel. The certificates and diplomas awarded by EPS providers are issued following an integrated test covering all the learning outcomes of the units, leading to the final abilities fixed for that section (determinative training units). The modular structure is common across EPS establishments, which allows student mobility between them.

For higher education for social promotion, the breakdown into training units is compatible with the ECTS credits structure.

As the SFMQ training profiles are developed, the breakdown into training units will have to be adapted, with one or more learning outcome units of the SFMQ training profile corresponding to one or more EPS training units.

5.3.2.3. Certification by units (CPU)

The primary objective of CPU[x] is pedagogical. It aims to enhance the motivation and success of learners by certifying learning as they progress. It does not constitute an "à la carte" training offer for the learner: all learners must achieve the outcomes of the same units in order to obtain the final qualification. The flexibility[46] lies in the establishment's organisation of the training with the goal of helping pupils to achieve success step by step, by providing immediate remedial work where necessary. All units must be completed in the course of the cycle. For learners who fail to achieve the objective within the specified time, suitable additional training will be organised in an additional year.

Since the various units only constitute steps towards final qualification, it is only the final qualification that will be positioned in the CFC.

A second objective concerns the integration of CPU into lifelong learning. The qualification profiles are based on the SFMQ training profiles. This guarantees common references for qualifying secondary education and for education and training operators. The use of the same breakdown into units will allow learners who leave their training early to pursue training with other operators without losing their partial achievements. This breakdown in learning units strictly follows the ECVET principles and constitutes thus its implementation.

5.3.2.4. Vocational training

Some vocational training operators have provided a modular offer for some time, long before the institution of a systematic organisation of learning outcomes assessment and qualification through the RECAF[5.3.1.4] system.

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[46] Where appropriate, the certifications reference system imposes a sequence for certain units when the outcomes of one constitute prerequisites for others. Outside the constraints associated with learning progression, the establishment is at liberty to fix its own time organisation.

This system incorporates the notion of credits and constitutes unit-based assessment. Qualification is structured into units which have meaning in the labour market. These units can be accumulated: the successful completion of each unit is evidenced on the certificate of competences acquired through training, which takes the form of a "passport". This certificate sets out a list of the learning outcome units making up the entire training programme. The passing of each test is also recorded on it.

For training programmes linked to an SFMQ profile, the breakdown into learning outcome units will be common across the various qualifying education and vocational training operators, and also the CVDC, which will facilitate the fluidity of citizens' learning pathways.

5.3.2.5. The SFMQ

As explained above[5.3.1.6], the SFMQ produces training profiles common across all qualifying education operators (qualifying secondary education and EPS), vocational training operators (the FOREM, Bruxelles Formation, the IFAPME and the SFPME) and the CVDC. These profiles consist of learning outcome units.

Where an SFMQ training profile exists, the qualification profiles of the aforementioned operators must refer to it, containing all or some of the learning outcome units from the training profile.

If it is to be positioned in the CFC, a qualification must comprise a significant and coherent set of learning outcomes that are consistent with the missions of the operator[5.4.1].

This latter condition will be fulfilled automatically if the qualification covers all the units of the training profile[47]. In this case, all the qualifications relating to the profile will be positioned at the same level in the CFC.

The reference to the same learning outcome units creates links between products developed by different operators. The learning outcome units that make up the SFMQ training profiles thus constitute a credits system that helps to link learners' progressive achievements, assessed according to shared standards defined by the SFMQ, to education-related and vocational training qualifications and to the CVDC competences credentials.

This breakdown in learning units strictly follows the ECVET principles and constitutes thus its implementation.

5.3.3. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning

It is important to distinguish between

- the **recognition of learning** which consists in allowing access to a training programme without the required credential or in granting dispensation from sections of a training programme on the basis of professional or personal experience;

- the **validation of learning** which consists in an assessment of the learning acquired from professional or personal experience leading to an official credential.

In the first case, the process of recognition of learning only opens the way to a qualification following success in the final assessment test of learning during training for which access and/or dispensation have been granted on the basis of experience.

In the second case, the validation process contributes directly to the certification of learning.

5.3.3.1. Recognition of learning in higher education

Full-time higher education practises the **recognition of learning acquired through experience** (VAE)[48].

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[47] In fact, in this case, the certification meets an occupation profile approved by the social partners within the Occupations Chamber and therefore constitutes a *certification that is consistent with a significant and coherent set of learning outcomes leading to at least one occupation or to a job and approved by an authority that includes the social partners*[0].

The Decree organising higher education[xvi] authorises

- access to the second cycle without a formal credential based on a minimum of five years of professional or personal experience;

- the granting of dispensations for both the first and second cycle provided at least 60 credits have been attained within the higher education institution.

As regards the universities, the "lifelong learning" (ETALV) committee of the CIUF has developed an inter-university platform[lv] with the aim of informing the public about the VAE procedure, ensuring equal treatment of VAE applicants through the harmonisation of procedures, creating a network of partnerships, promoting the sharing of practice between universities, etc. This platform includes members of the ETALV committee and the VAE advisors from various universities.

As regards the Hautes Ecoles, a unit[lvi] for VAE has been set up by the CGHE. Among other goals, its purpose is the convergence of procedures and the sharing of good practice. The portal refers applicants to HE VAE advisors. It also offers common dossiers for VAE applicants either for Bachelor level studies or Master level studies. The recognition of experience can lead to dispensations for specific education activities or to access to an appropriate 60-credit programme, in accordance with legal requirements.

