

SME-related policy measures adopted, implemented or announced in 2021

BELGIUM

Title of the measure (national language)	Title of the measure (English translation)	Implementing body	Adopted / implemented / announced as part of the 'National Recovery and Resilience Plan' (Yes / No)	Status (Adopted or implemented or announced)	Date of adoption / implementation or announcement (DD/MM/YYYY)	General description (objectives / key features / budget - if applicable, and weblink to online source)
ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF SUSTAINABILITY						
Belgium Builds Back Circular (Federal government)	Belgium Builds Back Circular	FPS Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment	Yes	Adopted	05/06/2021 (BE) 23/06/2021 (EU)	This project on the circular economy, worth 29 million euros, fulfils a triple objective: 1) Promote an integrated approach with the creation of a circular coalition; 2) Financing circular projects; 3) Raising awareness and informing SMEs. Regarding this third step, it is being implemented through the following means: - A website on the internet containing relevant information on the transition assistance measures offered to SMEs to enable them to adopt a circular economy model; - A self-evaluation tool that allows SMEs to measure their progression towards this economic model; - Annual awareness-raising campaigns (over

						<p>3 years)</p> <p>The result is that more SMEs are informed about the need for a transition to a more circular model and how to do it, but also that they can take the necessary measures to adapt their business model.</p> <p>https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/fr/ip_21_3147</p> <p>https://dermine.belgium.be/fr/le-plan-de-reprise-et-de-r%C3%A9silience-est-ratifi%C3%A9-par-le-conseil, mesure I 5.15 in the PDF document « PLAN NATIONAL POUR LA REPRISE ET LA RÉSILIENCE »</p>
Circular Wallonia (Wallonia)	Circular Wallonia	SPW Economie, Emploi Recherche	No	Adopted Implementation in progress (cf. mesures présentées ci-dessous)	04/02/21 Adoption by the Walloon Government	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote a sustainable recovery of the economy and the development of low-carbon businesses (This measure aims to support more than 1,000 businesses in their transition to a circular economy by the end of 2023); - Reduce the impact of economic activities on the environment; - Create local jobs that cannot be relocated; - Reduce the Region's dependence on the supply of raw materials and energy - Increase the attractiveness of Wallonia. <p>Main characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 measures based on 10 ambitions. Several measures aim to encourage the integration of the principles of the economy by companies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Adapting and strengthening existing support and financing mechanisms to further integrate the circular economy (First measure adopted in November 2021: the "NEXT" circular economy financing scheme managed by SRIW with €6.75M (Walloon recovery plan) that provides equity investment of between €50,000 and €1 million, in capital and/or unsecured (subordinated) loans, combined with support of circular business experts - https://next.circularwallonia.be/)

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthen the territorial approach to the development of the circular economy (with calls) ○ Accelerate the deployment of the circular economy and the resilience of supply chains through the digital transition ○ Foster networking, creativity and innovation, the emergence of new activities and the development of innovative entrepreneurship ○ Strengthen the development of knowledge and skills in the circular economy • Mainly concern Walloon companies but also other target audiences such as civil society, public actors, citizens • Particular focus on seven promising sectors for the circular economy in Wallonia: construction and buildings, plastics, metallurgy, water, textiles, the food industry and food systems, and bio-based products <p>Budget estimated at EUR220 million for 2021-2024</p> <p>https://economiecirculaire.wallonie.be/ ; https://economiecirculaire.wallonie.be/actualite/la-wallonie-prend-des-mesures-ambitieuses-pour-deployer-leconomie-circulaire</p>
Projectproep 'piloottrajecten bio- gebaseerde toepassingen" (Flemish region)	Call for "pilot projects for bio-based applications"	Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO)	Yes	Implemented	July 2021	The call for "pilot projects for bio-based applications" targets SMEs from industry, primary agriculture and aquaculture wanting to test the feasibility of scaling up a bio-based application. SMEs can call upon this support measure to set up a project testing the feasibility in cooperation with a provider of pilot infrastructure (as a subcontractor). As a quality assurance and guarantee for embedding in the Flemish ecosystem, only providers of pilot infrastructure with recognition for the SME portfolio pillar 'advice' are accepted. The invoice for subcontracting the pilot infrastructure must amount to at least 60% of the total project budget.

						<p>The focus of the projects is on upscaling activities. This means that there is enough maturity at the start of the project (proof-of-concept on an experimental scale) but that no commercial roll-out is possible yet. With this grant, small enterprises can finance 45% of the project budget and medium-sized enterprises 35%, with a minimum support of EUR 20,000 and a maximum support of EUR 100,000.</p> <p>https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/projectoproep-piloottrajecten-bio-gebaseerde-toepassingen</p>
<p>Nieuwe oproep Blue deal waterbesparende investeringen</p> <p>(Flemish region)</p>	<p>New call "Blue Deal water-saving investments"</p>	<p>Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Implemented</p>	<p>From the 4th of October 2021 until the 29th of October 2021</p>	<p>SMEs investing in water saving or drought control can apply for support. It includes investments to reduce water consumption, to buffer rainwater or to purify water or drain it into surface water. Small enterprises can receive up to 20% support for their investment, and medium-sized enterprises up to 10%. A total of EUR 2 million is provided. A minimum investment of EUR 10 000 is required and the maximum amount of support is EUR 500 000. The call may be repeated next year.</p> <p>https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/nieuwe-oproep-blue-deal-waterbesparende-investeringen-nog-tot-2910</p>
<p>Renolution : une stratégie pour rénover durablement le bâti bruxellois</p> <p>(Brussels-Capital Region)</p>	<p>'Renolution: a strategy to renovate Brussels' buildings'</p>	<p>Bruxelles Environnement (with the contribution of other bodies)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Adopted</p>	<p>25/04/2019</p>	<p>Through the combined efforts of the industrial, tertiary and public sectors, the objectives of the Brussels-Capital Region's Renovation Strategy (RENOLUTION) is to achieve an average energy performance level of PEB C for all housing in Brussels by 2050, i.e. an average consumption divided by 3 compared to the current situation. Ultimately, RENOLUTION will be contributing to the reduction of air pollution, to the improvement of the living comfort of the Brussels' people and will also contribute to the achievement of the climate objectives.</p> <p>The legislative process that will set the obligations will be finalised in 2024 at the earliest.</p> <p>Complementarily, RENOLAB, currently under implementation, will act as an innovation catalyzer by offering support to renovation projects from the</p>

