COUNTRY SYSTEM MAPPING

Country Report: Belgium (French community)

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Country System Mapping (CSM) activity is to identify, map and analyse the key features that impact the effective implementation of inclusive education policy in practice in all Agency member countries' education systems. In a departure from previous thematic activities undertaken by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency), CSM considers the **whole** education system from the perspective of implementing policy for inclusive education in practice. However, within this system-wide view, there is a focus on the specific priorities Representative Board members (RBs) have already identified in relation to monitoring and evaluation, cross-sector working and quality assurance.

The main output from the CSM work is a systematic mapping of information on each country's education system.

Information from the individual CSM Country Reports has been analysed in two ways:

- **Thematic Analysis** to highlight issues (challenges and opportunities) emerging from the reports to use as the starting point for the Agency's Thematic Country Cluster Activities (TCCA).

  Challenges for inclusion are defined as things the country needs to work on to reach an inclusive education system. Strengths for inclusion are things that encourage and reinforce inclusive practice in the country and could potentially be shown as an example to other countries.

- **Mapping** to inform TCCA groupings, based on the system structures and processes countries have (or do not have) in common.

  The agreed goal for the mapping element of the CSM analysis work was to highlight parameters, or comparative factors, that indicate which country systems are structured and/or working in different – or similar – ways.

The information from the CSM work will be used within the remainder of the [Multi-Annual Work Programme 2021–2027](#) (MAWP). As of autumn 2024, country cluster activities will be organised which are closely aligned to individual country approaches to key issues for inclusive education, as well as system structures and processes countries have in common.

Work within a shared vision for inclusive education systems

All Agency work is aligned with the position on inclusive education systems. This agreed position states that the ultimate vision for inclusive education systems is to ensure that:

> All learners of any age are provided with meaningful, high-quality educational opportunities in their local community, alongside their friends and peers (European Agency, 2022, p. 1)[1].

Agency work focuses on supporting the development of inclusive education systems in member countries to ensure every learner's right to inclusive and equitable educational opportunities. This aim is directed at all learners. However, all aspects of Agency work clearly recognise that some groups of learners face obstacles and barriers that mean they should be considered **learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education in mainstream schools in their local community, alongside their friends and peers**.

UNESCO identifies the possible obstacles and barriers to education learners may face as arising from:

> … gender, remoteness, wealth, disability, ethnicity, language, migration, displacement, incarceration, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion and other beliefs and attitudes (UNESCO, 2020, p. 4)[2].

Many learners may face a combination of these factors and the intersectional (inter-connected) nature of learners' needs must be acknowledged. Every learner has their own unique experiences of discrimination and/or barriers to learning. Everything and anything that can marginalise learners and increase their chances of exclusion from mainstream inclusive education must be understood and recognised.

All Agency member countries are committed to working towards ensuring more inclusive education systems. They do so in different ways, depending on their past and current contexts and histories. Inclusive education systems are a vital component within the wider aspiration of more socially inclusive societies that all countries align themselves with, both ethically and politically. However, all Agency work clearly recognises that countries have differences in their ways of thinking about, identifying and making provision for different groups of learners who may be considered vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education.

All countries have undergone key conceptual changes in their thinking and policy priorities for developments as they move towards inclusive education as an approach that ensures high-quality education for all learners. Across countries, the first shift was made from the concept of special educational needs to special needs education. This shift represented a focus away from the learner (identified as having special educational needs) towards a focus on the provision they receive (special needs education for learners who experience difficulties at school). The term 'special needs education' has also widened the focus

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[1] European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2022. *Agency Position on Inclusive Education Systems*. Odense, Denmark

[2] UNESCO, 2020. *Global Education Monitoring Report: Inclusion and education: all means all*. Paris: UNESCO

beyond learners with disabilities to include learners who appeared to be failing in school for a wide variety of reasons.

It is worth emphasising here that there have never been agreed definitions of the concepts of special educational needs or special needs education that can be consistently used across countries. The groups of learners considered as having special educational needs which require additional provision largely differ across countries.

The most recent shifts emphasise a move away from a concern with types of special needs or the categories a learner may or may not fall into, towards thinking of inclusion and inclusive education as an approach for all learners. They emphasise the barriers experienced by learners and focus overall on learners who may be vulnerable to exclusion from educational opportunities for different reasons.

Agency work focuses on supporting the development of inclusive education systems in its member countries to ensure every learner's right to inclusive and equitable educational opportunities. This aim is directed at all learners, while recognising the need to specifically address learners who may be vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education.

Overview of the Country System Mapping

The information collected in the CSM activity aims to provide evidence of and reflection on **where countries currently are** in their inclusive thinking, policy and provision for all learners, but in particular for those learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education.

CSM work focuses on the **whole** education system and how certain structures, mechanisms and processes may impact on the implementation of policy for inclusive education in practice. It aims to get insights into how the needs of all learners – including individuals or groups of learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education – are being considered. Many questions refer to learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education. Countries have opportunities to clarify what 'learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education' means for them and their systems.

However, it is acknowledged that it may not be possible for countries to provide information covering all learners and all learner groups.

The questions specifically focus on four priorities RBs have identified for wider future Agency work in relation to:

- Monitoring and evaluation
- Cross-sector working
- Quality assurance
- Effective policy implementation.

There are six main sections:

Section 1. Background to the inclusive education system

Section 2. Overview of the education system

Section 3. Legislative and policy framework

Section 4. System governance

Section 5. Quality assurance and accountability

Section 6. Stakeholder collaboration, co-operation and effective communication

Where countries have provided additional comments and reflections, these are included in a separate Section 7.

In each of these sections, relevant information was collected covering International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels 02 (pre-primary education) to 3 (upper-secondary education).

Each section has two subsections which require different types of country information, as outlined below.

All questions were rephrased into statements for the purpose of this report.

System description

Sections 1 to 6 include specific questions that aim to provide a factual description of key aspects of the legislation and policy framework for inclusive education in the country. The system information aims to accurately describe the relevant policy frameworks in countries.

Different types of questions are used to collect information that describes important system features – structures, mechanisms and processes – relating to governance, monitoring, quality assurance and collaboration. The descriptive information includes sources of original material and, where possible, is supported with quotes and citations from relevant policy documents and published work.

The descriptive information will be analysed to highlight parameters, or comparative factors, that indicate how countries are structured and/or working. This mapping will be used to inform country cluster groupings based on system structures and processes that countries have in common.

The descriptive information will also be used to prepare thematic cluster activities with Agency member countries. These activities will elaborate and collect even more detailed country information for the different priority areas from 2023 onwards.

Evaluative commentary

An important element of the questions is the evaluative, qualified and evidenced-based reflection on the factual information provided in sections 1 to 6.

The evaluative commentaries aim to provide a qualified reflection on the implementation of the legislation and policy framework for inclusive education in practice. They provide observations on and interpretations of the system factors that impact positively or negatively on inclusive education.

