

S E R V

Dialogue functions

House of social dialogue in Flanders

Social and Economic Council
of Flanders (SERV)

Activities of the SERV



the house of social dialogue

The SERV is the house of social dialogue in Flanders. It is the meeting point of the Flemish employers' associations (Voka, UNIZO, Boerenbond and Verso) and trade unions (ACV, ABVV and ACLVB). Together they offer advice and conclude agreements on key socioeconomic policy issues to improve welfare and well-being for the Flemish region and its inhabitants.

the SERV offers broad support

Employers' associations and trade unions have a broad support base. They represent over 160,000 entrepreneurs, businesses and organisations and about 2 million employees and job seekers in Flanders.

the SERV sets the agenda, advises and performs

The SERV advises the Flemish Government and the Flemish Parliament on ongoing or new socioeconomic policies. The topics are comprehensive and diverse: labour market, economics, education, energy, social policy, the Flemish budget, etc. Preferably, the SERV focuses on proactive pieces of advice on its own initiative due to the larger potential of policy impact. In recent years, the SERV was able to put key challenges and issues such as labour shortage, digitalisation, circular economy and climate on the political agenda.

the SERV connects and substantiates

The SERV can rely on in-house expertise to provide the parties involved with excellent advice and sound agreements. In addition to its own studies and research, the council regularly invokes external experts or civil society organisations and involves other stakeholders or citizen panels to share their view on the issue at hand.

the SERV weighs

The council's agreements and advices are broadly distributed and communicated to the government, parliament and the public administration. The SERV also feeds the public debate via various social media channels and its publications are regularly covered by the media (newspapers, tv and radio).

the SERV is transparent

Even though the SERV works completely independently, it is a public institute and its advice, agreements and reports are publicly available on its website www.serv.be.

Follow the SERV

Follow us on one of our social media channels and stay up to date with our latest news, publications and events.



WEBSITE

On our website you can read all our previous pieces of advice, agreements and reports and stay informed on future events, press releases and job opportunities.

www.serv.be
www.serv.be/en/serv

E-NEWSLETTERS

Subscribe to the newsletter of the SERV and the Foundation Innovation & Work through our website.



LINKEDIN

Join our LinkedIn professional network.

SERV (Sociaal-Economische Raad van Vlaanderen)



TWITTER

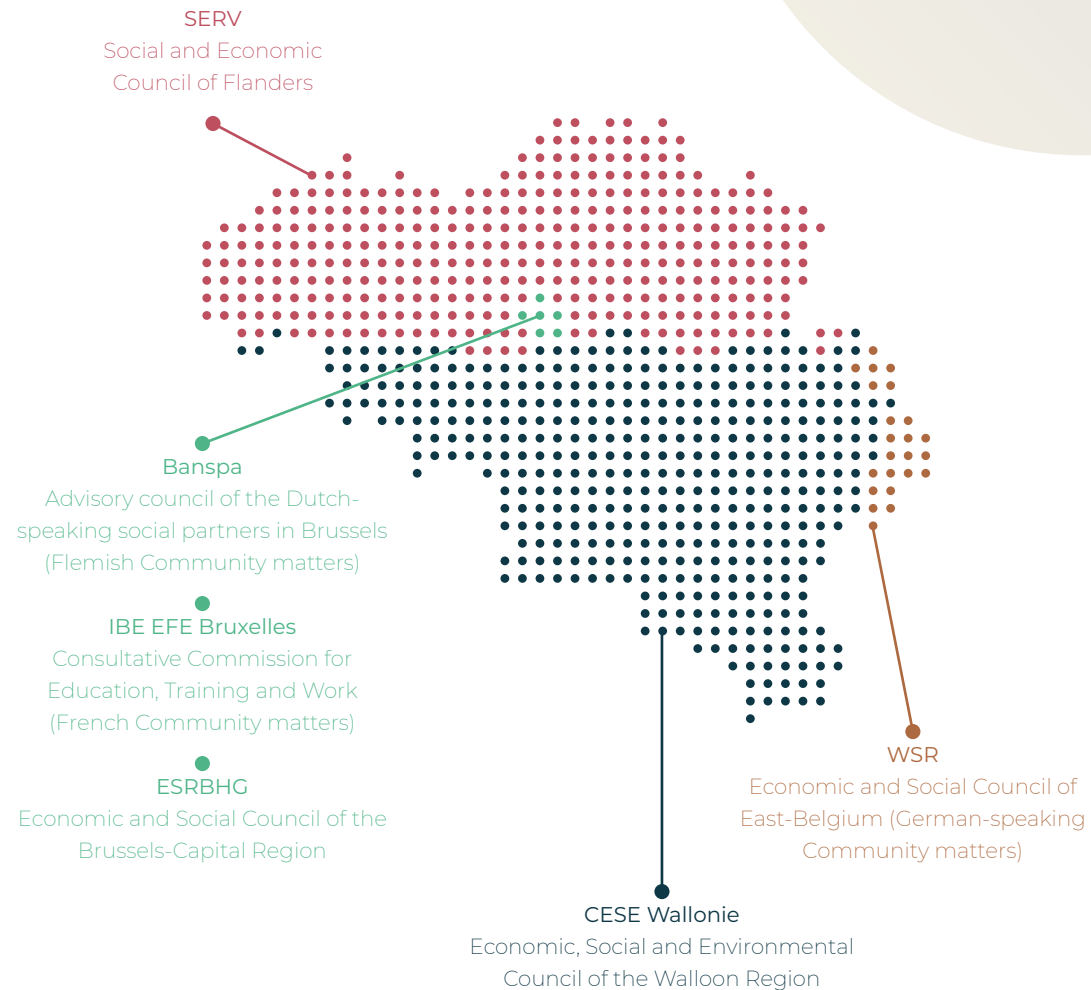
Follow us on Twitter and join the conversation.

