

# The Flemish Community and the Flemish Region

## Legislative and executive power

At the level of the communities and regions, the legislative competence is exercised by a Parliament (Vlaams Parlement) and the executive power by a government.

Flemish region and community matters are governed by the same institutions: there is one Flemish Parliament and one Flemish government.

## The Flemish Parliament

### » Elections

The elections for the Flemish Parliament are held every five years. They are held on the same day as the elections for the European Parliament. The members of the Flemish Parliament were directly elected for the first time on 21 May 1995. The last elections were held on 9 June 2024.

Such as for the federal elections there is an electoral threshold of 5% in each constituency for the regional elections and there must be as many women as men on the electoral lists. The age in order to be eligible for election is 18 years.

### » Legislative Parliament

The Flemish Parliament is a “legislative parliament” which means that it cannot be dissolved before the end of the period that it has been elected for.

### » Composition

The Flemish Parliament has 124 members:

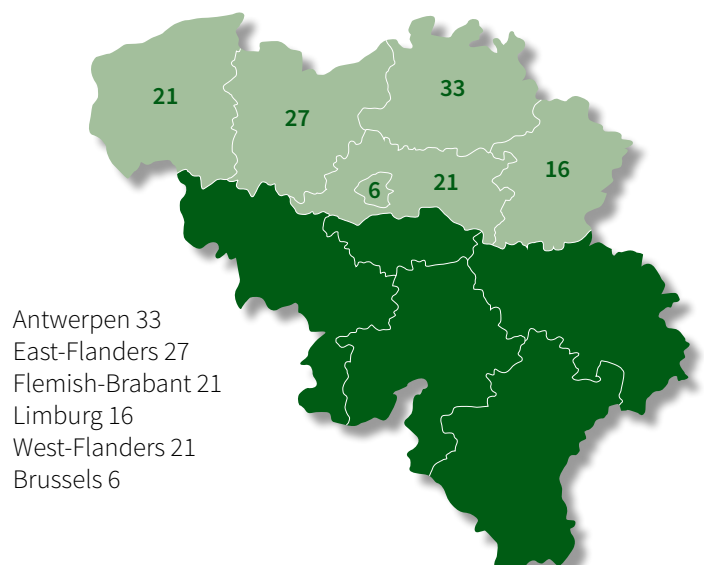
- 118 members are directly elected in 5 electoral constituencies of the Flemish Region.
- Six members are directly elected by the voters of the Brussels Region who have first voted on a list from the Dutch-speaking group for the Parliament of the Brussels Capital Region. They only vote on community matters. They do not participate in votes on regional matters.

### » Electoral constituencies

Since June 13, 2004, we have provincial constituencies for the elections of the Flemish Parliament. The Flemish Parliament adopted on 14 January 2004 a decree on this matter.

There are, Brussels excepted, 5 constituencies for the Flemish Parliament.

Seats per constituency<sup>(1)</sup>



<sup>(1)</sup> The number of seats is calculated on the basis of the National Register population figures.

## » Competences

### Issuing decrees

The Flemish Parliament passes decrees. These decrees have the same force of law as federal laws but only apply within the Dutch-speaking language Region as well as to certain Brussels institutions.

### Appointments and political control

The Flemish government is elected by the Flemish Parliament. It also gives it its investiture.

The Parliament can only force the government to resign in certain well defined circumstances through “motions of constructive disapproval”. A motion of disapproval is passed when the government no longer has the confidence of the Parliament. It is called constructive because the Parliament must immediately propose a new government.

Although not the case at the federal level, the Flemish Parliament may force an individual member of government to resign without the continuation of the entire government being jeopardised.

### Financial control

The Flemish Parliament approves the budget for the Flemish Community each year.

## » Workings and composition of the Flemish Parliament

The Flemish Parliament itself, i.e. without approval from the federal level (constitutional revision or legal changes), governs a certain number of aspects of its own workings and composition. It may for example change the boundaries of the electoral constituencies, the number of members of the Flemish Parliament and government, etc.

## The Flemish government

The Flemish government numbers a maximum of 11 members. At least one minister must reside within the bilingual Brussels-Capital Region.

The members of the government take their oath before the President of the Parliament. The President takes his oath before the King. The President of the Flemish government is called the “Minister-President”.

The members of the government issue “decrees”.

The Flemish government is assisted by a large administrative department. Certain public assignments are done by specialised public institutions such as VRT (Flemish television), De Lijn (Flemish public transport company), Kind en Gezin (Family and child agency), OVAM (Flemish waste agency) and VDAB (the Flemish agency for job centres and occupational training, equivalent to the Employment Office in the U.K.).