The evaluative commentaries reflect on **where and why the practice of inclusive education differs from or actively supports the stated policy intentions and goals** in the system description.

For the evaluative commentaries linked to each section, the following general questions are posed:

- What have been the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) for inclusive education? Why do they exist and what are the consequences?

- What have been the perceived opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusive education? What areas for development are identified and how can they be successfully implemented?

In addition, specific topic-related questions are also suggested.

The analysis of the evaluative commentary information will take a grounded approach. It will aim to identify issues that emerge as barriers to or supporting factors for meeting the needs of all learners in inclusive systems.

This analysis will be used to inform future Agency activities with member countries regarding country-specific and common system challenges and opportunities.

SECTION 1. BACKGROUND TO THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM

This section provides key background information in relation to inclusive education in the country.

1.1 Overview of the historical development of inclusive education

The first decisions on the integration of learners with special needs were taken in 1988. They concerned learners who were deaf, blind or with a physical disability but with normal intelligence. They could go to a mainstream school with special education support. For all other learners with special needs, they had to have been learners in special education for one year before they could benefit from the same measures.

In 2009, this requirement was abolished and all learners with special needs could be integrated into mainstream education with four hours of support from a special needs teacher.

In 2017, a new law made it compulsory for all learners with special needs to have reasonable accommodation in mainstream education.

In 2022, the French Community starts to phase out (during the next five years) the learner support system and moves towards supporting educational teams by moving towards a better implementation of universal pedagogy.

By 2030, the French Community hopes to reduce the number of learners in special education from 38,000 to 32,000.

The integration system is now only intended for learners who have actually attended special education for at least one year.

The last problem to be solved concerns learners with intellectual disability.

1.2 Legislation and policy definitions linked to key concepts within inclusive education systems

Inclusive education

Decree 17 June 2020 about the implementation of '*Pôles Territoriaux*'

Special needs education

Eight types of education are defined:

- type 1 education meets the educational and training needs of learners with mild intellectual disability (not including learners who are behind educationally); it is not organised at pre-primary level;

- type 2 education meets the educational and training needs of learners with moderate or severe intellectual disability;

- type 3 education meets the educational and training needs of learners with behavioural problems (structural and/or functional disturbances relating to relationships and emotional development, of such severity that they require the use of specific educational, re-educational and psychotherapeutic methods);

- type 4 education meets the educational and training needs of learners with physical disabilities (requiring mainstream medical and paramedical care);

- type 5 education meets the educational and training needs of sick and/or convalescent learners;

- type 6 education meets the educational and training needs of learners with visual impairments;

- type 7 education meets the educational and training needs of learners with hearing impairments;

- type 8 education meets the educational and training needs of learners with learning disabilities (resulting, for example, in difficulties in the development of language or speech and/or in learning to read, write or perform mathematical operations, but not involving intellectual disability or serious physical, behavioural or sensory disability; such disturbances are complex and have multiple origins). This type of education has to ensure the re-integration of learners into mainstream education, among its main goals. It is only organised at primary level.

Under certain conditions, specialist education for learners with autism, aphasia, dysphasia or multiple disabilities may be organised in certain types of specialist education.

There is no form of education specifically intended for gifted learners.

Source: *Eurydice*

Learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education

No definition.

Learners with special educational needs

Special education is organised into eight types. Each type is adapted to the general and particular needs of the learners who attend the schools, who have the same types of disabilities and therefore share common needs. For learners with multiple disabilities, special education is defined according to their educational needs and adjusted to their age and capabilities.

Sources: *Special education Decree of 3 March 2004; European Agency, Legislative definitions*

The legislation uses the term 'special needs learners' to refer to learners attending the various types of specialist education: learners with mild intellectual disability (not including learners who are behind educationally, with moderate or severe intellectual disability, with behavioural problems (structural and/or functional difficulties relating to relationships and emotional development), with physical disabilities (requiring mainstream medical and paramedical care), in a state of serious illness or convalescence,

with visual or hearing impairments, or with learning disabilities (complex difficulties that have multiple origins).

Source: *Eurydice*

Other(s)

Very early on (in the law of 6 July 1970), Belgium created a dedicated, well-structured organisation for the education of learners who are 'apt to be educated but cannot attend a mainstream school'.

For several years now, special measures have been taken with a view to encouraging the integration of these learners into mainstream education whenever possible. Integration is an adapted, sustained response to the specific needs of certain learners in order to prepare for their inclusion in social and working life from school onwards. The learner is at the centre of a process that must be constructed so as to take account of individual identity and diversity.

Source: *Eurydice*

1.3 Individuals or groups of learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education focused on in the report

The most important problem is that of learners with intellectual disability. They cannot be reasonably accommodated in mainstream schools because they are unable to follow the same curriculum as other learners.

Solutions are proposed, such as the creation of special classes for these learners in a mainstream school, but parents are not very supportive of the proposal.

1.4 Development of thinking around learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education

Belgium has long considered special education (5% of the school population) to be the only solution for the education of learners with special needs. Teachers are only trained to teach mainstream learners.

So we need to change the training and change the mentality. The Minister is under pressure from the results of a complaint filed by parents with the Council of Europe.

The creation of special classes in mainstream schools is not very successful, as mainstream schools are not yet prepared to take a step forward.

1.5 Future education system developments that may impact positively or negatively on inclusive education

The implementation of the '*Pôles territoriaux*' should make it possible to keep all learners in mainstream education for as long as possible by working on two levels: the

implementation of reasonable adjustments by mainstream school teachers supported by the *Pôles*' agents and the practice of a more universal education.

Unfortunately, during the transition period, mainstream teachers will lose much of the individual one-to-one learner support in the classroom.

Evaluative commentary

This section provides a qualified, evidenced-based reflection on the **challenges, opportunities and consequences** of developments towards inclusive education. It specifically considers political decisions that have impacted (positively or negatively) upon the vision for and implementation of inclusive education in the country. It also considers how changes in thinking around learners who are vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education have impacted upon policy and practice.

The Community has carried out a series of studies concerning the increase in the number of learners in specialist education (from 32,000 to 38,000 between 2004 and 2020 at a cost three to four times greater than in mainstream education), the increase in the number of learners supported in mainstream education by specialist education staff (from 500 in 2009 to 11,500 in 2020 at a cost of EUR 104 million), and the unequal distribution of aid between regions. The implementation of the *Pôles* has a dual objective: cost control and maintaining a larger number of learners in mainstream education.

It was also important not to lose the confidence of teachers in mainstream education and special education and to respond as well as possible to parents' requests.

SECTION 2. THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

This section provides information on the structures and features of the whole education system that influence the development and implementation of inclusive education in the country.

2.1 Overview of the education system

Responsibility for policy on pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education and specialist education lies with the parliament of the French Community and its government. They are also responsible for social advancement education and distance education.

The government of the French Community has a dual responsibility:

- it is the controlling authority for schools administered by the French Community and, as such, establishes structures, curricula, and methods; it administers schools, and takes all measures with a view to improving their operation;

- it regulates public and independent grant-aided schools, in compliance with the applicable constitutional and legal provisions.

