

DISCUSSION PAPERS IN DIPLOMACY

*Foreign Policy and Diplomacy of the Belgian Regions:
Flanders and Wallonia*

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Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’

ISSN 1569-2981

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ABSTRACT

Since 1993, Belgium has become a federal state in which the regions are compelled by the constitution to manage their own external relations. In many ways, Belgium can be seen as a ‘testing ground’ for regional sub-state diplomacy. This paper studies the foreign policy and diplomatic representation of two of the most prominent Belgian Regions and Communities: Flanders and Wallonia. First, a brief overview is provided of the consequences of the main constitutional principles for the foreign policy of the federal and regional governments. Second, a comparison is made of the departments of foreign affairs and delegations abroad (both diplomatic and other) which Flanders and Wallonia have developed over the years. Third, an overview is offered of the different instruments, both formal and informal, which Flanders and Wallonia employ to advance their interests. Fourth, the actual foreign policies of Flanders and Wallonia are compared, focussing on their respective geopolitical and functional priorities.

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FOREIGN POLICY AND DIPLOMACY OF THE BELGIAN REGIONS: FLANDERS AND WALLONIA

David Crielemans

Introduction

Regional Sub-state Diplomacy Coming of Age

Today, sub-state entities across the world engage in international relations, and conduct a foreign policy parallel, complementary to or sometimes in conflict with their central governmental counterparts. From a historical point of view, one could state that currently a third wave is developing in sub-state diplomacy, especially in Europe.¹

The first wave manifested itself from the 1980s onwards: a growing number of non-central governments tried to attract foreign direct investment. This was realised via initiatives by the regions themselves. Often, they also used culture and identity as a means to place themselves on the international map. Such initiatives were often ad hoc, and there was only a minor integration of all the external activities generated.

The second wave in the 1990s was characterized by the creation, by means of the sub-state entities in certain (European) countries, of a judicially grounded set of instruments for their own (parallel as well as complementary) diplomatic activities. These instruments were supplemented by the gradual development of a separate foreign policy apparatus (administration or policy body) which started to horizontally coordinate the external activities of the different administrations in certain regions.

The current *third wave* is characterized by different phenomena: (1) steps in the direction of a verticalization of the organisational structure of the administration or department of external/foreign affairs, (2) a strategic

1) D. Crielemans (ed.) '*Regional Sub-state Diplomacy Today*' (Leiden - Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2010 - forthcoming); D. Crielemans and M. Duran, '*Towards a 'Third Wave' in Regional Sub-state Diplomacy?*' (Antwerp, Flemish Centre for International Policy, 2010).

reorientation of the geopolitical and functional priorities, (3) attempts to integrate the external instruments for a sub-state foreign policy into a well performing whole.

This so-called third wave does not yet seem to be consolidated. Various regions find themselves at different stages in the development of their respective foreign policy and diplomatic representation. There are more and less advanced cases. The more advanced regions are often those which already dispose of a considerable constitutional legitimacy and institutional bandwidth within which they can develop their own external activities. Seen from this perspective, regions such as Québec, Bavaria, Wallonia and Flanders come to mind as cases which may very well indicate how sub-state diplomacy may evolve in the years to come.

Belgium as a Testing Ground

Comparing the sub-state diplomatic activities of regions is a difficult undertaking. The constitutional and institutional framework is very different in each country. Based upon history, culture and political practice, every state has developed its own solutions. If one compares cases which already have a similar constitutional setting, it is possible to develop a more in-depth analysis.

Some of the most advanced cases are the Belgian Regions and Communities: Flanders and Wallonia. Since the state reform of 1993, Belgium has become a federal state, in which the regions are not just entitled but even compelled by the constitution to manage their own external relations. There are two guiding principles regarding the division of competences between the federal government and the regions: the ‘in foro interno, in foro externo’ principle and the absence of a hierarchy between the federal and the regional level.

‘In foro interno, in foro externo’ entails that the Belgian federated entities or regions have to manage their material competences on a daily basis, not only regarding domestic affairs, but also with respect to foreign policy. If a Belgian regional government is competent internally for a material domain, then it also automatically becomes competent externally. Following this rationale, the Belgian regions have been granted the right to send their own diplomatic representatives, and to conclude international treaties with third parties.

The second principle which guides the Belgian solution is the idea of fundamental equality among all the governments in Belgium, i.e. the federal government as well as the federated ones (no hierarchy of norms). In practice,

this means that the internal legislation generated by the federated entities has power which is equal to that of the federal level. In foreign policy matters, this means that all Belgian governments are responsible for determining the federation's foreign policy.²

In many ways, Belgium can be seen as a testing ground for regional sub-state diplomacy. Based upon their wide constitutional possibilities, the Belgian regional governments have developed a wide range of instruments, networks and activities via which they interact upon the international scene. Furthermore, for over fifteen years they have developed sub-state diplomatic know-how. Today, this expertise is anchored within their regional departments of foreign affairs and official delegations abroad.

Studying the external instruments and policies of Belgium's regional governments could thus be relevant for other regions which want to further develop their foreign affairs capabilities and policies. However, a comparative study of the two main Belgian regions, Flanders and Wallonia, has not been attempted until now as researchers have, until recently, mostly focussed on only one of these regions. This paper wants to break that stalemate, and thus constitutes a contribution to that overdue exercise.

It is structured around four intrinsically connected themes. First, a brief overview is provided of the consequences of the main constitutional principles for the foreign policy of the federal and regional governments. This Belgian solution defines the bandwidth within which Flanders and Wallonia can develop their own external and diplomatic activities.

Second, a comparison is made of the departments of foreign affairs and delegations abroad (both diplomatic and other) which Flanders and Wallonia have developed over the years. From this, it becomes possible to see how much budget and resources have been invested in regional sub-state diplomacy³ and the type of general concepts which have informed it.

2) D. Criekemans, 'How sub-national entities try to develop their own 'paradiplomacy'. The case of Flanders (1993-2005)', paper presented at the International Conference 'Challenges for Foreign Ministries: Managing Diplomatic Networks and Optimising Value', Geneva, May 31 – June 1, 2006, 27 p.

3) One could indeed criticize the use of the term 'sub-state diplomacy' in the context of the Belgian federation since all policy levels are equal. Some authors such as the former Flemish Minister President therefore prefer the concept 'federated state diplomacy'. Read: L. Van den Brande, 'Sub-state Diplomacy Today: A Practitioner's View', in *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 191-210. Others use the concept 'paradiplomacy'. Read for instance: A. Lecours, 'Political Issues of Paradiplomacy: Lessons from the Developed World', in *Discussion Papers in Diplomacy*

Third, an overview is presented of the different instruments, both formal and informal, which Flanders and Wallonia employ to advance their interests. Interestingly, both regional governments make different choices in this regard. One can also identify certain areas where they can learn from each other.

Fourth, the actual foreign policy of Flanders and Wallonia is compared, focussing on their respective geopolitical and functional priorities.

The paper concludes that it is possible for regions within a federation to develop their own foreign policy accents and diplomacy, even with limited resources. The question for the future, however, is how the third wave in sub-state diplomacy will affect the relations between non-central and central governments.

