



Analytical report of social orientation: the case of Belgium

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Before starting the present analytical report, it is important to provide an overview of the materials for social orientation courses as provided by the Flemish and Walloon institutions. For more information regarding the setup of social orientation policies, please refer to the previous mapping report on social orientation in Belgium.

In Flanders, social orientation (*maatschappelijke oriëntatie*) is taught in a 60 hour course. How is this course set up? A 18 page document called 'Social orientation: general objective' (*Maatschappelijke oriëntatie: algemene doelstelling*) (not publicly available) has been developed treating the minimum of topics that needs to be discussed within the social orientation classes. The teachers are supposed to base their teachings on this outline. In this document, 11 'learning environments' are present that give possible ways to acquiring certain skills, central to Flemish civic integration policy. The learning environments are:

1. City and country;
2. Residence statuses;
3. Family;
4. Work and entrepreneurship;
5. Housing;
6. Health care;
7. Adult education;
8. Public services;
9. Mobility;
10. Consumption;
11. Spare time.

As also mentioned in the mapping report, norms and values are, besides skills, central in the course as well. Within these more practical topics, more conceptual values are also taught. According to the website of the Agency on Integration and Civic Integration they are (implicitly) incorporated in the course. Five main values are key to live in Flanders: freedom, equality, solidarity, respect and citizenship. These five most important values exist within three 'sets of norms and values': democracy, the constitutional state and pluralism. In practice, much emphasis is put on practical issues. Every course is different and teachers depart from the knowledge and the questions of the class. Not every learning environment is treated and teachers are free to make their own pedagogic choices. In the remainder of this report, the document 'Social orientation: general objective' is used together with information obtained through participant observation, conversations and targeted information inquiries at an organisation providing social orientation education.

In Wallonia, citizenship education treats a great variety of topics. Legislation stipulates that beneficiaries receive a minimum of 20 hours of social orientation classes. Those are two kinds, the *ateliers d'orientation citoyenne* (for language level below A2) and the *formation à l'intégration citoyenne*, for those who have understanding of French around or above A2. It is in this second option that topics relevant to our research are treated. In the ateliers, the focus is not so much on these conceptual, abstract and complicated matters. We shall therefore focus on the *formation à l'intégration citoyenne*.

Looking at the structure of the "*formation à l'intégration citoyenne*" (language level above A2) we note 6 modules and an interlude:

1. Creating solid foundations for intercultural communication;
2. Being and acting in new political contexts;
3. Being and acting in new professional and education related contexts;
Interlude: Social protection and state finances;
4. Being and acting in new socio-cultural contexts;

5. Daily life;
6. Me and my family.

Each of the topics above is subdivided into several other topics for which the number of teaching hours is indicated. Not all topics are obligatory but teachers are kindly asked to especially focus on: the general presentation of the state, the federal state of Belgium, voting, political pluralism, constitutional monarchy, separation of powers and the rule of law, neutrality of the state, presentation of social protection, the finances behind state missions (taxes), housing (how to find housing despite negative stereotypes, rights and duties of owner and landlord, relations with neighbours), health care and education. DISCRI (the overarching organisation) provides teachers with a course on how to teach social orientation and maintains a server with a vast amount of teaching materials. The teacher decides which topics to treat because the information on the server is way too extensive for the 20+ hours course of social orientation. For each topic, several information sheets with informative summaries are provided, as well as other supporting documents and materials such as pictures and examples of exercises. For some topics that can be found within the modules, more than 15 files are enlisted, to help the teachers in preparing their classes. Some documents are very concise, but others can also include complicated legal texts or several very long documents. Teachers choose what to use and what to leave aside. In what follows, several topics within these modules will be treated.

In Ostbelgien, the German speaking community of Belgium, social integration policy has recently been introduced. As it is too early to draw conclusions about the content and the functioning of this relatively small programme in comparison to the Flemish and Walloon counterparts, it has been left aside in this report.

I. National law and fundamental rights in social orientation

1. Main principles of the Constitution and values of society

Five main values are key to live in **Flanders** and are deemed central to its social orientation course: freedom, equality, solidarity, respect and citizenship. These five most important values exist within three 'sets of norms and values': democracy, the constitutional state and pluralism, which are supposed to be treated at different moments in the course. In practice however, much emphasis is put on practical issues to the detriment of these more abstract values. Turning to the document stating the general objectives of the course and the relevant learning environments, in the first learning environment 'City and country', one of the skills that needs to be acquired is 'getting an overview of several basic rights and obligations of the Belgian Constitution and reflecting upon what this means for the beneficiary him or herself.'¹ Here, a line is supposed to be drawn from the Constitution to the lives of the beneficiaries in class. In the paragraph dedicated to activities in class, we find 'drawing the most important rights and obligations as noted in the Constitution', reflecting with the beneficiaries what this means for them and reflecting about democracy and Belgium as a democratic state.² Examples of basic values that can be treated in this respect are equality (equality between rich and poor, between men and women) and respect (for religion, opinion, laws, diversity). There is however no explicit interpretation given to what the most important basic rights and obligations in the Constitution are. In the context of learning environment 'Education' further reference is made to the Constitution. It is explained that free choice of education, the right to education and the obligation to participate in education until the age of 18 are enshrined in the Constitution.³ In the learning environment 'Public services' the value of solidarity is treated in this respect along with

¹ Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering, Maatschappelijke oriëntatie, p.4.

² Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering, Maatschappelijke oriëntatie, p.5.

³ Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering, Maatschappelijke oriëntatie, p.13.

the rights and obligations derived from this. Beneficiaries learn about the social rights in the Constitution and how they are guaranteed by the system.⁴

In **Wallonia**, many documents have been analysed to find traces of the Constitution and the central values of society. In several modules, relevant information can be found, some of which is presented here. In module 2 'Being and acting in new political contexts' we find multiple references. The informative sheet dedicated to the general presentation of the state⁵ has been analysed and it turns out that there is no mentioning of the values of society or the Constitution. The next sheet 'Belgium: parliamentary democracy – constitutional monarchy – *état de droit* – the separation of the three powers of the state'⁶ contains more relevant information. It is explained that Belgium is a democracy and what this means. Furthermore, it is explained how the country is a monarchy but that the chosen government is in charge and that members of the Government need to respect the Constitution. The Constitution defines the organisation of the state and stipulates the rights and freedoms of citizens. Examples are given of what the Constitution entails: Belgians are equal before the law, equality of women and men is guaranteed, each child is entitled to moral, physical, psychological and sexual integrity, and everyone is entitled to education respecting fundamental rights and freedoms. The teacher can also access more information and extracts of the Constitution. The informative sheet is also dedicated to the separation of the three powers: legislative power, judicial power and the executive power of the state. This is stipulated in the Constitution. It finishes by explaining how Belgium is an *état de droit*. The state meets certain important criteria: the principles of legality, equality and the bespoke separation of the three powers. Legality entails that legal rules respect the superior legal norms of the Constitution, and international engagements such as the European Convention on Human Rights and others. Equality implies that each individual or organisation can contest the application of a judicial norm when it is not in line with superior norms. One is also able to protest against a law when it goes against the principles of the Constitution. To finish, the teacher receives links to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention of Human Rights. In module 4 'Being and acting in new socio-cultural contexts', we find a topic that is not included anymore in the *Formation à l'Intégration Citoyenne* but is presented on the server nonetheless. It deals with the rights and the limits related to religious practice.⁷ The freedom to exercise a religion or conviction is stipulated in the Constitution. Besides a description of the constitutional rights when it comes to the exercise of religion, a part is also dedicated to signs of religious conviction and further reading is advised.

In the extensive amount of information presented to the teacher, they themselves decide what to use based on the amount of time they have, the interests of the group and the level of French they have. The informative sheets seem to present the main principles of the Constitution as both bearing obligations and rights. There is no explicit focus on rights and obligations for non-nationals here. In an additional two-page document on fundamental rights, there is mentioning of all persons on Belgian territory (including non-nationals) enjoying protection accorded to people and goods, except for exceptions as foreseen in the law.

2. Prohibition of and protection against discrimination

In Flanders, the topic of discrimination first comes up in the learning environment dedicated to family life. Here, sexuality and gender are discussed, which leads to the point that Belgian legislation prohibits every form of discrimination based on sex, gender or sexual orientation.⁸ The central value of equality can be explained as having

⁴ Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering, Maatschappelijke oriëntatie, p.14.

⁵ DISCRI, Module 2, Fiche N°2

⁶ DISCRI, Module 2, Fiche N°3

⁷ DISCRI, Module 4, Fiche N°4

⁸ Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering, Maatschappelijke oriëntatie, p.7.

equal rights and duties within marriage and divorce. Strikingly, in the learning environments for work and housing, there is no reference to discrimination in the general objectives. The focus is on what the beneficiary can do to obtain work or housing and the attitudes required.⁹ Discrimination might be treated if it is asked about. Reference to main institutions and other stakeholders can be made when asked about, the same goes for relevant legal and administrative procedures. One has to bear in mind though that even for teachers (without legal training), such procedural topics are complicated to fully understand, let alone transfer.

In **Wallonia**, there is no general module or topic dedicated to discrimination in general. Instead, we find bits and pieces divided over other topics in the teacher information. For example: In module 2 'Being and acting in new political contexts', a colourful 2-page document explains the basics of fundamental rights.¹⁰ Each form of discrimination is forbidden, for example discrimination related to work, housing, administrative and private services. In Module 1 'Creating solid foundations for intercultural communication' the topic of prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination is present. This is not part of the *formation à l'intégration citoyenne*, but teachers are presented with quite a number of teaching materials such as exercises and questions to discuss. Furthermore, extensive information is available in the context of labour discrimination and housing. Below, the information related to labour discrimination is treated.

