

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR "BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS" 2.0

Belgium's National Action Plan for the implementation of the
United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human
Rights 2024 – 2029

INTRODUCTION

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The theme of business and human rights is handled by a range of international, multilateral organisations. It involves the **United Nations (UN)** in the first instance, in particular the Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** also plays a major role as one of the specialist agencies of the United Nations. It unifies both governments and employer and employee representatives.

All the initiatives taken by these multilateral organisations refer to and build upon the UN's basic treaties, declarations and recommendations on human rights, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹, the International Covenant on Civil Rights and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the Tripartite Declaration by the ILO on fundamental principles and rights at work² and its other standards, norms and recommendations³.

The most major recent international developments in terms of the theme of companies and human rights are the **Guiding principles on business and human rights (United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights – UNGP)**, which were unanimously approved by the **United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)** on 16 June 2011. The UNGP contain 31 guiding principles on business and human rights in accordance with the 'protect, respect and remedy' policy framework⁴, also known as the three pillars of the UNGP.

The state is obliged to protect people from human rights violations and to guarantee their rights (first pillar), while companies are responsible for respecting human rights and taking the necessary actions to do so (second pillar). If human rights are violated, all actors are committed to providing access to effective remediation (third pillar). In performing and monitoring the implementation of the UNGP, the UNHRC has set up a working group for business and human rights. This working group launched the idea of National Action Plans (NAP) that should be drawn up by countries to indicate the actions they will take to implement the UNGP. Belgium published its first NAP in July 2017.

Ten years after the approval of the UNGP, in late 2021, the *UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights* published a roadmap for the coming ten years (UNGP 10+) entitled 'Raising the Ambition – Increasing the Pace'⁵. The roadmap argues – in the event of a second NAP – for comprehensive, constructive and deeper actions by countries.

¹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, G.A., res.217A (III), U.N. Doc A/810 at 71 (1948). See also: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/human-rights/universal-declaration/translations/english>

² Declaration by the ILO on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: <https://www.ilo.org/declaration/thedeclaration/textdeclaration/lang--en/index.htm>

³ See: <https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/lang--en/index.htm>

⁴ UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, Human Rights Council; 2011.

⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-business/next-decade-business-and-human-rights>

Alongside the United Nations' system, the **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** also deserves a mention as a multilateral international organisation. They too undertook a great many initiatives on business and human rights that help to shape the international policy framework.

The OECD formulated the **Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises**, drawn up in 1979 and reviewed in May 2011 and in June 2023. The guidelines contain recommendations for conducting responsible business in a global world. The review of the Guidelines in 2011 integrated a new section on human rights. Besides the duty of governments to safeguard human rights, businesses also have some responsibilities in relation to human rights. Belgium, along with 51 countries, is a signatory to these Guidelines, and has promised to promote and verify adherence to them by Belgian businesses.

EUROPEAN CONTEXT

In a European context too, various initiatives and decisions were taken on the theme of business and human rights, building upon those same international treaties and developments. The reference texts and basic treaties adopted in the lap of the Council of Europe, such as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)⁶ and the European Social Charter (ESC)⁷ also serve as a basis.

Both in the context of the European Union and in the context of the Council of Europe, various initiatives were taken and there was a call, following the UNHRC's request, for national action plans to be drawn up relating to business and human rights.^{8,9}

⁶ https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_NLD.pdf

⁷ <https://www.coe.int/web/european-social-charter>

⁸ Conclusions on Business and Human Rights, Council of the European Union; 20/06/2016.

⁹ 7 Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on human rights and business; Council of Europe; 2/03/2016

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SECOND NAP FOR BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In March 2021, the federal and regional governments, in the context of the Coordination Committee for Foreign Policy (Coormulti), decided to develop a second national action plan for business and human rights. This was based on the results from the first Belgian *National Baseline Assessment* (NBA), which was launched in 2019 and was finalised in late 2020¹⁰. This NBA on business and human rights evaluated the extent to which Belgium had converted the UNGP, including based on the actions from the first NAP on business and human rights from 2017, and where further actions need to be taken with a view to further implementation of the UNGP.

The task for developing a proposal for a second NAP for business and human rights was – as was also the case for drawing up the first NAP – entrusted to the Social Responsibility working group of the Interdepartmental Commission for Sustainable Development (CIDD-ICDO). This working group is chaired by the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development (FISD), along with the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (hereinafter FPS Foreign Affairs). Representatives from various government services, both at the federal and from the federated entities, sit on the CIDD-ICDO.