The Belgian Solution

Governmental System: Communities and Regions

The Belgian federation has a complex structure, based on so-called ‘Communities’ and ‘Regions’. This is a result of history. From the 1960s onwards, the Flemish economy in the northern part of the country developed quite rapidly. At the same time the economy in Wallonia (the southern part of the country), which is mainly based on heavy industry, experienced a severe crisis. This element formed the first impetus for Wallonia to aspire to attain political control over the economic policy instruments, so as to be able to shape its own future with tailor-made policy tools.

Flanders initially developed another reasoning: at first instance it wanted to protect its own language and culture (Dutch). Thus, the Flemish political elite initially aspired to get political control over the culture-based policy instruments in the country. These dual aspirations led to the development of the so-called Belgian Regions and Communities, which overlap territorially – as shown by table 1.

(The Hague: Clingendael Institute, 2008). Yet other scholars prefer the term ‘constituent diplomacy’. Read: J. Kincaid, ‘Constituent Policies in Federal Polities and the Nation State: Conflict and Co-operation’, in H. J. Michelmann and P. Soldatos (eds.), *Federalism and International Relations: The Role of Subnational Units* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 54-75. For a more in-depth analysis of this complex conceptual problem, read: D. Criekemans, ‘Regional Sub-state Diplomacy Today: Introduction’, in *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol.5, no. 1.

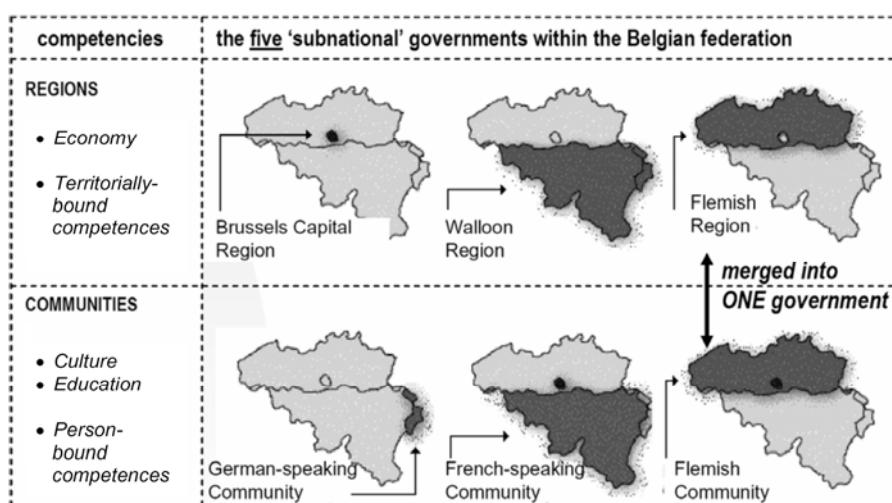


Table 1: The Belgian Solution

The Belgian Communities manage the person-bound competences such as language policy, cultural policy, education, welfare and preventive health care. The Belgian Regions manage the territorially-bound competences such as the economy, the environment, employment, infrastructure and environmental planning.

However, an important difference does exist in the northern and the southern part of the country. The competences of the Flemish Community and Flemish Region have in practice been merged. They are being managed by one Flemish Government and monitored by one Flemish Parliament. In the southern part of the country, there are still two different governments: the Walloon Regional Government and the French-speaking Community Government. As a result of this, the Belgian federal model has often been labelled as an a-symmetric model.⁴

4) The fusion which has been realized in the northern part of the country (Flanders) has in practice led to the realisation of important synergies on leaning policy areas. During the last years, however, steps have been taken in the southern part of the country to mimic the Flemish organizational structure; in 2007, the socialist Demotte became the first Minister President of both the Walloon Region and French-speaking Community. There are also other indications that a fusion of both regional tiers of governments in the south is being considered. Since the beginning of 2009, Wallonia is trying to develop a more integrated foreign policy; the two respective administrations for the

Consequences of Constitutional Principles

The ‘In Foro Interno, In Foro Externo’ Principle

This principle refers to the convergence between the internal, material and the external competences of the federated entities.⁵ It has three immediate consequences.

First, as a result of this principle, the Belgian federated entities have been granted the right to conclude or make treaties with third parties (e.g. sovereign states, regions with a degree of autonomy, international organisations, etc.). This treaty-making power has an immediate result. A foreign state or third party can no longer conclude a treaty with the Belgian federal government on matters which fall within the realm of exclusive competences of the Belgian Regions and Communities.⁶ In that case, only they have the authority to decide upon possible external cooperation.

Second, the Belgian federated entities have been granted the right to send their own representatives to bilateral posts, to other regions/areas, and to international organisations (e.g. the European Union or intergovernmental multilateral organisations). As regards this external representation of Belgium (*ius legationis*), the Belgian Communities and Regions can autonomously appoint their own diplomatic representatives abroad, with one restriction. From 1993 onwards, they were granted the opportunity to appoint their own attachés. Today, these positions are in some cases upgraded to the higher position of counsellor. In any event, these personnel are placed on the diplomatic list of the Belgian embassies, consulates or permanent representations by the Belgian federal Minister of Foreign Affairs.

external relations of the Walloon Region and the French-speaking Community were fused together into one single foreign policy body.

- 5) Since the Belgian constitutional revision of 1993, the division of labour between the federal and the regional governments in foreign policy is laid down in articles 167, 168 and 169 of the coordinated Constitution. Art. 167, § 1, section 1 states: ‘*The King (read: the federal Government) manages international relations without prejudice to the ability of the Communities and Regions to engage in international cooperation, including the signature of treaties, for those matters within their respective responsibilities as established by the Constitution and in virtue thereof.*
- 6) Regarding the making of treaties which touch upon the competences of both the federal level and the Communities/Regions (so-called mixed treaties) the six Belgian governments (federal and federated) signed a Cooperation Agreement on March 8th, 1994. This agreement also created a Working Group for Mixed Treaties within the framework of the Interministerial Conference for Foreign Policy (ICFP) (see table 2).

Third, the representation of Belgium within intergovernmental or (semi-) supranational multilateral organisations underwent two changes as a result of the principle ‘in foro interno, in foro externo’. From 1993 onwards, the six Belgian governments have to reach agreement regarding the composition of the Belgian multilateral negotiation delegations. Furthermore, from 1993 onwards the Belgian federated entities would also formally participate in the process of formulating the substance of the foreign policy position of the Belgian federation, namely on those material competences for which they were internally authorized.⁷ Foreign policy thus became an issue to be dealt with on a daily basis by the Belgian federation.

Fundamental Equality of Governments

The second principle which guides the Belgian solution is the idea of fundamental equality among all the Belgian governments, be they federal or federated (no hierarchy of norms). This means in practice that the internal legislation generated by the federated entities has power which is equal to that of the federal level.

In foreign policy matters, this thus implies that all Belgian governments are responsible for giving substance to and deciding upon the foreign policy of the federation. If they are not able to find a common ground, there is in practice no Belgian position. A substantive number of consultative bodies have been created to develop a common position in foreign policy issues between the federal and five federated governments. Table 2 offers a concise overview of the most important consultative bodies created to develop a foreign policy of the Belgian federation.

7) Read also: D. Criekemans and T. Salomonson, *Conclusions and policy recommendations on the further potential and opportunities for Flanders in multilateral organizations* (Wilrijk: University of Antwerp, 2002); D. Criekemans and T. Salomonson, ‘La Belgique, la Flandre et les forums multilatéraux’, in *Bulletin d’histoire politique*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2001, pp. 125-144.



