**Disability:IN Global Directory**

**Belgium**

**Disability Definition**

There’s no standard definition of disability in Belgium. It is a federal country divided into several competence levels that are responsible for formulating policies, including disability policy. The communities, regions and municipalities have their own set of definitions of disability. So, there’s no acceptable federal definition. However, the center or the federal authority recognizes various situations or reasons that may result in disability. The situations include –Physical and Sensorial Health Problems, Chronic and Degenerative Diseases, Genetic Diseases, Mental or Intellectual Limitations, Physical or Mental Limitations caused due to an accident at the workplace, occupational diseases etc.

**Legislation**

The adaptation of workstations is a right conferred by the Anti-Discrimination Act of 10 May 2007. Refusal of workplace adaptations is seen as discrimination.

Legislation does not foresee a specific procedure to provide reasonable adjustments. The initiative can come from the employee or the employer if the employer notices support needs. Premiums are given to the employer to pay for the adaptations.

[The Belgian Disability Forum (BDF)](https://bdf.belgium.be/en/) welcomes the adoption by the House of Representatives of the new article 22ter. The right to inclusion of persons with disabilities is now protected by the Belgian Constitution.

**Employer Requirements**

Federal government has a self-chosen 3% target (and only achieved 1.44% in 2016). Unable to locate quotas or targets for employers or Flanders.

Disability status information can be collected by self-identification questions but they are not market-practice in Belgium. Therefore, some employees might feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions.

Application stage, after the offer has been made and after employment commences:  
Yes, assuming employee has been given GDPR-compliant notice of the data collection.

Under the 2007 Discrimination Acts, companies have an obligation to make reasonable adjustments for disabled workers. This requires processing information on the nature of the disability of the worker and the measures that could be taken in order to improve the conditions of work

**Accessibility Requirements**

European Accessibility Act The European Parliament and the Council came to a provisional agreement on the Commission’s proposal for a European Accessibility Act on 8 November 2018.

"Art. 22ter. Every person with a disability has the right to full inclusion in society, including the right to reasonable accommodation. The law, decree or rule referred to in Article 134 shall guarantee the protection of this right."

Reference: <https://bdf.belgium.be/en/news/15-03-2021-people-with-disabilities-enter-the-belgian-constitution.html#:~:text=Every%20person%20with%20a%20disability,work%2C%20which%20began%20in%202002>.

**Cultural Norms**

Widespread institutionalisation of persons with disabilities, combined with a lack of community-based services, limits these persons’ possibilities to lead an autonomous life.

High number of children with disabilities who are educated in specialised schools, separately from other children, with little prospect of being reintegrated into mainstream education.

**Insights**

The employment rate of people with disabilities is below the EU-average. While the employment rate of persons with disabilities is lower than the non-disabled group in every age category, it’s most conspicuous in the age categories 25-34 and 55-64. The 55-64 category is further below the EU-average.

Disabilities policy is a community matter, where the French Community has transferred its responsibility for the French linguistic region to the Walloon Region. It is thus the Walloon Region for the French linguistic region, and the German-speaking Community for the German linguistic region, which are responsible for disabilities policy.

**Supplier Diversity**

[The Belgian Business Association (BBA](http://www.belgianba.be/)) is the leading network in Belgium for gay professionals. The BBA is member of EGMA (European Gay Managers Association) and has outstanding relationships with similar international organizations, like Genius in the Netherlands and l’Autre Cercle in France.

[Women in Business](https://www.womeninbusiness.brussels/) is a website providing information about female entrepreneurship in Belgium. It includes useful articles on issues affecting women in business. The website provides links to other organisations in Belgium pushing for workplace equality and better opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

In 2014, the proportion of women among the self-employed is 28% in the Brussels Region.

**Talent Sourcing Resources**

[The Walloon agency for the integration of people with disabilities](https://www.apf-francehandicap.org/carte?mtm_source=grants&mtm_medium=cpc&mtm_campaign=MV_Search_GRANTS_AssociationHandicap&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiAx_GqBhBQEiwAlDNAZtAdFYxO6OrmouWp5IjBpDpnLyVLJoSv_dksaq7JoOiiVIbi48k47hoCv74QAvD_BwE) (Agence Wallone pour l’intégration des personnes handicapées, AWIPH) promotes and enhances opportunities for people with disabilities to find paid employment, in both the regular labour market and in sheltered work environments.

**Additional Resources**

Mainly 4 institutions are competent for the disability policy:

[The Flemish agency for the social integration of disabled persons](https://www.vaph.be/en/welcome#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20VAPH%3F,better%20and%20more%20independent%20life.), The Walloon agency for the integration of disabled persons, The Brussels Francophone service for disabled persons, The Office for disabled persons of the German-speaking Community

[Belgian Disability Forum](https://bdf.belgium.be/en/) – Group of Belgian non profit organizations:  
The National High Council for Disabled Persons (Conseil supérieur national des personnes handicapées – Nationale Hoge Raad voor Personen met een handicap) is in charge of the examination of all problems that disabled persons can be faced with.

[European Disability Forum (EDF)](https://www.edf-feph.org/) is an independent European non-governmental organization (ENGO) that represents the interests of 50 million disabled people in the European Union and stands for their rights. It was created in 1996 and is based in Brussels.

**References**

[Belgium Country Visit Report (Commissioner for Human Rights, 2016)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/belgium-should-speed-up-the-inclusion-in-society-of-persons-with-disabilities?desktop=true)