



**Flanders**  
State of the Art

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024 DIPLOMATIC ACADEMY

**FLANDERS  
CHANCELLERY &  
FOREIGN OFFICE**

[www.fdfa.be/en](http://www.fdfa.be/en)

Establishing a Diplomatic Academy at the Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office was a promise set out in the 2019-2024 Flemish Coalition Agreement. It is part of Flanders's ambition to strengthen its diplomacy.

The Diplomatic Academy launched its first training programme in 2022, with the first batch of prospective diplomats graduating in the summer of 2023. Most of them left for their posts immediately afterwards. In 2024, a second batch of prospective diplomats completed their training programme. Like in previous years, other colleagues from the Flemish public administration again took part voluntarily in the Diplomatic Academy's 2024 learning activities.

## FIGURES

In 2024, the Diplomatic Academy organised 73 learning activities on 49 topics. Together, they account for 333 teaching hours, spread over more than 80 teaching days. A complete overview is attached as an appendix.

**73**  
LEARNING ACTIVITIES

**49**  
TOPICS

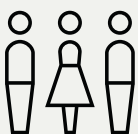
The Diplomatic Academy offered **73 learning activities** on **49 topics**.



THE WHOLE CALENDAR FOR 2024 IS TO BE FOUND IN THE APPENDIX

### DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS

During the same period, **three colleagues** each did a **six-week** practical internship at the **Delegations of Flanders in Paris, Copenhagen and New York**.



The training courses generally took place in Brussels. The programme also invested six working days in familiarisation and site visits to stakeholder organisations (city councils, ports, universities, sector federations, museums, innovation clusters, etc.) in Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent and Ypres.



Diplomatic batch 'Tijl Uylenspiegel'.  
On a working visit to Ypres, 28 November 2024

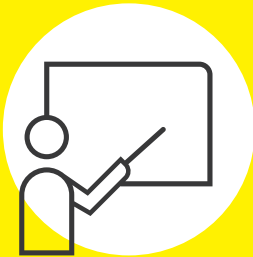
## TRAINING

The department's in-house experts were only called on a few times to teach courses. In most cases, external providers were used for the programme.

In 2024, the Diplomatic Academy invited **44** external trainers or lecturers as speakers, including people from Meanders Consulting, Public Governance Institute (KULeuven), The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS), Ghent University, Royal Conservatoire Antwerp, Embassy of Chile in Brussels, Expert Academy, Scriptorij, The Floor is Yours, Tybeert, Brussels Diplomatic Academy (VUB), Centre for Eastern Studies (Warsaw), University of Antwerp, College of Europe (Bruges),

VOKA – Metropolitan, Clingendael Institute (The Hague), RCA, George Washington University (Washington, D.C.), Global Diplomatic Forum (London), Flanders Investment & Trade, National Taiwan University (Taipei), Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), Vlamingen in de Wereld, and United Nations University – Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS, Bruges).

It was again possible to include several online lectures from UNU-CRIS's School of Modern Diplomacy 2024\* in the programme in October and November 2024, a special privilege.



The majority of learning activities (**65%**) could be attended in person. More than half (**56%**) could also or exclusively be followed online. The classroom participation rate was **42.5%** while **57.5%** participated online.

Most learning activities took place in Dutch. Just under one-third were in English.

Trainers or guest speakers came from Flanders and also from Chile, the Netherlands, Poland, Scotland, Taiwan, Sweden, and other countries.

One-third (15/44) of external lecturers were women, and two-thirds (29/44) were men.

Negotiation training, Clingendael Institute, Brussels, June 2024



## PARTICIPANTS



In 2024, **262** individuals participated in one or more training courses, accounting for **724** participations and **2,843** person-hours of training. The extent to which different groups of staff members participated is shown below.

In 2024, more than half of all registered participants were colleagues from other entities of the Flemish public administration. Staff members from the Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office nevertheless accounted for **57%** of all learning activities attended and **81%** of all teaching hours followed. Colleagues from Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT) represented 40% of all participants. Ten percent of the registered participants worked for other Flemish departments or agencies. Another 10% were not staff members of the Flemish public administration.

In 2024, the Diplomatic Academy offered its first session to members of the newly elected Flemish Parliament. In 2024, online learning activities were also opened to participation by alumni or fellows of the Government of Flanders's international Fayat scholarships programme. Individuals who were included in the recruitment reserves for Flemish diplomats but do not yet have an employment relationship with the Flemish public administration could also take part in some modules.

