

Census 2021: Metadata for the topic “Education”

The Census 2021 complies with the [Commission implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2017/543](#) of 22 March 2017 laying down rules for the application of [Regulation \(EC\) No 763/2008](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council on population and housing censuses as regards the technical specifications of the topics and of their breakdowns.

Highest level of education

Variables

- Educational attainment (ISCED-2011 code) - 2 digits
- 3 classes: low - medium - high
- Field - 2 digits (ISCED_F classification)
- Date of highest diploma obtained

Other breakdowns or possible classifications on request

Years

- 1/1/2011 to 1/1/2021

Survey population

- Belgian population
More information on how this population is determined is available here: <https://statbel.fgov.be/sites/default/files/files/documents/bevolking/calcul%20population%20F.pdf>
- Specific population on request (example: population aged 30-99 in the Brussels-Capital Region)

Source files

The highest level of education is a variable derived from two types of database: administrative sources and declarative sources. The **administrative** sources include the administrative databases on diplomas delivered by the institutions responsible for education (Communities and Regions), the data from the last Census (2011) and the diploma deductions based on enrolments in the institutions responsible for education (Communities and Regions).

The **declarative** sources bring together the databases in which the education level declared by the respondent is available: the population and housing census of 2001, databases from the labour market, databases from the Crossroads Bank for Social Security for job seekers, birth certificates, data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the SILC survey and the Adult Education Survey (AES).

The following databases have been used:

Overview of the databases obtained, processed and integrated to determine the highest level of education obtained for the Census 2021 (2011 → 2021)

| Database | 09-10 | 10-11 | 11-12 | 12-13 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | 18-19 | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | Description |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| French Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| COMPTAGES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Diplomas of compulsory education (primary and secondary education) Previous diplomas giving access to enrolment in the next year |
| JURY ¹ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Diplomas obtained via the central examination board |
| SATURN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Non-university higher education diplomas Previous diplomas giving access to enrolment in higher education |
| CREF | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Higher university education diplomas Previous diplomas giving access to enrolment in higher education |
| COMPULSORY EDUCATION EQUIVALENCES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Equivalences in compulsory (primary and secondary) education |
| German-speaking community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DGOV | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Primary, secondary and higher education diplomas (non-university) ² |
| DGOV_ZAWN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Apprenticeship and entrepreneurship diplomas |
| Walloon Region | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| IFAPME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Apprenticeship and business leaders diplomas |
| Flemish Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LED | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Diplomas delivered in Dutch-speaking education, all levels combined Diplomas declared by job seekers in Flanders Equivalences of secondary and higher education since 2018 |
| NARIC ³ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Equivalences between 2014 and 2018 for secondary and higher education diplomas. Included in LED after 2018 |

¹ For the jury in the French Community, Statbel obtained data for the period 2001-2016, then for 2018-2022. More precisely, these are separate files for each type of certificate (first degree of secondary education diploma, second degree of secondary education diploma, certificate of general upper secondary education and certificate of upper technical and vocational secondary education).

² Diplomas from higher education institutes (BAC) and Nursing (complementary vocational secondary education) were not delivered for the school years 2005-2006 to 2008-2009 and 2018-2019 to 2021-2022.

³ Statbel obtained all the equivalences recognised between 2014 and 2018, but the graduation year can be any year before 2018. The NARIC database (= equivalences in Flanders) is entirely integrated in LED.

| Databases | 09-10 | 10-11 | 11-12 | 12-13 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | 18-19 | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | Description |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| OTHER – ADMINISTRATIVE SOURCES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Royal Military Academy | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Diplomas delivered by the Royal Military Academy Other diploma from higher education previously obtained |
| Census 2011 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Highest level of education successfully completed by residents in Belgium on 01/01/2011. |
| DEDUCTIONS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Deduction of diplomas based on enrolments from the database on enrolments |
| | | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | |
| OTHER – DECLARATIVE SOURCES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Census 2001 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Highest level of education successfully completed by residents in Belgium on 01/01/2001 |
| Crossroads Bank for Social Security | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Data on job seekers (FOREM, ADG, VDAB & ACTIRIS) |
| Labour market database | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Data collected among enterprises on their employees and survey data (AES and SILC) |
| Birth certificates | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Education level of the father/mother (from eBirth) |
| Labour Force Survey (LFS) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Highest education level collected in the Labour Force Survey |

Important remarks

For diplomas obtained abroad, only diplomas that have received equivalence in Flanders or in compulsory education in the French Community are included.

