

## ANNUAL TOURISM REPORT

### BELGIUM 2012

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Council Decision 86/664/EEC of 22 December 1986<sup>1</sup> establishing a consultation and cooperation procedure in the field of tourism foresees that “each Member State shall send the Commission, once a year, a report on the most significant measures it has taken and, as far as possible, on measures it is considering taking in the provision of services for tourists which could have consequences for travellers from the other Member States”.

With the publication of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism”, the Commission announced that “in order to strengthen the collaboration with and among Member States, their current annual reporting through the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) will be used to facilitate the exchange and the dissemination of information about how their policies and actions safeguard the sustainability of tourism”.

This Communication was welcomed by the Competitiveness Council conclusions (22nd-23rd November 2007) and by the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 14th December 2007.

The main aims for the reporting process are:

- to be able to monitor the level of implementation of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism” by Member States;
- to facilitate the exchange of experiences among member States with regard to how they tackle issues which are important for the competitiveness and sustainability of European tourism.

MS reports referring to year  $n$  shall be sent to the European Commission by the end of February of year  $n+1$ .

If the reports are sent in English, the deadline is shifted to the end of April.

#### 2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

This section should provide an overview of the main organisational structure to illustrate how tourism is organised and managed, to identify linkages and to identify the engagement of other organisations/stakeholders.

The information required will only need to be prepared fully in year 1 as it will subsequently only be necessary to provide details of any changes.

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<sup>1</sup> Official Journal L 384, 31/12/1986 P. 0052 – 0053.

## BELGIUM

**2.1** Please identify the National Bodies responsible for tourism (Ministry and also any separate/related National Tourism Organisation), including key areas of responsibility, and their relationship to other national bodies. (maximum of 1.000 characters)

### **FLANDERS**

At the administrative level the two main actors are the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (“Departement internationaal Vlaanderen”; policy division) and Toerisme Vlaanderen, whose main responsibilities can be described as follows:

#### **A. Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (Policy Division – Tourism Unit)**

1. Policy support, preparation, monitoring and evaluation

*keeping track of trends, developing new regulations, issuing policy opinions to the Minister and the Government; monitoring the execution of the management agreement between the Flemish government and Toerisme Vlaanderen; overseeing the implementation of the policy and making an assessment of the approach; follow-up of international organisations e.g. EU, UNWTO, OECD*

2. Touristic licences

*granting and controlling licences for tourist accommodation and travel agencies*

#### **B. Toerisme Vlaanderen**

1. Policy execution

2. Marketing and promotion of Flanders as a destination

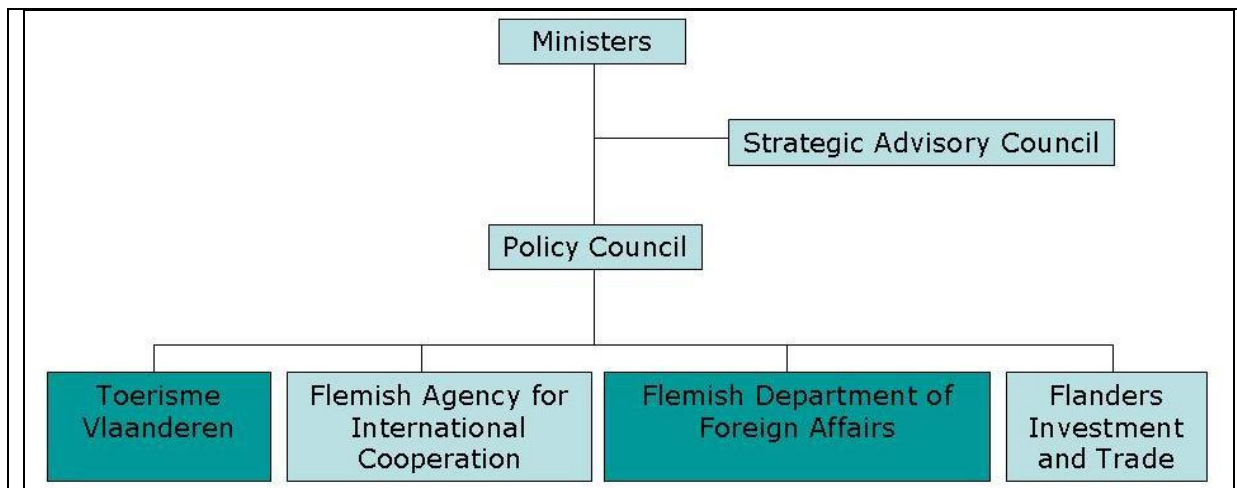
*Toerisme Vlaanderen has information centres in The Hague, Cologne, Paris, London, Milan, Vienna, Barcelona, New York, Beijing and Tokyo. Toerisme Vlaanderen also has representation offices in Russia (Moskou) and India (New Delhi, Mumbai). The Scandinavian market is actively marketed from the Brussels office.*

3. Providing support to and coordination of the tourist industry in Flanders

*coordinating and supporting provinces and local authorities (in developing strategic plans/ product development/ touristic welcoming services,...); gathering and dissemination of information and knowledge; research; communication; cooperation; product development; encouraging quality control in the sector; funding for tourist-related investments/ touristic-recreational projects/ tourism employment/ events; training for the tourist industry; promoting sustainable tourism; consultation with other policy areas e.g. mobility, environmental planning, culture,...*

4. Increasing holiday participation

The Authorities of Flanders contain 13 policy areas in total. Tourism is part of the **Flemish Foreign Affairs Policy Area**, which can be presented as follows:



### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The Tourism Services in the German Speaking Community of Belgium has been adapted. In accordance with the concept of the rural development in a general, a new strategy has been worked out. A clear separation between Ministry and Agency for promotion has been set on paper.