@S_E_R_V



Social dialogue in Belgium

The SERV organises social consultation processes in Flanders. Various other social and economic councils are active in Belgium as well.



The SERV members

Some 2,000,000 employees and job seekers in Flanders are members of the three Flemish trade unions. Moreover, about 160,000 entrepreneurs, companies and organisations are associated with one of the four Flemish employers' associations. Together, the social partners represent their members and make sure their voice is heard in policy and decision making processes.



trade unions

Represent about
2,000,000 employees
and job seekers

GENERAL FEDERATION OF LIBERAL BELGIAN TRADE UNIONS

Approx. 206,500 members in Flanders

The core values of ACLVB are freedom, solidarity, responsibility and tolerance. From a socioeconomic perspective and in accordance with their values, ACLVB provides employees with the support and expertise needed to meet challenges at work and to become fully-fledged citizens. That happens through personal as well as collective services, expertise and training.

www.aclvb.be



CONFEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN TRADE UNIONS

Approx. 1,141,500 members in Flanders

As the leading trade union in Flanders, ACV ensures that the voice of all employees is heard in social dialogue. Both at European, national, Flemish, sectoral and business level, ACV negotiates good pay and labour conditions, better work-life balance, good labour market policies, etc for the benefit of all employees.

www.hetacv.be

GENERAL FEDERATION OF BELGIAN LABOUR

Approx. 730,000 members in Flanders

The Flemish ABVV is the Flemish branch of the General Federation of Belgian Labour (FGTB/ABVV). Organised within six sectoral 'offices' and six 'regions', ABVV delegates represent their members within the interprofessional social dialogue institutions. Union delegates and militants receive elected mandates within social consultative processes at company level. The Flemish ABVV reinforces representatives within companies through training and support. The trade union supports both employees and unemployed with its broad interprofessional services. Additionally, the Flemish ABVV's activities are aimed at young, unemployed and older people.

www.vlaamsabvv.be



FLANDERS' CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Approx. 18,000 enterprises

Voka serves the interests of the Flemish entrepreneurs, both large- and small-scale companies. As a dynamic network of business made for and by entrepreneurs, Voka is in close contact with several authorities and institutions. Voka unites policymakers, fellow entrepreneurs and the wide civil society. Voka's mission is to establish an optimal framework for successful entrepreneurship.