Table 2: Overview of the Consultative Bodies for Foreign Policy-making in the Belgian Federation

The Belgian solution regarding foreign policy thus grants a considerable amount of autonomy to the Belgian Regions and Communities to conduct their own foreign policy. The first principle in the constitution states that the King (read: the Belgian federal government) manages the international relations of the Belgian federation. This principle stands potentially in direct confrontation with the idea embedded within the Belgian federal model that the Regions and Communities enjoy autonomy in foreign policy matters, be it in making treaties with third parties or in sending their own representatives abroad. The solution developed for this potential conflict is as follows: the Belgian Regions and Communities do enjoy maximum autonomy so long as the coherence of the foreign policy of the federation is not put in jeopardy.⁸

8) The federated governments are, for instance, obliged to inform the Belgian federal government of their intention to conclude treaties (on the basis of their exclusive competences) with third parties. The federal government has to be informed of every step in the procedure which a federated entity undertakes to conclude such a treaty. The federal government has the authority to object. In such a case, the procedure to conclude a treaty will be suspended, and the Inter-ministerial Conference for Foreign Policy (ICFP) will decide by consensus. When a consensus cannot be reached, the federal government can obstruct the further conclusion of the treaty in only four cases: (1) the foreign partner has not been recognized by Belgium, (2) Belgium does not maintain any diplomatic relations with the third partner, (3) one can deduce from a decision or act of the federal government that the relations between Belgium and the

The combination of in foro interno, in foro externo with the fundamental equality of all Belgian governments is without precedence in the foreign policy of federal states. This is an original solution which offers the Belgian Communities and Regions the possibility to develop both their own geopolitical priorities and their own functional interests and accents in foreign policy, as long as the coherence of the foreign policy of the federation is not threatened.

Departments of Foreign Affairs and Delegations Abroad

Differences in Defining Foreign Policy

As a starting point, it is interesting to see how Flanders and Wallonia define foreign policy. Although the constitutional and institutional setting is exactly the same, Flanders and Wallonia differ substantially in the way they tie culture and education into their foreign policy. Wallonia focuses a great deal on these policy domains. In Flanders, however, the international dimension of culture and education is followed up mainly by the respective functional departments, not by the department of foreign affairs.

Before 1993, the Flemish and French-speaking communities already conducted a foreign policy in the area of international cultural affairs. For instance, in 1980 the initiative was taken in Flanders to install a Flemish Committee-General for International Cultural Relations, which became operational from 1982 onwards. The concept of culture was being interpreted more broadly as time went by, gradually also including education, sport, etc. In the Flemish case, the new external policy domains which were acquired since 1993 gradually began to overshadow culture and education.

What is interesting here is how the Flemish Government strategically links competences of the Region and Community to a consistent policy whole. Wallonia currently finds itself in a process of fusing the external activities of both the Walloon Region and the French-speaking Community (see below).

third partner have been broken off, are suspended, or are seriously disrupted, or, (4) the treaty which is currently being drafted could contradict or violate obligations which the Belgian federation has earlier agreed to in its international or supranational obligations.

In both Flanders and Wallonia it is today the Minister President who also acts as the regional Minister for Foreign Affairs.⁹

Similar in the foreign policy of Flanders and Wallonia is that both devote a great deal of attention to economic relations with third parties (foreign trade and foreign direct invest). Both have also expanded development cooperation as an important dimension of their respective foreign policies. Next to these similarities, the differences between both models remain prominent. Table 3 offers a concise overview of these differences.

	FLANDERS	WALLONIA
Policy accents within external relations	All policy domains have an international dimension Recent; interest in public diplomacy	Strong attention to the role of culture and education Also activities in wider policy areas
Type of coordination	Vertical rather than horizontal	Both vertical & horizontal
Frequency of coordination	Structural and daily	Orderly and where required
Organisational structure	Rather verticalized structure	Matrix-like structure
Level of integration of foreign policy dossiers	Integrated (with some exceptions)	Quite integrated
Key principle	Coherence & refinement	Adaptation

Table 3: Interpretation of Foreign Policy

9) This has not always been the case in Flanders. An exception is the period between 2004 and 2008, when the function of the Minister for Foreign Affairs was separate from the position of Minister President. Since September 2008, it is again the Flemish Minister President who is responsible for the coordination of all external activities conducted by the Flemish Government. With this change, Flanders has returned to the situation in the 1990s, under Luc Van den Brande (1992-1999) and his successor Patrick Dewael (1999-2003). Before June 2009, there also existed a separate Minister for Foreign Affairs in Wallonia. Since July 2009, however, the competences of international relations, European affairs and development cooperation reside exclusively with the socialist Minister President Rudy Demotte.

Departments of Foreign Affairs

Further building upon the way in which Flanders and Wallonia organize foreign policy, one can attempt to analyse their respective departments of foreign affairs. Four parameters can be relevant: (1) organisational structure, (2) personnel in the capital, Brussels, (3) the number and strength of the delegations abroad – diplomatic and other, and (4) the budget.

Organisational Structure

When one compares the organisational structures of Flemish and Walloon foreign policy and diplomacy, it becomes clear that the Flemish example is much more centralised, while Wallonia is undergoing a process of fusion between the Walloon Region and the French-speaking Community.

The Flemish foreign policy organisation has been under constant reorganisation. In 1980, the idea was set in motion to establish a Flemish Committee-General for International Cultural Relations which became operational in 1982. The concept of culture was being interpreted more broadly as time went by, gradually also including education, sport, etc. In 1986 this led in 1986 to a new name: the Committee-General for International Cooperation, and an adapted organisational structure.

In 1991, a Flemish ministry took shape which combined the administrative capacity of both the Flemish Community and Region. Within this ministry, a new Administration for External Relations was created. This was a so-called horizontal department, in the sense that it coordinated all the external activities of the internal administrative policy domains.

The acquisition, in 1993, of the international treaty-making power and external representation led in 1994 to its renaming as the Administration for Foreign Policy, which underlined the idea that all external activities of the Flemish Government should be streamlined by political priorities. This situation remained for the remainder of the decade. Gradually, however, the organisational structure came under strain, mostly because the Flemish administration was being asked to follow up on a growing number of new competences.

In the Hermes Agreement of April 5th, 2000, the federal government agreed in principle with the federated entities to devolve agriculture and foreign trade to the Belgian Regions. This intention was formalized in the Lambertmont Agreement of July 13th, 2001.

An extra area which the Belgian governments agreed to devolve was development cooperation. However, to date this area has not been devolved in practice; a study group has not reached any conclusions as to how to realize this. The Flemish Government wants the Belgian personnel and the financial means that accompany them to be transferred to the Communities. This element still remains a subject of discussion.

In 2003, at the request of Wallonia, the competence concerning export licences for weapons was also devolved from the federal government to the Regions. This impressive list of new material competences resulted in a situation in which the structure of the Flemish Administration for Foreign Policy was no longer in alignment with its new tasks and responsibilities.

In 2005-06, the Flemish Government launched a new project called 'Better Governmental Policy', an effort to structure the competences which the Flemish Region and Community had accumulated since 1991. The initial idea was to verticalize the former horizontal Flemish Administration for Foreign Policy into a fully-fledged MFA. This meant bringing general foreign policy, development cooperation and tourism together under one responsible Minister.