What is the CIDD-ICDO?

The Interdepartmental Commission for Sustainable Development (CIDD-ICDO) is among the four federal actors entrusted by the Act of 5 May 1997 with the task of coordinating the federal sustainable development policy. It unites the representatives from federal government services and from the communities and regions that are responsible for the development, implementation, support and evaluation of the federal SD policy. This makes the CIDD-ICDO the interdepartmental body that develops the horizontal approach to encouraging collaboration between federal government services and other organisations, and where additional actions are proposed alongside those carried out in the context of their own tasks.

Who is part of the CIDD-ICDO's 'Social Responsibility' working group?

Depending on the topic it is dealing with, the CIDD-ICDO brings relevant experts together in working groups. The 'Social Responsibility' working group is among the working groups with a permanent mandate for coordinating projects aimed at encouraging, simplifying and promoting social responsibility in organisations, both private and public. Representatives from the 14 federal government services and the 3 federated entities – the Brussels-Capital Region, the Flemish Region and the Walloon Region – participate in this working group.

¹⁰ https://www.duurzameontwikkeling.be/sites/default/files/content/hiva-bsog_stakeholder_input_nl_versie_12.6.2022.pdf

After drawing up a roadmap, which was first approved by the Coormulti, a stakeholder survey was launched from January to May 2022, whereby a range of stakeholders in Belgium were asked to submit their recommendations and proposals for actions based on the results from the *National Baseline Assessment*. The various contributions were processed by an independent third party – a consortium composed from the KU Leuven's Higher Institute for Labour Studies (HIVA-KU Leuven) and *Brussels School of Governance* from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, who were appointed through a government contract. Their final report¹¹ was delivered in early June 2022. The report not only analyses and collates the contributions from the various stakeholders, but also examines where there may be any consensus between the stakeholder groups on concrete actions and proposals and what links there are with the NBA's recommendations on business and human rights.

In parallel with this stakeholder survey process, the CIDD-ICDO working group members consulted the various government services on the results of the *National Baseline Assessment* and the contributions received from stakeholders during the consultation. Every government service, both federal and regional, has been checked as to what actions and initiatives within its competences can be taken to remedy the shortcomings as inventoried in the NBA, as well as what further actions can be taken on the topic of business and human rights.

¹¹<https://www.duurzameontwikkeling.be/nl/news/waar-moet-beleid-rond-ondernemingen-en-mensenrechten-op-focussen-volgens-de-belgische>

SCOPE ACTION PLAN

This second national action plan for business and human rights specifically responds to the three pillars of the UNGP, namely:

- The obligation of the state to protect individuals where third parties, including companies, violate human rights;
- The responsibility of companies to respect human rights;
- The need to ensure that victims of human rights violations have access to effective legal remedies.

This second NAP aims to encourage and support Belgian companies (active in Belgium and/or abroad) and international companies in respecting and promoting human rights.

The Belgian federal and regional authorities are fully dedicated to their duty to promote and defend human rights and aim to align their legal and policy framework with this.

In executing and implementing the NAP, the parties commit themselves to applying the non-discrimination principle. Based on the Act of 12 January 2007 on gender mainstreaming and the federal plan for gender mainstreaming (2020-2024), the federal government has specifically committed to integrating the gender dimension into these actions.

Respecting human rights and including social responsibility is not only the responsibility of companies, but of all organisations. Some actions in this action plan are thus not solely intended for companies, but for organisations in general (including public authorities).

A specific mention of SMEs should be drawn up in that regards. After all, it is often said of Belgium that it is a “*country of SMEs*”. According to FPS Economy statistics, Belgium had around 1.2 million SMEs in early 2021, accounting for 99.1% of the total number of companies. Eight sectors together form almost 80% of the Belgian SME landscape.

Although SMEs are often not the first target group at which the various initiatives from this NAP are directed, SMEs are often part of the value or supply chain for large companies. It is therefore highly likely that SMEs, in Belgium and producing countries, will face the impact of the actions below shortly. This is why it is important to help SMEs meet their obligations and take measures on the impact of the regulations as described in this NAP. In addition, it is important to take account of the administrative burden for companies – and in particular for SMEs. The authorities involved are therefore committed to taking account of their specific position, which demands an adapted approach, when developing the actions described that will have an (in)direct influence on SMEs. Where the actions are aimed at or have an effect on SMEs, the authorities wish to collaborate with the organisations representing the SMEs on the further development of those measures through a sectoral approach.