www.voka.be



employers' associations

represent about 160,000 entrepreneurs, companies and organisations



UNION OF INDEPENDENT ENTREPRENEURS

Approx. 110,000 entrepreneurs and SMEs

UNIZO guards the interests of SMEs during each phase a company goes through, whether prior to its establishment or while it is trying to get into the international market. UNIZO's mission is two-fold: on the one hand it represents and defends the interests of entrepreneurs at all decision making levels whereas on the other it influences the decision-making process and legislation as well as takes part in social negotiations and society. Although UNIZO particularly targets entrepreneurs in Flanders and Brussels, it protects their interests at federal, European and even international level. UNIZO members are represented by delegations in commissions, industrial relations consultations and advisory bodies at local, provincial, regional, federal and European level in various business sectors (agriculture, industry, construction, distribution, professions and the service industry).

www.unizo.be



AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

About 18,000 farmers and horticulturists

Boerenbond stands for economically, ecologically and socially sustainable agriculture and horticulture which is fully integrated into society. The activities of Boerenbond are situated within five domains: advocacy, education and information, services, representation and co-operation with regard to production, supply and marketing. Boerenbond gradually develops its points of view through a network of local, regional, provincial and national structures.

www.boerenbond.be




ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL PROFIT ENTERPRISES

Approx. 16,000 enterprises

Verso, as an interprofessional employers' federation consisting of 15 federations, unites, defends and reinforces 16,000 social enterprises from all sectors. Those social enterprises primarily and explicitly pursue a social goal (and not shareholder value) and aim to be the primary entrepreneurial partner for policymakers and citizens in achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

www.verso-net.be





SERV mandate

the SERV **organises** consultations and offers **advice** on current social and economic issues and future challenges

SERV
Function and role

Flemish social dialogue with an impact

The SERV feeds and supports the public debate with policy-relevant information and expertise.

Consultation

The SERV organises bipartite or two-way consultation between employers' associations and trade unions. In addition, there is the tripartite or triple consultation between the Flemish Government, employers' associations and trade unions. The latter occurs within the Flemish Economic and Social Consultative Committee Advice (VESOC).

Advisory role

The SERV advises:

- as a strategic advisory council (SAR) for the following policy areas: work and social economy, economics, energy and equal opportunities and integration policy
- on all matters which are closely related to the socioeconomic consultation (education, welfare, environmental policy, innovation, etc)
- on the Flemish budget (annually).

The Flemish Government is obliged to ask the SERV for advice on all draft decrees (primary legislation) with social or economic relevance and on all drafts of secondary legislation of strategic importance within those policy areas.