This new organisational structure ought to improve the coherence and decisiveness of Flemish foreign policy, which would in turn have a positive spin-off effect on the external perception of Flanders as an international actor. It should be able to adapt, in more flexible ways, to the continuously changing international environment.

The reorganisation was not only limited to redesigning structures, but also involved new means for developing the MFA further in terms of human resources. The MFA officials were given the opportunity to follow training schemes and be seconded to an international organisation, so as to become a learning organisation. A new element was the creation of a Strategic Advisory Board. This body is composed of persons from civil society and the academic world.

On April 1st, 2006, the new Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs was declared operational.

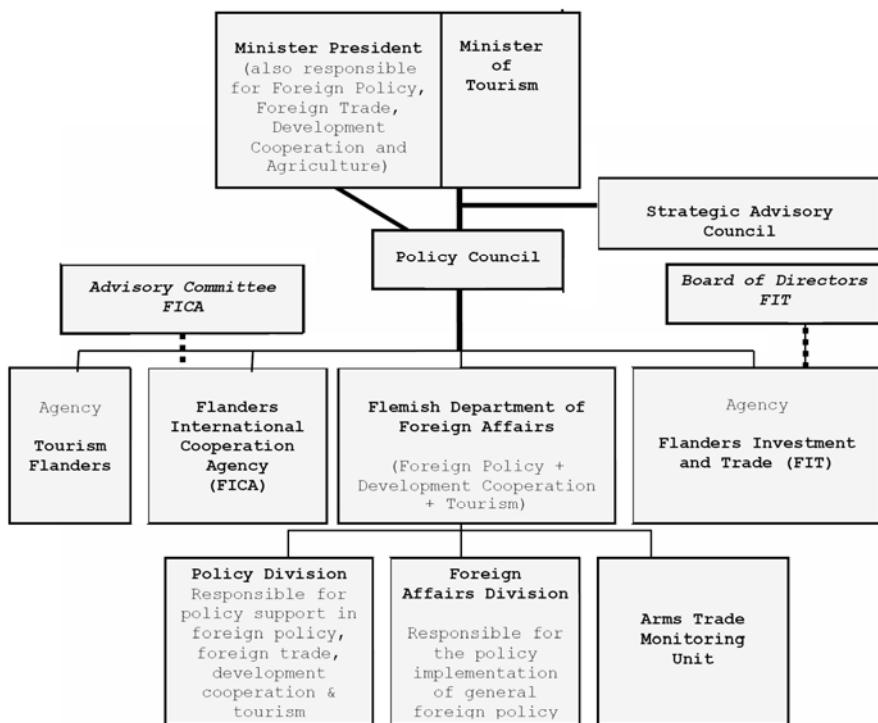


Table 4: Organisational Structure of the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (April 2006)

Until recently, the organisational support structure of the foreign affairs departments of the French-speaking Community and the Walloon Region was still composed of two parts, but this has changed during 2009. Originally, there existed a CGRI (Commissariat Général des Relations Internationales). This was a semi-governmental body which looked after international affairs on community matters. On the other hand, there was the DRI (Division des Relations Internationales), a service within the Ministry of the Walloon Region.

Five years ago, it was decided that both entities would be fused. From January 2009 onwards, this blending was established by law as a result of an agreement between the three governments (the Walloon Region, the French-speaking Community and the French-speaking Community-Commission within Brussels). Today, the unified structure has become operational. The new foreign service is called WBI (Wallonie – Bruxelles International).

This fusion constitutes a unique development in the Walloon political landscape. In all other internal policy matters, the French-speaking Community and the Walloon Region remain separated. The EIWB (Espace International Wallonie-Bruxelles) groups together the (1) Administrations of international relations (CGRI (community)-DRI (region)), (2) APEFE (Association pour la formation et l'éducation à l'étranger), AWEX (Agence Wallone à l'Exportation) and (3) the foreign network abroad (representatives, economic and trade attachés and coordinators APEFE).

Together with the Ministry of the French-speaking Community, a number of specialised agencies are jointly managed: WBImages (Wallonie-Bruxelles Images), WBM (Wallonie-Bruxelles Musiques), WBT (Wallonie-Bruxelles Théâtre), BIJ (Bureau International de la Jeunesse) and WBDM (Wallonie-Bruxelles Design Mode).

The new organisational structure of the Walloon foreign affairs department is rather complex, and has a matrix-like shape. One can detect many of the same staff members behind the name tag of different desks. On the other hand, this organisational chart is clearly communicated to the broader public. In this way, one not only obtains a clearer insight into the structure of the administration, but the administration is much more accessible to the public as well.

Other remarkable aspects are the integration of different functional departments at the management level: (1) the Director-General of WBI is now also the Director of AWEX and APEFE, (2) a strong integration of foreign policy: foreign trade, international cultural policy, international educational policy, development cooperation in one administration. In the future, Wallonian foreign affairs will likely be more able to develop synergies between different policy domains (especially with culture and education). However, the jury is still out on how unified this new structure will prove to be in practice.

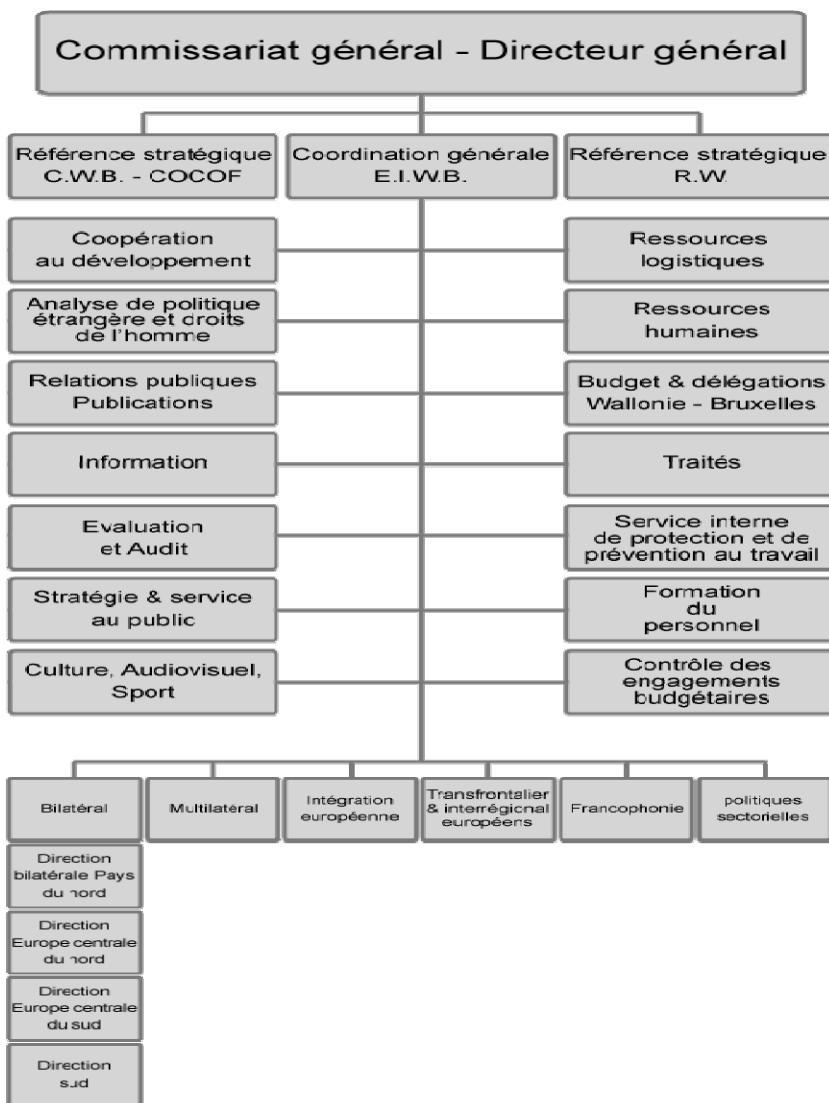


Table 5: Organisational Structure of the Walloon Department of Foreign Affairs (January 2009)