5.3.3.2.   The case of Education for Social Promotion (EPS)

Since 1991[xxiii], EPS has incorporated the possibility of taking learning acquired through experience into consideration for admission, the granting of dispensation and the certification of studies.

The EPS decree therefore authorises

- either **recognition of learning acquired through experience**

  o by granting access to training units on the basis of proficiency in abilities acquired through prior experience, in the absence of credentials in lieu thereof;

  o by granting dispensation for all or part of the learning activities of a training unit;

- or the issuance of a certificate relating to given units [5.3.2.2] of a section, on the basis of experience, and thus permitting direct access to the integrated test. The certificate or diploma certifying a section of the EPS programme can therefore be gained by presenting this test alone, which equates to real **validation of learning acquired through experience**.

As regards the competency credentials awarded by the CDVC, these are recognised and taken into account within EPS training pathways, with no additional test, which leads either to the recognition of prior learning or to the validation of determining training unit(s).

5.3.3.3.   The CVDC

As explained above[3.7], the CVDC organises, on the basis of common validations reference systems, the award of competency credentials by approved validation centres on behalf of the three executives of the FWB, Wallonia and the COCOF. These credentials contribute directly to the qualification. This is therefore a question of **validation of learning acquired through experience**.

These credentials are designed to allow either access to employment (reputation effect) or the continuation of training with one of the operators participating in the scheme (EPS, FOREM, Bruxelles Formation, IFAPME and SFPME) by taking the learning evidenced by the competency credential into consideration, with no additional test, with the aim of obtaining a certification awarded by one of these operators.

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[48] Not to be confused with the VAE practised in France, which does contribute directly to the award of certifications.

5.4. Criterion 4

The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national qualifications framework or for describing the place of qualifications in the national qualification system are transparent.

5.4.1. Positioning criteria

To allow its positioning in the CFC, a qualification must satisfy the following criteria:

- **admissibility**: the qualifications must be recognised and accredited by the public authorities and must be awarded by public education and training operators in their capacity as competent authorities;

- **pertinence to the missions of the organisation**: one of the three criteria below must be fulfilled:

  o **integration into the labour market**: the qualification relates to a significant and coherent set of learning outcomes leading to at least one occupation or to a job and approved by an authority that includes the social partners;

  o **continuation of a learning pathway**: the qualification relates to a significant and coherent set of learning outcomes that can be accumulated in order to develop new learning outcomes as defined by the public authorities and/or negotiated between the competent authorities;

  o **expansion and/or specialisation of learning outcomes**: the qualification relates to a coherent set of learning outcomes that is significant for professional or personal development, as defined by the public authorities and/or the competent authority;

- **assessment of learning outcomes**: the qualification is the result of a formal assessment process whereby a competent authority establishes that the learner's learning outcomes meet a given standard;

- **existence of one or more quality assurance systems**: these systems are consistent with the quality assurance principles of the CFC[5.5.2].

5.4.2. Determination of level

The choice of level, whether or not it is prescribed by legal provisions, will be justified by comparing

- either the learning outcomes of the qualification directly...

- or the generic elements characteristic of a set of qualifications...

... with the generic descriptors of the CFC, clearly and in summary form explaining their correspondence to the level selected, by examining the seven questions underlying the descriptors[4.3.3].

In order to facilitate this task, the descriptors table can be reorganised so as to place explicit emphasis on the seven questions, grouped into three categories:

	1	2			3		
	What?	To do what?	About what?	To what end/in what context?	With what degree of autonomy?	In what situation?	With what responsibility?
	Knowledge, Know-how, behavioural know-how	to permit		in the context of	Acting		
1	Not referenced to a specific field of work or study	the performance of tasks	simple and repetitive	the reproduction of simple processes	under direct supervision	in a structured and defined context within a non-specific working environment and/or field of study	

2	basic knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how in a specific field of work or study	the performance of a set of tasks	with no requirement to choose the methods/tools/equipment	the application of simple and standard processes.	under supervision	in known and defined situations relating to a specific field of work or study	with a degree of responsibility limited to the execution of tasks
3	General knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study		involving the choice of methods/tools/equipment	the application of complex processes.	with a degree of autonomy limited to the choices presented	and deployed in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which a limited number of factors vary.	with a degree of responsibility limited to the choices presented
4		the seeking out and selecting of relevant information	with the aim of mobilising and integrating knowledge/method**s**/practices	solving concrete problems where the indications are clear and where there are a finite and limited number of possible solutions	with a limited margin of initiative	in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which a large number of predictable factors are likely to change	with full responsibility for one's work
5	Specialised knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study	the analysis, completion and articulation of information on the basis of the knowledge/methods/practices in one's specialised field	with the aim of reorganising it and devising appropriate solutions	solving abstract problems, where the indications are not clear and where multiple solutions are possible	with a wide margin of initiative	in situations characteristic of a field of work or study in which changes are unpredictable	
6	In-depth knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study	the demonstration of understanding and critical use of the knowledge/methods/practices in his or her specialised field as well as the various dimensions and constraints of the situation	with the aim of formulating and/or implementing relevant (or new) solutions	solving complex problems or situations	with autonomy		with full responsibility
7	Highly specialised knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study	the demonstration of mastery and critical thinking in relation to the knowledge/methods/practices within his or her specialised field and at the interface with other specialised fields	with the aim of formulating and/or implementing innovative solutions	developing knowledge, plans (or procedures).		in new situations in a field of work or study and/or at the interface with several fields	
8	The most advanced knowledge, know-how, behavioural know-how within a specific field of work or study, or at the interface with several fields	the demonstration of recognised expertise in relation to the knowledge/methods/practices within his or her specialised field and at the interface with other specialised fields	with the aim of, in a novel and significant way, extending or redefining existing knowledge (and procedures)	in research and/or innovation		in the most advanced situations, at the forefront of a field of work or study and/or at the interface with several fields	

