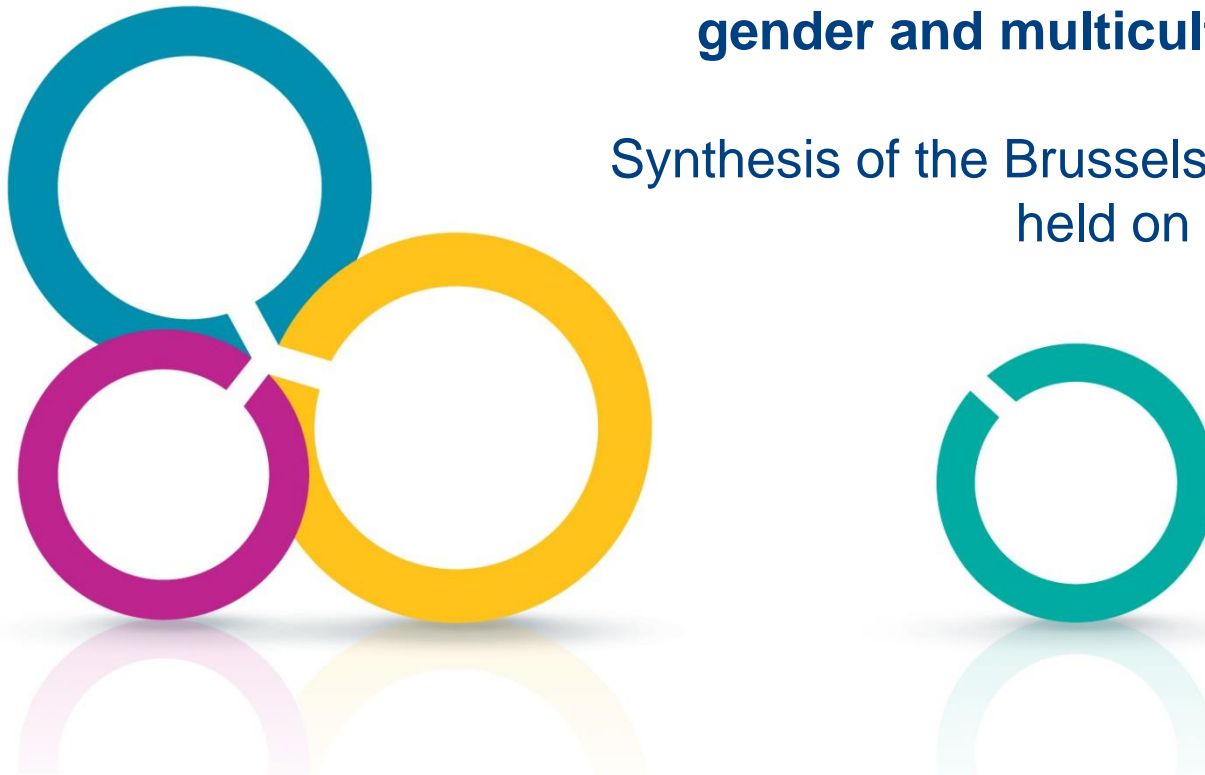


EURAXESS TOP IV –WP 3 : Social integration initiatives

Task 3.3 Managing diversity (focus on gender and multicultural issues)

Synthesis of the Brussels Focus Group held on 3 March 2020



Do you know Belgium?

General information



Source

https://www.belgium.be/sites/default/files/belgium_at_a_glance_en_lowres.pdf

1 EURAXESS Belgium – National level



➤ 3 Bridgehead Organisations (BHOs)

❑ Belspo – Belgian Science Policy Office (Federal BHO)

- Contact person: Bernard Delhousse

❑ EWI – Flemish Department of Economy, Science and Innovation (Flemish BHO)