While the agency is charged with the development of relevant products and the strategic issues, the Ministry sets down the rules and develops a master plan of needed infrastructure and facilities.

### WALLONIA

The actors are the Ministry for Tourism, the “Commissariat général au Tourisme”, Wallonie -Bruxelles Tourisme ( formerly Office de promotion du Tourisme -OPT) and le Centre d’Ingénierie touristique de Wallonie.

**A. The Ministry for Tourism** is in charge of the conception of the touristic policy.

**B. The “Commissariat général au Tourisme - CGT (General Tourism Commission) »**

Le CGT is the agency responsible for implementing the Walloon government's overall tourism policy. Since 2008, when the CGT became a public body, it has taken a more proactive approach to management that has allowed it to respond more appropriately to changes in the industry.

Its missions are executing touristic policy, managing touristic equipment which belongs to the Walloon Region and organising and promoting tourism on the Walloon territory. To do so, the CGT is in charge of classification and subsidy lines, promotion actions in Wallonia, conception and content of the image, official brochures, touristic data, products conception, fair participation.

**C. « Wallonie-Bruxelles Tourisme - WBT (Wallonia-Brussels Tourism Bureau)»**

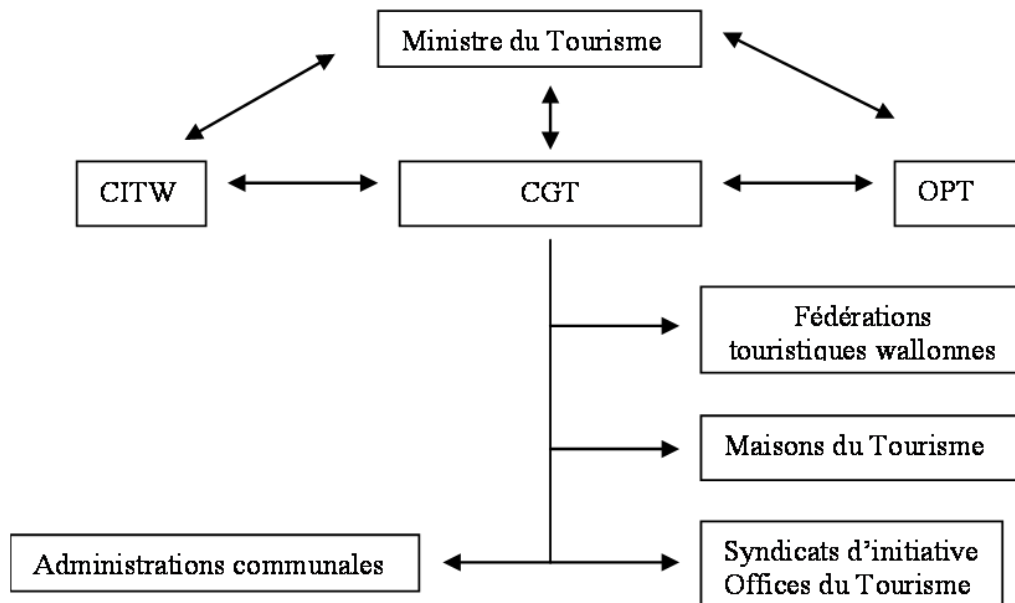
The second institutional player in Walloon tourism, WBT, has the chief responsibility for promoting Wallonia and Brussels as tourism destinations in Flanders and abroad.

**D. « Le Centre d’Ingénierie touristique de Wallonie – CITW (The Walloon Tourism Engineering Centre) »**

Lastly, with support from European funds, the CITW, a joint economic and tourism development undertaking of Walloon municipalities, has been organising and implementing "tourism engineering policies" in Wallonia, pooling responsibilities and co-ordinating actions at the Walloon territorial level,

## BELGIUM

as well as co-ordinating more generally the studies performed by specialised consultants.



## BRUSSELS

Tourism services of the French Community Commission of The Brussels Capital Region is responsible for implementing tourist policy decided by the authority, applying rules and regulations in force or the tourist sector, investing in equipment by subsidies, subsidising promotion relating to the image of Brussels as well as organisation of thematic visits and promotion of regional-scale tourist activities, supporting promotion of Brussels in the rest of the world along the line of the “Office de Promotion du Tourisme” policies, making studies and survey about tourist demand.

**2.2** Please, describe what organisations/agencies are used to deliver services at the national and regional level and the services that they deliver. (maximum 800 characters)

## FLANDERS

### 1. Toerisme Vlaanderen

(general information: see question 2.1.)

#### 1.1. Infopunt Toegankelijk Reizen

*stimulates efforts in the tourism sector to give people with a (fysical) disability a pleasant holiday; gives information on the accessibility of accommodation, transport, attractions and musea at the destination*  
*service of Toerisme Vlaanderen*

#### 1.2. Steunpunt Vakantieparticipatie

## BELGIUM

*develops a travel offer for people with a limited income*

*service of Toerisme Vlaanderen*

2. Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (see question 2.1.)