						<p>design stage to the end of the construction period through two distinct mechanisms :</p> <p>i) A call for projects for innovative solutions with the aim of removing the obstacles to renovation = this part of the project is called "Renolab ID". The measure would support an estimated total of 25 pilot projects.</p> <p>ii) A call for projects "Renolab.B" whose aim is to strengthen the skills of construction professionals and stimulate the circular economy and sustainability in renovation. The measure would support the design of 50 sustainable renovation projects and renovation works with an estimated surface area of 20,000 m2 through technical support (guidance by expert consultancies) and financial support (grants). The budgets for the technical and financial support (public contracts and subsidies) should be committed by 31 March 2024 at the latest.</p> <p>https://environnement.brussels/thematiques/batiment-et-energie/bilan-energetique-et-action-de-la-region/renovation-une-strategie-pour-renover-le-batiment-bruxellois</p>
SOCIAL ASPECTS OF SUSTAINABILITY						
<p>Amelioration du statut social des independants</p> <p>(Federal government)</p>	Improving the social status of the self-employed	INASTI	No	Implemented	01/01/2021 (implementation)	<p><u>Extension of paternity and birth leave for self-employed workers:</u> From 1 January 2021, the duration of paternity and childbirth leave is extended from 10 days (or 20 half days) to 15 days (or 30 half days).</p> <p>https://www.inasti.be/fr/news/le-conge-de-paternite-et-de-naissance-est-allonge</p> <p>https://www.inasti.be/fr/faq/allocation-de-paternite-et-de-naissance</p> <p><u>Increase in social benefits for self-employed workers, carers and assisting spouses:</u> increase of several social benefits in the sickness-disability fields (from 1 July 2021), droit passerelle (from 1 July 2021), paternity allowance - close carer (from 1 May 2021) and pensions.</p> <p>https://clarinval.belgium.be/fr/enveloppe-bien-etre-et-prime-unique-de-500-euros-</p>

						<p>nets#:~:text=En%20autre%2C%20un%20avant%20projet,19%20a%20%C3%A9galement%20%C3%A9t%C3%A9%20approuv%C3%A9.</p> <p><u>Improving the social status of the self-employed with regard to pensions</u> through the increase of future pensions by abolishing the correction coefficient and increasing the pension ceiling to improve the purchasing power of pensioners through the progressive increase of the minimum pension. https://www.inasti.be/fr/news/augmentation-des-pensions-des-independants-a-partir-du-1er-juillet-2021</p>
Stratégie « Alternativ'ES Wallonia » (Wallonia)	"Alternativ'ES Wallonia" Strategy	SPW EER et acteurs de l'économie sociale	No	Adopted Implementat ion in progress	Adopted in November 2020 - Implemented in 2021	<p>3 priority objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the creation, growth and social innovation of social economy enterprises - To professionalise and facilitate the scaling up of these enterprises; - Raise awareness and promote the model. <p>10 cross-cutting measures, including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting the creation, development and growth of social economy and cooperative companies in Wallonia; - Strengthen support, advice and funding for social economy enterprises in order to boost social entrepreneurship in Wallonia (provide for the establishment of dedicated incubators); - Stimulate social innovation and experimentation in the social economy in order to respond to new social and territorial challenges; - Encourage social economy enterprises to take part in a digital transformation process (implemented via the DigitalEES by DW call for expressions of interest launched in November 2021: https://www.digitalees.be/) - Promote and raise the profile of the social and cooperative economy in Wallonia (6-week campaign aimed at young people launched in May 2021: https://www.res-sources.be/wp-

Augmentation de la cyber-résilience des PME dont les indépendants (Federal government)	Increasing the cyber resilience of SMEs including the self-employed	SPF Economie	Yes	Adopted, implementation ongoing	05/06/2021 (BE) 23/06/2021 (EU)	<p>This project, which aims to increase the cyber resilience of SMEs, including the self-employed, has a total budget of EUR 12 million and starts in 2021 and ends in 2026. Its main components are as follows</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a website with a cyberscan allowing start-ups to quickly identify cybersecurity areas for improvement 2. Support tailored to the needs of the target audience of SMEs (including the self-employed). This support could include advice, the free provision of software, the organisation of experience sharing, etc. This support will take the form of a call for projects with several lots aimed at existing structures (networks, organisations, etc.), concerning the development of projects that support and accompany SMEs (including the self-employed) in order to improve the cybersecurity of their company. 3. an annual campaign (2022-2025) to raise awareness of cybersecurity for the self-employed and SMEs. <p>https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/fr/ip_21_3147</p> <p>https://dermine.belgium.be/fr/le-plan-de-reprise-et-de-r%C3%A9silience-est-ratifi%C3%A9-par-le-conseil, mesure I 2.01 in the PDF document « PLAN NATIONAL POUR LA REPRISE ET LA RÉSILIENCE »</p>
Campagne « Intelligence Artificielle pour booster votre PME » (Federal government)	"Artificial Intelligence to boost your SME" campaign	SPF Economy	No	Adopted, implementation ongoing	Juin 2021	<p>This campaign was conducted by the SPF Economy in 2021 and aims to demystify artificial intelligence and help entrepreneurs take the plunge</p> <p>The campaign site presents notably :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - answers to questions about what AI is and how it works ; - Information on the benefits of AI to simplify the management of an SME; - testimonials from other SMEs and AI providers who have successfully completed AI integration projects; - Information on how to take the first step towards integrating AI into your own business, with training and support offers; - the possibility to ask questions about AI through a chatbot, accompanied by an FAQ section.