The role of the Ministry of the French Community is primarily to execute ministerial decisions. It is also involved in the technical study of new regulations (laws, decrees, etc.). The implementation of the regulations by the administration necessarily involves inspection, but there is also an aspect of service to the heads of school and the controlling authorities: they are provided in good time with all the necessary information and tools needed to organise their schools smoothly, with full assurance of compliance with the law for both learners and staff members. In particular, this service is provided via circulars which present the content of decree and regulatory provisions initiated by the legislative powers and the French Community executive, and which are sent to all people whose task is to administer the structures that are part of the Ministry of the French Community and/or who are concerned, for a variety of reasons, by its actions.

At the different levels of education, the administration is responsible, in one way or another, for administering the following areas:

- the general characteristics of schools;

- the structure of the specific education on offer at each school, i.e. forms, years of study, streams, options, courses, programmes, etc., that each school is authorised to organise in compliance with the standards and rules in effect;

- the compliance of schedules, i.e. the combination of courses attended by each learner during a week;

- the regularity of learner enrolment;

- school population flows (from the standpoint, in particular, of monitoring standards, the different calculations of teacher/learner ratios, statistics, etc.);

- the calculation of staffing levels;

- the calculation of administrative and auxiliary education staffing levels;

- the calculation of operating subsidies or grants;

- determining the job positions eligible to be organised/subsidised (in compliance with staffing standards) and assigning teaching staff (in compliance with statutory rules).

Within the Ministry of the French Community, it is the General Administration of Education (AGE) that performs most functions relating to education. This administrative body consists of six directorates and general services:

- Administrator-General's Service

- General Service for the Steering of the Education System

- General Service for Education Organised by the French Community

- General Directorate for Compulsory Education

- General Directorate for Non-Compulsory Education and Scientific Research

- General Inspection Service.

Other services also work in areas relating to education, in particular the General Teaching Staff Administration, the School Facilities Service, the Directorate for Equal Opportunities, the Culture and Education Unit, and the Directorate for International Relations.

The Regions' only powers with regard to education relate to school transport; the regional administration also manages school buildings jointly with the French Community.

Source: *Eurydice*

In Belgium, the Communities are responsible for education, with the exception of three competences which remain a federal matter:

- the determination of the beginning and the end of compulsory education;

- the minimum requirements for the issuing of diplomas;

- the regulation of retirement for employees in the educational system.

Instruction in each community is provided in the language of the community in question.

The French Community of Belgium has competence in particular for cultural affairs and the use of languages, as well as education, childhood, youth and research. The government of the French Community has four ministers directly concerned with child care and education: a Minister for Education (responsible for education starting from the pre-primary stage), a Minister for Early Childhood (among others), a Minister for Higher Education, Media and Scientific Research, and a Minister for Social Advancement Education, Youth, Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities. A fifth minister is responsible for the budget, civil service and administrative simplification for the French Community. In the government of the Walloon Region, a minister is responsible for training (among other areas).

In Belgium, freedom of education is a constitutional right. Every (legal) person may organise education and establish schools to that aim. The government has the duty to organise non-denominational education (under certain conditions).

The constitution also guarantees a freedom of school choice for the parents. Parents and children must have access to a school of their choice within reasonable distance of their residence.

In order to guarantee the constitutional right to education, compulsory education has been introduced for all children residing in Belgium. Education is compulsory from 6 until 18. Compulsory education in Belgium does not equal the duty to attend school. Parents may choose home schooling (e-learning) for their children.

A learner must attend full-time compulsory education until the age of 15. From 15 onwards, learners may engage in part-time schooling and opt for a structured learning path which combines part-time vocational education in an educational institution with part-time employment.

In Belgium, besides mainstream education, special needs (pre-) primary and secondary education also exists. Special needs education is organised for learners who need temporary or permanent specific support because of a physical or mental disability, serious behavioural or emotional problems or severe learning disabilities.

However, in July 2015, the parliament of the French Community adopted by decree further steps with regard to guidance and support of integration for students from special needs education into mainstream education. It is only if integration is not possible in mainstream education that the learner is orientated to special needs education. In total permanent integration for each learner in primary education and in the first two degrees of mainstream secondary education, four periods for supported learners will be granted, provided by special needs education staff. Based on the means made available, 450 additional support periods may be granted on a proposal of the general council of specialist education, particularly in the specialist education institutions organising an adapted pedagogy or particular projects.

Source: *Eurydice*

See also: Eurydice: Structure of the education system

The vast majority of schools are either organised or grant-aided by the French Community. The responsibility for a school is vested in the person or legal entity known as the 'controlling authority': depending on the type of controlling authority, a distinction is made between grant-aided public education (provincial and municipal authorities) and grant-aided independent education (natural persons or private legal entities). The French Community is the sole controlling authority of the institutions that it organises. Most of the controlling authorities in grant-aided education belong to a federation of controlling authorities ('representation and co-ordination body'), which represents them in dealings with the government of the French Community. Non-grant-aided private education is virtually non-existent in the French Community.

Since most powers with regard to education have been transferred to the Communities, a two-fold shift has been taking place in the French Community: on the one hand, an increasing degree of management autonomy is being granted to institutions, in addition to

the high degree of freedom which was already theirs in terms of educational methods; on the other hand, this increasing autonomy has been accompanied by the introduction of new regulatory mechanisms to ensure the development of fairly run schools that perform to a high standard.

Source: *Eurydice*

Under the decree on the promotion of success at school in pre-secondary education (14 March 1995) and the decree on the missions of school (24 July 1997), learners' progression must be continuous from their entry in pre-primary education through to the end of the second year of primary education, and from the third to the sixth primary year.

The decree on the promotion of success at school in pre-secondary education, voted on in March 1995, outlines a concrete action plan for all participants in pre-secondary education, which is intended to achieve a significant and lasting reduction in the number of school failures. It defines the cycle as a 'series of school years within which the learner carries out their education continuously, at their own pace and without grade repetition' (Article 1). This decree organises the continuous progression of learners from entry into pre-primary school up to the end of the second year of primary school, and from the third to the sixth year of primary school.

The decree on the missions of school, voted on in July 1997, defines the objectives of compulsory education. In particular, it specifies the framework within which teaching activities take place, sets the length of the cycles and phases, organises the definition of the core skills, the preparation of pedagogic tools and assessment instruments, as well as the control of study programmes. It imposes the implementation of formative assessment and differentiated pedagogy. It further defines the notion of free education, imposes the definition by the *pouvoirs organisateurs* and the individual schools of texts specifying their options in relation to learners and their parents, and sets up a *conseil de participation* in each school. The decree re-affirms that the *pouvoirs organisateurs* must ensure equal access to all education for girls and boys.

Source: *Eurydice*

2.2 Specific features that are present within the education system

Early tracking of learners into a particular educational pathway (i.e. streaming learners by abilities into different types of provision or school; this includes placing children into separate schools)

From the third year onwards (second and third stages – ISCED 3), education takes four different forms :

- General

- Technical

- Artistic

- Vocational.