3. Strategic Advisory Council Flemish Foreign Affairs

*The Strategic Advisory Council Flemish Foreign Affairs advises the Flemish government in its international policy, including tourism. It formulates advises on its own initiative or on request about draft cooperation agreements, regulation proposals, policy intentions, ...The Council comprises representatives from the community-based organisations and independent experts.*

### **GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY**

Tourism service for East Belgium: advertising and promotion of Tourism in East Belgium. A near cooperation with business promotion and economic development is prepared. Common work with other external bodies in view of a better use of EU funds such as EFRE and Interreg. Prospection of new markets, near or far. Facilitating cooperation with other bodies by making up treaties in PPP.

New products are to developed, such as cycling and walking programs.

Special attention is placed in the use of new technologies (ict) and the development of adapted programs.

### **WALLONIA**

**The CGT is organised as follows:**

- The Tourism Organisations Division
- The Tourist Attractions and infrastructures Division, who is in charge, amongst other things, of social tourism;
- The Tourism Accommodation Division;
- The Tourism Products Division, who is in charge, amongst other things, of the development of the web portal of Walloon tourism ([www.tourismewallonie.be](http://www.tourismewallonie.be)); and
- The Tourism Strategy Division, who monitors the implementation of "Destination 2015" and is in charge of the Walloon Tourism Observatory.

**WBT has four principal objectives:**

1. To focus investment on high-potential tourist origin markets, namely:
  - priority markets for Wallonia and selective actions for Brussels, aimed at Flanders;
  - priority markets for Wallonia and for Brussels, aimed at the Netherlands, France, Germany and the United Kingdom;
  - priority markets for Brussels and selective actions for Wallonia, aimed at Spain, Italy, and the United States; and
  - diversification markets: Poland, Japan, Québec, and China.
2. Boosting the image, reputation and visibility of Wallonia as a destination, by forming

## BELGIUM

partnerships with the Walloon Export and Foreign Investment Agency (AWEX), Bruxelles Export and Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI) to boost the visibility of Wallonia and via promotional activities in markets further afield, organised in collaboration with other European destinations.

3. Innovating and improving the balance of supply and demand, by market. . For each market (e.g. golfers, gays etc.), Wallonia-Brussels Tourism (WBT) implements annual communication action plans (advertising and marketing), promotion (press and professional trade fairs) and direct marketing (prospecting and forging partnerships with tour operators and carriers), to promote both leisure and business tourism. Training courses are also improving knowledge of markets on the part of tourism service providers.
4. Partnering public and private investments to promote Wallonia as a destination and its tourism products. The WBT's three Walloon promotion clubs, each of which is chaired by a private sector representative, engage in co-operative marketing to pool public and private investments in partnership with the principal tourism industry associations in Wallonia: Club Détente-Découverte Excursions, Club Détente-Découverte Séjours, and Club MICE Wallonie.

**The CITW** (see 2.1)

### BRUSSELS

see 2.1

Partners are :

- Visit Brussels which associates Brussels tourist actors, works concretely on city image, deals with welcome service, supports private and public operators for business tourism
- Wallonie Bruxelles Tourisme (WBT) which is in charge of the promotion of the city on the foreign markets
- BHA and "Horeca" for the hotels, restaurants and pubs sector
- "Hostels in Brussels "for youth accomodation

**2.3** Please, describe which other bodies and organisations are involved at the national level and the process for involving them. (maximum 800 characters)

### FLANDERS

The Economic Inspection is responsible for the supervision and inspection of consumer protection matters.

### WALLONIA

(see 2.1 and 2.2)

## BELGIUM

### BRUSSELS

The Economic Inspection is responsible for the supervision and inspection of consumer protection matters.

**2.4** Please provide a diagram/organogram of the organisational structure for tourism identifying the relationship between national, regional and local bodies. Provide also a short description of the core responsibilities and competencies of each of the organisations. Include also information regarding the direct and indirect links between other departments, stakeholder organisations and unions. Information about mechanisms of decision making process participation from outsider organisations, e.g. forums, advisory committees is also requested. (maximum of 2.000 characters)

### FLANDERS

#### 1. Flemish Level

a) See under 2.1-2.3

b) Federation Tourism Industry

*represents the tourism industry in Flanders*

c) Guida Kenniscentrum voor Toerisme en Horeca vzw

*conducts research; collects and disseminates knowledge to employees, employers, professional organisations; advises policy makers on tourism and horeca  
financed by the social partners of the Horeca-sector and Toerisme Vlaanderen*

#### 2. Provinces

a) Main responsibilities: Since April 2011, the provinces are exclusively competent for tourism promotion on the domestic market.