- Contact person: Els Haesaert

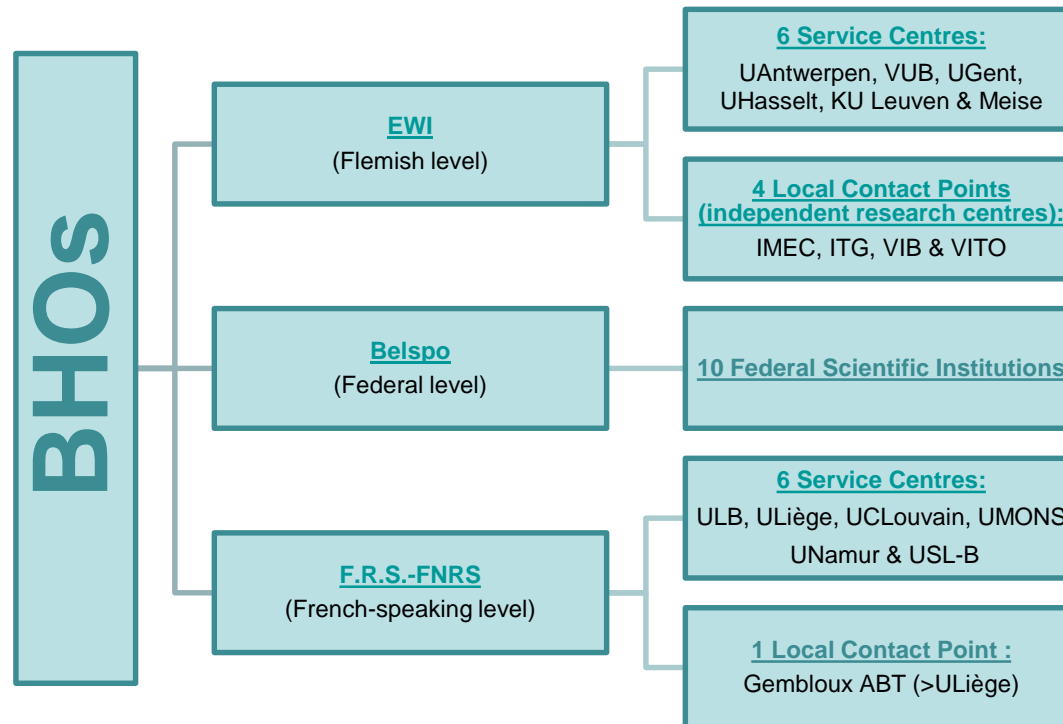
❑ F.R.S.-FNRS – Fund for Scientific Research (French-speaking BHO)

- Contact person : Morgane Sassi (author of slides 3-8)

EURAXESS Belgium – National level



➤ 27 decentralized organisations (ESCs, LOCPs)



EURAXESS Belgium – National level



➤ Common National Portal and Facebook page

❑ Website (www.euraxess.be)

- 3 Portal Administrators: Bernard Delhousse (Belspo) – Els Haesaert (EWI) – Jean-François Chevalier (F.R.S.-FNRS)
- Update information about institutions/policies, share news and “success stories”
- Some figures (1 January 2017 – 26 June 2019):

| General Data | |
|--------------|-------|
| Visitors | 17641 |
| Sessions | 22352 |
| Viewed pages | 73810 |

| TOP 4 Countries | Visitors |
|-----------------|----------|
| Belgium | 6756 |
| USA | 1461 |
| India | 926 |
| France | 816 |

EURAXESS Belgium – National level



❑ Facebook (EURAXESS Belgium)

- 3 “Posters”: BHOs representatives
- Share news, events, best practices, articles,

“success stories”, etc.



- Facebook Promotional Campaign



See reports on the Extranet (Library)

MEET THE RESEARCHERS



04/05/2018

**FROM DAMASCUS TO ULIÈGE,
FROM MASTER TO RESEARCH
CAREER**

RESEARCHER PROFILE -
Mohammed ALLAN Mohammed
Allan, a Syrian who arrived in Belgium
in July 2008 to start a Master...



➤ Organisation of training/info sessions

- Revamped website
- « Scientific VISA » (Directive 2016/801)
- TOP III tools
- Career development
- Open science





➤ HRS4R award



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

What?

The European Commission recognizes with the **'HR Excellence in Research Award'** the institutions which make progress in aligning their human resources policies to the 40 principles of the Charter & Code, based on a customized action plan/HR strategy.

In Belgium?

