

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY ON THE SDGs

# Belgium Wallonia



## Respondent Profile

### Some details on the respondent:

- A representative from the Ministère de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles accomplished the ARC9 survey. The respondent is involved in the decision-making stage of the policy cycle. Based on self-evaluation, their knowledge of SDG-related concepts, - such as the UN 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Global Citizenship Education, Climate Change Education - is at the Intermediate level. Their knowledge of existing higher education policies aimed at contributing to the SDGs in their country is at the Expert level.

## Understanding the National Context

### Who do you expect to be most responsible in pushing forward the implementation of the SDGs in higher education in your country? Is there a department/agency in-charge of such efforts and what are the priorities?

- By order of responsibility, the government and policymakers are seen as the primary actor responsible in pushing forward SDG-related efforts, followed by higher education institutions (HEIs), and civil society.
- Government's primary role in the implementation of the SDGs in higher education is establishing a common vision and strategy. By order of importance given by the respondent, this is followed by building capacity, enforcing regulations, providing reputational incentives, and providing funding opportunities.
  1. Enforce regulations (e.g. accreditation requirements, audits, non-binding policy statements)
  2. Provide funding opportunities
  3. Provide reputational incentives (e.g. national ranking, labels, awards)
  4. Build capacity (special units advising, tools for self-assessment, optional institutional reviews, guidelines)
  5. Establish a common vision and strategy
- In Belgium Wallonia, there is no formal responsibility is allocated for higher education towards the SDGs, all government activities in this regard are voluntary.

### Are there policy documents for higher education's response to the SDGs? What are some obstacles faced by HEIs in contributing to the SDGs?

- There is no noted government document that the Ministry refers to for the higher education sector's response to the SDGs in Belgium Wallonia.
- In terms of obstacles faced by universities, they are mostly structural issues (e.g. lack of time, funding, human resources) in nature.

### What are the top 5 SDG priorities for higher education in your country?

Priority 1	SDG 4	Quality Education
Priority 2	SDG 10	Reduced Inequalities
Priority 3	SDG 5	Gender Equality
Priority 4	SDG 9	Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
Priority 5	SDG 17	Partnerships for the Goals

## Policy Tools

**What policy tools are used to encourage HEIs to address the SDGs in your country? What specific higher education area do they target?**

- The Ministry employs a number of policy tools to encourage universities to contribute to the attainment of the SDGs, such as:
  - **Financial support or budget allocation** which target the areas of education and teaching, research, campus operations and governance, and partnerships and societal engagement of tertiary education institutions
  - **Access to facilities and infrastructure** mainly focused as well on education and teaching, research, campus operations and governance
  - **Special units advising and guidance** focused on education and teaching

	Education & Teaching	Research	Campus Operations & Governance	Partnerships and Societal Engagement
Financial support or budget allocation	x	x	x	x
National rankings, labels and awards				
Access to facilities and infrastructure	x	x	x	
Special units advising and guidelines	x			
Tools for self-assessment				
Optional institutional reviews				
Legal obligations				
Accreditation requirements				
Audit, monitoring, or evaluation				

Further policy tools such as tools for self-assessment, optional institutional reviews, legal obligations, accreditation requirements, audit, monitoring and evaluation, are not applicable do not apply in Belgium Wallonia.

- Some policy tools are applicable only to SDG 9 Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, these are: financial support or budget allocation; and Access to facilities and infrastructure.
- An example on the Ministry's use of policy tools to encourage HEI contributions to the SDGs: some incentives are available through the "[Next generation EU Fund](#)", encouraging renovation of buildings and infrastructure.

## Contextualising Higher Education Policies for SDGs

**What steps has your country taken to contextualize the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in its higher education context? Which partners were involved in these steps?**

- To contextualise SDG-related policies, the Ministry has established governance and coordination mechanisms, undertook multi-stakeholder consultations, reviewed national plans and strategies, and mainstreamed concepts into existing or new strategies.
- The Ministry has consulted and involved the following partners in these steps:
  - **HEIs and think tanks** are consulted and involved in: Establishing governance and coordination mechanisms; Reviewing national plans and strategies; Mapping targets; Prioritising and Adapting targets; Mainstreaming into existing or new strategies; Assessing interlinkages, synergies, and tradeoffs; Evaluating the implementation or impact of policies; Establishing monitoring arrangements for reporting and follow-up to the SDGs
  - **Central/national government authorities:** Undertaking multi-stakeholder consultations
  - **Provincial/local government authorities:** Undertaking multi-stakeholder consultations

## Sources

The information was provided by the **Ministère de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles**, as of 28 November 2022.

## Produced by



The **Asia-Europe Foundation** is an intergovernmental not-for-profit organisation located in Singapore. Founded in 1997, it is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). ASEM promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe.

This country sheet is part of the [9th ASEM Regional Conference on Higher Education \(ARC9\)](#) project, the Official Dialogue Partner of the ASEM Education Ministers Meeting (ASEMME), and the basis of the [ARC9 Report: Asia-Europe Higher Education Mapping: Working Towards the SDGs](#).