#### 3. Municipalities and cities

a) Main responsibility: giving information to the public (welcoming service)

b) Some municipalities and cities have a 'Flanders information office' or 'Regional information office', which means that they also give information about other Flemish provinces and municipalities

c) Some municipalities and cities (which can or cannot be situated in the same province) join forces in regional cooperation structures.

d) The municipalities and cities of the coastal area join forces within the framework of the 'Strategic Policy Plan for the Coast'.

e) The art cities Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges, Leuven and Mechelen join forces within the framework of the 'Art Cities Action Plan'.

f) VVSG (Vlaamse Vereniging van Steden en Gemeenten)

*represents the local authorities in Flanders*

### WALLONIA

## BELGIUM

**1. Walloon level** : “CGT”, “WBT” and “CITW”.

**2. Provinces** : 1 touristic federation per province

**3. Supra municipal level** : 42 Tourist Houses (“Maisons du Tourisme”) in charge of welcoming service and local promotion

**4. Municipalities** :

- a) Most municipalities have a Tourist Office which works together with the local Tourist House.
- b) An “Art Cities Network” has been put into place in 2008.
- c) “Territorial quality plans” have been elaborated for 45 municipalities with the support of the CITW. Their implementation has started in 2012 and needs an important “trans-administration” collaboration.

**2.5** Please provide information about financial data, including spend/budget on tourism as a percentage of overall government spend/budget, the level of national funding support for tourism marketing, the amount of EU funding support made available for tourism and data concerning the support to SMEs and Destinations. (500 characters)

### FLANDERS

- total tourism budget of the Flemish government: 61,753 million euro (policy credits).
- budget on tourism as a percentage of overall Flemish government budget : 0,3%
- funding support for tourism marketing: 10,4 million Euro  
(figures 2012)

### WALLONIA

The 2013 budget of the CGT is EUR 52 million

The budget does not take into account the funds granted for projects co-financed by the European Commission (the overall budgets approved for the programming period 2007-2013 amount to some EUR 97 million).

### BRUSSELS

7,415 million Euro for 2009

## 3. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

**3.1** Is there a current National Strategy for tourism? Yes  No

If yes, please, provide information in bullet point format about the key aims, objectives and priorities of the strategy highlighting those that are designed to address sustainability issues in economic, environmental and social terms in particular those related in the six aims included in the Agenda. In preparing the tourism strategy, explain how consideration has been given to the 9 principles set out in the Agenda (para2.3 p5) and given in the appendix. (maximum 1.000 characters)

### FLANDERS

Five strategic objectives have been formulated by the 2009-2014 Flemish Government in its tourism policy paper:



## BELGIUM

1. Enhancing the attractiveness and the perceptive value of (the) tourist destination(s) (in) Flanders
2. Stimulating tourist entrepreneurship
3. Conducting a forceful marketing policy per macro product with a view to increasing the economic returns
4. Enabling every Flemish citizen to fully participate in tourism
5. Enhancing the efficiency and the effects of the activities of the authorities engaged in the tourism sector

The Flemish tourism sector, both public and private, has recently completed a very important and comprehensive exercise that will determine the development of tourism in Flanders in the next decade. The new 'Strategic Policy Plan 2020 for Tourism in Flanders-Brussels' sets out the strategic framework for Flemish tourism, and defines the desired position of tourism in Flanders by 2020, and how this can be achieved. The Plan recognises that the integrated and co-ordinated development of tourism is a challenge, given the diversity of the issues and actors involved. Its aim is to respond to these challenges and to develop an umbrella tourism strategy for all the actors. More than 150 organisations were involved in the Plan's development, including the provinces, the Flemish art cities, private sector associations, representatives from other policy areas such as transport, heritage and education, and social tourism organisations. Each of these actors will have its own specific role in the Plan's implementation. For that reason it includes a Tourism Pact, whereby all actors explicitly subscribe to the strategic framework and indicate by their signature their commitment to its implementation. The Plan will both increase the competitiveness of the destination and help to raise the profile of tourism as an important (economic) sector.

### WALLONIA

In 2010, a meeting with over 1000 tourism industry stakeholders was held to launch, and examine the planned implementation of, Destination 2015 which was designed as a tool to plan the activities of the Tourism Department (Box 4.5).

Destination 2015 was intended to establish a five-year strategic plan containing the main "tourism" points from the Regional Policy Declaration of 2009 and transform them into concrete projects. Destination 2015 is a discussion and consultation document. It has been envisaged as a programme to be followed flexibly, and its implementation requires that a number of demand- and supply-side issues are taken into account:

- on one hand, it is recognised that the results of tourism activities depend on broad trends such as holiday schedules and their spacing (in proximity markets), which influence the number of overnight tourism visits; the weather, which influences visits to tourist attractions; and the financial crisis and rising living and transport costs, which also influence tourist behaviour;
- on the other hand, the human and financial resources available for implementing the

## BELGIUM

programme within the CGT and the WBT need to be considered.

Destination 2015 involves the pursuit of seven objectives, each of which is broken down into key themes and a series of specific action proposals:

- to measure the importance of the tourism economy;
- to promote balanced tourism development;
- to encourage "proximity tourism";
- to reflect on tourism diversity;
- to consider Wallonia's image and reputation for quality in foreign tourism markets;
- to work with tourist operators and expand partnerships; and
- to share knowledge.

Lastly, Destination 2015 looks to the future, as the CGT moves away from a project management culture towards a culture of planning and evaluation, and the adoption of a multi-year programming approach.

Further details can be found at [www.printempsdutourisme.be](http://www.printempsdutourisme.be)

### BRUSSELS

In 2006 Sittings for Tourism were organised by the authority integration de recommandations listed in the Strategic Plan 2006-2016. As a transversal competence the conclusions were drawn as follows, Brussels has 3 touristic pillars: Culture, Art of Living and Europe. The principles of sustainability were integrated such as economic viability, adapted schooling, PPPs, eco-labialising, integration of multiculturalism.

### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

A new strategic plan is worked out. The order has been given to an Austrian specialized society.

### 3.2 Who was the initiator and who is responsible for its implementation? (maximum 200 characters)

#### FLANDERS

The Flemish Minister responsible for tourism initiated the strategic goals of the tourism policy paper 2009-2014 and both Toerisme Vlaanderen and the Flemish department of foreign affairs are responsible for its implementation.

The Flemish government initiated the development of the strategic tourism policy plan 2020 for tourism in Flanders-Brussels, but more than 150 organizations were involved in the development process of the plan. All these actors have a responsibility in the implementation of the strategic plan.

## BELGIUM

(see also question 3.1.)

### **WALLONIA**

The Walloon Minister for tourism and his administration is responsible for the initiation of the policies. The “General Tourism Commission” is responsible for their implementation in Wallonia and the “Wallonia-Brussels Tourism Bureau” is responsible for their promotion in the rest of the world.

### **BRUSSELS**

The Brussels Minister for Tourism is responsible for the implementation of tourist policies;

### **GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY**

The Minister, responsible for Tourism, has given the order.

### **3.3 How is the strategy monitored and how often? (maximum 500 characters)**

#### **FLANDERS**

The Flemish tourism policy strategy 2009-2014 is monitored on a yearly basis. Each year, the minister presents in the parliament his policy letter, where he reports on the policy execution to the parliament for the year ending and on the policy execution plans for the year ahead.

Tourism actors will monitor the implementation of every strategic objective of the strategic tourism policy plan 2020 for tourism in Flanders-Brussels against a set of indicators. At an annual States General, all tourism actors will report upon and discuss the implementation of the strategic policy plan for tourism in Flanders. Tourism actors report about their previous year’s contributions to the realisation of the formulated objectives. In addition, they present the projects that they plan to launch in the coming year for implementing the strategic policy plan for tourism in Flanders. The Advisory Committee of Tourism Flanders has been given the task of monitoring and guiding several times per year the implementation of the strategic policy plan for tourism in Flanders. The Advisory Committee presents the state of affairs in the implementation of the strategic policy plan at the annual States General. In 2014 the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs makes an interim evaluation of the strategic policy plan for tourism in Flanders. The Advisory Committee presents this evaluation at the annual States General.

#### **WALLONIA**

In February 2012, a second meeting was organised to present Destination 2015 « Review and prospects », including a mid-term evaluation of its implementation.

#### **GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY**

Monitoring will be done by external group.

### **3.4 What tourism specific legislation exists? (maximum 500 characters)**

## BELGIUM

### FLANDERS

The most important Flemish tourism legislation include:

1. The 'Tourism for all' decree, the aim of which is to make tourism accessible to all segments of the Flemish population
2. The 'Accommodation' decree, which classifies and defines the minimum licencing standards for Flemish tourist accommodation
3. The 'Travel agencies' decree, which regulates the activities of travel agents and travel organizers. On July 5 2012, the Flemish parliament agreed a modification and abolition of the Flemish travel agencies decree (decree of 2 March 2007 concerning the statute of the travel agencies). The situation of self-regulation will become effective as from 1 January 2014.
4. 'Touristic Cooperation Structures' decree: currently the implementing orders are drawn up
5. The 'tourism subsidies order' which provides a general framework for tourism subsidies granted by the Flemish government.

### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Decrees related to regulation of all kinds of Tourist accommodations such as hotels, campsites, holiday apartments and youth hostels.

Help in investments for above mentioned accommodations

**Decrete ruling the relationship between the GSC and the information offices and Tourism federations**

A new developed codex is in progress.

### WALLONIA

A Walloon code for tourism has been elaborated. It gathers rules and regulations which are linked to the missions of the "General Tourism Commission" i.e. accommodation, attractions, travel agencies, equipment, etc.

See: <http://wallex.wallonie.be>

### BRUSSELS

Touristic legislation relates to the touristic accommodation, which classifies and defines the minimum licencing standards for accommodation, bed & breakfast, equipment, travel agencies and social tourism.

## 4. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES

This section provides Member States with an opportunity to outline specific initiatives and policies that are or are going to be adopted to manage and develop tourism activity in ways which respond to the key challenges of the Agenda and which fall within the six main aims of the Agenda itself.

### 1 Economic prosperity

## BELGIUM

- a. To ensure the long term competitiveness, viability and prosperity of tourism enterprises and destinations.
- b. To provide quality employment opportunities, offering fair pay and conditions for all employees and avoiding all forms of discrimination.

### 2 Social equity and cohesion

- a. To enhance the quality of life of local communities through tourism, and engage them in its planning and management
- b. To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.

### 3 Environmental and cultural protection

- a. To minimise pollution and degradation of the global and local environment and the use of scarce resources by tourism activities.
- b. To maintain and strengthen cultural richness and biodiversity and contribute to their appreciation and conservation.

**4.1** Please set out, briefly, the steps which have been or will be taken, if any, to address the 7 key challenges for the delivery of sustainable and competitive tourism, covered in the TSG report and referred to in the 'Agenda'.