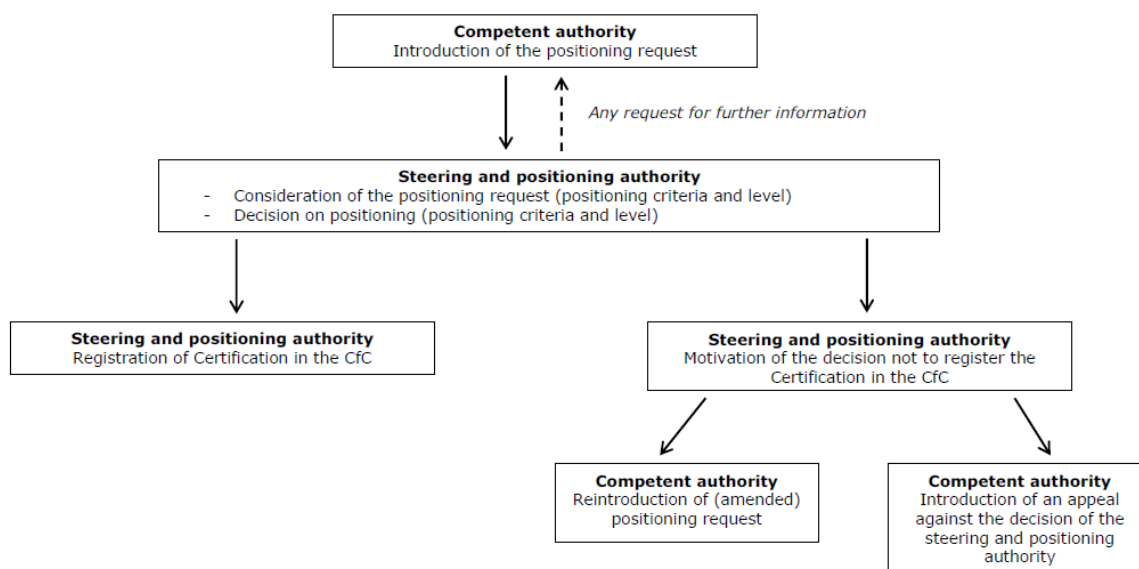### 5.4.3. 'Qualification by qualification' positioning [4.3.5]

For each qualification, a sheet will be completed and submitted to the positioning authority.

The sheet will show the following information:

- the title of the qualification;

- the verification of the criteria by which the certification can be positioned:

  o identification and status of the competent authority, evidenced by *reference to the legal text providing for its creation*;

  o the relevance of the qualification to the missions of the competent authority, determining the appropriate criterion[5.4.1] and making reference to *a dated notice from the competent authority providing evidence of its relevance*;

  o the existence of certified learning outcomes assessment standards, making reference to *the assessed and certified learning outcomes reference systems*;

  o the existence of quality procedures relating to the assessment and certification of learning outcomes, making reference to *the quality procedures concerning the assessment and certification of learning outcomes*;

- the level of the qualification:

  o the proposed level for the qualification;

  o justification for the level proposed for the qualification on the basis of *certified learning outcomes assessment standards*, drafted in summary form such that it is contextualised in relation to the descriptors of the level, grouped into three categories[5.4.2].

The documents printed in italics will be made available to the positioning authority.

The decision made by the positioning authority will follow the following flowchart:

5.4.4. 'Block' positioning[4.3.5]

For both existing and new qualifications, block positioning applies where elements characteristic of a set of qualifications permit the positioning, *ex ante*, of all those qualifications.

Block positioning is justified by the same criteria[5.4.1] and the same requirement to match the generic descriptors[5.4.2] as qualification by qualification positioning. The only differences are prior evidence of conformity to the criteria and consistency with the descriptors.

Block positioning consists of a process of registering qualifications with the steering and positioning body. It is based on a procedure whereby all information relevant to positioning in the CFC can be provided, based on

- the legal provisions relating to the qualifications to be registered;
- the definition, assessment and certification of learning outcomes in the light of the legal provisions in force relating to the "creation" of a new qualification;
- the main quality assurance mechanisms.

Qualifications relating to a full SFMQ training profile will be positioned by applying a similar procedure.

In fact, although the training profiles produced by the SFMQ do not directly define qualifications, the fact that they are drafted in terms of learning outcomes and the existence of assessment profiles make it possible to link them to a CFC level.

All qualifications based on a full profile under a recognised competent authority that applies a quality assurance system compliant with the quality assurance principles of the CFC[5.5.2] will therefore be positioned at the same pre-established level, on the basis of a notice confirming the conformity of their qualification profile to the training profile; this notice is issued by the SFMQ[5.3.1.6].

In fact, this compliance notice allows *ex ante* positioning and the application of block qualification.

5.4.5. Transition and operational phases

As soon as the CFC is effectively in place, it is important that a large number of qualifications can be positioned rapidly in order to render the framework immediately operational. This necessitates a transition phase.

For education related qualifications, the Ministry of the FWB (and its departments with competence for compulsory education, special education, Education for Social Promotion and higher education) will take responsibility for the overall registration of existing education related qualifications. For vocational qualifications, the competent authorities will prepare requests for positioning on the basis of the methodological form proposed so that these qualifications can be registered at the same time as education related qualifications.