In Module 3 'Being and acting in new professional and education related contexts' we find more information, specifically in the context of finding a job and in the workspace.¹¹ The difference between discrimination occurring in the process of obtaining a job and discrimination at work is explained. The federal law of 10/05/2007 prohibits hiring discrimination based on age, sexual orientation, marital status, birth, wealth, religious or philosophical conviction, language, current or future health status, handicap, physical or genetic characteristics or social origin. During the selection process, candidates should be treated equally. Exceptions are mentioned and explained with examples. An example being a company wanting to hire a 55+ person to make a commercial for senior public. Another example is a catholic school refusing to hire a Muslim teacher for its religious education. Discrimination at the work place is also explained. The employer is not allowed to treat an employee differently and less favourably for reasons related to race, ethnic origin, skin colour, religion or conviction, handicap, age, sexual orientation, political or philosophical convictions or affiliation to a trade union. The employer is also responsible for the behaviour of the other employees.

It is stated that teachers need to be careful in treating the topic of labour discrimination and discrimination in general. Numerous situations can be analysed that amount to discrimination or not. Teachers are therefore invited to guide non-nationals to specialised organisations that are able to determine whether a particular situation is discriminatory or not and to explain what can be done to combat this.

3. Justice and law enforcement

In **Flanders**, main legal norms are not treated as such, but they are embedded in the five central values: freedom, equality, solidarity, respect and citizenship. In the general objectives, no reference is made to the division between administrative violations and criminal acts. Throughout the document however, indications are constantly made of what it entails to be a good citizen. Teachers are asked to talk about what a citizen can or cannot do within the 11 different learning environments. For example within the learning environment of mobility, rights and duties are explained as well as what one best does when an accident occurs and that one has to pay for public transport.¹² In terms of law

⁹ Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering, Maatschappelijke oriëntatie, pp.9-10.

¹⁰ DISCRI, Droits fondamentaux

¹¹ DISCRI, Module 3 Fiche N°5

¹² DISCRI, Intermède – Modules 2 & 3

enforcement, the structure of the police might come up when people ask for it or when a study visit to the police is planned. The same goes for the judiciary system, it might be treated when asked about.

In **Wallonia**, when it comes to main legal norms, there is no module or topic that treats this as a whole. Instead we find the topic rather dispersed. When asking what a citizen can or cannot do, a small topic can be found in the interlude. Here, we find information on non-declared work and the consequences. Law enforcement can also be discussed here or there but not in a structured manner. Access to justice is part of Module 5 dedicated to daily life. In the online tool it is stated that access to justice is part of the social orientation course but that no supporting documents are available as for the other topics. Indeed, behind this theme, only two secondary sources are found that might assist the teacher. One document explains the existence of *maisons de justice* (houses of justice), an organisation where one can go in case of legal issues. Their mission is to be a meeting point to construct citizens' confidence in the justice system.

4. Violation of one's rights

In **Flanders**, this topic might be treated if it comes up, for example in relation to something that is highlighted in the media. Procedural information and in depth information on hate speech and hate crime are generally not given. People might be referred elsewhere in such cases.

Like the other topics in **Wallonia**, the violation of one's rights might be treated in the course, but not in a structured manner. It depends on the teacher and on how the course proceeds. Since it can entail rather personal issues, it is likely that a non-national with an issue regarding hate speech or hate crime is referred to a social assistant.

5. Rights of suspects and accused

In **Flanders**, this topic is not necessarily treated in all courses. However, sometimes a visit to the police station is included in the course. In this course, a police officer would explain the functioning of the police including rights of suspects or accused. People are allowed to ask questions so if they are interested in this, they are free to do so. A police officer explained to the project team that the goal of such visits is to take away the fear that non-nationals sometimes have for the police, to make sure that they do not want to run when they see police and to tell them that they are approachable and there to help.

In **Wallonia**, this topic does not seem to be treated as such in the online course material. Maybe, in a topic here or there it can be slightly treated but there is no topic as a whole dedicated to this. It all seems to come down as to how the course develops, the questions of the beneficiaries and the information the teacher wishes to share.

6. Legal aid

In the **Flemish** learning environment dedicated to residence statuses, the focus is not necessarily on legal aid but it is noted that teachers should reflect upon the consequences of migration for the beneficiary. They need to reflect upon the question whether the person needs further aid or support.¹³ In such an instance, people could be referred to organisations where they can obtain such aid. In learning environment 'Public services', non-nationals are supposed to obtain better insight into the public services that might support them. In Antwerp, the app 'Welcome to Antwerp' can

¹³ Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering, Maatschappelijke oriëntatie, p.6.

also be a way to learn where and how to obtain legal aid. Typing in 'discrimination' refers to the local contact point of equality body UNIA and under the heading 'administration' we find a subheading 'legal information residence status', where 5 relevant organisations are referred to, including a centre for legal aid.