#### 4.1.1 Reducing the seasonality of demand. (maximum 200 characters)

##### **FLANDERS**

- the activities undertaken to offer people with a limited income travel experiences, reduce seasonality (e.g. Calypso project)

##### **GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY**

Making up niches offers for target groups such as "gourmet tours" related to specific and season related natural events such as spring awakening, hunting time, first snow, ...

Good use of local habitudes such as carnival

Development of a four seasons cycling and walking program as follow up of the construction of tracks on abandoned railway tracks.

Sight seeing by story telling using new technologies such as GPS and MP3 players. A system of walking trails related to each other in a knot system is of great success.

Cross border long trail walking tracks with adapted accommodation facilities as well for cycling people, as for walking people.

##### **WALLONIA**

Specific actions of "Destination 2015" (see 3.1) such as the various projects in regards with territorial or sectorial quality plans.

## BELGIUM

### 4.1.2 Addressing the impact of tourism transport. (maximum 200 characters)

#### FLANDERS

- active support of cycle and walking tourism with specific action plans

#### WALLONIA

The national Railway Company (SNCB) sells combined tickets which includes the attraction entrance and transportation fees, they are called B-excursions.

### 4.1.3 Improving the quality of tourism jobs. (maximum 200 characters)

#### FLANDERS

- subsidies to touristic associations for employment
- providing and supporting touristic education and training (e.g. language trainings, marketing, communication, subsidies for the 'Master in Tourism' at the K.U.Leuven university, training for travel and tour guides)
- providing research and data (e.g. 'Tourism in Figures'; tourism databases)

#### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

An initiative of Quality management of Tourist offer by the Government should, on a long term, assure a better quality of offer and jobs.

The implementation of a QM System in accordance with the Swiss QM has been launched.

#### WALLONIA

The competence centre for tourism within the FOREM (the Walloon employment institution) gives specific trainings in tourism e.g. accessibility and languages.

### 4.1.4 Maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and the quality of life, in the face of change. (maximum 200 characters)

#### FLANDERS

#### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

A new view on business such as enhancing quality of life for the inhabitant will have as a logic consequence, that the quality of life for Tourists will be better automatically. Added to this, Tourist specific offers are adapted to inhabitant needs.

### 4.1.5 Minimising resource use and the production of waste. (maximum 200 characters)

## BELGIUM

### FLANDERS

- 'De Groene Sleutel' labels (ecolabel for accommodation who are environmentally conscious about energy, water and waste) were awarded in March 2012 to 89 tourism companies (11 camping sites, 24 youth accommodations, 24 hotels, 11 guest rooms, 8 attractions, 1 holiday residence and 7 meeting locations). Besides the 89 winners, there are 248 tourism entrepreneurs who follow the support programme at Toerisme Vlaanderen.

### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Research will be done in view of CO<sup>2</sup> free or CO<sup>2</sup> neutral Tourism. A no more used railway track is transformed into a cross border bicycle track with a length of about 150 km.

All restoration and hotel offers use local or regional products to make live local agriculture. Moreover, the use of local products make a serious contribution in the enhancing of Tourist offers.

In order to participate in the quality management set up, the participants are held to employ a certain percentage of local products. Moreover, the inspectors in accommodations are strongly recommending to subscribe in the "Green key" system.

### BRUSSELS

- ecolabel: La "clé verte" (green key) for hostels, bed and breakfast, youth hostels, possibly open to mice.

#### 4.1.6 Conserving and giving value to natural and cultural heritage. (maximum 200 characters)

### FLANDERS

- Impulse programme for the art cities; financial support for several tourism-recreational projects linked to heritage
- active participation of the heritage sector in the strategic tourism policy plan 2020 for tourism in Flanders-Brussels
- active support of cycling and walking tourism

### WALLONIA

- Wallonia takes part of the Eden project aiming at enhancing touristic identity, putting the Region into a European perspective and applying the principles of sustainability
- Putting a "Bistrot de terroir" (Local quality pub) label into place
- a specific project to promote tourism in the Ardennes forest: This project is being implemented on the basis of a strategic study prepared by the CGT and DGO3 (Directorate of Nature and Forests, DNF) in co-operation with the University of Louvain. The project brings together, in a forest territory, all the stakeholders necessary to the construction of a tourism product. It therefore involves multi-faceted coordination: horizontal (between the two competent administrations, CGT and DGO3-DNF), and vertical

## BELGIUM

(between the two administrations and the local authorities, as well as private and public stakeholders in the region). Its objective is to promote the Walloon forests from a perspective of nature preservation and local initiative.

- a platform of reflection on "Tourism and Culture", divided into working groups organised according to horizontal themes (heritage, museums, economy, statistics etc.), bringing together the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, the CGT, WBT, the Walloon Heritage Institute (IPW), DGO4 Heritage etc.

- a platform of reflection on "Tourism and Heritage", comprising Walloon government agencies responsible for the preservation and promotion of the region's built heritage: CGT, DGO4 Heritage and IPW, to co-ordinate policies, subsidies and activities for promoting the Walloon heritage.