						<p>The project also plans to allow SMEs to test their level of AI maturity and receive further advice on how to prepare for its integration within their organisation. https://www.intelligenceartificiellepourpme.be/</p> <p>https://news.economie.fgov.be/199565-intelligence-artificielle-un-boost-pour-votre-pme</p>
<p>Brussels, capital of AI in support of the transition and the common good(FARI/ EDIH)</p> <p>(Brussels-Capital Region)</p>	<p>FARI - AI Institute for the Common Good</p>	<p>Innoviris, VUB-ULB</p>	<p>YES (for FARI)</p>	<p>Partly implemented</p>	<p>March/April 2021</p>	<p>With FARI, the Artificial Intelligence Institute for the Common Good, the Brussels Region intends to become a European pioneer in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) with strong ethical fundaments. FARI will host an independent non-profit Data Tank, acting as a think tank at the Regional, National and European levels. Its goal is to help citizens, decisions-makers, companies (including SME's) as well as non-profit organizations by working on the real-world impact of AI-applications and informing on the most-needed changes to guarantee ethical, lawful and responsible use of AI and data sciences.</p> <p>Budget : 10 MEUR</p> <p>https://ai.vub.ac.be/launch-of-fari-the-artificial-intelligence-institute-for-the-common-good-in-brussels/?utm_source=www.google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=Google&referrer-analytics=1</p> <p>Furthermore, as a European Digital Innovation Hub candidate, Brussels-Capital Region will further strengthen its leading role in the responsible deployment of AI-related applications. Besides, the EDIH will also respond to a need of establishing a one-stop-shop in Brussels for all the ecosystem in terms of skills, scaling up and networking.</p>
<p>Renforcement de la stratégie DigitalWallonia4.ai</p>	<p>Reinforcement of the DigitalWallonia4.ai strategy</p>	<p>Agence du Numérique</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Announced</p>	<p>21/10/21</p>	<p>Since its launch in July 2019 nearly 2 million euros have been invested in DigitalWallonia4.AI as part of the Digital Wallonia budgets. The objective is to multiply these resources by 10 by 2024 as part of</p>

(Wallonia)						<p>Wallonia's Recovery Plan, in order to achieve the European objectives in this field.</p> <p>The Budget of 21 million euros spread over the next three years will allow the DigitalWallonia4.ai programme to increase its scope. For 2021, measures will include the followings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New "Cap IA" programme to help companies with a mature artificial intelligence solution who want support in bringing their AI project to market, through the provision of specialists and resources to guide the project. - Launching of calls for sectoral projects "Start IA" (which consists of a diagnosis of maturity in AI) - Start of a public sector awareness programme and launch of calls for projects for the public sector - Development of a complete training programme in artificial intelligence for companies (3 profiles: business, project and developer and 3 levels) by the consortium of Walloon competence centres ("Numeria Academy") <p>https://www.digitalwallonia.be/fr/publications/dw4ai-event-2years</p>
<p>CyberWal (Cybersecurity for Wallonia)</p> <p>(Wallonia)</p>	CyberWal	Agence du Numérique + universités/centres de recherche agréés et centres de compétence	No	Adopted Implemented	<p>Announcement of the first financing 18/11/2021</p> <p>du le</p>	<p>Objective: to organise the cybersecurity ecosystem linking companies needs with research and innovation, and training aspects. The latter and SME awareness will be reinforced with the DigitalWallonia4Cyber strategy to be launched in 2022.</p> <p>Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first step for a dome of Walloon actions around cybersecurity - Awareness-raising component: campaigns aimed at SMEs (organised in collaboration with the Belgian Cyber Security Centre) and awareness-raising events - Research component: already received initial funding via the "CyberExcellence" project. It will be ensured that all research activities can be translated into innovation (transformed into viable products and demonstrators following the TRL3-7 chain) and even into venture creation. To achieve this objective, the

						<p>consortium will identify the challenges with the actors of the socio-economic fabric, large companies and SMEs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovation component: The objective is to encourage the creation of start-ups as well as the development of new products in the field of cybersecurity based on the research demonstrators (support provided by a technological incubator). CyberWal aims to integrate the human and societal dimensions into this process (dialogue with representatives of civil society). Interested companies will be involved in the process as potential customers or future investors. These actions will be financed by investors or directly by the companies. - Training component: training the cyber security actors of tomorrow. Retraining for basic needs, and training for cyber security professions (forgotten talents) and training in advanced fields (PhD level and beyond). <p>Budget: for CyberExcellence of EUR18.9 million for the first 4 years (stimulus package) Communiqué de presse GW : https://borsus.wallonie.be/home/communiques-de-presse/communiques-de-presse/presses/la-wallonie-comme-acteur-incontournable-de-la-cybersecurite.html</p>
Thematische oproepen kmo-groeisubsidie (Flemish Region)	Thematic calls SME growth subsidy	Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO)	Yes	Implemented	First call: from the 15 th of March to the 30 th of April 2021.	<p>The SME growth subsidy is a subsidy instrument that allows companies to purchase advice or hire additional staff for an ambitious growth trajectory. For example, rolling out a new strategy, exploring new markets or launching new products. The maximum amount of the subsidy is EUR 50,000 per year per growth trajectory. In 2021, the SME growth subsidy was thoroughly reformed. The system whereby companies could apply all year round was replaced by a system of thematic calls. The first call was open from 15 March to 30 April for the themes "digital transformation" and "internationalisation". A budget of EUR 2.5 million was provided per theme. 187 applications were submitted of which 89 were positively ranked. There were 40 applications for digital transformation and 49 for</p>