In **Wallonia**, access to justice is part of Module 5 dedicated to daily life. In the online tool it is stated that access to justice is part of the social orientation course but that no supporting documents are available as for the other topics. Indeed, behind this theme, only two secondary sources that might assist the teacher are found. One document explains the existence of *maisons de justice* (houses of justice), an organisation where one can go in case of legal issues. Their mission is to be a meeting point to construct citizens' confidence in the justice system. Furthermore, an interview with a teacher has shown that reference to the equality body UNIA can be made. In one course, she invited a representative of UNIA to come and explain the organisation and topic of discrimination in class. Also, in case of questions about discrimination, or other legal issues, a person can be referred to a social assistant. The organisation in question has a social assistant present to further aid the non-national.

II. Methodology of teaching basics of national law and fundamental rights

1. Profile and qualifications of teachers

In Flanders, there are strict criteria for teaching social orientation and exams need to be taken in order to qualify. Knowledge of languages is important, since courses are taught in a multitude of languages. Furthermore, people should demonstrate sufficient pedagogic qualities and should speak Dutch. Interestingly, teachers have differing backgrounds. For example, some teachers are newcomers who followed social orientation classes themselves in the past.

In some instances, participants receive information regarding law and fundamental rights through guest lectures or visits. For example, during a visit to the police, this kind of information can be treated.

In Wallonia, citizenship course providers face several requirements for teachers. They should have a teaching degree, minimum three years of experience in adult teaching, a language level of C1 in French and lastly they should have or intend to follow education regarding the integration and interculturality to learn about the themes they should be teaching themselves. This education lasts a few days and is offered by each of the 8 regional integration centres. The DISCRI also offers information days, individual guidance, in-depth education focused on interculturality and andragogy in a multicultural environment. The information regarding the online platform is very important in this respect.

Sometimes, there are study visits or guest lectures in which beneficiaries are introduced to outsiders. An example of such lecture can be a lecture by UNIA (equality body), such an event is not regular but might happen during a course.

2. Teaching methods

In Flanders (and in Flemish courses in Brussels), most courses are given by teachers who combine lecturing with interactive discussions and group work. The method they adhere to is called CLIMOdiek, and is a form of cooperative teaching in multicultural contexts. Teachers do not simply answer questions and needs. Beneficiaries are encouraged

to actively participate in the course. They are supposed to work alone or together in dealing with situations one can encounter in Flanders. Self-reliance and the attitudes of beneficiaries are important. Besides class work, extracurricular activities can be undertaken such as city walks, museum visits, a visit to an agency promoting LGBT awareness, ecological living etc.

In Wallonia, the DISCRI assists the teaching organisations in formulating their courses. In the course they provide for the teachers, the intercultural method is put forward. This encourages for example asking beneficiaries to explain what certain situations were like in their respective home countries and to take this as a starting point to compare it to the Belgian situation. Some schools might organise visits but this is not structural. It is not included in the legislation and depends on the institution providing the education. The value of such study visits or guest lectures was shared during an interview the project team made.

3. Inclusion of host communities in the social orientation curriculum

In Flanders (and in Flemish courses in Brussels), participation of the host society in the course depends on the schools. In Flanders, we noted that some schools organise round table discussions with beneficiaries and Belgian people. Other schools invite a Belgian in the classroom now and then. It is unclear whether all course providers do this, but it seems that there is some (albeit limited) space for the participation of the host society in the courses.

In Wallonia, it is rather rare that Belgians participate in the classroom since these courses are explicitly set up for non-nationals. Sometimes, teachers might invite speakers to assist them concerning certain topics but most importantly, there are numerous other integration initiatives promoting contact between Belgians and non-nationals.

4. Case study: social orientation in Antwerp

In Antwerp, we were present at a social orientation session that was taught in French to 14 non-nationals, mainly from northern and sub-Saharan Africa. It was their fifth class. The course is taught in a school building where young children also go to school. In a separate wing, there are several classrooms for social orientation courses and the teachers have a general office space at their disposal.

The afternoon class started by a discussion about the daily news. It was the anniversary of the terrorist attacks in Brussels and it was all over the news. Multiple people want to have their say. One person had even been present at Brussels Airport to pick up his wife and told the others about the dramatic events. Another major event in Belgium that day was the alleged group rape of two tourists by four young men of migrant origin. After talking about these news items, we turned to the topic of the day: participation.