### 4.1.7 Making holidays available to all. (maximum 200 characters)

#### **FLANDERS**

- further development of the 'Steunpunt Vakantieparticipatie' services (see also question 2.2) 'Steunpunt Vakantieparticipatie' (centre for travel participation) is a service of Toerisme Vlaanderen that develops a travel offer for people with a limited income. It contains day trips, trips of several days or longer, individual trips, organised trips and group arrangements. Steunpunt Vakantieparticipatie continuously looks for new tourism supplying partners.

- Toerisme Vlaanderen acted as project leader in the Calypso project 'FETE' (First European Travel Experience), which aimed at developing an international exchange programme for youth (16-26 years old) with financial and other barriers to travel during low season.

#### **GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY**

The authority invests in several kinds of natural attractions such as bicycle tracks and natural trails, making no additional cost for the user. Outdoor pastime in free nature will bring no additional cost for Tourists, while the offer is interesting. Investments by the Authority in pool or sport accommodations f. inst. help keep income prices on a low level.

#### **WALLONIA**

Subsidies are given to social tourism centres.



## BELGIUM

4.2 As key challenges may change over time, please identify any other areas that are becoming a new challenge. (maximum 600 characters)

### FLANDERS

The strategic tourism policy plan 2020 for tourism in Flanders-Brussels defines the following as the main challenges for tourism in Flanders towards 2020:

- Improving tourism knowledge base (defined as the most important challenge)
- Improving attractiveness of tourism employment and professionalization
- Creating a favourable business climate
- Investing in a diverse, qualitative and diverse tourism offer
- Improving access to the tourist offering
- Improving (physical) accessibility
- Branding Flanders as a tourism destination
- Reinforcement of tourist reception
- Increasing participation in tourism

### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The need of narrow given statistics for a better react on external events appears more and more. There behind, a participation in a national program of Travelsat competitive index will help to identify new challenges on time

### WALLONIA

- the success of developing the networks mentioned above and the creation of new:

- Tourism department: a working group comprising representatives of the Minister of Tourism, the CGT and the Wallonia-Brussels tourism office has been established to address projects such as the preparation of the Strategic Plan Destination 2015, and the organisation of the "Années des Saveurs" gastronomy promotion.
- "Strategies" network: a working group comprising the CGT, WBT, CITW and the Forem tourism skills centre has been established to address common concerns such as training needs in the sector, and the introduction of a quality initiative.
- Public-private partnerships: several partnerships have been established, such as collaborative working groups between the CGT and consultants from Walloon universities (scientific support for various projects) or the private sector (operational studies); between the CGT and tourism professional associations (Horeca, Gîtes de Wallonie, Accueil Champêtre, CAWAB, MSW etc.).
- A working group has been set up on "leisure zones" comprising the CGT, DGO4 (local development planning) and the CITW to develop a concerted Walloon approach to a land-use policy from the viewpoint of tourism development, and to identify areas suitable for

## BELGIUM

designation as "leisure zones" under the procedure stipulated in the CWATUPe (Walloon Code on Land Use, Urban Development, Heritage and Energy).

- Collaboration with DGO4 (local development planning) and the CPDT (Standing Conference on Local Development) in the context of updating the regional development plan in order to review the role that tourism should play in this local development instrument.

- the success of the PPPs (Promotion clubs)

### BRUSSELS

- developing youth tourism (promotion and infrastructure)

- creating accommodation for trainees in the European institutions

**4.3** Please identify and describe a specific initiative, which is related to the 7 key challenges, that is innovative/ successful and which would be of interest to or of help to other Member States. (maximum 2.000 characters)

### FLANDERS

Flanders is one of the first regions in the world, if not the very first, to have developed a Tourism Satellite Account on a regional basis (developed by the research centre of the Flemish government). In addition to a fully-fledged TSA for the Flemish Region, an estimated TSA was also prepared for the Brussels-Capital Region.

This first exercise to develop a Tourism Satellite Account for the Flemish and Brussels Capital Regions was completed early 2012 with results for the year 2008. In this first edition, we managed to present 5 tables:

- TABLE 1: Inbound tourism consumption
- TABLE 2: Domestic tourism consumption
- TABLE 4: Internal tourism consumption
- TABLE 5: Production accounts of tourism industries and other industries
- TABLE 6: Domestic supply and internal tourism consumption

Late 2012, an updated TSA for the year 2010 has been developed. This edition included an update of the 5 tables we had already developed, and we presented a new table 7 on employment in the tourism industries. We intend to make a limited yearly update of the TSA and a more profound update every 3 years.

Gross Value Added of Tourism Industries (This indicator includes the added value generated by the tourism industry, regardless of whether this supply is consumed by tourists or non-tourists)

## BELGIUM

- In the Flemish Region, the Gross Value Added of Tourism Industries amounts to 8.9 billion euro, or 4.8% of the total value added in the Flemish Region in 2010.
- In the Brussels Capital Region the Gross Value Added of Tourism Industries amounts to 3.3 billion euro or 5.6% of the total value added in the Brussels Capital Region in 2010.

Tourism Direct Gross Value Added (This indicator includes the valued added of both tourism-related as well as other branches of activity, but only for the share of the value added that is also actually purchased by tourists in these sectors. Whatever is not consumed by tourists is disregarded, even if it was produced by a tourism-related branch of activity.)

- The Tourism Direct Gross Value Added in the Flemish Region is equal to EUR 4.4 billion or 2.4% of the total Value Added in the Flemish Region in 2010.
- For the Brussels-Capital Region, The Tourism Direct Gross Value Added amounted to EUR 2.5 billion or 4.3% of the total Value Added in the Brussels-Capital Region in 2010.