						internationalisation. Through this first call, over 1.3 million euros was awarded to Flemish companies for realising a digital transformation and over 1.6 million euros for internationalising their activities. In July and August a second call ran for these themes and also for 'sustainability and circular entrepreneurship'. On the 1 st of November a third call was launched, opening up four themes: innovation, circular entrepreneurship, internationalisation and digital transformation. https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/resultaten-1e-thematische-oproep-kmo-groeijsubsidie
Subsidie voor cybersecurity verbetertrajecten (Flemish Region)	Subsidy for cybersecurity improvement trajectories	Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO)	No	Implemented	From the 1 st of January 2021, adapted in September 2021.	<p>Since 1 January 2021, companies that want to increase their cybersecurity maturity can apply for the subsidy for cybersecurity improvement trajectories. During such a trajectory, one of the 9 recognised service providers helps to improve the security of a company. Different versions of the program are possible, depending on the needs of the company. The full basic package costs between EUR25,000 and EUR30,000 (excluding VAT). The subsidy amounts to 45% of the cost.</p> <p>In order to encourage even more SMEs to make cybersecurity a priority, a low-threshold introductory version is being offered from September on. After intervention through the grant, companies pay between EUR6,800 and EUR8,100 (incl. VAT), depending on the service provider. That is about EUR 10,000 less than for the full basic package. https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/verbeter-de-cybersecurity-van-je-bedrijf-een-laagdrempelig-verbetertraject-met-de-kmo</p>
INNOVATION (e.g. vouchers, grants or loans for R&D and innovation, support to encourage SMEs to commercialise RTD results and to acquire patents, etc.)						
SME Fund (EUIPO) – Service 1 : IP pre-diagnostic service (IP Scan) (Federal government)	SME Fund (EUIPO) – Service 1 : IP pre-diagnostic service (IP Scan)	Federal Public Service Economy	No	Implemented	January 2021 (start)	This fund provides financial support in the form of intellectual property vouchers or "IP vouchers". These vouchers allow for the partial reimbursement of the cost of IP pre-diagnostic services ("IP scan"), through which intellectual property experts examine the SME's business model, products or services and growth plans and help the SME formulate an appropriate IP

						<p>strategy. For this service, the maximum reimbursement is EUR 1,125</p> <p>https://economie.fgov.be/fr/themes/propriete-intellectuelle/innovation-et-propriete/dynamisez-votre-entreprise</p>
<p>BEL-COO</p> <p>(Wallonia Flanders and Brussels)</p>	BEL-COO	SPW recherche, VLAIO et Innoviris	No	Implemented	02/02/21	<p>The BEL-COO programme is a joint initiative of the three regional research administrations (SPW research, VLAIO and Innoviris) that aims to operationalise the collaboration agreement signed in 2018. This programme is aimed at companies (both SMEs and large companies) that wish to jointly develop an innovative interregional research or development project.</p> <p>To benefit from the support of this programme, the project consortium must be composed of at least two companies from two different regions; none of the participating companies may have a budget higher than 70% of the total project budget, and each participating company performs R&D tasks with a clear technical risk and participates in the economic results of the project (no subcontracting relationship). After a favourable opinion from each region concerned, the company will receive financial support from the region to which it belongs (max. 500.000 EUR for projects in Wallonia in the form of a grant or a recoverable advance).</p> <p>https://recherche.wallonie.be/belcoo</p> <p>https://borsus.wallonie.be/home/communiques-de-presse/communiques-de-presse/presses/recherche-et-entreprises--lancement-du-programme-bel-coo.html</p>
<p>Nieuw VLAIO-instrument: O&O haalbaarheidsstudie</p> <p>(Flemish Region)</p>	New instrument of Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurs hip: R&D feasibility study	Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO)	No	Implemented	May 2021	<p>From May 2021 onwards, companies that consider an innovative project for which the feasibility is not yet sufficiently clear and for which the innovative follow-up trajectory has the potential for sufficient valorisation in Flanders will be able to apply for support for an R&D feasibility study. The feasibility study must provide better and substantiated insights into the possibilities and feasibility of an innovation</p>

						and is a preparation for a supportable innovative follow-up trajectory (research, development and ICON projects, ... of the agency). With this grant, enterprises can finance 40-50% of the project budget, with a maximum support of EUR50,000. https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/nieuw-vlaio-instrument-oo-haalbaarheidsstudie
Valorisation des gisements urbains (Brussels-Capital Region)	Recovery of urban waste	Innoviris	No	Implemente d	May 2021	While existing regional programmes such as Be.Circular focus primarily on higher TRL-projects, the Brussels-Capital Region has now complemented its action in favour of a more circular economy by setting up the "Recovery of urban waste"-program. The latter aims at funding innovative projects based on the recovery of urban deposit and in need of feasibility check, or in need for a check of local demand and economic viability. Eligible projects must be designed to develop an activity based on the recovery of an urban deposit. The grant covers 50 to 70% of the costs, with no maximal amount but an estimated budget per project of 100 to 400 k€. While this call is open to all, it is particularly suitable for SME's as the grant will cover 70% of the costs of selected projects (versus respectively 50% and 60% for large and middle-sized companies). https://innoviris.brussels/program/recovery-urban-waste
SKILLS (e.g. vocational education and training, forecasting skill needs, measures to adapt the vocational training systems to the requirements of the labour market, etc.).						
Stratégie nationale et intersectorielle Women in Digital 2021-2026 (Federal government)	National and intersectoral strategy Women in Digital 2021- 2026	Federal Public Service Economy	Yes	Adopted, implementati on ongoing	05/03/2021 (Conseil des Ministres) 31/03/2021 (Comité de Concertation)	The goal of this national strategy, supported and implemented by the federal state and the federate entities, is to reduce the barriers, support female entrepreneurship in the digital sector and promote a more positive image of the digital sector. The development of a website to accompany the Women in Digital strategy is also planned. More specifically, 2 sub-objectives specifically concern the entrepreneurship: 2.3. Promoting female entrepreneurship in the digital sector or in sectors that require digital skills, and 5.3.