The course on that day was about how to participate, how to become active, how to get where one wants to be. The week before non-nationals had already worked on such questions and people were invited to score their current integration. In the classroom numbers 1 – 10 were hanged on the wall. Non-nationals needed to think about what integration is for them, while the teacher did not explain what integration was when asked about it. It was up to the beneficiaries to decide for themselves what integration was and how they scored their actual situation. Most people scored themselves between 1 and 3 and the highest score attributed was 7. In the discussion, people were invited to explain why they were scoring themselves this way. Having a residence permit, work, being in the social orientation course, speaking Dutch (or not) were all important to integration, it was said. For most people, this was a long list of

things they still needed to acquire and it seemed to discourage some. Several people lowered their score. Afterwards, people noted down on a form what they wanted to do to lift their score to be used in subsequent individual conversations. Illiterate and poorly-literate people were helped with writing.

The remainder of the first half of the class was dedicated to the Welkom in Antwerpen app (Welcome to Antwerp). This is a Dutch app that can be used by everyone. It works highly intuitively and symbols can also be recognised by those who do not know how to read or write very well. One can press certain buttons to have words read out loud to navigate without reading. The teacher encouraged everyone to download it on their phones. Most people had a smart phone and others could use one of the four tablets in class to follow. The section dedicated to the app presented a very difficult situation for the teacher. One female beneficiary claimed not to have a phone and completely zoned out during this part of the course which took 40 minutes. She was not interested in help or in the tablet and simply let everything pass. Later on, during the break, she was seen playing on her smartphone. This way she missed out on very relevant information for her and her surroundings because the app is a great source to also use after the course, the teacher explained later on.

After the break, participation was again central. Beneficiaries would receive a city pass for free and three months of library service. They learned how to obtain these by themselves by going to the library to get both simultaneously. A short movie was shown about what one could do with the city pass. The teacher was strict to explain that after the Easter break everyone needed to have such a card to benefit from many free or discounted activities in the city.

To close this session, the teacher put a large number of photos on a table and people could choose activities that they liked. They were all related to informative or active sessions in Antwerp and proved a nice introduction to what can be undertaken there. There were activities with children, sports, information sessions, concerts, and voluntary work. Info sessions were on entrepreneurship, computers, volunteering, learning how to bike, getting vaccinations, higher education, pregnancy, speaking Dutch, and several more.

Afterwards it was interesting to reflect upon the content of the teaching guidelines and the content of the course. Greater values central to life in Flanders were again, as in prior observations, largely absent in the teachings. Its content was merely practical. Also, the course illustrated how difficult it can be for a teacher to motivate and to transfer the importance of the teachings. The app, the city pass and free activities are great ways to participate, to explore and to learn about life in Flanders. The question remains whether after this session, this feeling is shared within the entire class.

5. Case study: social orientation in Charleroi

In Charleroi, we were present at a social orientation session at an organisation that teaches 22h per week. The organisation is located rather centrally in Charleroi in an old city mansion. In the street, we noted some other NGOs as well. The organisation does not only teach social orientation but they also support non-nationals in other ways. A social assistant is permanently present and one can also follow language classes given by volunteers. This is also accessible for people who fall out of the scope of official government programmes on integration.

The course is taught in a small classroom which seats maximally 11 people. It also functions as the teachers' office and there is a computer and a blackboard. There is another room next to it and the doors can be opened to double the seating space. The class we observed was the first class in a new course and it still needed to be decided whether the teacher can use the more basic (below language level A2) or the more complicated materials (above language level A2).

Eight women were present, one man was absent but came by beforehand to explain his absence. The teacher texted all participants a few hours before the class would start. An individual conversation (from a few weeks before) preceded the class so the teacher had already met everyone once.

To start the class, the teacher first wanted to know everyone's name, the origin of the name and its meaning. At first people were slightly hesitant and not everyone knew the meaning of their name but the Internet helped out. It turned out that names can exist in different languages and the meanings were sometimes quite surprising. This all happened without asking people about their origin. Only after this extensive introduction, people were asked to give some more information about themselves. The teacher wanted to know about their origin and the time in Belgium so far and the group wanted to know about other people's profession/diplomas and family situation. In total this introduction took over an hour but created familiarity within the group. We learned that the participants came from Russia, Romania (2), Syria (2), Guinea-Conakry, Algeria (2). Their language level differed, from one native speaker to one person that clearly could not follow. A few ladies would speak Arabic from time to time. In the beginning, the teacher let this happen without paying too much attention.

After the break, an extensive explanation was given of the work done by the organisation. Besides that, the participants were asked what they expected to learn in the next few weeks.

The words citizenship, integration and participation were noted on the blackboard together with a small paper with their Arab translation. The teacher did not speak Arabic but this helped in transferring the information. The group was divided into Arab speakers and others and for about half an hour people could note down what they thought of when it came to citizenship, integration and participation (notions taken together).