Personnel

It is no coincidence that the most advanced foreign affairs departments in terms of competences and organisational structure also have the most people working internally. Flanders and Wallonia are both examples of this phenomenon. Nevertheless, the data show some interesting differences. Although Flanders and Wallonia have exactly the same competences, the amount of personnel working in Walloon foreign policy (CGRI-DRI) is more than double that of Flanders. The expenditures on personnel are also in line with this finding. Wallonia spends more of its money on personnel, both in relation to other budget posts as in general.

	Flanders	Wallonia
Total amount of personnel engaged in external affairs (estimated)	94 persons	207 persons

Table 6: Personnel Engaged

Delegations Abroad, Diplomatic and Functional

When one compares the delegations abroad of Flanders and Wallonia, one must make a distinction between diplomatic personnel, personnel working on foreign trade and attracting direct foreign investment, as well as cultural, tourist and educational representatives.

	Flanders	Wallonia
POLITICAL	10 + EU	15 + EU
ECONOMIC (FOREIGN TRADE & INVESTMENT)	89 in 68 countries	107 in 73 countries
CULTURAL	3	(via the <i>Francophonie</i>)
TOURISM	12	--
EDUCATIONAL	--	12

Table 7: Foreign Representation

From the data, certain patterns can be distinguished. It becomes clear that the political representation of regions abroad often constitutes only a fraction of the total foreign representation. The economic representation is also very important. Both regions with legislative powers have set up their own agencies for foreign trade and investment, which are very active.

Interestingly, in the cases of Flanders and Wallonia, the economic network is between six to seven times larger than the political one. For Flanders, the cultural representation abroad is rather limited.¹⁰ One also detects an importance being given by Flanders to attracting more tourism. Wallonia is very much engaged in having representatives abroad who foster cooperation and exchange programmes in the area of education.

The Belgian regions far outnumber other regions with respect to the sending of political representatives abroad. There thus exists a definite relationship between the formal powers granted and the network established. Flanders has political representatives in The Hague, Paris, Berlin, London, Geneva, Brussels (EU), Madrid, Warsaw, Pretoria, Vienna and New York. Wallonia has political representatives in Québec, Paris, Berlin, Brussels (EU), Warsaw, Geneva, Bucharest, Prague, Baton Rouge, Hanoi, Tunis, Rabat, Dakar, Kinshasa, Algiers and Santiago de Chile.

What is unique about Flanders and Wallonia compared to other regions is that their political representatives abroad have an official diplomatic statute. They are presented to the outside world as being diplomats who are functionally specialised in following up on the dossiers of their respective regional governments. They thus have a diplomatic passport.

The Belgian regions have also established a rotation system among their senior ‘diplomatic’ staff, similar to those of other states. In Wallonia, this has already existed for a number of years. Flanders introduced this system in August 2008, when the first rotation took place. None of the other regions want to set up such a system; they think that it would not be efficient and also their network is too small.

10) In fact, Flanders does not have any official cultural representative abroad. It does, however, have three cultural houses: ‘De Brakke Grond’ in Amsterdam (the Netherlands), a centre in Osaka (Japan) and one in New York.

Budget

The budget for the foreign policy of WBI is much greater than that for Flemish foreign policy. The assessment can be made that Wallonia with its 3.5 million inhabitants invests more strongly in the development of its foreign policy compared to Flanders. Worthy of mention is the large budget which Wallonia invests in cultural exchanges. The substantial increase in this budget can be explained by the institution of a single counter (guichet unique), which has given international cultural policy an impressive stimulus.

A similar analysis can be made regarding the personnel strength of the foreign policy domain. In 2006, CGRI and DRI had 443 personnel, Flanders had 162 people for the same policy domains (the Flemish Department for Foreign Affairs and the Flanders International Cooperation Agency, FICA).

The figures for the expenditures of Flanders and Wallonia on external relations are certainly impressive compared to other regions.¹¹ Wallonia invests more in the political and diplomatic dimension of its external relations

11) The former CGRI (French-speaking Community) has an annual budget of 46 million (m.) on average (2006 and 2007), of which the main posts are (1°) wages (12.5 m.), (2°) bilateral relations (9 m.), (3°) representations abroad (6.5 m.), (4°) multi-lateral programmes (4 m.), (5°) cultural exchanges (4 m.), (6°) multilateral contributions (3.4 m.), (7°) payments to third parties (3 m.), etc.

The former DRI (Walloon Region) has an annual budget of 18.6 million (m.) on average (2006 and 2007), of which the main posts are (1°) representations abroad, and rent (4.3 m.), (2°) development cooperation (2.8 m.), (3°) subsidies to promote bilateral cooperation with the South (2.5 m.), (4°) subsidies for financing projects in development cooperation (1.2 m.), (5°) cross-border promotion and action (1.2 m.), (6°) bilateral programmes ‘South’ (0.7 m.), (7°) bilateral programmes ‘North’ (0.26 m.), etc.

The total budget of Wallonie-Bruxelles International - WBI thus varies between 64.5 million (2007) and 65.9 million (2006).

The Flemish budget in more detail:

Fluctuating budget and new annual growth of 10% each year since 2004

Foreign policy: 15.8 million

Development Cooperation: 27 million

Tourism: 60 million

Foreign Trade: 52 million

Budgets of other sectoral departments (e.g. the environment, energy, education, etc.), amounting to substantial amounts (not separately written down in a ‘horizontal budget’ for foreign affairs, but rather within the other departmental budgets.)

compared to Flanders. However, this does not say anything about the effectiveness and efficiency of external policies and foreign policy.

The Position of the Belgian Federal MFA

During the past decade and a half, the Belgian federal diplomatic apparatus has adapted itself to the new situation which was created as a result of the constitutional revision of 1993. Whereas the central government used to enjoy a monopoly in the management of the international affairs of the country, it is now only one of the players.

However, it has successfully transformed itself into a coordination centre which guides all external contacts under an atmosphere of federal loyalty. Within the Belgian federation, one can even detect a remarkable realignment. The external contacts of Belgium have become more diverse and a kind of informal division of tasks seems to have taken place in the external relations among the different governments within the federation.

The federal government is for the most part a loyal partner vis-à-vis the regions; both work actively together on an institutionalized, daily basis. However, problems do remain, mostly as a result of unclear delineations of material competency areas, or because international politics has sometimes become a real-time event, so that it has become much more difficult for governments to co-ordinate.