						Skills enhancement of female entrepreneurs and managers (reskilling/upskilling). The text of the strategy can be found on the website of the FPS Economy . https://news.belgium.be/fr/plan-interfederal-et-intersectoriel-women-digital https://desutter.belgium.be/fr/%C2%AB-women-digital-%C2%BB-entend-attirer-davantage-de-femmes-dans-l%E2%80%99ict-0
ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN						
La création en ligne des sociétés (Federal government)	Online creation of businesses	SPF Economie	No	Implemente d	12/07/ 2021. - <i>Loi modifiant le Code des sociétés et des associations et la loi du 16 mars 1803 contenant organisation du notariat et portant des dispositions diverses à la suite de la transposition de la directive (UE) 2019/1151 (...)</i>	<p>This measure enables to incorporate a company requiring a notarial deed digitally. Previously, entrepreneurs wishing to set up a company requiring a notarial deed had to go to the notary in person to sign the deed.</p> <p>This digitisation applies to all legal persons and will not result in any additional costs for entrepreneurs. https://www.notaire.be/nouveautes/detail/vous-pouvez-desormais-cree-votre-societe-en-ligne-avec-startmybusiness https://etaamb.openjustice.be/fr/loi-du-12-juillet-2021_n2021031824</p>
Bruxelles Numérique (Brussels-Capital Region)	Digital Brussels	BRPS - Easy.brussels	NO	Announced	02/07/2021	<p>Part of the 2020-2025 Plan for Administrative Simplification of the Brussels-Capital Region, the regulation project "Digital Brussels" aims to integrate the "digital by default" principle into the operations of the administrations of Brussels, so that existing administrative procedures, as well as future ones, will progressively be made available in a digital form. The regulation proposal was prepared over the course of 2021, with the aim to start implementation in late 2022 or early 2023.</p> <p>Plan for Administrative Simplification 2020-2025 of the Brussels-Capital Region, Mission 8 (p. 25)</p>

						https://easy.brussels/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Easy-Way-2020-2025-EN.pdf
REGULATORY OBSTACLES						
ACCESS TO FINANCE (including guarantee schemes, public funding programmes, support for alternative financing and equity financing, favourable legal, tax and regulatory frameworks for investments, fiscal incentives)						
Prolongation de la mesure 'zero coti' http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/eli/arrete/2021/01/05/2020205676/moniteur	Extension of the "first appointments" measure	INASTI	No	Implemente d	Extension from 01/01/2021 onwards	<p>Extended from 01/01/2021 for an indefinite period, this measure consists of a total exemption from the basic rate of employers' contributions for an employer's first engagement. This exemption is valid for life, for all first-time employees, and has been in place since 2016.</p> <p>This is an essential measure to help the self-employed to take the first step of hiring.</p> <p>https://www.partena-professional.be/fr/prolongation-de-la-reduction-groupe-cible-premier-engagement</p>
Tax shelter COVID-19 (Federal government)	Tax shelter COVID-19	SPF Finances	No	Implemente d	Augmentation de capital de la société entre le 1er janvier 2021 et le 31 août 2021	<p>Following the COVID crisis, the tax shelter system was temporarily extended to help companies affected by the crisis to raise capital and cope with the crisis. This tax shelter is available to all SMEs (not only start-ups and scale-ups). In addition, the transaction must be direct, i.e. transactions via a financing vehicle such as a crowdfunding platform are excluded from this measure. Individuals can obtain a 20% reduction in personal income tax between 1 January 2021 and 31 August 2021 if they directly acquire new shares in a small business whose turnover for the period from 2 November 2020 to 31 December 2020 has decreased by at least 30% compared to the same period in 2019 (maximum EUR100,000 per taxable period).</p> <p>This measure is an extension of a similar measure that applied in 2020. It has been decided to repeat this temporary measure for a further period due to the continuing effects of the pandemic.</p> <p>https://www.vlaio.be/nl/subsidies-financiering/subsidiedatabank/tax-shelter-covid-19 ;</p>