Some of the notions that came out in the non-Arab group were: learning and sharing culture, knowing the law, participating in the 'cleanliness' of Belgium, history, visiting places, learning the languages, participating in the development of Belgium, knowing what we can do in Belgium, helping others, respecting differences.

The teacher then placed small photos on the table and looking at those, people were encouraged to find more things that have to do with citizenship, integration and participation. A general discussion afterwards added information on the (governmental, administrative, social and economic) system in Belgium, adult education, rights and obligations, geography, cultures, participating in the well-functioning of the country, solidarity, participating with one's own project, health, studies, equality and racism.

Following this course, several issues were interesting to reflect upon further. During this first class, it was demonstrated how with several techniques rapport and understanding can be promoted within a group. However, this already took 1,5h of the legal minimum of 20h. The fact that the course was in French proved to be difficult for particularly one person, the teacher later explained that they would probably move her to another group and continue with the rest on a higher level (*formation à l'intégration citoyenne*), which required language level A2. Looking at the vast amount of information teachers have available, it became clear that these cannot be treated at all in such short courses. The question remains what the impact of the programme is. This remains to be seen in future evaluations.

III. Assessing the impact of teaching law and fundamental rights as part of social orientation

1. Existing periodic and ad hoc assessments of social orientation system

The first major assessment¹⁴ of the **Flemish** civic integration policy (including social orientation) took place between 15 December 2004 and 31 January 2007 under the supervision of Leuven University and the University of Antwerp. More precisely the he HIVA Research Institute for Work and Society in Leuven and the Centre for Migration and Intercultural Studies (CeMIS) in Antwerp took up this task. The last evaluation¹⁵ already dates back to 2010 and was again done by HIVA. They assessed the impact of civic integration policy and social orientation and made an analysis of the translation from policy to practice.

In **Wallonia**, article 152/9 of the *Code wallon de l'action sociale et de la santé* foresees an evaluation every two years concerning the functioning and the management of the integration trajectory and aims at enlisting proposals to improve. A first evaluation rapport, has been presented to the government in July 2017.¹⁶ It is mainly a quantitative report. Another, mostly qualitative report is foreseen towards the end of the governing term. This evaluation seems to be more complicated. From an interview, we learnt that in the legislative documents, no criteria for evaluation have been described, which makes it complicated to assess in retrospect. There is also a large number of organisations where social orientation is provided and this fragmentation is another complicating factor in a possible evaluation. This evaluation is supposed to take place in the future, executed amongst others, by the *Insitut wallon de l'évaluation, de la prospective et de la statistique* (IWEPS) but it is unclear how exactly this will take effect.

At a more local level, there are periodic evaluations through different platforms where people involved in the social orientation programme exchange their experience. The *Centre Regional d'Integration de Charleroi* (CRIC) for example hosts such a platform. Goals of these meetings are to exchange and target needs, to receive further education, to respond to demands of professionalisation (as demanded in the legislation), to coordinate, to discuss the activities undertaken, to harmonise local activities, to give an impulse to new actions and services, to improve the network with other operators in the domain of integration, to better manage supply and demand, to pool the competences of organisations, to share the agenda of different operators though common ways of communication and to formulate the citizenship modules and local integration plans (PLI).

2. Indicators used to assess the social orientation system

The system of indicators used to assess the social orientation system is very large as the 2010 evaluation was rather extensive. If we focus on the most recent evaluation, we note that 2010 evaluation is comprised of several reports

¹⁴ 'Evaluation 2007' accessed on April 26, 2018 <http://integratiebeleid.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/evaluatieonderzoek-inburgering-2007>

¹⁵ 'Evaluation 2010' accessed on April 26, 2018 <http://integratiebeleid.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/evaluatieonderzoek-inburgering-2010>

¹⁶ Wallonie 2017 'Premier rapport d'évaluation du parcours d'intégration des primo-arrivants' (internal document)

being: (1) Civic integration in **Flanders**,¹⁷ (2) Civic integration policy in Flanders: an evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness,¹⁸ (3) the impact of civic integration¹⁹ and (4) a synthesis: efficiency and effectiveness of the Flemish civic integration policy.²⁰

In the evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of the policy, a large number of research questions were answered. The main question was whether the executing organisations were able to meet the policy objectives and whether this happened efficiently and effectively. Effectiveness is defined rather narrowly, namely as beneficiaries obtaining the certificate. Sub questions are: To what extent is civic orientation effective in terms of outreach, signed contracts and obtained certificates? To what extent is the target group reached by the policy? And how can we explain this? Is the flow within the trajectory efficient? How is the cooperation between different actors on micro and meso level? What are the possible obstacles? How are changes in the legislative framework implemented in the execution of the policy? What does the content look like and how is this influenced by legislative changes? How large is the drop out of the programme, how can we explain and remedy this?²¹ In the following evaluation, the impact of the policy is central. Evaluators look beyond simply obtaining the certificate but assess the effect of the civic integration trajectory on the daily lives of the beneficiaries. How did they experience the trajectory? Did it help them in obtaining a job or further education? Are they more independent now? Do we note a difference in the socio-economic position of newcomers that have or have not completed or started the trajectory? These are only a few questions that the researchers attempted to answer in this evaluation.²² The list of indicators used is simply too long to mention here but it should be clear that these evaluations are based on a vast amount of both quantitative and qualitative data.