Although Flanders and Wallonia have increasing personnel who specialise in international relations and diplomacy, they are still rather limited compared to the network of the Belgian federal MFA. The latter has over 3,200 employees and collaborators, of which two thirds are located abroad. Thus, federal diplomacy remains important, and also has a constitutionally-embedded task to represent the Belgian Regions and Communities abroad, especially in those areas, countries and regions where Flanders, Wallonia or Brussels do not present themselves. Furthermore, Belgian federal diplomacy plays an integral and central role in high politics dossiers in the United Nations, the European Common and Security Policy, NATO and the OSCE.

Instruments of Foreign Policy and Diplomacy

A Spectrum of Diplomatic Instruments

The spectrum of ‘diplomatic’ instruments which are available to the Belgian Regions and Communities is quite diverse. Both Flanders and Wallonia make active use of all of them, albeit that they have made different choices.

First, there is the treaty-making power. The Belgian Regions and Communities can conclude exclusive treaties with other regions, but also with states. This is quite unique when viewed from an international comparative perspective. Quite often such instruments are not only employed by regions with legislative powers to create substantial content-based cooperation with other partners. They may also be used to further build and enhance the international-legal recognition of the respective region as a player which should be taken seriously in the international arena.

Flanders, for instance, used the opportunity of the fall of the Iron Curtain to conclude treaties with the Baltic states, Poland and Hungary. Between 1993 and 2008, Flanders concluded 33 exclusive treaties (27 bilateral and 6 multilateral). The Walloon Region has concluded 67 treaties, and the French-speaking Community has concluded 51 treaties. It seems that Wallonia is less concerned with the possible inflationary consequences of too large external treaty obligations, compared to Flanders. In July 2009, the new Flemish Government stated in its new programme for the next five years that it would again devote more attention to the possibilities which are provided by exclusive treaties.

Another aspect of the Belgian solution is that international treaties also have to be ratified by the regions when their content is considered to touch upon the competences of these last entities. Mixed treaties are treaties which apply to both the Belgian federal and the regional competences. Due to the fact that the Belgian state structure lacks homogeneous packages of competences, the regions are involved in many treaties. This explains the high number of over 345 mixed treaties.

Second, there are also other agreements of a certain formalised nature; (political) declarations of intent and/or cooperation agreements, transnational

contracts¹² and cultural agreements or partnerships. They do not compel the contracting parties to follow up on or implement their initial intention to cooperate. From a more positive perspective, they are much more flexible as instruments of foreign policy compared to the rather rigid structure of formal treaties, which often need governments to come together on a biannual basis to work out (strict) implementation programmes in the policy areas which were summed up in the respective treaties. However, these instruments of foreign policy remain non-enforceable. Both Flanders and Wallonia often make use of the flexible instrument of joint political declarations of intent with third parties. It seems that Flanders has used this instrument more in the past compared to Wallonia, but one must at the same time acknowledge that it is very difficult to quantify this instrument. Flanders is also quite active in the area of transnational contracts (more than 52).

With regard to cultural treaties, a number of interesting patterns arise. The concluding of formal cultural treaties – a practice which used to be commonplace up to the end of the 1980s – seems to have become outdated. Many consider them to be too rigid as instruments. Wallonia still actively works with cultural treaties (often it concerns treaties which were concluded before 1993 by the central government). In Flanders, the number of cultural treaties has rapidly decreased (from 39 in 2001 to a mere 9 in 2007). In many cases, cultural cooperation has been included in broader Flemish exclusive treaties with third parties, in other cases the more flexible instrument of partnerships is more favoured.

Third, there is the development of assistance programmes and the sharing of know-how: bilateral programmes, programmes on cross-boundary cooperation, programmes which want to bring the civil societies of the region and other regions/countries together and multilateral programmes. They have in common that they are established as the result of initiatives of one or more regions with legislative powers.

There may be different reasons to establish such programmes. Often they are designed to achieve one or more of the following goals: (1) to create an added-value to internal policy areas, (2) to tap into existing or newly created

12) Transnational contracts are agreements concluded between two parties of which at least one of them is not a subject of international law. They are considered to pertain to private law. For instance, Flanders has concluded such contracts with Québec in the area of education, science, technology, health. Also, the Flemish Region has concluded transnational contracts with, for instance, the South African New Housing Company to build homes for Flemish development policy. This contract was dissolved a number of years ago.

reservoirs of policy ideas and competences, (3) to support already existing bilateral, cross-border or multilateral policies of the region, (4) to further develop the international-legal position and recognition of the region(s) with legislative powers.

With respect to bilateral policy, the Francophone world is very high on Wallonia's agenda. Flanders focuses – unlike Wallonia – on all European countries and the macro-region of Southern Africa (South Africa, Malawi, Mozambique, and Lesotho). Wallonia has a BRIC strategy.¹³ Flanders only started with such an initiative in 2009.

Regarding cross-border policy, Flanders and Wallonia both invest in various cross-border projects with areas in the Netherlands, France and Germany. Wallonia is especially active in the so-called ‘Great Region’, consisting of a number of German *Länder*, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the French department of Lorraine, the Germanophone Community in Belgium and Wallonia, with specific projects on community workers.

Concerning additional European programmes of assistance and the sharing of knowledge (outside of the EU framework), Flanders seem to be ahead of Wallonia. In April 1992 (before Flanders officially became an international actor with treaty-making power), the Flemish Government had decided to make relations with Central and Eastern Europe a priority. A new policy instrument was created for this: the Central and Eastern Europe Programme.¹⁴

With regard to multilateral programmes, the Belgian regions seem to be very advanced, and are a model for other regions. For Wallonia, one may

13) BRIC refers to the growing economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China.

14) In 1992, 10.68 million euros were earmarked in order to support the transition process in Central & Eastern Europe, and the development of strong and healthy market economies. With this annual budget (which gradually decreased over the course of the 1990s), projects were financed in such areas as the economy, the environment, infrastructure, education, vocational training, socio-economic matters and judicial assistance. The Flemish know-how could be used to bring these countries up to Western European standards. At the same time, these projects could bring Flemish and Central-European specialists together on a wide variety of dossiers. Also important to note is that in this way certain aspects of the Flemish (socio-)economic, ecological and societal model could be exported to the East. Wallonia does not have such an extensive programme of assistance.

D. Criekemans, ‘The case of Flanders (1993-2005): how subnational entities develop their own ‘paradiplomacy’’, Kishan S. Rana (ed.), Foreign ministries: managing diplomatic networks and optimizing value (Geneva, DiploFoundation, 2007), pp. 118-156.

refer to the activities of the *Francophonie*. Flanders is often seen as an example which other regions partly want to emulate. We will come back to this under the next point.

Fourth, there are other forms of participation in multilateral frameworks and organisations: observing or participating in committees, the creation of/or participation in funds within multilateral organisations, and becoming an associate member of multilateral organisations. Via these instruments, regions often try to get access to important multilateral debates which affect their internal competences.

Flanders developed its first initial multilateral steps vis-à-vis the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNESCO and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). It also contributed financially to certain projects of these organisations. Flanders' competency with regard to preventive health care led to an interest in the work of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and UN-AIDS.