Statbel has not received the diplomas:

- of social advancement education in the FWB which delivers diplomas of secondary and higher education
- of equivalences of higher education diplomas in the French Community
- of the first and second degrees of secondary education in the French Community
- of juries in primary and higher education in the French Community
- of primary education in the Flemish Community
- of higher education in the German-speaking Community from 2018 onwards
- of education of apprentices and entrepreneurs in the Brussels-Capital Region that delivers upper secondary education and higher education diplomas
- of apprentices and entrepreneurs in the German-speaking Community from 2017/2018 onwards
- of private schools in primary, secondary and higher education
- of European schools in primary and secondary education.

Private schools, including European schools (5 establishments among which 4 are in the Brussels-Capital Region) are not governed by the Communities or the Regions.

Processing

The variable was created in several steps:

1. Upload of each database separately
2. Cleansing of databases:
 - a. deletion of duplicates
 - b. research of unique identifier, national register number, if not provided⁴
 - c. creation and harmonisation of variables useful for processing
3. Creation of specific tables for diplomas and enrolments for each source
4. Pooling of all uploaded tables and creation of four specific tables: “Diplomas”, “Enrolments”, “Previous diplomas” and “Previous enrolments”
5. Improvement of information on diplomas (orientation and field of study) based on databases on enrolments and vice versa.
(For example, in the diploma database, a person graduated in the school year 2015-2016, but the field of the diploma is unknown. If this person is enrolled in Economics in higher education in 2015-2016, we will deduce that the field of the diploma is “Economics”).
6. Deduction of diplomas based on enrolments if the diplomas are not known
7. Introduction of declarative databases and priority rules (see Annex 1)
8. Conversion of diplomas into the ISCED 2011 classification
9. Addition per year of the highest level of diploma obtained based on the defined priority rules (see Annex 1)⁵
10. Matching with population
If a person is not in the database but is in the stock, the level of diploma obtained will be “missing”.

⁴ It should be noted that data are lost at this stage because the identification data provided do not allow us to identify a person with a national register number.

⁵ STATBEL uses both authentic and declarative sources. Sometimes STATBEL also derives data from registration data based on certain hypotheses. Authentic sources are preferred over declarative sources (e.g. surveys). However, if the information is missing from authentic sources, declarative sources are used to minimise missing data. If STATBEL then receives information about that individual from an authentic source the following year, it is quite possible that this information will conflict with the declarative source from the previous year. Inconsistencies are therefore possible in longitudinal analyses.

Classifications:

ISCED 2011 for the level of education

The highest level of education completed is determined according to the ISCED 2011 classification.

- Low
 - ISCED level 0: Early childhood education
 - 02 Some early childhood education
 - ISCED level 1: Primary education
 - 10 Primary
 - ISCED level 2: Lower secondary education
 - 24 General
 - 25 Vocational
- Medium
 - ISCED level 3: Upper secondary education
 - 34 General
 - 35 Vocational
 - ISCED level 4: Post-secondary non-tertiary education
 - 44 General
 - 45 Vocational
- High
 - ISCED level 5: Short-cycle tertiary education
 - 54 General
 - 55 Vocational
 - 56 Unspecified orientation
 - ISCED level 6: Bachelor's or equivalent level
 - 64 Academic
 - 65 Vocational
 - 66 Orientation unspecified
 - ISCED level 7: Master's or equivalent level
 - 74 Academic
 - 75 Vocational
 - 76 Unspecified orientation
 - ISCED level 8: Doctoral or equivalent level
 - 84 Academic
 - 85 Vocational
 - 86 Unspecified orientation

More information on this classification:

<https://statbel.fgov.be/fr/propos-de-statbel/methodologie/classifications/classification-internationale-type-de-leducation>

No highest diploma obtained is determined for people under 15 (NAP). There is also another category: UNK. This includes all people for whom no highest level of education could be determined. Both

categories are in line with the European Census regulation (EU 2017/543). They are not always included in the charts.