Then, during the operational phase, the positioning processes will have to be fine-tuned and adjusted to future legal provisions in this area. They will also have to be evaluated and adapted under a quality assurance process as stipulated below[5.5].

5.4.6. Steering and positioning authority

The composition of and the roles assigned to the steering and positioning authority, whose missions were broadly outlined above[4.3.6], have been defined in the governements agreement, on which the legal texts will be based. Some elements of principle that are constitutive to this future authority are agreed: the authority will not be both "gamekeeper and poacher"; its neutrality and its transversal expertise (reflecting the education and training sectors in French-speaking Belgium) are guaranteed.

5.5. Criterion 5

The national quality assurance system(s) for education and training refer(s) to the national qualifications framework or system and are consistent with the relevant European principles and guidelines (as indicated in annex 3 of the Recommendation). In its Advice 110[vi], the CEF recommends putting quality procedures in place at two distinct levels:

- first, between training and assessment/validation, in line with the learning outcomes;

- second, between the competences and/or learning outcomes reference systems and societal expectations.
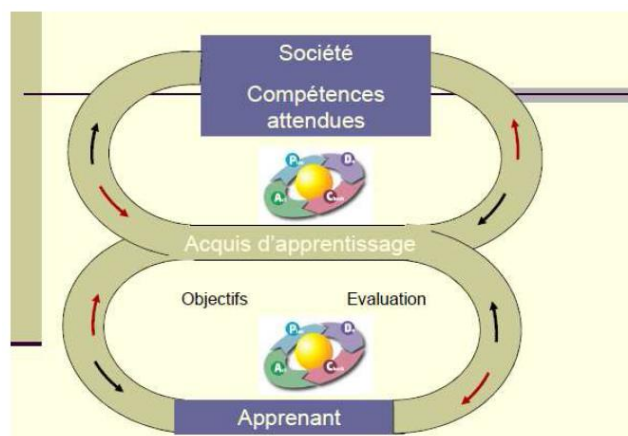
This diagram shows the place of quality assurance procedures, as guarantees of continual feedback between the expectations of society and the learning outcomes, on the one hand, and between the learning outcomes and assessment and learner training, on the other.

The upper loop concerns the definition of learning outcomes[5.3.1] by each operator in the light of its missions. The definition of these outcomes makes it possible to position the qualifications at CFC level. Guaranteeing the quality of this positioning constitutes an *ex ante* procedure. The positioning methodologies[5.4] defined by the Experts Group trace the broad outlines of the procedures to be put in place by the steering and positioning committee. These must be defined in operational terms, implemented, assessed and adjusted. It will be the authority's responsibility to manage the quality of this process, both internally and externally, by means of auditing.

The lower loop concerns education, training and validation operators whose task is to assess and certify the learning outcomes. The quality of this assessment and certification process is guaranteed by an *ex post* procedure. This depends on the operators' own quality assurance systems. They must adhere to common principles if consistency is to be maintained.

These two procedures, *ex ante* and *ex post*, are to be found in the definition adopted by the Quality[4.3.4] technical group: quality assurance relating to the qualifications framework is intended to guarantee the learning outcomes assessment and certification process on the basis of reference systems and also the process of positioning qualifications at a level of the framework in order to promote mutual trust between operators, in respect of education and training recipients and society through a quality assurance that implements policies and procedures.

The Quality technical group focused primarily on the *ex post* procedure as the *ex ante* procedure falls mainly within the scope of positioning methodologies and the operation of the future steering and positioning authority.

5.5.1. The quality assurance systems in French-speaking Belgium

As set out above[4.3.4], the technical group identified three approaches to quality assurance among all the operators:

- an **external and formative assessment approach** for higher education programmes, implemented by the Agency for quality assessment in higher education (AEQES);

- a legal **assessment and inspection procedure** implemented by the General Inspectorate for basic, secondary, special and social promotion education in particular; this approach is also implemented by the IFAPME/SFPME through the Training Directorate whose role is to inspect training centres;

- an **assessment and compliance certification approach** of a quality assurance system that measures compliance against a pre-established ISO type standard implemented for training operators.

5.5.1.1. The Agency for quality assessment in higher education (AEQES)

The AEQES is an independent public service and a full member of the European ENQA network, and is included on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR); it practises formative assessment based on a dialogue between all stakeholders within the FWB. Fully in line with the European context, the Agency reports on the quality of higher education and works towards its continuous improvement.

The Agency has complete independence to plan procedures for assessing the quality of the Bachelor's and Master's degrees awarded by institutions accredited by the FWB, for all types of higher education including Education for Social Promotion. It draws up a schedule of course assessments on a ten-yearly basis, ensuring that courses are grouped together appropriately with the aim of encouraging the clarification of profiles and training objectives in line with the missions of the establishments, of disseminating good practice and of promoting the creation of synergies.

The Agency organises assessment and monitoring procedures, chooses its experts, informs them of their mission and context and ensures that they work with total independence.

There are three phases to the Agency's assessment process: internal assessment, external assessment and monitoring.

The internal assessment or preparation phase culminates in the drafting of a self-assessment report by the establishments being assessed. The framework for this report is defined in a list of reference indicators. This list of reference indicators was revised in 2012 with the explicit inclusion of the notions of learning outcomes and a qualifications framework[lvii].

The external assessment consists of an external examination and a closing phase. A panel of experts, appointed by the Agency, inspects the higher education establishments concerned on the basis of their self-assessment report. For each establishment assessed, the assessment report containing a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis plus recommendations is published on the Agency's website.