advice with an impact

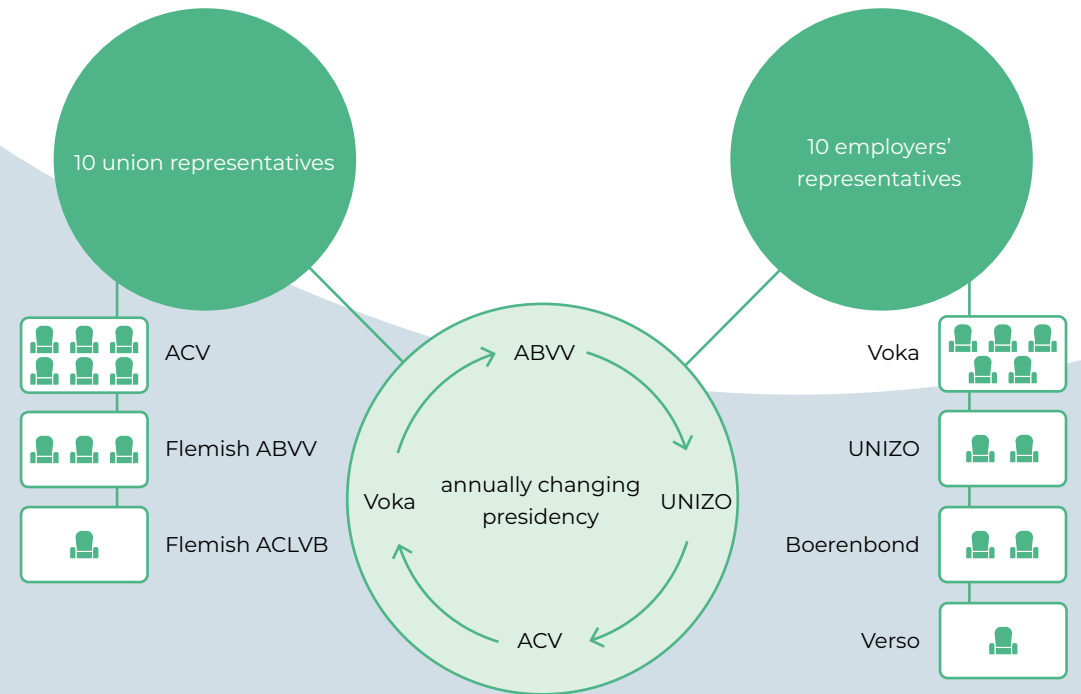


SERV composition



Council

The council formally approves the advice given. The council is also responsible for adopting the annual work programme, the appointment of the daily management, president and vice-president, and the approval of the budget and annual report.



Executive committee

The executive committee of the SERV consults every two weeks. The focus is on strategy determination, consultation on strategic cases and the conclusion of bipartite and tripartite agreements.

Day-to-day management

General administrator Pieter Kerremans and vice-general administrator Helga Coppen are responsible for the day-to-day management of the SERV.

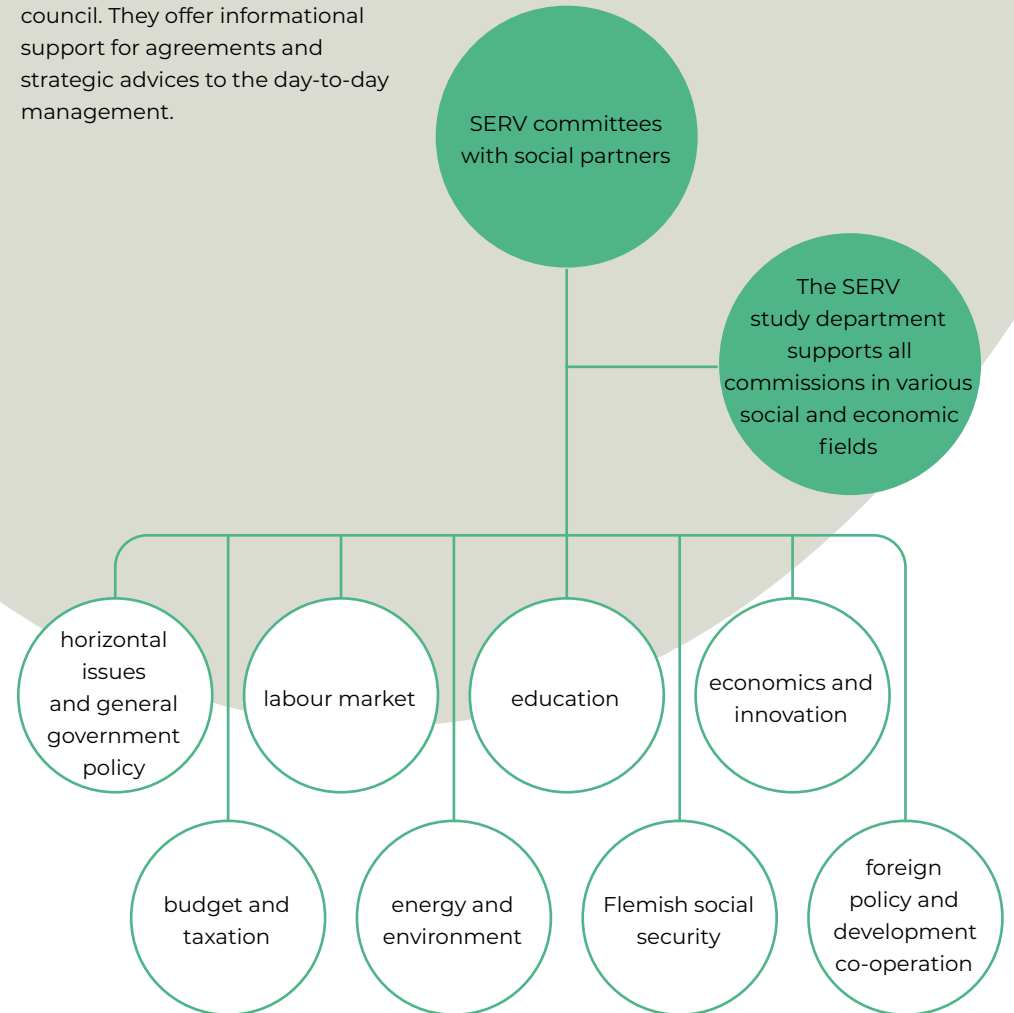
Contact: pkerremans@serv.be – hcoppen@serv.be