IMPLEMENTATION AND VERIFICATION

The second NAP is composed of 16 sections, which in total comprise 67 actions. In describing the actions, the actor(s) responsible for the implementation of the action concerned are always indicated. In this plan, every authority is consequently responsible for the actions to which it has committed itself as an actor involved. The national action plan for business and human rights shall be valid for a period of five years. The actions implemented will be monitored annually by the Social Responsibility Working Group at the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development (FISD) and this can be consulted on the following website: [FISD | \(duurzameontwikkeling.be\)](https://www.duurzameontwikkeling.be).

In the meantime, after three years, a *National Baseline Assessment* will be set up in relation to business and human rights, which will come alongside a stakeholder consultation. The decision may be taken to adjust or update the action plan based on this evaluation. On the basis of this evaluation, a progress report will be drawn up that will be published on the website <https://www.duurzameontwikkeling.be/nl>.

This report will then be added to the CIDD-ICDO's annual report to the federal government, the federal parliament and the Federal Council for Sustainable Development. It will also be provided for informational purposes to the various advisory councils that were involved in the consultation process for drawing up this national action plan.

AGREED ACTIONS

The 67 actions are subdivided into the following 16 sections:

1. **HUMAN RIGHTS AND DUE DILIGENCE (HRDD): LEGISLATION AND SUPPORT**
2. **REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY RELATING TO BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**
3. **BUSINESS AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**
4. **HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT**
5. **BUSINESS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND BELGIUM'S FOREIGN POLICY**
6. **BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**
7. **HUMAN RIGHTS IN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**
8. **PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND COVENANTS RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS**
9. **RAISING AWARENESS, TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR COMPANIES AND ORGANISATIONS RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS**
10. **MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS IN BELGIUM**
11. **MEASURES AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET**
12. **COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND COMBATING SOCIAL FRAUD AND SOCIAL DUMPING**
13. **ACCESS TO RECOVERY**
14. **LABOUR PROTECTION AND HEALTH AT WORK**
15. **PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**
16. **VARIOUS ACTIONS**



I. HUMAN RIGHTS AND DUE DILIGENCE (HRDD): LEGISLATION AND SUPPORT

ACTION 1. EU DIRECTIVE ON CORPORATE DUE DILIGENCE (CSDD)

ACTION 2. SIGNING OF THE GERMAN-DUTCH COMMON DECLARATION ON A LIVEABLE INCOME AND A LIVING WAGE

ACTION 3. CONTRIBUTION TO THE APPROACH TO THE USE OF FORCED LABOUR IN THE GLOBAL VALUE CHAIN

ACTION 4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGULATION ON THE IMPORT OF CONFLICT MINERALS

ACTION 5. SHARING KNOWLEDGE ON CHAIN MANAGEMENT AND APPROPRIATE DUE DILIGENCE IN BELGIAN SECTORAL LEARNING NETWORKS

ACTION 6. PROMOTION OF THE PRACTICAL ONLINE MANUAL ON DUE DILIGENCE



2. REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY RELATING TO BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

ACTION 7. CONVERTING THE CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING
DIRECTIVE (CSRD) INTO BELGIAN LAW

ACTION 8. FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS DURING THE 'AWARDS FOR BEST
BELGIAN SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS'



3. BUSINESS AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

ACTION 9. ENHANCING AWARENESS-RAISING FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS AS TO THE INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS INTO RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND MAKING IT EASIER TO SHARE INFORMATION AND GOOD PRACTICES

ACTION 10. RAISING AWARENESS AMONG COMPANIES AS TO THE USE OF THE DIRECTIVES ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND COMPANIES (DEVELOPED BY UNICEF, SAVE THE CHILDREN AND GLOBAL COMPACT), INCLUDING THROUGH FACILITATING EXCHANGE SESSIONS WITH COMPANIES THAT ARE ALREADY IMPLEMENTING THESE PRINCIPLES

ACTION 11. ACCESSIBLE AND CHILD-FRIENDLY LEGAL AND RECOVERY SYSTEMS AND MECHANISMS THAT ENSURE CHILDREN AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES HAVE ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE AND ADAPTED PROCEDURES



4. HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT

ACTION 12. BETTER INTEGRATION OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS INTO FREE
TRADE AGREEMENTS

ACTION 13. MONITORING OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINEXPO
STUDY