A transversal report consisting of a contextualised presentation of the curriculum under assessment is also published on the Agency's website.

The aim of the monitoring phase is to anchor the quality assurance process and to ensure that it remains a long-term priority. Within six months of the publication of the summary reports on the Agency's website, each institution provides the Agency with a monitoring action plan in line with a predefined model. These plans are published on the Agency's website and are directly linked to the corresponding assessment report.

The AEQES follows European references, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance.

5.5.1.2.   Inspectorate in education

Since the 2007 Decree, the Inspectorate has been reorganised and it now represents a major element for the education system in terms of quality. The Inspectorate is competent for primary and secondary education as well as for the education for social promotion and the arts higher education. The higher education for social promotion and the arts higher education are thus subject to two quality assurance systems: the AEQES and the Inspectorate.

While this service is important, so are the teaching support services and units which were created at the same time as the General Inspectorate. Each education network has its own advice and teaching support unit or service.

The mission of the Inspectorate is to verify that general objectives, the objectives set by the Missions Decree and all reference systems are being adhered to. The Inspectorate is regularly present in schools. It carries out observations either of a class, an option or, gradually, over several levels of education. Today there are also joint assignments covering basic and secondary schools in order to examine the transition between the two levels.

The Inspectorate's work has three main focuses:

- adherence to the programmes approved by the Government,
- the appropriateness of activities to the competences in the reference systems,
- the consistency of assessment practices.

These major focuses are found in the Inspectorate's various reports. Reports are produced

- at establishment level, and are communicated to the establishments,
- at global level, in the form of subject or discipline reports and in the form of a general annual report.

Each of these reports sets out the strong points, the weak points and the areas for improvement.

The establishment report mentions whether the effectiveness and the quality of the system are satisfactory or not. If not, each organising authority must implement an improvement process addressing the findings of the Inspectorate. This is where the teaching support units and services come into play. They are manned by teams of teachers who, in particular, specialise in supporting schools with their response to the findings of the Inspectorate. The Inspectorate then conducts a return inspection and indicates to the establishment how far it has progressed in relation to the targets set for it.

The obligation to use management tools within establishments is gradually appearing in legislation. This applies to 25% of schools, for example; those under differentiated staff, those who receive additional resources to achieve their objectives concerning an intake recognised as underprivileged. A global differentiated education plan must, among other things, be made available to the Inspectorate and a monitoring report imposed after a certain number of years in terms of assessment. The same system is proposed around CPU; this consists of a plan for implementing CPU which is an initial management tool and also an assessment tool. This plan provides for criteria and indicators on which assessment of the process will be based.

As regards quality assurance, Education for Social Promotion is subject to the Inspectorate, which guarantees the level of studies, and to the AEQES for higher education. The Higher EPS council has also developed a quality guide covering general principles and proposing procedures aimed at promoting internal quality assurance within establishments.

5.5.1.3. Quality assurance in vocational training

The various vocational training operators have all adopted a global approach to ISO type quality assurance. The FOREM and Bruxelles Formation are ISO 9001 certified and the IFAPME is in the process of becoming so. Although not certified, the CVDC has adopted the same type of approach.

This is therefore a global quality assurance that encompasses all aspects of the operation of the training and accreditation bodies. The consequence of guaranteeing the quality of all processes is to guarantee the quality of the qualifications. This covers both the strategic management of the training or validation process and the learner's entire experience with the operator, from the information he or she receives to support for employment readiness.

The principles and methods of operation are fixed in shared and accredited written procedures approved by all institution[s] and all staff. Indicators permit assessment of their implementation and their adaptation for continuous improvement.

The key processes from the viewpoint of the CFC – namely the processes of defining learning outcomes reference systems, assessment or validation reference systems and the assessment and qualification procedures – are processes subject to global quality assurance. As regards the procedure implemented by RECAF[5.3.1.4], procedures are already shared by several vocational training operators.

To this must be added the assessment and inspection procedure traditionally implemented in training for small and medium sized enterprises (IFAPME/SFPME) through the Training Directorate which is responsible for inspecting training centres.

The vocational training operators have embarked on an evolution towards common pedagogical quality assurance which supplements internal quality systems and which is intended to lead to an external inspection of the training arrangements, that is to say, the training, assessment and certification processes. This joint work is progressing in accordance with the principles of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF) recommendation[xxx].

5.5.2. Quality assurance principles within the context of the CFC

As explained above[4.3.4], it has been deemed appropriate for the present to retain different quality assurance systems or approaches. With this in mind, it will be necessary to develop a common internal structure within the steering and positioning authority that will pursue two main missions:

- to guarantee the quality of the process of positioning qualifications within the CFC (*ex ante* approach);

- to promote a convergence/harmonisation of the quality assurance systems, approaches and procedures *ex post*, in relation to the common general systems for quality assurance within the CFC.

These principles, broadly inspired by the principles of Annex III of the European recommendation[li**Error! Bookmark not defined.**], are as follows:

Principle 1:

Quality assurance underlies all the levels of the French-speaking qualifications framework (CFC). In view of the diversity of education, training and validation operators, in particular as regards their structures, their missions and their target publics, quality assurance systems coexist within the French-speaking qualifications framework.

Principle 2:

Quality assurance forms an integral part of the mission of the education, training and validation establishments or operators. Quality assurance falls under the responsibility of entities which

implement education programmes and training or validation reference systems and which assess learning outcomes.