In **Wallonia**, the quantitative report²³ focuses on three issues: a sketch of the current situation of the policy implementation. In other words, a mere description of how the policy is implemented and by whom. In a second phase, the focus shifts to the activities of the Regional Integration Centres (CRI), a description of the organisations in question and their relevant statistics: numbers of initial conversations, people participating in the *bilans sociaux* voluntarily or obligatorily, according to gender etc. The *bilan social* is the initial conversation with the beneficiary in which their situation and their possible needs are analysed. They also get a short overview of their rights and obligations. This takes about 4 hours and is not part of the social orientation education. It precedes social orientation but there are no numbers on social orientation in the report. Furthermore, it is also analysed how the transfer from municipalities to the CRI functions. Per CRI, the municipalities that do not transfer possible beneficiaries (regularly) are enlisted. It seems that quite a number of municipalities do not refer beneficiaries to the Regional Integration Centres. This is the main conclusion of the report, besides that fact that most of the objectives of the policy are met (as far as this was analysed in the report). A third and last point treated in the report concerns the evaluation process itself and deals with the question how to analyse the policy thoroughly, incorporating the effects of its implementation. This is highly challenging and we need to wait for this evaluation which will be most relevant for the topics of interest.

3. Feedback by beneficiaries

In **Flanders**, there are some publicly available commercial testimonies of beneficiaries which can be drawn from the large evaluations in 2007 and 2010. The third part of the evaluation in 2007 is completely dedicated to the perspective

¹⁷ De Cuyper, Peter, Miet Lamberts, Fernando Pauwels, Carissa Vets 'inburgering in Vlaanderen' HIVA 2010

¹⁸ De Cuyper, Peter 'Het inburgeringsbeleid in Vlaanderen: de efficiëntie en effectiviteit geëvalueerd' HIVA 2010

¹⁹ Pauwels, Fernando & Miet Lamberts 'De impact van inburgering' HIVA 2010

²⁰ De Cuyper, Peter, Miet Lamberts & Fernando Pauwels 'De efficiëntie, effectiviteit en impact van het Vlaamse inburgeringsbeleid geëvalueerd, HIVA 2010

²¹ De Cuyper, Peter 'Het inburgeringsbeleid in Vlaanderen: de efficiëntie en effectiviteit geëvalueerd' HIVA 2010, pp. 3- 4

²² Pauwels, Fernando & Miet Lamberts 'De impact van inburgering' HIVA 2010, p. 4

²³ Wallonie 2017 'Premier rapport d'évaluation du parcours d'intégration des primo-arrivants' (internal document)

of the newcomers on civic integration policy.²⁴ It goes beyond the point of this analytical report to include a large description of the document. It will be mostly outdated by now since policy and course materials have changed. However, one question might still be relevant today. Beneficiaries were amongst many other things asked about their recommendations. What would they change if they could? We selected the recommendations that could still be relevant today regarding the content: keeping the course content up to date, providing written course materials in native tongues, providing summaries at the end of the course, providing more elaborate course materials, more audio-visual materials, more practice, inviting more experts.²⁵ These last three recommendations have more or less been taken into account by now. Regarding social orientation 'tailored to the individual' recommendations were: arranging separate courses for those who have just arrived and those who have been in Belgium longer, taking into account interests and needs of beneficiaries, taking into account how fast people can learn.²⁶ Regarding the practical organisation it was demanded to better coordinate social orientation and language classes, offering shorter courses with more hours per week, providing more course hours, teaching social orientation and Dutch together and making sure there is continuity despite a possible absence of the teacher.²⁷ Social orientation providers can also gather their own feedback from the beneficiaries. In Antwerp, Atlas maintains a complaint policy from on which they regularly base their improvements and at the end of the course there are general evaluations. There are no large scale evaluations in Antwerp at the moment.

