



Flanders
State of the Art

ANNUAL REPORT 2025 DIPLOMATIC ACADEMY

**FLANDERS
CHANCELLERY &
FOREIGN OFFICE**

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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 was launched in 2021. The first batches of prospective diplomats graduated in 2023 and 2024. Most of them left thereafter for their first posting abroad. The training programme was not repeated in 2025. The Flemish diplomatic service currently has insufficient vacancies, although it does have a sufficient number of well-trained prospective diplomats available.

This is why the academy changed direction in 2025. Instead of the traditional building blocks of diplomatic training, this year's programme included lectures on current global developments and briefings on our government's key priorities.

This attracted a broader range of participants and more frequently involved internal experts as lecturers. The focus shifted towards shorter briefings, which were primarily attended online.

FIGURES

In 2025, the Diplomatic Academy offered 28 learning activities across 24 topics. Together, they account for 157 teaching hours, spread over more than 40 days. A complete overview is provided in the appendix.

28 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

24 TOPICS

The Diplomatic Academy offered **28 learning activities** across **24 topics**.

157 TEACHING HOURS spread over **40** DAYS

THE WHOLE CALENDAR FOR 2025 IS TO BE FOUND IN THE ANNEX

Most of the training courses were held online. A minority were organised in person in Brussels. The programme also included a few site visits in the capital, but these were rare.

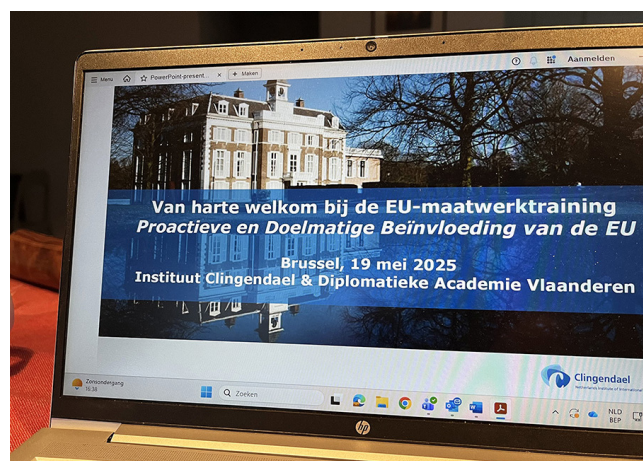
Experts from the Flemish public administration provided seven learning activities. External providers presented the other training courses.

In 2025, the Diplomatic Academy invited external trainers from Meanders Consulting, the Clingendael Institute (The Hague), the Merito Foundation, the Brussels Diplomatic Academy (VUB), Frank Van Oss, Department of Work, Economy, Science, Innovation and Social Economy (WEWIS), Research Foundation-Flanders, Visit Flanders, FIT Business Academy, KU Leuven, the Limburg Provincial Development Agency (POM), and the United Nations University–Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS, Bruges).

The Diplomatic Academy also facilitated participation in learning activities organised by the Geneva Institute of Geopolitical Studies (GIGS, Geneva), the Global Diplomatic Forum (GDF, London), and the Instituto per gli Studi di Politico Internazionale (ISPI, Milan) in 2025.

Several online lectures from UNU-CRIS's "School of Modern Diplomacy 2025"* were included in our programme in October and November 2025. This was a special privilege.

Eighty-five per cent of all learning activities were completed online. Only 15% were followed in person. Seventeen of the learning activities were conducted in English and eleven in Dutch.



PARTICIPANTS



Once again, more than half of all registered participants in 2025 were colleagues from other Flemish government entities. Their share increased to just over two thirds. Approximately 40% of the training hours completed were accounted for by staff members of the Chancellery and Foreign Office. Colleagues from Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT) accounted for one third of the training hours; those from other departments and agencies accounted for a quarter.

As no new training programme for prospective diplomats was launched in 2025, participation from within the department declined. The revised programme featured fewer activities, but attracted more participants.