Principle 3:

Quality assurance consists of the regular assessment of education, training and validation establishments or operators, and also of their programmes or quality assurance systems, by external inspection bodies or agencies.

Principle 4:

These bodies or agencies are themselves subject to regular inspections by third-party organisations.

Principle 5:

In particular, quality assurance covers contexts, inputs, processes and outputs, giving priority to the products and outcomes of education, training and validation.

Principle 6:

Quality assurance systems encompass the following in particular:

▪ procedures for implementation, including the participation of stakeholders;

▪ appropriate resources;

▪ consistent assessment methods, combining self-assessment and external assessment;

▪ feedback mechanisms and procedures for the purposes of improvement;

▪ widely accessible assessment results.

Each education, training or validation establishment or operator puts in place a quality assurance system that encompasses the points above in the light of its own specific features, and that contributes to a learning outcomes-based approach.

The learning outcomes-based approach will include:

▪ a definition of the learning outcomes;

▪ the methods of assessing the learning outcomes;

▪ the procedures for certifying the learning outcomes.

Principle 7:

Quality assurance is a cooperative process which, for each education, training and validation level and system, involves the stakeholders concerned.

Principle 8:

Initiatives relating to quality assurance are coordinated at CFC level by taking into account the European principles on quality for education, training and validation.

Principle 9:

Guidance on quality assurance at European and international level can constitute points of reference for the development of quality assurance systems for the CFC.

Each operator therefore undertakes where necessary to modify its own quality assurance system with the aim of complying in full with these principles.

In the course of the Quality technical group's work, each operator performed a SWOT analysis of its quality assurance system or approach against the principles set out in Annex III. Elements of convergence and divergence were identified.

Over and above these elements, **although each system appears effectively appropriate and relevant** in its own context for the purposes of meeting the specific needs of each operator, **points for improvement and development will have to be implemented** in order to comply with the general principles. These incorporate:

- the introduction of **external** approach within the quality assurance system or approach;

- **accessibility and publicity** regarding the results of the quality assurance system or approach;

- **strengthening of the impact(s)** of the quality assurance system or approach on the operator, in particular by ensuring a reasonable time period between two assessments, monitoring of action plans, etc.;

- **the involvement of stakeholders**, both internal and external;

- **a learner-centred approach** involving in particular the definition, assessment and certification of learning outcomes within the quality assurance system or approach.

5.6. Criterion 6

The referencing process shall include the stated agreement of the relevant quality assurance bodies.

This referencing report serves as a progress report[4.4] on the process of constructing the CFC. It is first of all a cooperative process driven by the education, training and validation operators, a process supervised and agreed by the offices of the various competent ministries. De formalisation by the governements of the elements making up the framework is underway, as explained above.

The aspect of quality assurance relating to the CFC has been produced in the same way: it has been representatives of the various services or agencies responsible for quality who have undertaken it, leading to the proposals and principles set out in this report. Explicit agreement can only be forthcoming when the framework will be formalised. The proposals and principles fall within the purview of much more than an implicit agreement: given the fact that they have been produced jointly, they constitute a basis to which the representatives of the services and agencies responsible for quality among the various operators can adhere.

The government agreement[4.5] specifically defines the following tasks and missions of the executive committee of the steering and positioning authority:

- Guaranteeing the quality of the positioning process of qualifications within the CFC;

- Fostering synergies between QA systems, approaches and procedures, with respect to QA principles adopted in the context of the CFC, through exchanges of good practices, consultation, pilot-projects between providers, etc.;

To accomplish those tasks and missions, the executive committee can call upon an experts group with a similar composition as the experts group set up by the government note dated 16 October 2010 ("experts group"[4.2.2]. The executive committee will thus benefit from their advice on future developments and collect any useful information for improving the operational scheme.

5.7. Criterion 7

The referencing process shall involve international experts.

Michel FEUTRIE, professor at the University of Lille-1, where he has been Vice-President and Director of the Department of Continuing Training, former Rapporteur of the CNCP, former President of the EUCEN, former Secretary General of the European platform EUCIS-LLL, expert in continuing training and the validation of learning and expert to the EQF-AG, has monitored the entire process of constructing the CFC [4.2.4].

Given his close involvement in the procedure setting up the CFC, it was deemed useful to submit the referencing report to two additional international experts.

The following were chosen

- Jos NOESEN, Expert to the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, author of the Luxembourg referencing report and expert for Luxembourg to the EQF-AG;;

- Aileen PONTON, Chief Executive at the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership; international expert for the report referencing the VKS to the EQF.

In addition to his extensive experience in implementing the EQF, the choice of Jos NOESEN is justified by the proximity between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the FWB and the significant mobility and exchange between the two entities.

Aileen PONTON was chosen to bring a more geographically and culturally removed viewpoint, and to gain the benefit of her long experience in the qualifications framework of Scotland. Her participation in the Flemish referencing report also helps to provide a relevant viewpoint over all the Belgian frameworks.

A meeting between the two international experts and the President and Secretaries of the Experts Group was held in Glasgow in May 2013, in order to explain the current process to them and to receive their initial remarks.

Following the sending of the first draft of this report, a second meeting was held in Brussels early November 2013, with the participation of Michel Feutrie. The comments and suggestions made by the experts, at both a general level and on more specific points, were integrated in the final version of the report.

5.8. Criterion 8

The competent national body or bodies shall certify the referencing of the national qualifications framework or system with the EQF. One comprehensive report, setting out the referencing and the evidence supporting it shall be published by the competent national bodies, including the National Coordination Point, and shall address separately each of the criteria.