Annex 2 gives a breakdown of this classification for the different education levels of each community.

ISCED-F (2013) for the field

The field of the diploma is classified according to the ISCED-F 2013 classification (<https://statbel.fgov.be/en/open-data/code-isced-f-2013-4-digits>).

Remarks

The comparison with the previous Census requires some caution: this publication is based on the Belgian population and the [Census 2011](#) has as reference the European definition of the population.

Information on the difference between the Belgian population and the Census 2011 population is available here:

<https://statbel.fgov.be/sites/default/files/files/documents/bevolking/calcul%20population%20E.pdf>

Comparisons with the results of surveys such as the LFS (Labour Force Survey) also deserve some caution. The results presented in the Census reflect the highest level of education achieved according to the administrative data available, whereas the LFS figures are based on a survey that measures the highest level of education achieved by (a sample of) respondents. Both sources have their own characteristics and have advantages and disadvantages. For example, the LFS is less faced with the problem of missing values at the educational level, such as diplomas obtained abroad, but measurement errors and other forms of distortion that are characteristic of this type of survey may occur. On the other hand, the great advantage of current administrative data is that figures are available at a very detailed level and can therefore be linked to other administrative sources. More detailed information on the specific differences between the two sources is available on request from Statbel.

Indication student or pupil from administrative databases

Variables:

- Indication of whether a person is enrolled as a pupil or student (FL_INSCRPTN)
 - o 0: Not specified
 - o 1: enrolled
- Educational level - current education (ISCED-2011 code)
- Field of education - current education (ISCED-F code)

Years:

- 1/1/2016 to 1/1/2021

Survey population

- Belgian population
More information on how this population is determined is available here:

<https://statbel.fgov.be/sites/default/files/files/documents/bevolking/calcul%20population%20E.pdf>

- Specific population (list) (example: population aged 30-99 in the Brussels-Capital Region)

Source files

The database on enrolments set up by Statbel covers children, young people and adults enrolled in an education level in Belgium. It includes enrolments in pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education, entrepreneurship training, apprenticeship and dual learning if the information is known in the following databases:

Overview of the databases obtained, processed and integrated to determine the FL INSCRPTN obtained for the Census 2021 (2011 -> 2021)

| Database | 09-10 | 10-11 | 11-12 | 12-13 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | 18-19 | 19-20 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | Description |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| French Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| COMPTAGES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in compulsory education (pre-primary, primary and secondary) Enrolment the previous year |
| HOME EDUCATION | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments of persons of compulsory school age in distance learning |
| SATURN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in non-university higher education Enrolment the previous year |
| CREF | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in university higher education Enrolment the previous year |
| German-speaking community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DGOV | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in primary, secondary and higher education (non-university) Enrolment the previous year |
| DGOV_ZAWN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in apprenticeship and entrepreneurship trainings |
| Walloon Region | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| IFAPME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in apprenticeship and entrepreneurship trainings |
| Flemish Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| AGODI | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in pre-primary, primary and secondary education |
| AGODI thuisonderwijs | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in home education |
| DHO | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in higher education |
| OTHER – ADMINISTRATIVE SOURCES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Royal Military Academy | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Enrolments in the Royal Military Academy |

Important remarks

The modality “Unspecified” is assigned to all persons who are not recorded as being in a level of education on the basis of the information collected in the above databases. This can be, among others, data on adult education, private education (e.g. in European or private schools) and enrolments in education institutions abroad that are not included in the list.

Annex 1: priority rules

Priority rules are set up to select the highest level of education of individuals if different diplomas are given for the same school year.

According to the information available and its quality, four methods (M1, M2, M3 and M4) are used to determine a level of education successfully completed for a specific school year.