DA - 2025	# Participants	%	# Courses	%	# Hours	%
Diplomatic representatives	14	3,95	47	5,65	103	5,95
Prospective diplomats	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other staff abroad	34	9,60	84	10,10	125	7,23
Subtotal of staff abroad	48	13,55	131	15,76	228	13,19
Headquarters-based staff	68	19,20	149	17,93	449	25,97
Total Flanders Chancellery & Foreign Office (FCFO)	116	32,76	280	33,69	677	39,16
FIT - Staff abroad	93	26,27	247	29,72	305,5	17,67
FIT - Domestic staff	68	19,20	189	22,74	258,5	14,95
Total Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT)	161	45,48	436	52,46	564	32,62
Other Departments and Agencies	73	20,62	110	13,23	478	27,65
Other	4	1,12	5	0,60	9,5	0,55
OVERALL TOTAL	354	99,98	831	99,98	1728,5	99,98

Training course on social media guidelines during the return days for employees of the foreign offices (Belpaire Building, 24 October 2025)



ORGANISATION

In 2025, the Diplomatic Academy could count on the continuous and attentive cooperation of colleagues from the Agency for Government Personnel (AgO) and the Agency for Facility Operations (HFB) for practical and administrative support. This cooperation was crucial to ensuring that all activities ran smoothly.

Various teams within the department, including the Integrity Hub, the Flanders Statistics Authority, the Foreign Offices Support Team, and the Communications & Marketing Team, prepared or provided several training modules.

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 grateful to all the aforementioned teams and services.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The Diplomatic Academy's 2025 programme was organised at a cost of approximately 36,000 euros. This cost is lower than in previous years due to adjustments to the programme and the absence of internships abroad.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Our cooperation with the Global Diplomatic Forum (London) continued to grow in 2025.

On 14 July 2025, the General Representative of Flanders in New York participated in the Young Diplomats Forum in Washington as a panellist.

On 1 September 2025, the Young Diplomats Forum in Brussels kicked off at the Flemish government buildings, with a keynote speech by a tech diplomat from Flanders Investment & Trade.

On 22 September 2025, participants of the Young Diplomats Forum in London were welcomed to a programme at Flanders House. (Photo)

During the Taiwan-Flanders Joint Committee meeting in Brussels on 20 November 2025, it was decided to continue cooperation between both diplomatic academies. This was subsequently included in the 'agreed minutes'.



The Young Diplomats Forum in London were welcomed to a programme at Flanders House (22 september)

ANNEX

Date(s)	Learning activity	Class	Online	#Participants	Hours
Unknown	How Covid-19 made Health Diplomacy		1	1	6
Unknown	How the New U.S. Administration is Recasting Diplomacy		1	1	2
25.02.2025	Foreign Investment in Flanders 2024		13	13	1
7-11.04.2025	Geo-economics	1		1	25
29.04.2024	Flanders's Productivity and Competitiveness Agenda		97	97	1
5-6.05.2025	Next Milan Forum	1		1	20
06.05.2025	Flanders and the Draghi Report		80	80	1,5
19.05.2025	How to effectively influence EU decision-making (day 1)	15		15	7
21.05.2025	Coaching leadership skills	12		12	4
22.05.2025	Integrity	14		14	2
26.05.2025	Communication skills	1		1	4
06.06.2025	Economic and knowledge security		43	43	1,5
10.06.2025	How to effectively influence EU decision-making (day 2)	16		16	7
11.06.2025	How to effectively influence EU decision-making (day 3)	15		15	7
02.07.2025	How to effectively influence EU decision-making (day 4)	14		14	7
07.07.2025	How to effectively influence EU decision-making (day 5)	14		14	7
SUMMER RECESS					
1-5.09.2025	Young Diplomats Forum	3		3	30
30.09.2025	Opportunities for the defence industry in Flanders		113	113	1
02.10.2025	Digital diplomacy: competing for influence in the 21st century*		7	7	1
07.10.2025	Flanders in figures (and benchmarked)	5	53	58	2
09.10.2025	The UN Security Council in the new era of great power competition*		10	10	2
24.10.2025	Social media and external communication	21		21	2,5
22.10.2025	Einstein Telescope: scientific purpose and components		51	51	1
30.10.2025	The changing face of energy statecraft*		10	10	2
05.11.2025	Einstein Telescope: socio-economic gamechanger?		63	63	1
12.11.2025	Einstein Telescope: political & diplomatic context and strategy		64	64	1
13.11.2025	Skills of the public diplomat: force & grace*		53	53	2
14.11.2025	Einstein Telescope: a lever for international branding as a knowledge region		38	38	1
20.11.2025	Migration diplomacy and power politics*		3	3	2
27.11.2025	New York on the global stage*		0	0	2
09.12.2025	Diplomatic accreditation, list, passport, ID, letters of credence, ...		31	31	1
15.12.2025	Critical Raw Materials in a Changing World: Flanders's Role and Response		13	13	1,5
16.12.2025	A New World Economic Order? Global Supply Chain in its Asian Era		8	8	1,5
Total		132	752	884	157,5

*1 This lecture was cancelled last minute.

* From UNU-CRIS School of Modern Diplomacy 2025

COLOPHON

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