This report supplements the report previously filed with the EQF-AG by Flanders.

An informal meeting of the presidents and secretaries of the experts group, with representatives of the Flemish Ministry for education and training and the German-speaking Community Government, was held by mid-November 2013. This meeting provided the opportunity to exchange views on the synergies and specificities of the three frameworks.

It was suggest presenting, in due time, a common referencing report made of the three reports and including a common chapter on the links and synegries between the three frameworks.

5.9. Criterion 9

The official EQF platform shall maintain a public listing of member states that have confirmed that they have completed the referencing process, including links to completed referencing reports.

This report shall be presented to the EQF-AG for the purposes of inclusion on the official EQF platform.

5.10. Criterion 10

Following the referencing process, and in line with the timelines set in the Recommendation, all new qualification certificates, diplomas and Europass documents issued by the competent authorities contain a clear reference, by way of national qualifications systems, to the appropriate European Qualifications Framework level.

Diploma supplements are systematically issued for higher education (universities[lviii], University coleges[lix], Art coleges[lx] and Education for Social Promotion[lxi]) under a legal obligation. By virtue of the decree[xvi] which positions academic degrees, the level of diplomas referenced to levels 6, 7 and 8 of the EQF is stated thereon.

Certificate supplements are issued by the public vocational training organisations within the context of the RECAF[5.3.1.4] system, the award of apprenticeship certificates and business leadership diplomas (IFAPME / SFPME)[3.6], and are issued by the CDVC for competency credentials[0].

EPS is expected to issue the supplement to its secondary education certificate shortly. As part of the development of CPU[5.3.2.3], qualifying secondary education will also issue certificate supplements.

As soon as the CFC is legally instituted and the steering and positioning authority is set up, for qualifications positioned within the CFC, certificate supplements must mention their level and the corresponding EQF level.

The work done by the experts group have allowed to settle solid foundations for the legal formalisation and the full implementation of the CFC.

Those foundations were jointly built by the various education and training providers that have already integrated the challenges and impacts of the framework on their practices. The development process has allowed to overcome the existing barriers between those providers and to achieve mutul trust considering their specificities linked to their proper missions. The learning outcomes approach is widespreading, is developing and refining in consistency with the generic descriptors. The initiatives for rapproachment, for better recognition of learning outcomes, for building shared reference systems are increasing. Further work remains to fully achieve the common quality assurance principles, to which all providers are committed.

The next step consists in the legal formalisation of the framework. The bottom-up approach chosen for developing the framework, supported by the representatives of the competent goverments through systematic information exchanges, is allowing the rapid implementation of the legal frame and thus realising the outcomes of the experts group. Based on the governments' agreement integrating and specifying the summary report of the experts group, the legislative process will be finalised by early 2014.

Once the steering and positioning authority is established, the effective implementation of the framework will follow. The 'block' positioning will allow the inclusion within the framework of the large majority of education qualifications and professional qualifications referenced to the SFMQ. Concerning the 'qualification by qualification' positioning, the precisely-designed tools that were developed will allow requesting immidiatly the positioning to the authority.

Then, the procedures will be further developed, assassed and adapted.

The experts group prepared a slideshow so that, from now on, common information can be provided to providers, institutions, schools and other stakeholders to the CFC. Once the framework is legally established, broader information session should be organised with this perspective to inform, communicate and make a reality this framework amongst users, citizens holding qualifications and employers.

This infomation and communication should be based on a widely and publicly accessible database including all positioned qualifications, this database being linked to the existing information sources on study programmes, jobs, professions, training opportunities, etc. Special attention should be paid to the information towards guidance professionals.

After a comprehensive evaluation of the established frame, the possibility of opening the framework to other qualifications public bodies and other bodies pursuing general interest mission in partnership with competent public authorities, should be considered.

ACTIRIS	Office Régional Bruxellois pour l'Emploi – the Brussels Region employment office[2.2]
ADEPS	Administration générale de l'aide à la jeunesse, de la santé et du sport – the general administration for assistance to young people, health and sport[3.9]
ADG	Arbeitsamtes der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft[2.2]
AEF-Europe	French-speaking Belgian Agency for Lifelong Learning Programme[4.5]
AEQES	Agence pour l'évaluation de la qualité dans l'enseignement supérieur – the agency for quality assessment in higher education[5.5.1.1]
AGERS	Administration générale de l'enseignement et de la recherche scientifique – the general administration for education and scientific research
AIWM	Institut für aus- und Weiterbildung im Mittelstand und in kleinen und mittleren unternehmen[2.2]
ARES	Académie de Recherche et d'Enseignement supérieur – the Academy for Research and Higher Education[5.3.1.1]
ASBL	Association sans but lucrative – non-profit association
BES	Brevet d'enseignement supérieur – certificate of higher education[3.3]
CAP	Certificat d'aptitudes pédagogiques – certificate of teaching competence[3.3.4]
CAPAES	Certificat d'aptitudes pédagogiques adapté à l'enseignement supérieur – certification of teaching competence adapted to higher education[3.3.4]
CCPQ	Commission Communautaire des Professions et Qualifications – Community commission for professions and qualifications[3.8]
CVDC	Consortium de Validation des Compétences – Skils validation consortium[3.7]
CE1D	Certificat d'enseignement du premier degré – Certificate of completion of the first cycle[3.2]
CE2D	Certificat d'études secondaires du second degré – Certificate of completion of the second cycle of secondary studies[3.2]
CEB	Certificat d'études de base – certificate of basic studies[3.2]
CEC	Cadre européen des certifications pour l'éducation et la formation tout au long de la vie – European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning[i]**Error! Bookmark not defined.** (French acronym)
CECP	Commission nationale des certifications professionnelles – National vocational qualifications committee[5.7]
CEF	Conseil de l'éducation et de la formation – Education and training council[4.1]
CEFA	Centre d'éducation et de formation en alternance – Work/study education and training centre[3.2]
CESS	Certificat d'enseignement secondaire supérieur – Certificate of upper secondary education[3.2]