1. Method 1: M1 gives the highest ISCED level in administrative databases.
2. Method 2: M2 includes the ISCED from the Census 2011.
3. Method 3: M3 is the highest ISCED level in declarative sources.
4. Method 4: M4 shows the ISCED from the Census 2001.

How is the highest level of diploma obtained on 1 January of a given year selected? To answer to this question, let's look at some examples:

- Case 1: ISCED 2021 and 2011 are known

| | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 |
|---|----|----|----|----|
| Situation 1 | 10 | 40 | 40 | 40 |
| <i>We only look at the two values of M1 and M2. The first digit from the Census 2011 (M2) is higher than the first digit from the Census 2021 (M1). This is the case for someone who has gone back to school at a lower level than the one completed before. We keep the Census 2011 line (M2).</i> | | | | |
| Situation 2 | 25 | 25 | 35 | 25 |
| <i>We only look at the two values of M1 and M2. They are equal. The Census 2021 (M1) has priority because the field of the diploma is available in the Census 2021 database and not in the Census 2011 database. We keep the Census 2021 line (M1).</i> | | | | |
| Situation 3 | 74 | 64 | 74 | . |
| <i>We only look at both values M1 and M2. The first digit from the Census 2021 (M1) is higher than the first digit from the Census 2011 (M2). We keep the Census 2021 line (M1).</i> | | | | |

- Case 2: ISCED 2021 is known, ISCED 2011 is unknown and ISCED 2001 is unknown.

| | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 |
|---|----|----|----|----|
| Situation 4 | 45 | 99 | 10 | . |
| <i>Census 2021 (M1) is known, Census 2011 (M2) is unknown. We only look at the Census 2021 line and keep it (M1).</i> | | | | |

- Case 3: ISCED 2021 is unknown and ISCED 2011 is known

| | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 |
|---|----|----|----|----|
| Situation 5 | 99 | 25 | 35 | 24 |
| <i>Census 2021 (M1) is unknown, Census 2011 (M2) is known. We only look at the Census 2011 line and keep it (M2).</i> | | | | |

- Case 4: ISCED 2021 is known, ISCED 2011 is missing or unknown, ISCED 2001 is known

| | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 |
|---|----|----|----|----|
| Situation 6 | 34 | . | 74 | 75 |
| <i>Census 2021 (M1) is known, Census 2011 (M2) is missing (did not participate in Census 2011). ISCED of Census 2001 (M4) is known. We only look at the Census 2021 and 2001 lines. ISCED of Census 2001 is higher. We keep the Census 2001 line (M4).</i> | | | | |
| | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 |
| Situation 7 | 35 | . | 35 | 24 |
| <i>The Census 2021 (M1) is known, thr Census 2011 (M2) is missing (did not participate in Census 2011). ISCED of Census 2001 (M4) is known. We only look at the Census 2021 and 2001 lines. ISCED of Census 2021 is higher. We keep the Census 2021 line.</i> | | | | |
| | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 |
| Situation 8 | 35 | 99 | 74 | 65 |
| <i>Census 2021 is known, Census 2011 is unknown. ISCED of Census 2001 is known. We only look at the Census 2021 and 2001 lines. ISCED of Census 2001 is higher. We keep the Census 2001 line.</i> | | | | |

- Case 5: ISCED 2021 is known, ISCED 2011 is missing, ISCED 2001 is missing, ISCED of other declarative sources is known

| | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 |
|---|----|----|----|----|
| Situation 9 | 34 | . | 74 | . |
| <i>Census 2021 (M1) has priority. We keep the Census 2021 line.</i> | | | | |

- Case 6: ISCED 2021 and 2011 are unknown, ISCED of declarative sources is known.

| | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 |
|---|----|----|----|----|
| Situation 10 | 99 | 99 | 35 | . |
| <i>Census 2021 (M1), Census 2011 (M2), Census 2001 (M4) are unknown. ISCED of declarative sources (M3) and Census 2001 (M4) are known. We keep the declarative sources line (M3)</i> | | | | |
| Situation 11 | 99 | 99 | 65 | 35 |
| <i>Census 2021 (M1) and Census 2011 (M2) are unknown. ISCED of declarative sources (M3) and Census 2001 (M4) are known. We only look at the Census 2001 lines (M4) and those of declarative sources (M3). ISCED of declarative sources (M3) is higher. We keep the declarative sources line (M3).</i> | | | | |
| Situation 12 | 99 | 99 | 35 | 65 |
| <i>The Census 2021 (M1) and the Census 2011 (M2) are unknown. ISCED of declarative sources (M3) and Census 2001 (M4) are known. We only look at the Census 2001 lines (M4) and those of declarative sources (M3). ISCED of declarative sources (M4) is higher. We keep the declarative sources line (M4).</i> | | | | |

- Case 7: ISCED 2021 and 2011 as well as ISCED from declarative sources ISCED are unknown

| | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 |
|--------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Situation 13 | 99 | 99 | 99 | |
| <i>We keep the Census 2021 line.</i> | | | | |