						https://eservices.minfin.fgov.be/myminfin-web/pages/fisconet/compare/ec3f2a9d-039e-4b77-9c83-a57c6cd745f9/b4e7ea49-abc8-4d4a-995d-7b9f9af993bf/b4e7ea49-abc8-4d4a-995d-7b9f9af993bf
Prime phoenix.brussels premie (Brussels-Capital Region)	phoenix.brussels premium	Actiris	Not included in the RRP, but part of regional post-Covid 19 measures	Implemented	1/01/2021	The purpose of this premium is to allow Belgian employers who hire Brussels residents who have recently registered with Actiris and/or who have been made redundant as a result of the health crisis to benefit from financial aid (max. 500 or 800 EUR/month). This employment aid measure is specific, targeted and limited in time (max. 6 months). The premium is accessible to several types of private and public enterprises, including SME's. https://www.actiris.brussels/fr/employeurs/phoenix-brussels/
Plan de soutien à la solvabilité et à la relance des entreprises wallonnes (Wallonia)	Support plan for the solvency and recovery of Walloon companies	Sowalfin, SRIW, Sogepa, Investis	No	Adopted	25/02/21	Objective: to provide support adapted to the entire Walloon economic fabric, from the self-employed individual to the large company, via the SME, through complementary measures. Features: Includes 4 measures : <u>1.Establishment of a solvency and recovery fund from the SRIW, SOGEPa and Investis</u> Fund of EUR400 million (which can be reinforced by other public or private means) to: 1) reinforce the equity and quasi-equity of companies by an increase in (quasi-) capital; 2) support the growth of companies with investment projects or which wish to expand or modify their processes. <u>2.Introduction of the Subordinated Loan "Propulsion" (Sowalfin)</u> New loan of up to EUR50,000 to EUR1 million in conjunction with a bank loan of the same amount, in order to strengthen the financial structure of Walloon SMEs affected by the crisis. <u>3.Adaptation of the "Ricochet-Relance" loan (from 15 March 2021)</u> Launched in April 2020, this product combining a guarantee on a bank loan and a subordinated loan at

						<p>a rate of 0% complementary to the bank loan is adapted to the needs of companies in the context of the recovery, with an amount of 100,000 euros. The loan can now be extended by a moratorium of at least 6 months granted by the bank - Sowalfin can grant a subordinated loan of up to EUR50,000.</p> <p><u>4.Non-financial support for the recovery of Walloon entrepreneurs by Sowalfin via an awareness campaign on available solutions and an "accompaniment package" consisting of a "recovery" checklist, local spaces for listening, exchanging and working on possible solutions throughout Wallonia, with experts who can establish a diagnosis of recovery and redeployment</u> https://borsus.wallonie.be/home/communiques-de-presse/communiques-de-presse/presses/plan-de-soutien-a-la-solvabilite-et-a-la-relande-des-entreprises-wallonnes--la-wallonie-mobilise-500-millions.html</p>
Vriendenaandeel (Flemish Region)	Friends' share	PMV	No	Implemented	Mid-February 2021	<p>As of mid-February 2021, a private person can invest in an SME through what we call the "Vriendenaandeel" (Friends' share). The "Friends shareholder" can invest up to 75,000 euros and receives a tax benefit of 2.5% for up to 5 years. The company can thus acquire capital of up to 300,000 euros. As a private individual, you can also combine the "Friends' share" with a "Winwinlening", but the combination of both is limited to 75,000 euros. https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/het-vriendenaandeel-een-win-win-voor-ondernemers-en-particulieren</p>
LATE PAYMENTS <i>(measures aimed at addressing late payments)</i>						
Loi modifiant la loi du 2 août 2002 concernant la lutte contre le retard de paiement dans les transactions commerciales	Act amending the Act of 2 August 2002 on combating late payment in commercial transactions		No	Adopted	loi du 14 août 2021, qui entre en vigueur le 1er février 2022, https://etaamb.openjustice.be/fr/loi-du-14-aout-2021	According to the Act of 2 August 2002 on late payment in commercial transactions, the payment period between companies is thirty days, but a longer period may be agreed. Following the Act of 14 August 2021, which comes into force on 1 February 2022, this agreed payment period may no longer exceed 60 days. Any contractual clause that provides for a longer payment period is deemed unwritten.

(Federal government)					2021 n20210325 97.html	However, the law provides for the possibility of authorising longer payment periods for certain sectors by Royal Decree. https://www.rdc-tbh.be/news/betalingstermijn-in-handelstransacties-maximum-60-dagen-wet-van-14-augustus-2021-tot-wijziging-van-de-wet-van-2-augustus-2002/
ACCESS TO MARKETS (e.g. market-specific support and business training activities, export credit insurance, missions – covering both the Single market and third countries)						
Point d'information Benelux sur le commerce de détail (Federal government)	Benelux Retail Information Point	Benelux	No	Adopted	Launch of the website on 29 septembre 2021 https://retail.benelux.int/fr/	The 'Benelux Retail Information Point' for established and new retailers (mostly SMEs gives entrepreneurs one-click access to the relevant Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg legislation on retailing, setting up a business, e-commerce and doing business in another Benelux country. It thus reduces the barriers to carrying out cross-border transactions or establishing a business in the neighbouring country.. https://www.retaildetail.be/fr/news/g%C3%A9n%C3%A9ral/le-benelux-lance-un-portail-d%E2%80%99information-sur-le-commerce-de-d%C3%A9tail
Mesures en réponse au Brexit (Wallonia)	Measures to address Brexit	AWEX SOFINEX FOREM	No	Adopted – implementation in progress	04/01/21	Objective: to minimise practical difficulties for our companies at the border Features: 1. <u>AWEX internationalisation support for the UK</u> - "Export Consultancy" and "Export Booster" vouchers - Support for communication costs (50% intervention) - Support for participation in trade fairs and exhibitions, prospecting and - Setting up a commercial representation office 2. <u>Brexit Package (AWEX)</u> Advice or training financed to cover a range of costs that Walloon exporters will face on the UK market (digital communication, purchase of market research, product certification, patent registration, trademark registration, legal issues, logistics, purchase of advertising, etc.) 3. <u>Financing support measures (SOFINEX):</u>