DA - 2024	# Participants	%	# Courses	%	# Hours	%
Diplomatic representatives	11	4.19	22	3.04	125.5	4.41
Prospective diplomats	6	2.29	170	23.48	1,002	35.24
Other staff abroad	14	5.34	33	4.56	130.5	4.59
Subtotal of staff abroad	31	11.82	225	31.07	1,258	44.24
Headquarters-based staff	75	28.62	188	25.96	1,048	36.86
<b>Total Flanders Chancellery &amp; Foreign Office</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>40.45</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>57.04</b>	<b>2,306</b>	<b>81.11</b>
FIT - Staff abroad	64	24.42	138	19.06	217.5	7.65
FIT - Domestic staff	40	15.26	97	13.39	136.5	4.80
<b>Total Flanders Investment &amp; Trade</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>39.69</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>32.45</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>12.45</b>
Other departments and agencies	30	11.45	52	7.18	122.5	4.30
Other	22	8.38	24	3.31	60.5	2.12
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>99.97</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>99.98</b>	<b>2,843</b>	<b>99.98</b>

### TIJL UYLENSPIEGEL BATCH

In 2024, a second batch of new Flemish diplomats successfully completed the Diplomatic Academy's training programme. This batch, which called itself the Tijl Uylenspiegel batch, includes four laureates.

They received their certificates from the Minister-President of the Government of Flanders at Errera House on 8 November 2024.

The first laureate of the Tijl Uylenspiegel batch took office as Deputy General Representative of Flanders in London on 1 January 2025.



Laureates of the Diplomatic Academy receive their certificates from the Minister-President of the Government of Flanders. Brussels, 8 November 2024

## ORGANISATION

In 2024, the Diplomatic Academy could count on the continued valuable collaboration of colleagues from the Agency for Government Personnel (AgO) and the Agency for Facility Operations (HFB) for practical and administrative support. Their participation was crucial to the smooth running of all the activities.

The department's Stakeholder Management Team prepared the working and familiarisation visits to Antwerp, Ghent, Brussels and Ypres.

Several training modules were also prepared or provided by colleagues from different teams within the department, i.e. Development Cooperation, Multilateral Cooperation, Foreign Offices Support, the Integrity Hub, the staff services, and the Flanders Statistics Authority.

All Diplomatic Academy learning activities were programmed and managed through Vlimpers-Leren, the Agency for Government Personnel's learning management system.

The Diplomatic Academy is indebted to all the aforementioned teams and services.

## BUDGET

The 2024 Diplomatic Academy programme cost approximately EUR 115,000. Nearly a quarter of that amount covered the cost of internships abroad.

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

International cooperation with foreign counterparts was again sought in 2024.

The Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland offered a lecture on 6 February 2024. Dr Kamil Kłysiński of the Centre for Eastern Studies in Warsaw delivered the lecture on developments in Belarus.

At the invitation of the Catalan Government, the Diplomatic Academy Director took part in the seminar *Talent Management in External Action: Foreign Action Civil Servants: Exchange of Good Practices and Successful Cases*. This seminar was organised by the School of Public Administration of Catalonia in Barcelona on 9 April 2024.

On 22 April 2024, the General Representative of Flanders to the EU gave a lecture to Polish trainee diplomats on the Government of Flanders's contribution to Belgium's ongoing presidency of the Council of the EU.

Exploratory talks on potential cooperation were held with the Director General of the Diplomatic Academy of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry in Brussels on 18 June 2024.

On 24 June 2024, the Secretary General of the Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office gave a lecture to Taiwanese trainee diplomats on the Government of Flanders's contribution to Belgium's ongoing presidency of the Council of the EU.

On 15 July 2024, the Young Diplomats Forum (YDF) 2024 kicked off at the Flemish public administration's Herman Teirlinck Building. The YDF is an initiative of the London-based Global Diplomatic Forum. It brought together young diplomats

and international politics students worldwide for a five-day programme in Brussels. The department's management team welcomed the participants, and the Deputy General Representative of Flanders to the EU delivered the keynote speech during the opening session.

Six colleagues from the department participated in the full YDF programme.

On 8 October 2024, Prof. Cheng-chu Ming of Taiwan National University gave a lecture to Flanders's Diplomatic Academy on geopolitical developments in Asia. The intention to exchange lectures for trainee diplomats was laid down in the 2023-2024 bilateral work programme between Flanders and Taiwan, signed in Taipei in April 2023.



Kick-off of Young Diplomats Forum in Brussels (HT, 15 July 2024)



Secretary General Julie Bynens addresses Taiwanese trainee diplomats (June 2024)