It is also organised in two streams :

- the transition stream prepares learners for higher education while also offering opportunities to enter the labour market;

- the qualification stream prepares learners to enter the labour market while also enabling them to continue their studies in higher education.

Source: *Eurydice*

'Double-shift' patterns to the school day (i.e. learners attend for either a morning or afternoon session)

No information.

Grade retention (i.e. holding learners back to repeat school years, instead of providing flexible support that enables learners to progress with their peers)

This set-up is intended to enable each learner to progress continuously through schooling, at their own pace and without repeating any years, from the beginning of pre-primary school until the end of the second year of primary school (phase 1) and from the third to the sixth year of primary education (phase 2), acquiring within each of these phases the essential learning set out in the core skills defining the required level.

Certain learners need more time than the usual period of schooling to acquire the core skills required at the end of each of the first two phases of schooling. In order to take account of each learner's individual pace of learning, schools have the option to enable learners to receive a maximum of one extra year per phase. For learners experiencing difficulties, the period of compulsory primary schooling may therefore be seven years, or even eight years by special dispensation.

The teaching staff, by agreement with the parents, chooses the most appropriate moment to use this measure, in the light of the learner's individual situation. Thus, the arrangement of the extra year need not necessarily take place at the end of a phase.

However, such a measure must be treated as exceptional, and may not under any circumstances be confused with a repeated year: it must be accompanied by the formation of a pedagogical dossier for each learner concerned.

Source: *Eurydice*

Multiple languages of instruction

A framework decree of 17 July 1998 modified a number of important aspects of the regulation of primary education. In particular, it redefined the resources to be expended on mainstream and special pre-primary and primary education and the timetables. It also introduced on a widespread basis the teaching of modern languages from the fifth primary year onwards, and under certain conditions authorised immersion education in a modern language other than French or in sign language.

Indeed, on the authorisation of the government in the case of education organised by the French Community, or on the initiative of the controlling authority in the case of grant-aided education, a school, under certain conditions, provides certain courses either in a modern language other than French or in sign language, by organising immersion

instruction: The 'immersion' decree of 11 May 2007 (*décret 'immersion'*) regulates immersion education. When it is organised, between 8 to 21 periods, depending on the phase at which immersion instruction began, immersion learning seeks to achieve the following:

- in terms of the lessons and educational activities provided in the immersion language, the attainment of the competencies defined in the core skills;

- in terms of the immersion language, the attainment of the oral and written communication competencies in that language defined in the core skills.

If a school or site organises immersion learning, this is mentioned in the school plan. Enrolment in immersion learning may not be subject to any prior selection.

Source: *Eurydice*

The decree on the organisation of mainstream primary and pre-primary education and the regulation of education (13 July 1998) in articles 12 and 13 makes it possible to organise courses for deaf learners in Immersion French – Sign language. There are two teachers in the classroom: one who teaches in French and one who translates into sign language and gives the necessary explanations.

Source: *European Agency, CPRA*

Specific policies on access to compulsory education in local schools (i.e. school selection policies)

No information.

2.3 Public and private authorities responsible for different types of provision

No information.

2.4 Levels of autonomy open to educational institutions – schools, local authorities, school maintainers, etc. – within the system

The Decree on the Missions (24 July 1997) of Schools, adopted in 1997, might be described as the fundamental charter for compulsory education and its preparatory pre-school stage: it defines the objectives that schools must pursue and introduces procedures which will enable them to achieve those objectives. This fundamental decree focuses on two elements: convergence between all institutions in the realisation of common objectives, and autonomy in both the definition of educational plans and the responsible management of resources. The underlying approach is that autonomy must be accompanied by responsibility, participation and solidarity.

The decree enables each pre-secondary and secondary school to adapt its teaching and modify the organisation of courses. Every mainstream or specialist pre-secondary or secondary school organised or subsidised by the French Community must have a school plan. This defines the range of educational choices and specific concrete actions that the

school's teaching team intends to implement – in co-operation with all players and partners – to achieve the aims of the educational plan and pedagogical plan set by the controlling authority.

Alongside measures aimed at increasing the autonomy of schools and/or controlling authorities, there has been an observable trend in recent years towards making the education system more coherent, and of ensuring greater fairness in it, by adding steering mechanisms and defining new rules (in consultation with the various controlling authorities): this has included the definition of general objectives to be pursued at the different levels of the education system and sets of competency guidelines which now serve as a form of reference during the curricula reviews, the creation of a Steering Committee, the gradual introduction of external certifying examinations, the reinforcement of the external non-certifying assessment scheme, and the adoption of a regulatory mechanism for enrolments in the first year of secondary education.

Source: *Eurydice*

2.5 General mechanisms for funding schools

Formal education takes place in education and training institutions and leads to the award of recognised diplomas and qualifications. The whole of the formal education sector is organised, grant-aided or simply recognised by the French Community. Access to compulsory education (primary and secondary) is free of charge whereas, with some exceptions, learners in higher education are required to pay registration fees. Under certain conditions, learners in secondary education and higher education receive grants or study loans allocated by the French Community.

Source: *Eurydice*

The expenses relating to education provided in educational institutions or sections thereof administered by public and private providers are borne by the controlling authorities, but the Communities can allocate salary grants and operational subsidies to educational institutions administered by provinces, municipalities, or other public or private bodies (in public grant-aided or independent grant-aided education).

Source: *Eurydice*

2.6 Specific mechanisms for funding the inclusion of learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education

Currently this is the case, thanks to the measures related to integration. According to Chapter 10 of the decree of 3 March 2004, funding is guaranteed for every learner attending mainstream education through special education.

A special budget of EUR 1 million is reserved to resolve the difficulties related to the implementation of a new integration (decree of 3 March 2004).

Source: *European Agency, CPRA*

SECTION 3. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This section provides information on the overall framework of legislation and policy governing the whole of the education system in the country.

3.1 Is there a single legislation and policy framework covering all learners in all educational settings?

No.

3.1a Description of the single legislation and policy framework

Not applicable.

3.1b Overview of the general education legislation and policy framework guiding the whole system

We have specific legislation for mainstream education and specific legislation for specialist education.

3.1c Overview of the specific education legislation and policy framework impacting on the inclusion of learners who are vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education

The decree of 7 December 2017 specifies that the obligation to put in place reasonable accommodation only concerns learners who are able to follow the curriculum of mainstream education.

The decree of 2 May 2019 allows the creation of inclusive classes reserved for learners with moderate to severe intellectual disability and learners with autism. These classes are created in a school of mainstream education.

3.2 Is there a single curriculum framework covering all learners in all educational settings?

No.

3.2a Description of the single curriculum framework

Not applicable.

3.2b Overview of the general curriculum framework

In the different educational fields, the French Community defines the levels to be reached, but the course programmes are the responsibility of the educational networks (Catholic education, cities and provinces, Wallonia-Brussels education).