In **Wallonia**, there are no publicly available testimonies of beneficiaries regarding their satisfaction with the social orientation courses. In general however, such evaluations exist and are gathered at the initiative of the CRI, the social orientation providers or teachers. It is not clear to what extent they are taken into account for future development.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

1. Ability and capacity of social orientation system to raise beneficiaries' awareness and equip them against acts of racism and xenophobia

In **Flanders**, the ability and the capacity of the social orientation system to raise awareness and to effectively equip beneficiaries against acts of racism and xenophobia remains limited. Maybe, the fact that people can ask questions during the classes or during the breaks are the main ways to act against such problems. Teachers know how to refer beneficiaries to organisations that can assist them in these matters. Raising awareness and creating clarity concerning racism and xenophobia might be successful here and there but cannot be called structural. This is concluded from both observations and discussions with teachers. For this to happen on a larger scale, structural inclusion of RACCOMBAT's research topics is necessary in the social orientation course. Until today, the topics are slightly treated but overshadowed by more practical (and sometimes more urgent) topics. Creating more depth in the teacher guidelines is recommended and teachers should constantly be looking for opportunities to draw their teachings from the practical to the more abstract. The same conclusions can be drawn for **Wallonia**. Teachers have a very vast

²⁴ Geets, Johan, Steven Van den Eede, Johan Wets, Miet Lamberts & Christiane Timmerman 'Hoe wordt het inburgeringsbeleid geapprecieerd? HIVA 2007

²⁵ Geets, Johan, Steven Van den Eede, Johan Wets, Miet Lamberts & Christiane Timmerman 'Hoe wordt het inburgeringsbeleid geapprecieerd? HIVA 2007, pp. 84/85

²⁶ Geets, Johan, Steven Van den Eede, Johan Wets, Miet Lamberts & Christiane Timmerman 'Hoe wordt het inburgeringsbeleid geapprecieerd? HIVA 2007, p. 85

²⁷ Geets, Johan, Steven Van den Eede, Johan Wets, Miet Lamberts & Christiane Timmerman 'Hoe wordt het inburgeringsbeleid geapprecieerd? HIVA 2007, p. 85

amount of teaching material available but need to be careful to create enough depth in their teachings. Looking at the format of the social orientation course, this is particularly challenging in the small amount of teaching hours they have.

2. Recommendations

In **Flanders**, our recommendations encompass two major issues, being the absence of values and abstract principles in the teachings and the sheer size of the teaching guidelines. Whereas the teaching guide gives ample instructions on how central values of society can be instructed on, this remains often very implicit or absent in practice. Often, the challenges of teaching non-nationals make addressing such abstract issues problematic. Also, the often practical questions raised by the beneficiaries do not invite teachers to go into depth on a conceptual level. Therefore, the five main values key to live in Flanders: freedom, equality, solidarity, respect and citizenship can be overshadowed. The same goes for the framework within which these values are said to exist: democracy, the constitutional state and pluralism. The main research area of RACCOMBAT, being the combat against racism, discrimination and xenophobia, would also benefit from a stronger focus on these norms and values.

Our second recommendation deals with the size of the teacher guidelines. This advice might also be beneficial to addressing our first recommendation. With the formulation of the document the *Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering*, joined by city agencies *Atlas Antwerpen* and *IN-Gent*, have attempted to create a list of topics that absolutely need to be addressed in the 60h social orientation course. Per learning environment, one or more pages describe which values can be discussed. Since it is very concise however, we still run the risk that teachers focus too much on their own way. Furthermore, if the values and abstract topics at stake here are only mentioned in one row of a table, e.g. (basic value) equality – (practical translation) equality between rich and poor, men and women, this can simply be too abstract for the teachers. A more elaborate description of each learning environment is needed, with more guidelines as to how abstract values can be included in the classes. Inspiration might be sought in the Walloon materials, where teachers can use an entire server full of material. This makes it more probable to have comparable classes within the social orientation education.

In **Wallonia**, our main recommendation seems already on its way to execution. Twenty hours are simply not enough to teach social orientation and we were delighted to learn that in the future the number of hours will increase to 60. This will partly solve the current highly paradoxical situation of having a server with an abundance of teaching materials while there is not sufficient time available to teach. The legislation has however not been adapted yet.²⁸ Other recommendations focus on the inclusion of the host society and the creation of an app to provide newcomers with lasting support during their integration process. Teachers have illustrated the importance of study visits or invited speakers in the course but explain how within the current legislation there is no place for that. A teacher explained that it is even discouraged as it is not stipulated in the law. By allowing and encouraging teachers to undertake this effort, the non-national beneficiaries could benefit from often rare contact with locals in an open and stimulated atmosphere. Our last recommendation focuses on lasting support for beneficiaries after completion of the social orientation course. Since the programme is only quite short, people are likely to come up with a multitude of questions afterwards. In Antwerp, a freely accessible app has been developed for newcomers (also national newcomers and other residents). Introducing such an app in the larger cities of Wallonia could increase the participation and independence of non-nationals in a long-lasting, durable manner.

²⁸ [“Press release Alda Greoli”](#), accessed January 24, 2018.

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