## ANNEX

Data	Learning activity	Classroom	Online	#Participants	Hours
09.01.2024	The institutions of Flanders	8	17	25	3
16.01.2024	Coaching skills (day 1)	6	2	8	7
18.01.2024	Making presentations (first edition, part 1)	9		9	6
19.01.2024	Coaching skills (day 2)	8		8	7
25.01.2024	Coaching skills (day 3)	6	2	8	7
26.01.2024	Book presentation: W. SOMERS, The State of Taiwan (2023)		21	21	1.5
31.01.2024	European institutions (part 1)	7	4	11	3
01.02.2024	European institutions (part 2)	5	6	11	3
02.02.2024	European institutions (part 3)	10	8	18	3
02.02.2024	Making presentations (first edition, part 2)	8		8	2
06.02.2024	Belarusian political and business elite post-2020		13	13	1.5
09.02.2024	Advocating Flanders's interests in the EU: the practice	5	2	7	3
12.02.2024	Development cooperation and humanitarian aid (1)	5	4	9	3
13.02.2024	Development cooperation and humanitarian aid (2)	5	3	8	3
20.02.2024	Cable writing (first edition, part 1)		12	12	3
21.02.2024	Cable writing (first edition, part 2)		12	12	3
29.02.2024	Diplomatic law (day 1)	8		8	7
01.03.2024	Diplomatic law (day 2)	8		8	3
06.03.2024	Flemish development cooperation	8	5	13	3
07.03.2024	Making presentations (second edition, part 1)	7		7	6
08.03.2024	Making presentations (third edition, part 1)	9		9	6
12.03.2024	Cable writing (second edition, part 1)		10	10	3
13.03.2024	Cable writing (second edition, part 2)		11	11	3
19.03.2024	Book review: Rob DE WIJK, De nieuwe wereldorde (2023)	7	2	9	2
21.03.2024	Making presentations (second and third editions, part 2)	5		5	2
22.03.2024	Making presentations (second and third editions, part 2)	8		8	2
26.03.2024	The importance of Brussels for Flanders's prosperity and international position	9	29	38	1.5
18.04.2024	Budgetary challenges for the Flemish public administration	6	50	56	1
Unspecified	Time management		2	2	1.5
Unspecified	Artificial intelligence and diplomacy		1	1	3
08.05-14.06	Diplomatic law	1		1	3
08.05-14.06	Diplomatic law		1	1	3
15.05.2024	Autocratic regimes: impact on international economic relations		54	54	1
30.05.2024	Addressing an audience	7		7	6
31.05.2024	Writing speeches	9		9	7
04.06.2024	Protocol and etiquette (day 1)	9		9	7.5
05.06.2024	Protocol and etiquette (day 2)	10		10	7.5



Data	Learning activity	Classroom	Online	#Participants	Hours
07.06.2024	Exchange of views with the Ambassador of Chile	8		8	1.5
11.06.2024	International negotiation	12		12	6
12.06.2024	International negotiation	12		12	6
13.06.2024	International negotiation	10		10	6.5
17.06.2024	Multilateral diplomacy	11	7	18	3
26.06.2024	Communication training	7		7	3.5
27.06.2024	Camera training	7		7	4.5
02.07.2024	Flanders in figures	4	26	30	2
03.07.2024	Foreign policy of the Government of Flanders (1982-2022)	7	26	33	2
05.07.2024	History of Flanders - part 1	5	6	11	3
08.07.2024	History of Flanders - part 2	5	7	12	3
09.07.2024	Book review: Robert COOPER, The Ambassadors (2021)	4	2	6	1.5
15-19.07.2024	Young Diplomats Forum	6		6	30
<b>SUMMER BREAK</b>					
09-13.09.2024	Subnational governance and diplomacy		1	1	30
10.09.2024	Making presentations	5		5	6
18.09.2024	Navigating the startup ecosystem with Startup.Flanders		5	5	1.5
25.09.2024	Making presentations	5		5	3
03.10.2024	How trade can bring economic and political change*		40	40	2
08.10.2024	Geopolitical developments in Asia: implications for Flanders and Europe		26	26	1.5
10.10.2024	Some reflections on the role of culture in the changing nature of diplomacy*		5	5	2
15.10.2024	Communication strategy and brand policy of the Flemish public administration/Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office (DKBUZA)		5	5	1
17.10.2024	Multidisciplinary aspects of water security*		0	0	2
22.10.2024	Europe and the world on Flanders's political agenda	14		14	2
24.10.2024	Skills of the public diplomat: language, narrative and allegiance*		8	8	2
31.10.2024	Digital diplomacy: social media and diplomacy*		30	30	1.5
05.11.2024	Site visits to key stakeholders in Antwerp	4		4	7
08.11.2024	Site visits to key stakeholders in Brussels	3		3	7
12.11.2024	Site visits to key stakeholders in Ghent	7		7	6.5
13.11.2024	Intercultural communication	4		4	6
14.11.2024	Intercultural communication	4		4	6
15.11.2024	Intercultural communication	4		4	6
21.11.2024	Science diplomacy in the age of war*		37	37	1.5
27.11.2024	Site visits to key stakeholders in Brussels	4		4	7
28.11.2024	Site visits to key stakeholders in Flanders Fields (Westhoek/Ypres)	15		15	11
29.11.2024	Integrity	4		4	2
30.11.2024	Life as an expat	7		7	8
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>371</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>333</b>

**COLOPHON**

**EDITING:**

Diplomatic Academy,  
Flanders Chancellery & Foreign Office

**EDITION:**

January 2024

**PUBLISHER:**

Julie Bynens, Simon Bolivarlaan 17 - 1000 Brussel

**CONCEPT AND LAYOUT:**

LDV United

**DEPOT NUMBER:**

D/2025/3241/468 for Diplomatic Academy 2024 Annual Report