In specialist education, the levels to be reached and the programmes do not exist in primary education. In specialist secondary education, the levels to be reached are defined according to the extent of the disability.

3.2c Overview of specific curriculum framework(s) for different groups of learners who are vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education

For secondary education, there are four possible orientations:

- Form 1 which aims to socialise learners with very severe intellectual disability;

- Form 2 which aims to provide training that allows you to work in a protected and suitable environment;

- Form 3 which aims at professional training that allows working in a mainstream environment;

- Form 4 which follows the legislation of the mainstream secondary school by allowing arrangements which take account of the disability.

3.3 Is there a single legislation and policy framework for all teacher education and professional development?

Yes.

3.3a Description of the single legislation and policy framework for teacher education and professional development

There are four types of training:

- a five-year university course for teachers of levels 5 and 6 of secondary education;

- a three-year course (soon to be four) for teachers of levels 1 to 4 of secondary education;

- training in three years (soon four) for primary school teachers;

- a three-year training (soon to be four) for kindergarten teachers.

None of these trainings gives real indications regarding learners with special needs.

On-the-job training provides better information.

3.3b Overview of the general legislation and policy framework for teacher education and professional development

Not applicable.

3.3c Overview of specific legislation and policy framework for teacher education and professional development and what and who this specific framework focuses on

Does not exist.

The initial training of teachers at the pre-secondary and lower secondary levels is organised as part of a first-cycle training in higher education, leading to a bachelor's degree (180 ECTS, level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework). Teachers at upper secondary school hold the upper secondary teaching diploma (a second-cycle degree). This pedagogical training can be acquired as part of a teaching master's (120 ECTS, level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework) or a specific training (post-master's)

corresponding to 30 ECTS. The initial training of higher education and adult education varies among other factors, depending on the type of institution where they are working.

All teachers at the mainstream or specialist pre-secondary and secondary levels must attend continuing training.

Source: *Eurydice*

The initial training of the bachelor's (pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education) generally takes place in the *Hautes écoles* (some training courses are organised in social advancement higher education). All the networks organise this type of education. Administratively, the education departments at *hautes écoles* form part of the short-type, full-time higher education system. Teachers of Latin, Greek, Spanish and Italian are trained at university. Teachers of arts subjects, except those who have been trained at *hautes écoles* and hold a bachelor's degree certificate of lower secondary education in the fine arts, are trained in arts colleges.

In pre-primary and primary education, teachers hold a bachelor's degree in pre-primary or primary teaching, depending on the level of schooling, whereas in lower secondary education, they hold bachelor's degrees in lower secondary education (AESI).

An essential principle underpinning training courses and reinforced by the decree of 12 December 2000 is the linking of theory and practice. Various aspects of organisation, content and teaching activities are instrumental in enabling students not only to acquire the reflexes of teaching professionals, but also to become theoreticians of their practices. The training model used is a simultaneous one. Teaching practice is organised during each of the three years of study: in the first year, this consists of participative observation in the presence of the internship supervisor; in the second and third years, the student takes charge of a class.

Source: *Eurydice*

Continuing training is obligatory for all permanently appointed or hired teaching staff (as well as for staff designated or hired on a temporary basis if it is included in their schedule) on the basis of six half-days a year. Voluntary continuing training (i.e. in addition to these obligatory six half-days) is limited to ten half-days a year in mainstream pre-secondary education if it takes place during the teacher's working hours, unless there is an exemption. In mainstream secondary education and specialist education, the reference period during which the compulsory training must be taken is three years, and the teacher is limited to six half-days per year of voluntary continuing training during working hours. Outside working hours, there are no limits on the duration of voluntary training.

Continuing training is organised by a specially created Institute for In-Service Training, or at network level (or controlling authority level if the controlling authority does not subscribe to a representation body), or at school level. The Institute for In-Service Training does not directly train the teachers, but makes use of training operators (*Hautes écoles*, universities, teachers' associations, continuing education agencies, etc.).

Source: *Eurydice*

3.4 Is there a single legislation and policy framework to ensure support for all learners throughout their school careers?

Yes.

3.4a Description of the single legislation and policy framework that ensures support for all throughout their school careers

Continuing vocational training – FPC (formerly known as in-service training – FCC) is governed by book 6 of the code of basic education and secondary education, title 1 (On continuing vocational training for members of the educational team of the schools and members of the staff of the multi-disciplinary team of the psychological centres), which entered into force on 29 August 2022.

3.4b Overview of the general legislation and policy framework that ensures support for the majority of learners throughout their school careers

Not applicable.

3.4c Overview of the specific legislation and policy framework that ensures support for learners who are vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education throughout their school careers

The Centres for Psychological, Medical and Social Services (CPMS) are facilities which receive and listen to young people, and where multi-disciplinary teams operate: educational psychologists, assistant educational psychologists, assistant social workers, assistant paramedics and doctors. They are subject to professional confidentiality requirements, and the services they provide are free of charge. Each school is served by a CPMS.

The CPMSs have three main missions:

- to promote the psychological, educational, medical and social conditions which will give learners the best chance of developing their personalities harmoniously and of preparing to assume their role as autonomous, responsible citizens and play an active role in social, cultural and economic life;

- to contribute to learners' educational process throughout their school career, by encouraging the use of means by which they can be led to make constant progress, within an approach of ensuring equal access opportunities to social, civic and personal emancipation. To this end, among other things the centres will mobilise the resources available in the learner's family, social and school environment;

- with a view to providing orientation for the subsequent course of their life, to support learners in the development of their personal, educational and work plans and their integration into social and professional life.

Source: *Eurydice*

Integration may be undertaken using four possible approaches (defined in the decree of 5 February 2009):

- total permanent integration: the learner attends all classes in mainstream education throughout the year;

- partial permanent integration: the learner attends some classes in a mainstream school throughout the year, and others in a specialised school;

- total temporary integration: the learner attends all classes in mainstream education for one or more limited periods;

- partial temporary integration: the learner attends some classes in mainstream education for one or more limited periods.

The integration of a learner into mainstream education requires co-ordination of the educational teams. Support from specialised educational personnel may be provided. The qualifications of such personnel depend on the learner's specific needs. Allowances, operational subsidies, and more favourable staffing norms are shared between the mainstream school and the specialist school, according to the type of integration and the disability. If specific equipment is needed for the integrated learner, it must be made available to the mainstream school concerned. The learner in total permanent integration benefits from free transport. The one in temporary integration, being registered in special needs education, only benefits from the transport to specialist education until they pass into total permanent integration.

Certain agreements (set out in the decrees of 30 April 2009) were made between the French Community and the Regions (Walloon Region, Brussels Capital Region) to formalise and support assistance for disabled learners. The Agency for a Quality Life (AViQ: Agence pour une Vie de Qualité) for the Walloon Region, and the Brussels Fund for the Social and Professional Integration of Disabled People, also known as PHARE (Personne Handicapée Autonomie Recherchée – Disabled Person Autonomy Sought) for the Brussels Capital Region may contribute to certain costs associated with integration (the purchase of special equipment, the adaptation of a building, etc.). These bodies also offer support with the integration process (assistance with communication, psycho-educational support, etc.).