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brexit guarantee to cover a significant part of the risk with banks; Loan to companies exporting capital goods. - Financing or direct guarantee to Walloon companies (VSEs/SMEs): for setting up in the United Kingdom, creating a subsidiary or activity in the United Kingdom. 4. <u>Export academy (AWEX and FOREM)</u>: new training modules meeting the specific needs of Walloon companies and their employees following the BREXIT. <p>https://borsus.wallonie.be/home/communiqués-de-presse/communiqués-de-presse/presses/brexit--une-page-se-tourne-allons-a-present-de-lavant-aux-cotes-de-nos-entreprises.html</p>
<p>Brexit-actieplan met verschillende maatregelen: Brexit veerkrachtsubsidie, Bijzondere exportsteun Brexit, opleiding Douanetechnische vraagstukken na Brexit, ...</p> <p>(Flemish Region)</p>	Under the brexit action plan: Brexit resilience subsidy, special export support, training on customs issues after the Brexit, ...	Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO), FIT and SYNTRA	No	Implemented	From the 1st of February 2021 on	<p>To counteract the impact of the Brexit on the Flemish economy, the Flemish government launched the new instrument 'Brexit resilience subsidy' in early 2021. With this subsidy, companies can receive a maximum of EUR 25,000 for obtaining external advice and/or a maximum of EUR 25,000 for their own costs to reorient themselves to new markets, products and services or to adapt their business operations to the new market conditions in order to remain competitive on the British market.</p> <p>The aid percentage amounts to 50%. The minimum project cost is EUR 20,000.</p> <p>https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/versoepeling-brexit-veerkrachtsubsidie-interne-kosten-volstaan-voor-je-steunaanvraag</p> <p>Next to that FIT grants a lump-sum subsidy of EUR10,000 to 200 experienced Flemish exporters with at least 5 FTEs on the payroll, an export share of at least 20% and positive equity.. They can use the subsidy for all kinds of costs related to internationalisation.</p> <p>https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/fit-subsidie-om-export-te-herlanceren-na-brexit-deadline-verlengd</p>

						<p>To support information needs around Brexit, SYNTRA is organising a specialised 'Brexit training module' on several occasions and in different training centres. The training is recognised under the SME e-wallet.</p> <p>https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/opleiding-douanetechnische-vraagstukken-na-brexit</p>
START-UP ENVIRONMENT						
<p>Eerste oproep nieuw VLAIO-programma 'Innovatieve Starterssteun' (Flemish Region)</p>	<p>1st call of the new program called "innovative start-up support"</p>	<p>Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Implemented</p>	<p>The call was launched mid-February 2021 and closed on the 15th of March 2021.</p>	<p>This call has the following goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an offer of financial support combined with external expert guidance and business case advice from VLAIO and its partners; - support aimed at young starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o who play a pioneering role within their market/sector o with great potential and corresponding ambition o with uncertainties that require an effort of at least 1 person-year/EUR 70,000 o that have a competent team and start-up network - a competitive call with a grant of EUR50,000 (fixed amount) for 55 starters; - projects with flexible implementation, but clear deliverables: a 'proof of business' and/or 'proof of concept'. <p>Participation in the call was possible through one of the following partners: Agoria, Sirris, Imec-istart, Voka, Unizo, Netwerk Ondernemen, Start-it @ KBC, Flanders DC and VRI.</p> <p>In the end, 75 applications for support were submitted and evaluated on the basis of a pitch and interview and 57 of these applications received a positive assessment. The total budget of this call was EUR2.850.000.</p> <p>Before launching a new call, this first experimental call will be evaluated thoroughly.</p> <p>https://www.vlaio.be/nl/nieuws/57-innovatieve-starters-met-pioniersrol-krijgen-ieder-50000-euro-subsidie</p>

SCALE-UP ENVIRONMENT						
NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS						
Stratégie de Spécialisation Intelligente de la Wallonie (2021 - 2027) (Wallonia)	Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) of Wallonia (2021 - 2027)	SPW EER Gouvernance incluant le Cabinet du Ministre, réseau LIEU (université), Centres de Recherche agréés, Pôles et Clusters, administrations publiques et organismes parapublics	No	Adopted	19/03/21	<p>This strategic framework for Wallonia's research and innovation policy and industrial policy aims to build innovative ecosystems around strategic priorities defined on the basis of Wallonia's distinctive strengths in order to strengthen Wallonia's competitiveness and attractiveness (attracting and maintaining a qualified workforce).</p> <p>5 Strategic Innovation Areas (SIAs) shared by the stakeholders were validated by the Walloon Government in October 2020: Circular materials; Innovations for enhanced health; Innovations for agile and safe design and production methods; Sustainable energy systems and housing; Agri-food chains of the future and innovative environmental management. Each SIA has been the subject of a roadmap validated in July 2021 which aims to make them a reality (Vision and ambitions by 2030 and the main levers to be mobilised to achieve them).</p> <p>Within these SIAs, the stakeholders (including companies) have joined forces around Strategic Innovation Initiatives (SIIs) (more specialised themes) corresponding to a portfolio of projects that can be financed via Walloon and European calls for projects. The call was launched in September 2021 and the results will be known in January 2022.</p> <p>Strategy : https://economie.wallonie.be/content/le-gouvernement-adopte-la-nouvelle-strat%C3%A9gie-wallonne-de-sp%C3%A9cialisation-intelligente-s3-et-sia SIA : https://economie.wallonie.be/content/s3-wallonne-les-feuilles-de-route-des-5-domaines-d%E2%80%99innovation-strat%C3%A9giques-sont-valid%C3%A9es SII : https://economie.wallonie.be/content/s3-%E2%80%93-initiatives-d%E2%80%99innovation-strat%C3%A9giques-lancement-de-</p>