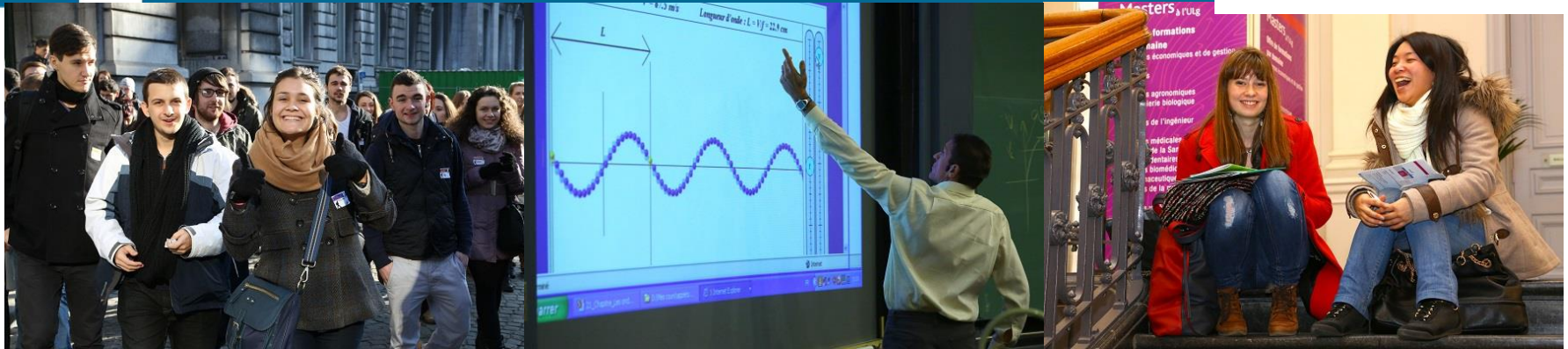
- ✓ 5 French-speaking universities (out of 6), 4 Flemish universities (out of 5) and 3 independent research centres hold the HR award



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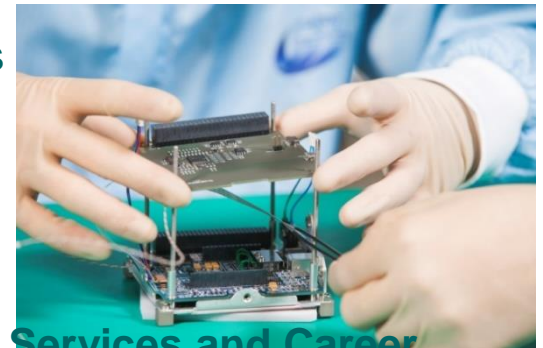
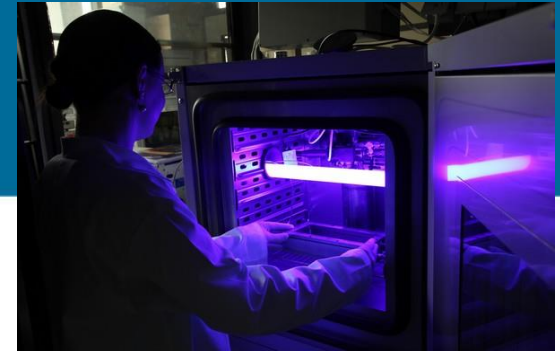
2 ULiège at a glance



- ▶ **European** medium size university : 25.000 students, **23%** are international students
- ▶ About 12.000 jobs, including the **University Hospital**
- ▶ 3.500 lecturers-researchers
- ▶ 92.000 alumni (10% abroad)
- ▶ In contact with more than 900 institutions worldwide
- ▶ Well-located city in Western Europe (neighbours: Netherlands, Germany, Luxembourg, France... and the UK) but not too expensive

Research at ULiège

- ▶ 44 research units, **3 main sectors** :
Humanities and Social sciences, Sciences and techniques,
Health sciences (many centres of excellence and research centres covering all fields of research)
- ▶ More than 8 000 scientific publications and papers per year
- ▶ One of the world leaders in **Open Access** (190.000 publications since the creation of ORBI in 2008– 125.000 of which are available in full)
- ▶ **High-tech equipment:**
Space Center, Oceanographic station, particle accelerator
- ▶ Integrated **research-valorisation structures** in growing sectors
WSL: space and engineering sciences
GIGA: life sciences
Aquapôle: water and environmental sciences
- ▶ More than **100 spin-offs** still active
- ▶ High quality personalized assistance for researchers (**Euraxess Services and Career development Centres**)



3 Brussels Focus Group: participants



- 12 participants
- 1 man
- 1 from industry
- 1 refugee expert
- 1 handicap expert
- 2 gender experts
- 1 professor
- 6 staff from public institutions (universities and research centres)