From left to right: Danny Van Assche (Unizo), Caroline Copers (Vlaams ABVV), Hans Maertens (Voka), Sonja De Becker (Boerenbond), Gert Truyens (ACLVB), Ann Vermorgen (ACV), Pieter Kerremans (SERV), Helga Coppen (SERV).

Committees

The daily management can establish permanent or temporary committees. They consult and prepare pieces of advice for the council. They offer informational support for agreements and strategic advices to the day-to-day management.



A house with many rooms

The SERV accommodates various other organisations. The functioning and role of these autonomous committees and councils correspond to a greater or lesser extent to the consultation and advisory function of the SERV.



SERV

A house with many rooms

Foundation Innovation & Work



WHO

The Foundation Innovation & Work conducts research for and on behalf of the Flemish social partners.

WHAT

Its activities centre on socioeconomic research into the quality of work or workability, human resources policy, organisational change and research in support of SERV's consultation. The foundation is also responsible for the triennial IOA survey of enterprises and organisations and the Flemish Workability Monitor of employees and the self employed. The foundation's research can be divided into the following three areas:

1. Work, organisation and innovation processes
2. Entrepreneurship, economy and innovation policy
3. Workability and longer working lives

HOW

The Foundation Innovation & Work heavily invests in the dissemination of all research results via reports and educational activities. With its research projects, it also stimulates the consultation between the social partners at SERV.

www.serv.be/stichting
www.serv.be/en/stichting
www.werkbaarwerk.be



Diversity Commission



WHO

The Diversity Commission consists of representatives of the Flemish social partners, the disadvantaged groups represented in the user consultation body on disability and work (persons with a work disability) and the Minority Forum (persons with a migrant background).

WHAT

The commission advises on the proportional representation of disadvantaged groups, diversity and equal treatment in socioeconomic life.

HOW

The commission organises consultations and advises – on its own initiative or at the request of the Flemish Government – on the equal opportunities and diversity plan for government personnel and on the Flemish equal opportunities and integration policy.

www.serv.be/diversiteit



Social Economy Commission



WHO

The Social Economy Commission consists of representatives of the Flemish social partners, representatives of the social economy businesses, independent experts and representatives of the Department of Work and Social Economy.

WHAT

The commission discusses existing or future policies for Social Economy.

HOW

The commission organises consultations between its members and aims to provide answers to the most important policy challenges within the social economy domain.

www.commissiesocialeconomie.be



Advisory Commission on Economic Migration



WHO

The Advisory Commission Economic Migration consists of members of the Flemish social partners, representatives of the Department of Work and Social Economy, VDAB, the Department of Economy, Science and Innovation and an independent expert.

WHAT

The advisory commission monitors social developments in economic migration and detects any bottlenecks. It also examines the criteria which form the basis of the regulations for economic migration and checks whether those regulations are sufficiently harmonious. As such, immigration of employees and self-employed people can occur optimally.

HOW

The advisory commission organises consultations and advises on the social, economic and administrative problems related to the employment of foreign workers and the independent professional activity of foreigners. They are either the result of the SERV taking the initiative by itself or of a request by the Flemish Government.

www.commissieeconomischemigratie.be





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LinkedIn: [SERV \(Sociaal-Economische Raad van Vlaanderen\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/serv)

More information?

See www.serv.be for all pieces of advice, reports and other publications. Subscribe to the newsletter of the SERV via the website.

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