						l%E2%80%99appel-%C3%A0-manifestation-d%E2%80%99int%C3%A9r%C3%AAt
OTHER RELEVANT TOPICS (e.g. second chance for honest bankrupt entrepreneurs, bankruptcy prevention, entrepreneurship education, public procurement)						
Réforme de la procédure de réorganisation judiciaire	Reform of the judicial recovery procedure		No	Adopted, implemented	Law 21/03/2021 http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/change_lg.pl?language=fr&la=F&cn=2021032102&table_name=loi	<p>The judicial reorganisation procedure (JRP) allows a company in difficulty to protect itself from its creditors and to reorganise.</p> <p>The new procedure introduces greater flexibility in the accounting documents that a company wishing to be protected must provide to the court and avoids the procedure declared directly inadmissible if one of these documents is missing. If the documents are completed after the start of the procedure, a regularisation is possible.</p> <p>This JRP also allows for an attempt at mediation before entering public court proceedings. This allows companies to make their difficulties public only when there is already a solution. Under the old system, there was a publication indicating that the company was in difficulty and implying a risk that other companies would stop cooperating.</p> <p>In addition, a deferral of payment of six to twelve months is provided for. For companies in difficulty that were healthy before the crisis, this makes it possible to identify a solution following the end of the moratorium on bankruptcies.</p> <p>https://www.stradalex.com/fr/sl_news/document/sl_news_article20210331-1-fr https://www.mosal.be/categories/points-de-droit-11532/articles/la-nouvelle-loi-sur-la-procedure-de-reorganisation-judiciaire-prj-quelles-nouveautes-4342.htm</p>
Actieplan "toegang van kmo's tot overheidsopdracht en bevorderen"	Action plan "improving the access of SMEs towards public procurement"	FOD Economie, FOD BOSA, FOD Kanselarij	No	Adopted	19/11/2021 (Council Ministers) of	<p>This action plan aims to improve relations between Belgian SMEs and contracting authorities. The identified actions aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make government contracts more efficient for both the contractor and the provider;

(Federal government)						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - greater transparency at all stages of the procurement procedure with a view to better information for economic operators and healthier competition; - simplify the procurement procedure from the perspective of SMEs; - train, inform and guide both contracting authorities and SMEs. <p>The action plan consists of the following four axes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Axis 1 – Stimulating SME participation – Improving and accelerating payment behavior in the federal government - Axis 2 – Stimulating SME participation – Reducing administrative burdens and increasing transparency and effectiveness through an evaluation of the legislation and the federal procurement policy - Axis 3 – Stimulating SME participation – Guidance and training of SMEs and procurers - Axis 4 – Monitoring SME participation <p>https://economie.fgov.be/nl/themas/ondernemingen/een-onderneming-beheren-en/toegang-van-kmos-tot/het-gemeenschappelijke https://www.stradalex.com/en/sl_news/document/sl_news_breve20211203-2-fr ; https://news.belgium.be/fr/plan-daction-visant-stimuler-laces-des-pme-aux-marches-publics</p>
Mesures aux entreprises sinistrées (inondations juillet 2021) – arrêté du Gouvernement Wallon publié le 20/10/21 (Wallonia)	Measures for affected businesses (floods July 2021) – Walloon Government order published on 20/10/21	Gouvernement Wallon	No	Adopted	20/10/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repair aid under the Calamity Fund (additional 200 million allocated to the fund for 2021 following the floods) for the restoration, reconstruction or resumption of economic activity. - “Restart Shop”: Compensation of EUR 5,000 to assist the recovery and resettlement of affected businesses. Management of the aid by the SPW Economy. Budget: EUR 5 million (12/11/21) - “Resilience package / strategic repositioning / business continuity plan: Intervention in consultancy costs for strategic repositioning, flat-rate aid for drawing up a business plan, intervention in personnel costs (1 to 2 FTEs for 1 year useful for recovery) and

						<p>0% interest rate loans for expenditure not covered by reconstruction costs.</p> <p>- <u>Support for investments by SMEs and large companies</u>: additional budgetary resources in the context of investment premiums (necessary in particular for production tools) of up to EUR 15 million in 2022, of which EUR 5 million for large companies and EUR 10 million for SMEs.</p> <p>https://www.1890.be/article/decret-calamites ; https://borsus.wallonie.be/home/communiqués-de-presse/communiqués-de-presse/presses/inondations--mecanisme--restart-shop--a-destination-des-commerçants-sinistres.html ; https://borsus.wallonie.be/home/communiqués-de-presse/communiqués-de-presse/presses/inondations--le-gouvernement-soutient-les-entreprises-sinistrees-dans-leur-reconstruction.html</p>
<p>Prolongation/adaptation des mesures temporaires de crise en 2021 pour les travailleurs indépendants</p> <p>(Federal government)</p>	<p>Extension/adaptation of temporary crisis measures in 2021 for the self-employed</p>	INASTI	No	Adopted and announced	2021	<p>Self-employed persons who are experiencing difficulties as a result of the COVID-19 coronavirus crisis, could make use of various measures in the course of 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simplified application for exemption from social security contributions - Deferral of social security contributions by self-employed persons - Deferral of contributions by companies - Waiver of surcharges for late payment of social security contributions - Temporary reduction of social security contributions - Temporary crisis measures of passerelle law <p>In 2021, a new system of temporary crisis measures of passerelle law has been introduced, based on three components:</p> <p>1° in case of interruption of activity due to health measures taken by the public authorities ;</p> <p>2° in case of considerable loss of income</p> <p>3° in case of interruption of activity due to quarantine or care for their child.</p>

						<p>Temporary crisis measures under the passerelle law were also taken following the bad weather and severe flooding in July 2021.</p> <p>In the context of these crises (Covid-19 and bad weather), a psychological support scheme has also been specifically provided for self-employed workers in distress (reimbursement of 8 psychological care sessions).</p> <p>https://www.inasti.be/fr/news/difficultes-suite-au-coronavirus</p>
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