Because of its educational and cultural work, the Council of Europe was also selected. Within the OECD, Flanders promoted the development of more regional statistical data and studies. Also the WTO has become an important organisation for Flemish foreign policy, certainly regarding the negotiations in the liberalization of services (the Flemish economy is mainly services-based). One can detect a wide dispersal of Flemish multilateral activities: from a limited number of organisations and programmes into a much wider spectrum, in which all Flemish administrations are involved. Coordinating this effort therefore becomes a much more daunting task. Flanders today finds itself in a process in which the original project-based approach is less prominent, in favour of the development of a much more structural approach.

Wallonia is active in multilateral programmes, often via its contacts in the *Francophonie*. As regards the possibility of becoming an associate member of a multilateral organisation, only Flanders is in this position, in the World Tourism Organisation.¹⁵ No other region is an associate member of a traditional multilateral organisation.

Fifth, there is participation in other formal or informal networks. Via these instruments, regions try to: (1) set the international agenda, (2) bring

15) As a result of Flanders' associate membership of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the federal Belgian level withdrew. According to some interviewees this has created problems in the sense that sometimes the Flemish government can no longer achieve the necessary access to the highest political bodies in the organisation.

the necessary know-how and actors together to achieve specific goals, (3) learn from other regions with similar or different experiences. Both Wallonia and Flanders are active in this regard, but seem to operate in often different formal and informal networks. They still play a role in REGLEG, the Group of EU Regions with Legislative Powers. Gradually, Flanders and Wallonia are also becoming active in more specific policy-driven networks. They have initiated several informal and formal policy networks. Flanders is involved in the Flanders Districts of Creativity network (or the DC network). The DC regions exchange experiences and work together on issues of creativity, on the promotion of innovation, on entrepreneurial spirit and business creativity, and on exchange programmes in the area of innovation and creativity. Wallonia is not a member of the DC network. Another good example can be found in sustainable development. For instance, in 1993 the Walloon government started ENCORE, the Environmental Conference of the European Regions, a discussion forum for European regions on the implementation of EU environmental law. Flanders is also a member of ENCORE. Many other examples of specific policy networks in which Flanders and Wallonia are active could be mentioned.

Current Foreign Policies

Overall, the objectives which both Flanders and Wallonia mention for going abroad are quite similar. They try to strengthen their own autonomy by optimally using the possibilities and contacts offered by the international community. They also attempt to make a recognizable contribution and to further develop the international legal personality of their region. Furthermore, both strive to gain more access to policy solutions which are developed internationally. Both also develop their own identity and image, via public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy and also via tourism. Both aim to take up a rightful place in the international community. Both regions also develop their own foreign trade and try to attract foreign direct investments. Last but not least, both regions make a contribution to international solidarity via initiatives in the area of development cooperation.

Depending on the political constellation in different periods, different accents are made. In Wallonia, for instance, economic aspects have been underlined for years, and are linked to the 'Marshall Plan' of the Walloon Region. Recently, this has also become important in Flanders as a result of the economic crisis. The new Flemish foreign affairs strategy for 2009-2014

states that Flanders should develop its own economic diplomacy. When comparing the foreign policies of Flanders and Wallonia, one must make a distinction between their bilateral, European and multilateral policies.

Bilateral Policies

With regard to bilateral policies, there is a difference between Flanders and Wallonia. Flanders' foreign policy is mostly focussed on neighbouring countries and Central and Eastern Europe: there is a clear focus policy. Flanders also collaborates - mainly in development cooperation - with South Africa, Morocco and Chile. Since 1989, Flanders has had a relationship with Québec, which was strengthened in 2002. Since 1994, it has developed contacts with all ten Central and Eastern European countries.

The first exclusive treaties which the Flemish Government concluded were with the Netherlands, regarding the deepening of the River Scheldt (which partly flows across Dutch territory) and also regarding cooperation in such areas as culture, education, sciences, welfare, etc. The Netherlands is the absolute priority of Flemish foreign policy, for cultural, economic and logistical reasons.

Walloon bilateral policies are mostly embedded within the *Francophonie*. Wallonia thus has different geopolitical priorities compared to Flanders. Many Walloon activities are developed in Francophone Africa, and also in countries in Asia such as Vietnam. It seems to have difficulties in formulating priorities compared to the Flemish focus policy.

Typical for the foreign policy of the Walloon Region/French-speaking Community is the clear division in two of their geopolitical focus. All external cooperation is clustered in two programmes: the 'Programmes Nord' and 'Programmes Sud'. This dual system finds its origin in the finality of the Walloon foreign policy. The *Programmes Nord*¹⁶ focus on cooperation in the areas of education, the economy and culture with developed countries and countries in transition. The *Programmes Sud*¹⁷ aim at cooperation with the developing countries in the area of education, knowledge and solidarity.

16) The northern countries with which Wallonia has relations can be divided between the European countries and the new EU-border countries; North America, Brazil, Israel and Japan, and also the rising economies such as China, Chili, Cuba, Lebanon and Tunisia. Wallonia has a BRIC strategy, something which Flanders does not yet have (but is planning to do so).

17) The southern countries with which Wallonia has relations are some Maghreb countries (in particular Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco), some Central African

European Policies

Both Flanders and Wallonia are active on the European scene, but sometimes in different dossiers, and in different ways. First, one should mention that as a result of the Belgian federal solution to foreign policy, a cooperation agreement had to be signed in 1994. This agreement included the representation of Belgium within the Council of Ministers of the European Union, and has recently been updated.

The situation varies in each policy domain, but there are cases (e.g. culture, education, sport) in which Belgium as a whole will be represented by a Minister from the Communities or Regions, who will speak on behalf of the whole of the Belgian federation. In more mixed policy domains, the team leader will be someone from the federal government, accompanied by a representative of the Region/Community, or vice versa.

In practice it means that the traditional distinction between domestic policy and international (EU) policy is less clear; both are intermingled. The different Belgian governments have to try to work together via the DG-E consultation process. There is thus little room for the regional governments to develop a parallel foreign policy in EU affairs. They are obliged to work in a complementary fashion. Nevertheless, this has not inhibited Flanders and Wallonia from developing different accents.

The EU policy of Flanders is probably one of the most important components of Flemish foreign policy. The choices made are a direct result of both the institutional position of Flanders within Europe and its competences. A recurring theme in Flemish foreign policy is the regional dimension within the European Union.

In December 1992, the former Flemish Minister President officially launched the Charter of Europe of the Regions, which involved an informal network of like-minded people believing that Europe should be built on cultural diversity – the Europe of the Cultures. In 2001, Flanders played an important part in the REGLEG network. In 2008, Flanders presided over this network.

countries (RDC, Rwanda, Burundi), some West African countries (Burkina Faso, Benin, Senegal), some Latin American countries with lower levels of economic development such as Bolivia and Haiti, and then also South Africa, Palestine and Vietnam.

Many of the competences which the Belgian regions and communities have received over the years are actually issues in which the European Union is quite active: education, agriculture, aspects of economic policy, etc. Flanders could be identified as a somewhat sceptical European actor. In dossiers such as trade liberalization it is often rather conservative. Nevertheless, Flanders can also be regarded as a loyal European team player, which mostly acts in concert with the other Belgian regional governments.

Wallonia is also active in EU affairs. However, it does not always invest the same amount of time in so many diverse EU dossiers compared to Flanders. This is because Wallonia also has some other interests on the European scene. Next to EU politics, one can also mention a European programme which is of particular interest to Wallonia: *Interreg*. This is a cooperation programme, financed by the EU, which fosters cooperation among adjacent European regions. For the moment, Interreg IV (2007-2013) is up and running. This entails cross-border projects (IV-A), transnational projects (IV-B) and inter-regional projects (IV-C).