CFC	Cadre francophone des certifications pour l'apprentissage tout au long de la vie French-speaking qualifications framework for lifelong learning[4]
CGHE	Conseil général des hautes écoles – General council of the university coleges[4.2.2]
CITE	Classification internationale type de l'éducation – International standard classification of education
CIUF	Conseil interuniversitaire de la Communauté française – Inter-university council of the French-speaking community[4.2.2]
COBRA	Competenties en Beroepen Repertorium voor de Arbeidsmarkt[5.3.1.4]
COCOF	Commission communautaire française de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale - Commission of the Brussels-Capital Region for the French-speaking inhabitants of Brussels [2.2]
COPROFOR	Commission de profil de formation (SFMQ) – Training profile committee[5.3.1.6]
COREF	Commission de référentiel métier (SFMQ) – Occupations reference system committee[5.3.1.6]
COROME	Description des professions réalisée par Actiris – Description of professions produced by Actiris [5.3.1.4]
CPU	Certification by units[5.3.2.3]
CQ6	Certificat de qualification de 6ème année – Qualification certificate for the sixth year of study[3.2]
CQ7	Certificat de qualification de 7ème année - Qualification certificate for the seventh year of study[3.2]
CSESA	Conseil supérieur de l'enseignement supérieur artistique – Higher council for art colege[4.2.2]
DGENORS	Direction générale de l'enseignement non obligatoire et de la recherche scientifique – Directorate general for non-compulsory education and scientific research
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System[5.3.2.1]
ECVET	European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training[xi]
EEES	Espace européen de l'enseignement supérieur – European Higher Education Area[3.3]
EFPME	Espace formation PME – SME training area[3.6.2]
EFT	Entreprise de formation par le travail – Work-based training enterprise[3.5.1]
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education[5.5.1.1]
EPS	Enseignement de promotion sociale – Education for Social Promotion[3.3.4][3.4]
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education[5.5.1.1]
EQARF	European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training[5.5.1.3
EQAVET	European Quality Assurance for Vocational Education and Training[xxx]
EQF	European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning[iError! Bookmark not defined.]

EQF-AG	European Qualifications Framework Advisory Group[i]
ESA	Ecole supérieure des Arts – Art college [3.3.3]
ESAHR	Enseignement secondaire artistique à horaire réduit – Reduced-timetable secondary education in the Arts[3.9]
ETALV	Commission éducation tout au long de la vie du CIUF – Lifelong learning committee for the CIUF[5.3.1.1]
EUCEN	European Universities Continuing Education Network[5.7]
EUCIS-LLL	European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning[5.7]
FEBISP	Fédération bruxelloise des organismes d'insertion socioprofessionnelle et d'économie sociale d'insertion – Brussels federation of socioprofessional and the social integration economy agencies[3.5.2]
FOREM	Office Régional wallon pour l'emploi et la formation professionnelle – Walloon Regional office for employment and vocational training[3.5.1]
FWB	Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles ou Communauté française – Federation Wallonia-Brussels or French-speaking Community[2.4]
HE	Haute Ecole[3.3.2]
IFAPME	Institut de formation en alternance des petites et moyennes entreprises – SME work/study training institute[3.6.1]
IFPME	Institut de Formation Permanente pour les Classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises – training institute for SMEs, for the French Community[2.2] (Community institution preceding the IFAPME and the SFPME)
IFPME-ALTIS	Institut de Formation Permanente pour les Classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises[3.6] (Current structure common to the IFPME and the SFPME)
INTERFEDE	Interfédération des Entreprises de Formation par le Travail et des Organismes d'Insertion SocioProfessionnelle – Interfederation of EFTs and OISPs[3.5.1]
ISO	International Organization for Standardisation[5.5.1.3]
OIP	Organisme d'intérêt public – Public interest body
OISP	Organisme d'insertion socioprofessionnelle – Socioprofessional integration body[3.5.1][3.5.2]
ONEM	Office national de l'emploi – National employment office[2.2]
ORBEM	Office Régional Bruxellois pour l'Emploi – Brussels Region employment office (now ACTIRIS) - [2.2]
PME	Petite(s) et moyenne(s) entreprise(s) – SMEs, small and medium-sized enterprises
QDG	Qualification framework der Deutschsprachigen Gemeintshaft[5.2.1]
RECAF	Reconnaissance des compétences acquises en formation – Recognition of competences acquired through training[5.3.1.4]
ROME V3	Répertoire opérationnel des métiers et emplois – Operational directory of occupations and jobs – version 3[5.2.1]
SFMQ	Service francophone des métiers et qualifications - French-speaking service for

	professions and qualifications [3.8]
SFPME	Service Formation des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises – Training service for SMEs[3.6.2]
SPE	Service public de l'emploi – Public employment service
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
SYNTRA	Vlaamse Agentschap voor ondernemersvorming[2.2]
VAE	Valorisation des acquis de l'expérience – Recognition of learning acquired through experience[5.3.3.1]
VDAB	Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding[2.2]
VKS	Vlaamse kwalificatiestructuur[4.3.1]

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