5. BUSINESS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND BELGIUM'S FOREIGN POLICY

ACTION 14. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN INITIATIVES ON HUMAN RIGHTS

ACTION 15. PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND THE CIVIC SPACE

ACTION 16. PROMOTION OF A NEW EDITION OF THE OECD GUIDELINES FOR MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES

ACTION 17. INTEGRATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS DIMENSION INTO FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION (BCR)



6. BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

ACTION 18. SUPPORT FOR THE BELGIAN PARTNERSHIP 'BEYOND CHOCOLATE'

ACTION18A SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION IN THE 'WORLD COCOA CONFERENCE'

ACTION 19. SUPPORT WITH PROMOTING MARKET ACCESS FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

ACTION 20. SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 'SDG FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME'

ACTION 21. SUPPORT FOR THE 'BETTER JOBS ACCELERATOR FUND' PROGRAMME

ACTION 22. SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (BIO INVEST)

21A DECENT WORK APPROACH WITH THE UN, ILO AND PARTNER COUNTRIES

21B DECENT WORK APPROACH WITH THE WORLD BANK



7. HUMAN RIGHTS IN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

ACTION 23.
PURCHASING

UPDATING AND ENHANCING SOCIAL AND ETHICAL CRITERIA IN

ACTION 24.

UPDATING, DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING SUITABLE TOOLS

ACTION 25.
LEARNING NETWORKS

SHARING KNOWLEDGE THROUGH PROJECT OPERATIONS AND

ACTION 26.

MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP OF SUSTAINABLE CRITERIA

ACTION 27.

RESEARCH INTO POTENTIAL NEW ACTIONS IN THE FUTURE



8. PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND COVENANTS RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS

ACTION 28. WITHIN THE NATURAL STONE SECTOR: SUPPORT FOR THE TRUSTONE INITIATIVE

ACTION 29. WITHIN THE TEXTILES AND CLOTHING SECTOR: PROMOTING A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING



9. RAISING AWARENESS, TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR COMPANIES AND ORGANISATIONS RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS

ACTION 30. CREATING AND UPDATING TOOLS AROUND HUMAN RIGHTS

ACTION 31. INFORMATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH TRAINING AND OTHER COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

ACTION 32. RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS AMONG BELGIAN OFFICIALS AND BUSINESSES ACTIVE ABROAD AND DURING ECONOMIC MISSIONS

ACTION 33. TAKING ACTION IN TERMS OF RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

ACTION 34. 'SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS' – 'SUSTAINABLE FOOD LABELLING'

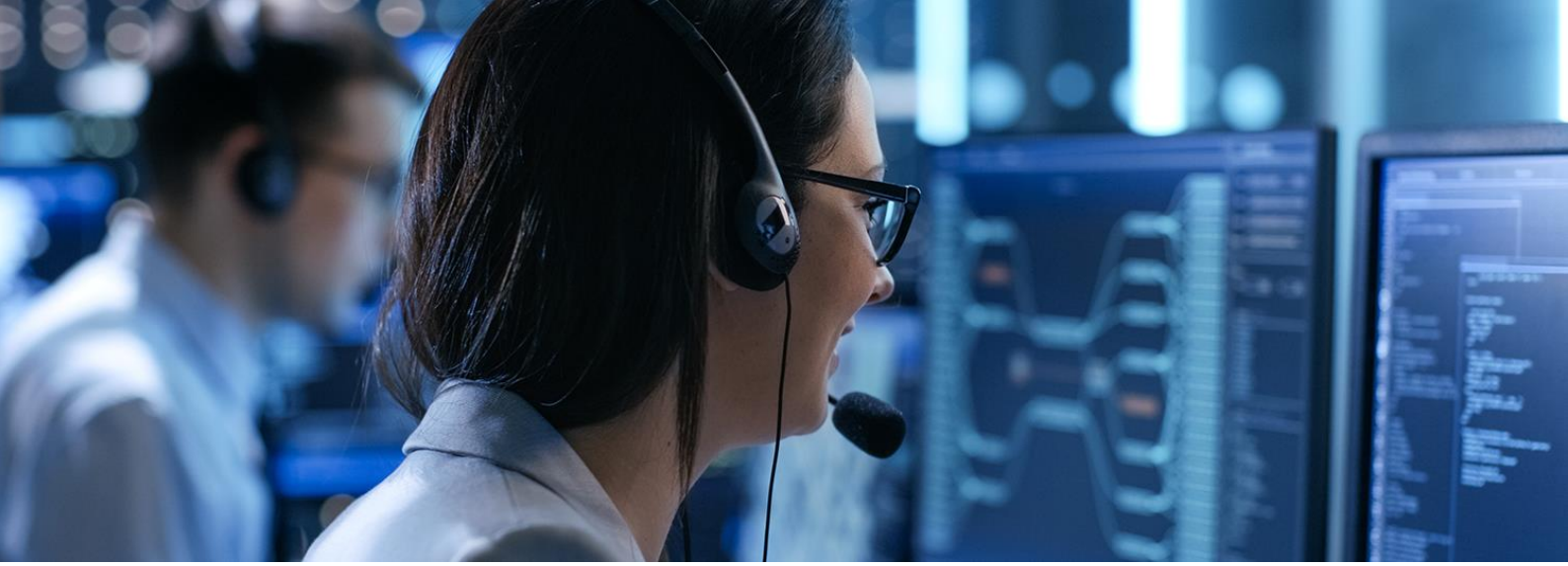
ACTION 35. THE AWARENESS-RAISING TOOL ON CORRUPTION



10. MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS IN BELGIUM

ACTION 36. MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIONS FROM THIS
NAP AND EVALUATION

ACTION 37. EXTRA FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SDG BAROMETER



II. MEASURES AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

ACTION 38. CONTINUATION OF THE ACTIVITIES FOR THE LAUNCH OF A NATIONAL PLAN TO COMBAT RACISM

ACTION 39. SETTING UP A SYSTEM FOR DIVERSITY AND DISCRIMINATION MONITORING AT A SECTORAL LEVEL

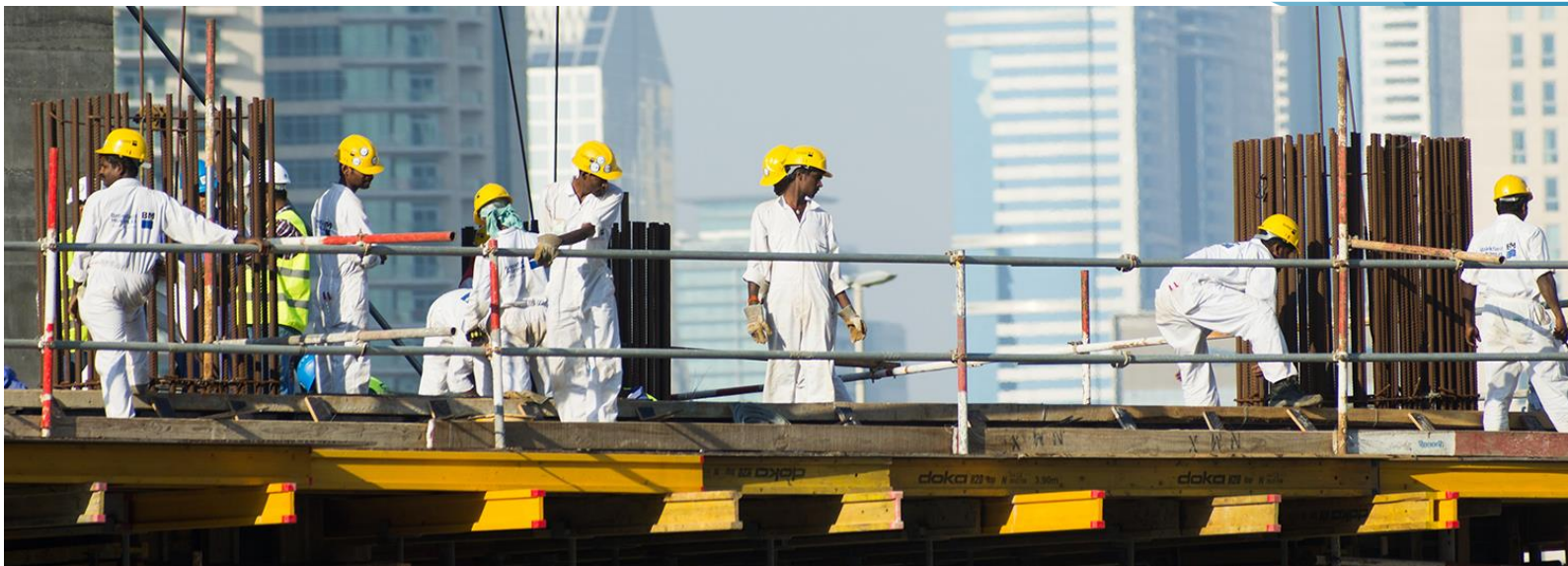
ACTION 40. CONVERSION OF THE 'PAY TRANSPARENCY' DIRECTIVE

ACTION 41. ENDING DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

ACTION 42. APPLICATION OF THE NEW LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON COMBATING DISCRIMINATION, WHICH INTRODUCES BETTER PROTECTION AGAINST REPRISALS FOR WITNESSES AND VICTIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

ACTION 43. EQUAL TREATMENT TO COMBAT DISCRIMINATION

ACTION 44. ENSURING A WORK-LIFE BALANCE



12. COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND COMBATING SOCIAL FRAUD AND SOCIAL DUMPING

ACTION 45. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FEDERAL STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025 TO COMBAT SOCIAL FRAUD AND SOCIAL DUMPING AND THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOURTH ACTION PLAN FOR THE BATTLE AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

ACTION 46. RAISING AWARENESS AND TRAINING FIRST-LINE ACTORS ON THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION, IN PARTICULAR FROM THIRD COUNTRIES

ACTION 47. THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE INTERNET AS A RESEARCH TOOL FOR THE SOCIAL INSPECTION SERVICES

ACTION 48. INFORMATION AND GOOD PRACTICES AS TO COMPLIANCE WITH THE STIPULATIONS REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF THE NON-PUNITIVE CLAUSE IN THE CRIMINAL CODE

ACTION 49. IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE ON THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING

ACTION 50. STATISTICS ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING SO AS TO COMBAT THIS BETTER



13. ACCESS TO RECOVERY

ACTION 51. DEVELOPMENT OF A FREE DIGITAL TOOL RELATING TO ACCESS TO REMEDIATION IN BELGIUM