ISCED 8

ISCED 7

ISCED 6

ISCED 5

ISCED 4

ISCED 3

ISCED 2

ISCED 1

ISCED 020

23

18-21

18

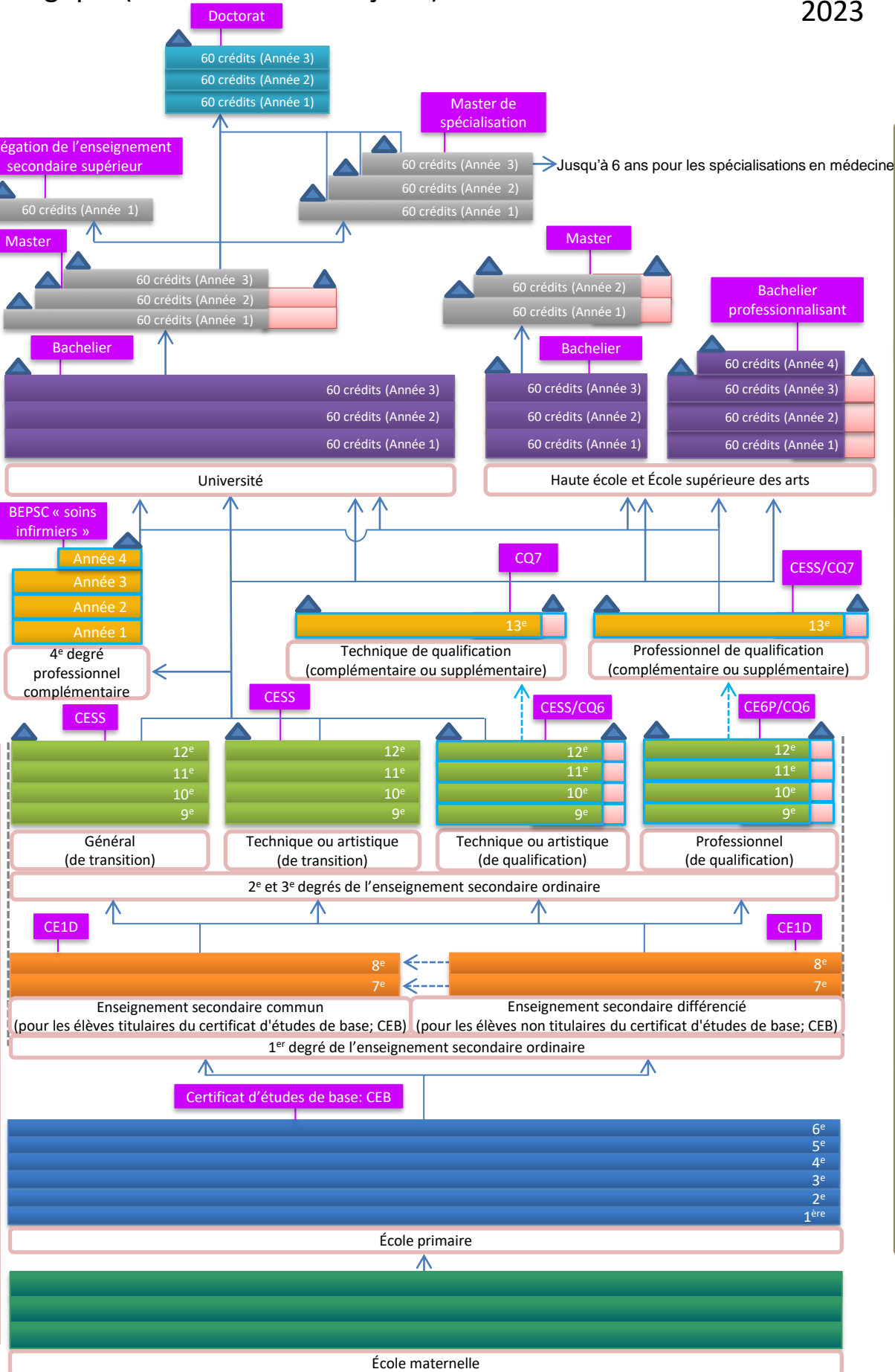
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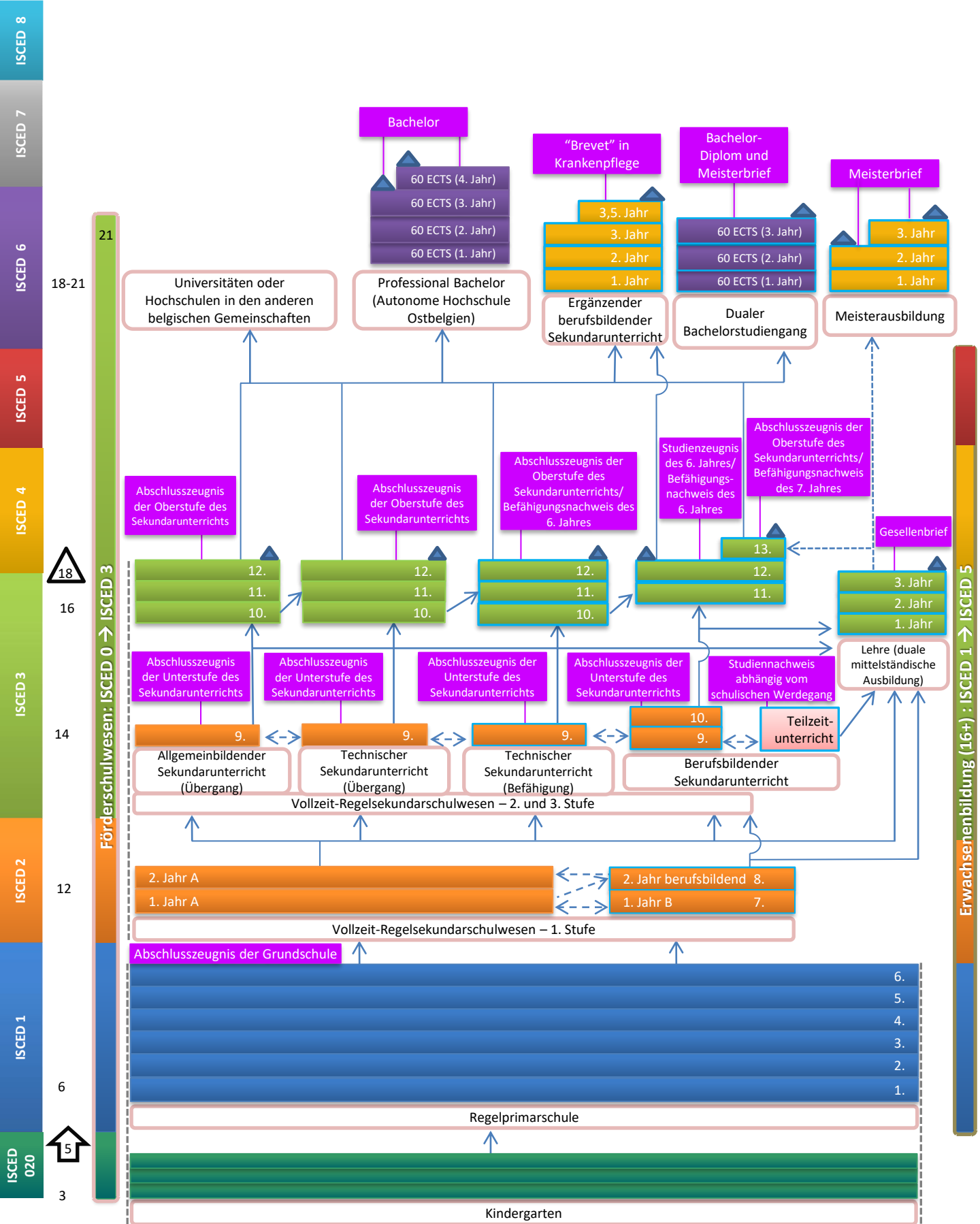
12

