



# RECENT INNOVATIONS IN BELGIAN AND FLEMISH BELGIAN EDUCATION

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**National Center On Education And The Economy**



## **Belgium/Flemish Belgium**

### **Recent Innovations**

1. Free pre-school starting at age 2.5. Almost all kids attend.
2. Parents can choose primary and secondary schools.
3. School day: 8-4pm primary; until 5pm secondary; one hour free
4. Student groupings: primary school has six classes and three levels; secondary school grouped by age.
5. Curriculum & Instruction: schools free to determine texts and teaching methods. Follows goals set by Flemish Community of Belgium and courses set by administration and approved by the Ministry. Set curriculum for all until the end of second year of secondary school. Choose between general, technical, vocational or artistic education.
6. Assessment and Qualifications: no common exam for all schools. Assessment is done by the teachers on their own at the primary level and within a class committee run by the principal at the secondary level. A Certificate of Primary Education is given if a student completes primary school successfully and a Secondary Diploma is given after 6 years of general, technical and artistic education and 7 years after vocational ed at the secondary level. There is an inspection system to ensure schools meet standards.
7. Interesting system of upper secondary and post-secondary education. From 15 or 16 years of age, secondary school is compulsory to 18 but students are only required to go part-time. Offerings include full-time secondary education, apprenticeship or part-time education. Combines theory and work. See Eurydice report for graphic representation.
8. Complicated higher ed system. University education and non-university higher ed called higher colleges (teachers go to higher colleges). Each offering different diplomas with different time spent.
9. Special Ed: 4.5% of primary and secondary students attend separate institutions for special needs.
10. Modularized the courses in secondary professional education.
11. Governance: Flemish Parliament responsible for education policy. Three types of education-community education (public, neutral), subsidized public education (neutral or denominational organized by province or municipality)

and subsidized private education (private organizations, denominational, independent or non-denominational). The organization that sets up the school receives funds from government and then has autonomy over almost all aspects of the school.

12. Comprehensive Employment and Training System worth looking into. See Eurydice document for more.