Thus, Early Aid Services can provide advice and information to schools in collaboration with the psycho-medico-social centers, and with the parents' consent. These services are present to help the learner and their family up to the age of 8 in educational, social and psychological terms.

The Integration Support Services (SAI), subsidised by AViQ, can, at the parents' request, support learners between the ages of 6 and 20 with their schooling. They thus take over from the Early Aid Services for young learners. Among other tasks, the staff in the SAI can:

- give residual specialist support to the work of the school with the learner whose schooling is made difficult by their disability;

- respond to one-off needs and/or help with the gradual attainment of full-time schooling for learners with disabilities who have either dropped out of school or are not receiving schooling.

In addition, schooling continuity services (SAS) can help learners undergoing a crisis by temporarily taking them in (decree of 15 December 2006).

Source: *Eurydice*

Establish in each school the teaching choices and priority actions to support the reception of a learner with specific needs (Included in the decree of 3 March 2004):

- Set up experimental pedagogies in special education for learners with autism, dysphasia or severe multiple disabilities.

- Allow all learners with specific needs to benefit from measures related to total permanent integration as in the decree of 3 March 2004 on the organisation of specialist teaching.

- Allow parents and professionals to have clear, detailed information that specifies the rights and duties of each one, with procedures that make it possible to meet each learner's specific needs as regards teaching. Guidelines for integration are available for all users.

- Support the experiments aimed at integrating groups of learners with specific needs accompanied by special teachers.

Source: *European Agency, CPRA*

3.5 Is there a single legislation and policy framework to ensure support for all learners at times of transition between phases of education and into adult life?

Yes.

3.5a Description of the single legislation and policy framework that ensures support for all learners at times of transition between phases of education and into adult life

Decree of 3 March 2004, Article 4, section 1-30 – Individual transition plan (PIT): the PIT, integrated into the individual learning plan, is a reflexive approach that tends to establish the necessary links between different partners to develop and foster the school–adulthood continuum.

Source: *European Agency, CPRA*

3.5b Overview of the general legislation and policy framework that ensures support for the majority of learners at times of transition between phases of education and into adult life

Not applicable.

3.5c Overview of the specific legislation and policy framework that ensures support for learners who are vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education at times of transition between phases of education and into adult life

Decree of 3 March 2004, Article 4, section 1-30 – Individual transition plan (PIT): the PIT, integrated into the individual learning plan, is a reflexive approach that tends to establish the necessary links between different partners to develop and foster the school–adulthood continuum.

SECTION 4. SYSTEM GOVERNANCE

This section provides information on aspects of governance across and between different system levels, bodies and stakeholders in the country.

4.1 Shared responsibilities across and between central and local government

A local consultation committee (CoCoBa) is set up in each school organised by the French Community. It is composed of staff members and trade union representatives. Its principal mission is to provide consultation on teaching staff working conditions. It verifies that the school plan conforms to the educational plan set by the controlling authority. Local joint committees (CoPaLoc) for grant-aided schools have been established for institutions of pre-secondary, secondary and higher education. The representatives of the controlling authorities and trade unions that sit on these committees define staff working conditions and intervene, in particular, in cases of temporary appointments of teachers, redeployments and assignment changes, when a school is taken over by another controlling authority; or to administer the use of the 'period endowment' (in pre-secondary education, the teaching staff allocated on the basis of the number of learners enrolled) and the NTPP (the total number of teacher-periods allocated on the basis of the number of mainstream learners in secondary education). They set school opening and closing hours. They verify that the school plan conforms to the educational plan set by the controlling authority. They are also consulted on other questions. In grant-aided independent education, a similar role is played by the works council, a local consultation body or the trade union delegation.

Following the Decree on the Missions (24 July 1997) of School, participation councils were created in each pre-secondary and secondary school in the different networks. The participation council is made up of the institution's director and representatives of the controlling authority, of the staff, of the parents, of the social, cultural and economic worlds and of the learners (except in pre-secondary education). The councils are responsible for, among other things, debating, amending and supplementing the school plan, proposing it for approval by the minister or the controlling authority, periodically evaluating its implementation, proposing adaptations and issuing an opinion on the activity report.

In order to ensure closer consultation between education institutions, geographical areas have been defined for each school level, each consisting of two councils: one for non-denominational education and one for denominational education. These councils ensure the use of teacher-periods which are shared by institutions in the area, as well as the harmonisation of educational provision in secondary education. Proposals are submitted to a consultation committee, which is responsible for approving them and thus making them definitive. These consultation committees and the area councils are composed of representatives of the controlling authorities concerned, including the minister as controlling authority of Community education.

Source: _Eurydice_

4.2 Specific areas for shared responsibilities across and between central and local government

Policy development, implementation and co-ordination

Higher council for teaching learners with special needs, general council for primary and secondary education, parents' associations, administration, inspection and teachers' unions.

Identification of needs / referral for services

Higher council for teaching learners with special needs, general council for primary and secondary education, parents' associations, administration, inspection and teachers' unions.

Data collection and sharing

Education Indicators Service.

Monitoring and evaluation

Compulsory Education Steering Service.

Quality assurance and accountability

Not present.

Funding

Ministry of Education.

4.3 Formal and informal collaboration across ministries

The French Community of Belgium has competence in particular for cultural affairs and the use of languages, as well as education, childhood, youth and research. The government of the French Community has four ministers directly concerned with child care and education: a Minister for Education (responsible for education starting from the pre-primary stage), a Minister for Early Childhood (among others), a Minister for Higher Education, Media and Scientific Research, and a Minister for Social Advancement Education, Youth, Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities. A fifth minister is responsible for the budget, civil service and administrative simplification for the French Community. In the government of the Walloon Region, a minister is responsible for training (among other areas).

Source: *Eurydice*

4.4 Specific mechanisms for formal and informal collaboration that impact on inclusive education

Development of a shared vision for inclusive education

Higher council for teaching learners with special needs, general council for primary and secondary education, parents' associations, administration, inspection and teachers' unions with the support of referral agencies.

Policy development, implementation and co-ordination

Higher council for teaching learners with special needs, general council for primary and secondary education, parents' associations, administration, inspection and teachers' unions.

Identification of needs / referral for services

Referral from the schools to higher council for teaching learners with special needs, general council for primary and secondary education, parents' associations, administration, inspection and teachers' unions.

Data collection and sharing

Only administration.

Monitoring and evaluation

Only administration and Ministry.

Quality assurance and accountability

Not present.

Funding

No information.

SECTION 5. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

This section provides information on the general and specific quality assurance and accountability frameworks and mechanisms informing the country's education system.

5.1 School inspection processes and structures for all forms of educational provision

In addition, the decree of 8 March 2007 defines a General Department of Inspection, which is responsible for steering quality at pre-secondary and secondary levels.