6

2 1/2

Education Des Adultes : (18+) : ISCED 1 → ISCED 7





Legenda

Flemmish



Start- en eindleeftijd leerplichtonderwijs



Eindleeftijd van verplichte vorming



Erkend eindpunt van een bepaald onderwijsniveau



Typische studentenstroom



Mogelijke overgang tussen programma's



Programma kan deeltijds gevolgd worden



Beroeps-/professionele oriëntering



Programma kan zowel worden aangeboden via duaal als niet-duaal leren



Onderwijstype dat meerdere ISCED-niveaus omvat



Kan aangeboden worden binnen één school



Geen overgang mogelijk

Diploma

Naam van het diploma , getuigschrift of certificaat

ECTS

Europees Systeem voor Overdracht en Accumulatie van Studiepunten

NQF L

Vlaamse kwalificatiestructuur - Niveau

2023

Referentiejaar (schooljaar 2022/2023 op het noordelijk halfrond)

* **Theoretische instroomleeftijd**, betreft de formele leeftijd voor toegang tot een programma, de werkelijke instroomleeftijd kan afhankelijk van het programma hiervan afwijken.

Légende

French



Âge de début/fin de la scolarité obligatoire



Fin de la formation obligatoire



Points de sortie reconnus du système éducatif



Flux typique d'élèves/étudiants



Transfert d'un programme à un autre



Programme conçu pour une scolarisation à temps partiel



Orientation technique/professionnelle
(conformément à la définition nationale au niveau tertiaire)



Programme pouvant être proposé dans le cadre d'un
apprentissage standard ou en alternance



Structure unique (niveaux CITE intégrés)



Programmes pouvant être dispensés dans la même
structure scolaire



Transfert non autorisé aux points de croisement

Diploma

Nom du diplôme ou de la certification

ECTS

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (crédits)

NQF L

Cadre national des certifications - Niveau

2023

Année de référence (année scolaire 2022/2023
dans l'hémisphère Nord)

*Les **âges théoriques d'entrée** sont ceux établis par la loi et la réglementation pour l'entrée dans un programme spécifique ; les âges réels d'entrée peuvent varier selon le programme.

Legende

German



Beginn/Ende der Schulpflicht



Ende der Ausbildungspflicht



Austritt aus dem Bildungssystem



Typischer Bildungsweg



Übergang zwischen Bildungswegen



Bildungsweg in Teilzeit



Berufliche Ausrichtung
(im tertiären Bereich gemäß nationaler Definition)



Bildungsweg kann sowohl dual als auch nicht dual angeboten werden



Einheitliche Struktur des Bildungswegs
(integrierte ISCED-Stufen)



Bildungswegen können innerhalb derselben Schulform angeboten werden



Übergang nicht möglich

Diploma

Bezeichnung des Hochschulgrads oder Abschlusszeugnisses

ECTS

Europäisches System zur Übertragung und Akkumulierung von Studienleistungen (Leistungspunkte)

NQF L

Niveau im nationalen Qualifikationsrahmen

2023

Bezugsjahr (Schuljahr 2022/2023 auf der nördlichen Halbkugel)

* **Das theoretische Eintrittsalter** bezieht sich auf das durch Gesetze oder anderweitige Regelungen bestimmte Lebensalter. Das tatsächliche Eintrittsalter kann je nach Bildungsweg davon abweichen.