3 Brussels Focus Group: definition of diversity- number of quotes



| | |
|---|----------|
| Age – (including academic age – age is also key for inter-/intra-sectoral mobility) | 3 |
| Gender – (also linked to capacities/excellence) | 6 |
| Disability – (physical or psychological) | 4 |
| Sexual orientation LGBT | 2 |
| Ethnic origin | 7 |
| Religion | 3 |
| Social origin | 3 |
| Family situation | 1 |
| Culture (socio-cultural habits that may vary) | 3 |
| Political opinion | 1 |

3 Brussels Focus Group: blockers



| | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Blocker 1: lack of availability of information | Governance -Institutional framework | All of them - “newcomers” in general | Administrative staff, academic staff |
| Blocker 2: bilateral relationship with the superior | Governance - Institutional framework | All | Researcher |
| Blocker 3: sexual harassment | Governance- Culture | Gender | Business/liaison officer (admin) |
| Blocker 4: no legal personality | Political -Legal | Status of worker, fellow, civil servant,... | Administrative staff |
| Blocker 5: disability versus excellence | Social -Culture | Disability | Administrative staff, teaching staff, NGO |
| Blocker 6: antagonist reactions to cultural differences | Environment, | Culture/religion | Liaison officer (admin) |
| Blocker 7: language/lack of support to help foreigners learn the local language | Environment, Cultural/Institutional | Nationality | All participants |
| Blocker 8: work-private life unbalance | Research, Culture | Autonomy versus “greedy” institution | All participants |
| Blocker 9: non recognition of diplomas/expertise | Research, Profession, Legal | Nationality/status (refugees) | Administrative staff |
| Blocker 10: ill-adapted/impersonal ways of communication | Research, Culture | Ethnic origin, refugees | All participants |

3 Brussels Focus Group: blockers



- Focus on need for human contact (blockers 6,7,10)
- Importance of sexual harassment (but still invisible and not addressed for non-workers, like students)
- Importance of governance and institutional culture

3 Brussels Focus Group: boosters



| | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Booster 1: availability of a human contact/mediator clearly identified and enabled by the institution | Governance, Institutional | All of them | All participants |
| Booster 2: transparent procedure to complaint about harassment for non workers | Social , professional, Legal framework | Gender | Business, researcher |
| Booster 3: formal procedures to address disabilities | Social , professional, Institutional framework, culture | Disability | Administrative staff, teaching staff, NGO |
| Booster 4: inclusive facilities/forms | Governance, Institutional | Gender | All participants |
| Booster 5: info days and awareness campaigns | Social , Culture | Disability | Administrative staff, teaching staff, NGO |
| Booster 6: definition of limits | Research , Culture | Autonomy versus greedy institution | All participants |
| Booster 6 bis: social activities for foreigners | Research , Culture | Ethnic origin | Administrative staff, teaching staff |

3 Brussels Focus Group: boosters



- Boosters 1,4,6 highlight the role of the institution
- It is necessary to assist the persons victims of discrimination
- But it is crucial to simultaneously implement changes in the institution

3 Brussels Focus Group: conclusions



“Diversity” can lead to either enrichment (i.e. improvement of people’s culture and attitudes) or discrimination. Diversity can be ill-perceived if it is unnecessarily being focused on and tackled in a clumsy way: people are no “quotas” and should not be categorized.

The mention of diversity can trigger very different reactions, positive or negative. Among the focus group, participants seemed to agree with the fact that we should rather talk about “inclusiveness”, to guarantee well-being and equality of treatment: a transversal, fair, humane and humble attitude to integration is needed.

“We are not only recruiting brains”

4 References from other experts



Some experts could not take part to the focus group but accepted to comment its conclusions



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4 References from other experts



○ VLIR GENDER CHARTER

<https://jongeacademie.be/charter-vlir-ja/> -adopted on 26 June 2019

○ A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 Brussels, 5.3.2020 COM(2020) 152 final

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2020%3A152%3AFIN>

○ Gender diagnosis recently carried out by the Spanish National Research Agency

○ Measure “cascade” from ULB, aiming at counteracting the leaky pipeline in academic careers <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gg7KjTBN7HA>

4 References from other experts



- **UNIA** : independent public institution fighting against discrimination and defending equal opportunities in Belgium <https://www.unia.be/en/>

Inclusion policy to be put in place

Positive action is not = to positive discrimination

Invest in awareness raising

“Do not dissociate the issues: these issues are not separate, they are governed by the same logic of thought and the same mechanisms of separation and inferiorisation of those different from/transgressing what is presented as the reference, the indisputable standard. »

Questions or feedback welcome !



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