

# Foreword

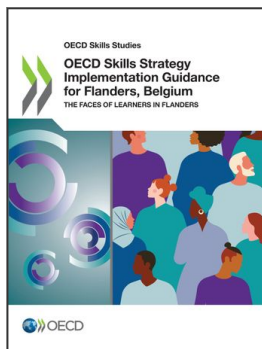
In Flanders, Belgium, as in other economies across the OECD, megatrends such as globalisation, digitalisation, climate change and demographic change are reshaping how citizens work and live. COVID-19 has accelerated the proliferation of digital technologies and has been the impetus for the large-scale adoption of new working arrangements and practices such as teleworking. Together, these trends are reshaping the skills needed for success in work and society. In this context, lifelong learning is increasingly necessary to ensure that people are adaptable and resilient to changing skills demands. High-quality and inclusive learning opportunities in formal, non-formal and informal settings should be accessible for everyone to enable full participation in the economy and society.

Flanders has long recognised the importance of lifelong learning strategies and policies to confront the challenges and seize the opportunities inherent in societal and economic changes. Flemish adults can choose from a large variety of learning opportunities, and the Flemish Government offers a wide range of incentives and support measures to help build a culture of lifelong learning.

While Flanders is already a strong performer overall, the Flemish Government has not yet achieved its own aspirations for fostering a culture of lifelong learning. Flanders continues to search for new ways to further strengthen the commitment of its people to continuous learning. More specifically, the government of Flanders aims to close the significant learning gaps across different socio-demographic groups, and between high- and low-skilled adults. Overcoming the lack of motivation to learn on the part of certain adults is proving especially challenging. Still too many adults do not see a need to learn, and this is true even for adults who could arguably benefit the most from upskilling and/or reskilling, such as those with low levels of education and skills and those employed in jobs vulnerable to automation.

This study aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of lifelong learning policies by identifying representative types of learners (i.e. learner profiles) that share a set of factors influencing their participation. The insights from this analysis will support Flanders to better target and tailor policies to those most in need of support, and help make lifelong learning a reality for all.

The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of the OECD member countries or the European Union.



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