We made a management report of the Flemish TSA, both for the year 2008 and 2010.

### WALLONIA

The development of a quality approach to tourism along the lines of the principles of sustainability. On June 27<sup>th</sup> 2012, the Minister of Tourisme has officially launched "Wallonie Destination Qualité" a new label centered on improving the quality of service in the tourism industry. Wallonie Destination Qualité is based on the Swiss program "Quality our Passion". Training sessions have been organized since October 2012, and the first labels should be officially announced mid 2013. More info [www.walloniedestinationqualite.be](http://www.walloniedestinationqualite.be)

## 5. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Three mechanisms for implementing the Agenda were identified in the "Agenda": sustainable destinations, sustainable businesses and responsible tourists.

**5.1 Sustainable destinations:** What support is given to strengthen destination management at the regional/ destination level (supportive policy environment, knowledge networks, training programmes, establishment of measures/indicators for benchmarking, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

### FLANDERS

- development of the strategic tourism policy plan 2020 for tourism in Flanders-Brussels (see questions 3.1, 3.2, 4.2)
- providing and supporting touristic education and training (e.g. language trainings, marketing, communication, subsidies for the 'Master in Tourism' at the K.U.Leuven university, training for travel and tour guides)
- development of a TSA for Flanders (see question 4.3)

### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

## BELGIUM

A system of quality management is to be installed.

Certification of attractions and development of standards for walking trails and wellness offers are to be developed.

### WALLONIA

An EDEN+ network was implemented at the end of 2011 as a 2<sup>nd</sup> phase to the EDEN project. A communication campaign has been organized to raise the awareness on the different Eden Destinations in Wallonia. Communication material has been developed and published in various touristic brochures.

**5.2 Sustainable businesses:** What support is given to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of businesses (supportive policy environment, orientation of business support services to sustainability, training, financial incentives, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

### FLANDERS

- subsidies for sustainable touristic-recreational projects
- Stimulating 'Travelife' training programme for travel agents
- Green Key label for sustainable entrepreneurs (see also question 4.1.5.)

### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Learning areas for people work in information centres and Horeca sector will start up in the course of this year. Working together with life long learning providers in an out of the Community has been set up.

**5.3 Responsible tourists:** What support is given to promote responsible choices by tourists (e.g. sustainability in education, national marketing and media campaigns, promotion of certification schemes)? (maximum 600 characters)

### FLANDERS

- integration of sustainability in tourism education programmes at secondary level (2011-2012)
- learning network for bachelor education programmes in hotel management and tourism management: exchange of information on sustainability and corporate social responsibility (3 or 4 meetings per year)

### GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Learning and educational programs in Nature centres and continue development of nature trails along with distribution of fliers help enhancing local and tourist behaviour.

**A long life learning program has been adapted to satisfy the need. Yet, improvements are still to come.**

## 6. DATA AND INDICATORS

## BELGIUM

Eurostat will provide, as an annex, the key statistical data required to support the reporting process covering around 20 indicators<sup>2</sup>. These are mainly related to the aim of 'economic prosperity'.

Please, identify indicators that are being used or developed which could add to the range of information being provided by Eurostat, particularly in relation to social and environmental issues (other indicators from the TSG report, visitors/ residents satisfaction, etc.). (maximum 500 characters)

### **FLANDERS**

Regional TSA for Flanders (see question 4.3)

### **WALLONIA**

Since 2000 the Walloon observatory of tourism has been cater for statistics. Surveys are being made on a regular bases.

## **7. COMPLEMENTARY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If necessary use the following box to provide additional complementary information that has not already been covered.

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<sup>2</sup> These indicators have been selected from the 50 TSG indicators on the basis of the possibility to calculate them at the European level.

### APPENDIX

Principles of sustainable tourism:

- **Taking a holistic and integrated approach**

All the various impacts of tourism should be taken into account in its planning and development. Furthermore, tourism should be well balanced and integrated with a whole range of activities that affect society and the environment.

- **Planning for the long term**

Sustainable development is about taking care of the needs of future generations as well as our own. Long term planning requires the ability to sustain actions over time.

- **Achieving an appropriate pace and rhythm of development**

The level, pace and shape of development should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations.

- **Involving all stakeholders**

A sustainable approach requires widespread and committed participation in decision making and practical implementation by all those implicated in the outcome.

- **Using best available knowledge**

Policies and actions should be informed by the latest and best knowledge available. Information on tourism trends and impacts, and skills and experience, should be shared across Europe.

- **Minimising and managing risk – the precautionary principle**

Where there is uncertainty about outcomes, there should be full evaluation and preventative action should be taken to avoid damage to the environment or society.

- **Reflecting impacts in costs – user and polluter pays**

Prices should reflect the real costs to society of consumption and production activities. This has implications not simply for pollution but for charging for the use of facilities that have significant management costs attached to them.

- **Setting and respecting limits, where appropriate**

The carrying capacity of individual sites and wider areas should be recognised, with a readiness and ability to limit, where and when appropriate, the amount of tourism development and volume of tourist flows.

- **Undertaking continuous monitoring**

Sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them all the time, so that the necessary changes and improvements can be made.