Source: *Eurydice*

The General Department of Inspection, directed by a co-ordinating inspector-general, was created by the decree of 8 March 2007. This general department consists of various services, several of which relate to pre-secondary and/or secondary education:

- an Inspection Service for Mainstream Pre-Secondary Education, directed by an inspector-general assisted by three inspectors responsible for co-ordinating inspection activity in mainstream pre-secondary education;

- an Inspection Service for Mainstream Secondary Education, directed by an inspector-general assisted by three inspectors responsible for co-ordinating inspection activity in mainstream secondary education;

- an Inspection Service for Specialist Education, directed by an inspector responsible for co-ordinating inspection activity in specialist education;

- an Inspection Service for Arts Education, directed by an inspector responsible for co-ordinating inspection activity in arts education;

- an Inspection Service for the Centres for Psychological, Medical and Social Services, directed by an inspector responsible for co-ordinating inspection activity in the Centres for Psychological, Medical and Social Services.

There is also a separate inspectorate for each recognised religion (Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, Orthodoxy) apart from Islam, and an inspectorate of non-confessional ethics, but the decree on inspection does not apply to religion classes. In any case, the inspectors of religious teaching fall within the authority of the Co-ordinating General Inspector.

The inspectors' remit includes the following tasks:

- evaluating and checking on the level of studies (in relation to the achievement targets established by legislation);

- compliance with the curricula set or approved by the government;

- consistency of practice, including evaluation practice, and appropriateness of teaching equipment and school facilities in the light of educational requirements;

- coherence of choices made with regard to in-career training and their appropriateness in the light of educational requirements, as well as the impact of such training on educational practice;

- proper implementation of the educational aspects of differentiated staffing plans;

- the safeguarding of freedom of artistic expression and of the modes of artistic expression (arts education);

- compliance with various requirements set out in decrees;

- within schools or distance education institutions, identifying any mechanisms for segregation and working to ensure the elimination of such mechanisms;

- providing advice and information about the missions defined above;

- providing support with the design, organisation and correction of external evaluations not leading to certification, with the analysis and use of the results within educational institutions (for pre-secondary education and secondary education), and with the devising of evaluations by external boards in arts education;

- providing support with the design, organisation and correction of and the board for the common external test leading to the issue of the primary education certificate at the end of primary education (pre-secondary education);

- assisting the Steering Committee (pre-secondary and secondary education);

- collaborating on in-career training across all networks (pre-secondary and secondary education) or the in-career training of personnel members (part-time arts education grant-aided by the French Community);

- issuing a formal opinion on the granting of conformity approval for school textbooks, educational software and teaching aids which are submitted to them by the Steering Committee (pre-secondary and secondary education);

- issuing opinions and making proposals, on their initiative or at the government's request, on any matter falling within their sphere of competence;

- participating in working groups, committees and councils, in accordance with specific laws, decrees and regulations;

- working with the teaching departments of higher education institutions within the context of and under the conditions set by the government;

- checking on and evaluating compliance with the requirements set out in the decrees regarding in-career training, in terms of those aspects whose inspection and evaluation are entrusted to them by the legislation;

- working with government services in connection with the inspection of the application of the measures in favour of free educational provision stipulated by the Decree on the Missions of Schools (pre-secondary and secondary education);

- checking on the observation of neutrality where it is a requirement;

- checking on compliance with certain provisions relating to the status of school heads;

- carrying out any other tasks entrusted to them by or under the terms of laws, decrees or regulations.

In addition, the inspection services appraise, at the request of the head of school in education organised by the French Community and of the controlling authority in grant-aided education, the teaching skills of the members of staff on its teaching team.

The members of the General Department of Inspection base their evaluation and monitoring on observations made in particular through attendance of lessons and activities, the examination of learners' work and documents, the results obtained in external evaluations not leading to certification, interviews with learners, the analysis of quantitative data relating to failure rates, grade repetition or re-assignments to other institutions, and the examination of learners' study assignments.

The government or the general official appointed by the government or its representative may, on the basis of a complaint or on its own initiative, decide to conduct an investigation at one or more institutions. If this occurs, the co-ordinating inspector-general may send one or more members of staff of the General Department of Inspection to establishments of higher education, apart from arts colleges, to perform this or any other related assignment.

Inspection missions are described in detailed reports, which may relate to a single class or all or part of one or more institutions, and which are sent to the competent authorities. They may also form the subject of a memo sent to the service responsible for educational advice and support. If a controlling authority does not intend to take action in response to a negative report compiled by a member of the General Department of Inspection, it is required to justify its decision within a month of receiving the report.

In October 2009, the General Department of Inspection circulated a report which contained a survey of the education system, proposals for remedying the weaknesses identified and the inspection schedule for each inspection department for the school year 2009/2010 and the following two years.

Source: *Eurydice*

5.2 Other quality assurance processes for all forms of educational provision

At the level of pre-secondary and secondary education, quality evaluation must be situated in the general context of the Belgian education system, which guarantees a significant degree of freedom to the networks in the management of schools and the definition of curricula and educational methods. However, significant progress has been made during the past decade in quality evaluation at the level of the system as a whole, and at the level of institutions, teachers and learners. New bodies have been created, and the roles of the main actors in the system have been redefined in order to improve co-ordination between evaluation processes and the quality of education: the Steering

Committee, the General Department of Inspection, the networks and the school heads, the educational teams and the class councils.

Some of the details of evaluation activities vary from network to network, but common compulsory guidelines ensure a better degree of consistency within the system.

In addition, various reforms have provided a framework for the integration of learners with disabilities into mainstream education and have adjusted special education. The implementation of these reforms and the collection of good practices in the field of integration are carried out by the Inspection Service.

Source: *Eurydice*

The 'project of educational establishment' must contain elements which enable the organisation of inclusion.

When the school has reached an agreement with the parents and the learner, the head teacher of the special school finds a mainstream school willing to collaborate regarding inclusion.

Following this, the class council of special education, the guidance service and the class teacher of the mainstream school draw up a written protocol, which includes:

- the learner's plan for inclusion and file, the aims, the specific equipment needed, travel requirements, exemption from the mainstream programme if necessary, and the method of communication between the two schools;

- information regarding co-operation between the support team of the special school and the teachers of the mainstream school and also how to organise the internal assessment of the full-time permanent inclusion;

- the agreement of the guidance service;

- the agreement of the parents;

- the opinion of the travel commission.

Source: *European Agency, CPRA*

5.3 Evaluation mechanisms used to monitor outcomes at different system levels

General outcomes (academic, social, well-being, etc.) for all learners

Each school has for three years produced a management plan with objectives to be achieved. This steering plan includes a large number of indicators which are grouped together by the administration and which are used to steer each school and to steer teaching.

Specific outcomes (academic, social, well-being, etc.) for learners vulnerable to exclusion

Each school has for three years produced a management plan with objectives to be achieved. This steering plan includes a large number of indicators which are grouped

together by the administration and which are used to steer each school and to steer teaching.