For Wallonia, within IV-A, the area of 'La Grande Région' is of very high importance. This entails the German regions of Saarland, Rhineland and Lotharingen, the state of Luxembourg, and for Belgium: the Walloon Region, the French-speaking Community and the German-speaking Community. One of the topics is the mobility of labour within this region, an important indication of the success of the cross-border work of the Grande Région.

Next to this, Wallonia is also a partner in an important cooperation within the framework of the Interreg IV-C programme. This cooperation between France, Wallonia and Flanders deals with a wide range of subjects, from the economy and demography to culture and spatial planning.

Multilateral Policies

Multilateral politics has become increasingly important for both regional governments. Soon after the Flemish Government received its international competences, Flanders developed an interest in collaborating with and within multilateral organisations on concrete issues of policy. As we mentioned earlier in the section on the instruments of foreign policy and diplomacy, Flemish activities were developed in the ILO, UNESCO, EBRD, WHO, UN-AIDS, WTO, the Council of Europe and UNWTO. The new trend is one in which the original Flemish project-based approach is less prominent, in favour of the development of a much more structural approach: trying to set

the agenda and to influence the multilateral decision-making via different routes.

In the multilateral policy of Wallonia, the *Francophonie* plays a major role in different ways: (1) the substantial budgets allocated to Francophone countries and regions, (2) the jump-start potential which is attributed to these countries (3) the international platform of the *Francophonie* is also considered to be a good basis upon which to achieve other goals such as sustainable development and democracy. Some examples of committees on Wallonia's priority list are: the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF), the *Agence universitaire de la Francophonie*, the CONFEMEN (Conférence des Ministres de l'Education Nationale) and the CONFEJES (Conférence des Ministres de la Jeunesse et des Sports). Wallonia thus utilizes the *Francophonie* both as a network and a forum.

There are also other multilateral organisations and projects in which CGRI-DRI actively participates. The activities of a number of organisations within the UN family are followed. Within the WTO, especially the dossiers of cultural diversity and educational services are closely monitored. Also the debates within the ILO are followed by the representation of the French Community in Geneva.

Since 2005, the Walloon political representative in Geneva has also been a member of the Bureau du Groupe des Ambassadeurs Francophones. In this way, he participates in the co-ordination of the position of the French-speaking governments in different international organisations. Via this Bureau, the CGRI-DRI (now WBI) is indirectly involved in the Human Rights Council of the UN, the World Health Council of the WHO, and the WTO.

Conclusion

Belgium is a unique example among the countries which have given international responsibilities to their federated entities. The combination of the principle 'in foro interno, in foro externo' together with that of the fundamental equality of all Belgian governments is without precedence in the foreign policy of federal states. Compared to most other countries, the autonomy given to the Belgian Regions and Communities is far-reaching, but the instruments with which the coherence of the foreign policy of the federation are guaranteed have only been filled in in a limited way.

During the past decade and a half, the Belgian federal diplomatic apparatus has adapted itself to the new situation which was created as a result of the constitutional revision of 1993. Whereas the central government used to enjoy a monopoly in the management of the international affairs of the country, it is now only one of the players. However, it has successfully transformed itself into a coordination centre which guides all external contacts under an atmosphere of federal loyalty.

Within the Belgian federation, one can even detect a remarkable realignment. Belgium's external contacts have become more diverse and a kind of informal division of tasks seems to have taken place in the external relations among the different governments within the federation.

Flanders has made active use of its international treaty-making power. The way in which subsequent Flemish governments have selected external partners does suggest that the northern part of the country has different priorities externally. Nevertheless, the six governments within the Belgian federation work on a fairly complementary basis, both in geopolitical as well as in functional terms. The Belgian Regions and Communities continue to receive more competences, and – as a consequence – will have more to say in the foreign policy of the federation.

This is also the reason why the Flemish Government has continuously adapted its structural organization. As a result of the rapidly changing institutional architecture within the Belgian federation, much attention has been devoted during past years to competences and decision-making structures.

However, the case of Flemish diplomacy shows that it is possible for a region within a federation to develop its own foreign policy accents, even with limited resources. The Flemish foreign policy apparatus has sought ways to adapt in more flexible ways to both new competences and novel challenges within society or on the international scene. It has also made use of the opportunities for networking and new partnerships which presented themselves at certain junctures in time.

Flemish foreign policy often operates not parallel to the foreign policy of the Belgian central government, but is part of a multi-layered process within and outside the Belgian federation. The consultation procedures which have been developed over the years can perhaps serve as some inspiration to other countries which are looking to reconcile globalization and localization. One must bear in mind, however, that a blind transposition of the 'Belgian solution' is not to be recommended. Each solution which tries to give more international authority to the component states within a federation should be

attuned to the needs of each political system and the specificity of its component units.

Wallonia has also made active use of its international treaty-making power, even more than Flanders. Wallonia's geopolitical interests mostly coincide with those of the Belgian federal government. In this way, Wallonia already builds upon the achievements and existing contacts of the Belgian federal government. Wallonia has a further advantage in the sense that it can use the *Francophonie* as an important network to punch above its weight on the international scene, and to be an actor early on.

The Belgian solution regarding foreign policy is a very specific one. Based upon the combination of a few far-reaching principles, Flanders and Wallonia enjoy unprecedented possibilities for developing their foreign policy and sub-state diplomacy. Belgium can be seen as a testing ground for regional sub-state diplomacy. Studying the external instruments and policies of Belgium's regional governments is relevant for other regions which want to further develop their foreign affairs capabilities and policies.

Many regions are today asking themselves questions as to how to develop their own foreign policy and diplomacy, certainly in an era of economic crisis and budget limitations. The road to which the Belgian regions seem to point is one of integration of existing instruments, and the need to join together the developed know-how in some kind of ministry or department of foreign affairs. The experience of Flanders and Wallonia could thus very well inform other regions when they embark upon their own 'third-wave' quest for better diplomatic results via systematization and integration.

However, also other advanced regions, such as for instance Québec, Scotland or Catalonia, could very well be informative in third-wave exercises.¹⁸ In the coming years, it will be interesting to follow up on how sub-state diplomacy and its relation vis-à-vis the diplomacy of central governments will further develop. What effect will the third wave in sub-state diplomacy have upon the relations with the central governments? Will it enhance conflictive, parallel, complementary or cooperative ways of behaviour? Whatever the answer to this question will be, it is clear that the outcome of this relationship will become crucial in understanding the effectiveness of tomorrow's bilateral, cross-border, European and multilateral policies.

18) For more on this, read: D. Criekemans, 'Regional Sub-state Diplomacy from a Comparative Perspective: Quebec, Scotland, Bavaria, Catalonia, Wallonia and Flanders', in *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 37-64.

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- 1 Jan Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2005) pp. 16-25.
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 - 5 Ellen Huijgh, 'The Public Diplomacy of Federated Entities: Examining the Quebec Model', *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2010), pp. 125-150
- Discussion Papers in Diplomacy should be cited as follows: Brian Hocking and David Spence, Towards a European Diplomatic System?, *Discussion Papers in Diplomacy*, No. 98 (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 2005).
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