Outcomes for schools (professional development, staff and personal well-being, etc.)

Ministry of Compulsory Education of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation:Decree defining the priority tasks of basic education and secondary education and organising the structures to achieve them 24 July 1997, Article 67.

Source: *European Agency, Supporting Inclusive School Leadership*

Outcomes for parents and families (support, participation, family well-being, etc.)

Schools are obliged to organise a parents' association. These associations are grouped into two associations which represent them to the services of the minister.

5.4 Evaluation mechanisms used to monitor the effectiveness of processes at different system levels

Effectiveness of teaching and learning processes

The task of permanent assessment concerning the integrative actions is assured by the general council for special education.

Permanent assessment of the integrations is authorised by the application of Chapter 10 on the basis of the reports written by the teaching team and by the Wallonia-Brussels Federation Inspection Department.

For learners in permanent total integration (Decree of 3 March 2004, Article 145).

Source: *European Agency, CPRA*

Effectiveness of school management processes

Each school has for three years produced a management plan with objectives to be achieved. This steering plan includes a large number of indicators which are grouped together by the administration and which are used to steer each school and to steer teaching.

Effectiveness of teacher professional development processes

Each school has for three years produced a management plan with objectives to be achieved. This steering plan includes a large number of indicators which are grouped together by the administration and which are used to steer each school and to steer teaching.

Efficiency and effectiveness of funding mechanisms

Each school has for three years produced a management plan with objectives to be achieved. This steering plan includes a large number of indicators which are grouped together by the administration and which are used to steer each school and to steer teaching.

Effectiveness of (vertical) co-operation between stakeholders at different system levels

Each school has for three years produced a management plan with objectives to be achieved. This steering plan includes a large number of indicators which are grouped together by the administration and which are used to steer each school and to steer teaching.

Effectiveness of (horizontal) co-operation between ministries and ministerial departments

Each school has for three years produced a management plan with objectives to be achieved. This steering plan includes a large number of indicators which are grouped together by the administration and which are used to steer each school and to steer teaching.

5.5 Specific monitoring mechanisms relating to learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education

No information.

5.6 Specific evaluation mechanisms relating to learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education

No information.

5.7 Specific accountability mechanisms to ensure the inclusion of learners vulnerable to exclusion from inclusive education

The objectives of the Pact for Excellence in Teaching are as follows:

- to adapt skills and knowledge to the needs of the school of the 21st century;
- to improve learners' educational pathways and fight against failure and inequalities at school;
- to support and invest in teaching teams to enable them to meet the challenges of the 21st-century school;
- adapting the governance of the school system in order to make its various stakeholders accountable;
- improving the steering of the system and its performance and optimising its organisation and resources.

The desired aim is to strengthen basic knowledge and ensure a higher level of knowledge for all learners.

Source: *Eurydice*

The Pact for Excellence in Teaching in its Opinion Number 3 proposes five strategic lines of action for the development of schools:

- teaching the knowledge and skills of society and promoting the pleasure of learning, through reinforced pre-primary education, a common polytechnic and multi-disciplinary core curriculum, and a revised and clarified learning framework;

- mobilising those involved in education within a context of increased autonomy and responsibility by strengthening and contractualising the management of the education system and schools, increasing the leadership of the school head, and enhancing the role of teachers within the collective dynamics of the school;

- make the vocational pathway a path of excellence that is rewarding for each learner and enables successful socio-professional integration, while strengthening its steering and simplifying its organisation;

- in order to improve the role of education as a source of social emancipation while focusing on excellence for all, promote diversity and inclusive schooling throughout the education system while developing strategies to fight against failure at school, dropping out and grade repetition;

- ensure that every child has a place in a quality school, and develop school organisation to make schools more accessible, more open to their environment and better adapted to the learners' well-being.

Source: *Eurydice*

SECTION 6. STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION, CO-OPERATION AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

This section provides information on the structures, mechanisms and opportunities for stakeholder collaboration and co-operation in the country.

6.1 Does the legislation and policy framework specify learner voices are used to inform the development of learning and teaching environments?

No.

6.1a Description of the legislation and policy framework around the use of learner voice

Not applicable.

6.1b Explanation

Some devices give voice to young people in secondary education but their voice is never relayed.

6.2 Does the legislation and policy framework ensure curriculum development processes take account of all learners and their communities?

No.

6.2a Description of how the legislation and policy framework around curriculum development processes take account of all learners and their communities

Not applicable.

6.2b Explanation

No information.

6.3 Does the legislation and policy framework support the active involvement of different stakeholders in ensuring inclusive learning environments?

Parents and families

The provision is reproduced in the Decree of 3 March 2004 and in the Decree of 27 July 1997. Parents are involved and their opinion is always needed at all levels of education.

Source: *European Agency, CPRA*

In the elementary school, the 'project of educational establishment' (July 1997) advises on how to promote communication between learners, parents and members of the school team. Each school must revise the project every three years in co-operation with the participation council. Parents' associations are present in the Higher Council for Special Education (Article 180 of the Decree of 3 March 2004).

Decree of 2 February 2007, Article 8: The director is responsible for the school's relations with learners, parents and third parties.

Source: *European Agency, CPRA*

School-leaders/leadership teams, teachers and specialist staff

The decree defining the priority tasks of basic education and secondary education and organising the structures to achieve them of 24 July 1997 (Ministry of Compulsory Education of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation) mentions in Article 67, '…the school's strategy for integrating learners, as well as the strategy in terms of reasonable accommodations for learners with special needs …'

Source: *European Agency, Supporting Inclusive School Leadership*

Not to obtain certifications, the learner must follow a non-flexible programme. However, the 'project of educational establishment' (decree of July 1997, article 67) defines the set of pedagogical choices and particular concrete activities that the school teaching team employs for use in collaboration with all partners and to realise the government's educational and pedagogical plan.

In the case of a mainstream school, the 'project of educational establishment' decides the pedagogical choices and actions required in promoting the inclusion of learners from special schools.

Each school must have a protocol that describes which tools are implemented in order for the learners to reach the general and the particular aims of the decree regarding basic competences.

Source: *European Agency, CPRA*

Stakeholders in the local communities

No information.

Local-level decision-/policy-makers

No information.

Non-governmental organisations, disabled people's organisations or other organisations representing vulnerable groups

No information.

6.4 Does the legislation and policy framework ensure that curriculum development processes involve the participation and contribution of different stakeholders?

Yes.

6.4a Description of the legislation and policy framework ensuring the involvement of stakeholders in curriculum development processes

No information.

6.4b Explanation

It is the work of the trade union organisations which are very influential and which are represented in all the places of decision and negotiation.

6.5 Does the legislation and policy framework support the development of learning communities in local/regional areas?

No.

6.5a Description of the legislation and policy framework that supports the development of learning communities

Not applicable.

SECTION 7. FINAL COMMENTS AND REFLECTIONS

The French Community of Belgium has made enormous progress over the past dozen years. It is committed to the path of a more inclusive school while maintaining specialist education.