ACTION 52. ENHANCING THE NATIONAL CONTACT POINT (NCP) AS REGARDS CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

ACTION 53. BETTER ACCESS TO LEGAL AND JUDICIAL SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE

ACTION 54. PROVIDING NEW COLLECTIVE COMPLAINTS MECHANISMS OR SUPPORTING THE EXISTING ONES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH (FUTURE) EU DIRECTIVES

ACTION 55. PROVIDING A FIRST-LINE SUPPORT MECHANISM FOR REPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS



14. LABOUR PROTECTION AND HEALTH AT WORK

ACTION 56. MONITORING, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF THE LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS REGARDING THE NATURE OF LABOUR RELATIONS FOR PLATFORM WORKERS

ACTION 57. PARTICIPATION IN THE DISCUSSIONS ON THE PROPOSAL FOR A DIRECTIVE CONCERNING THE IMPROVEMENT OF LABOUR CONDITIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF LABOUR THROUGH A PLATFORM

ACTION 58. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR COMBATING SOCIAL FRAUD FOR 2023-2024

ACTION 59. IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASES 2 AND 3 OF THE FEDERAL ACTION PLAN FOR 'MENTAL WELL-BEING AT WORK'



15. PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

ACTION 60. NO SERIOUS DETRACTION FROM ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

ACTION 61. APPROVAL OF THE ACT ON THE PROTECTION OF HUMANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN PROSPECTING, EXPLORING AND OPERATING SEA AND OCEAN FLOOR RESOURCES AND THEIR SUBSTRATA BEYOND THE BORDERS OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION

ACTION 62. RATIFICATION OF THE NEW TREATY FOR THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF BIODIVERSITY BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION (BBNJ)

ACTION 63. BRUSSELS AIR-CLIMATE AND ENERGY PLAN (PACE)



16. VARIOUS ACTIONS

ACTION 64. MAKING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT DEPENDENT UPON RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

64.BIS PUBLIC SUPPORT AS PART OF THE SHIFTING ECONOMY

ACTION 65. THE BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION IS TO BECOME THE FIRST 'FAIR TRADE' REGION

ACTION 66. INSPECTION OF THE IMPORT, EXPORT AND TRANSIT OF WEAPONS, MUNITIONS, MILITARY EQUIPMENT, PEACE-KEEPING EQUIPMENT AND DUAL-USE EQUIPMENT IN THE FLEMISH REGION

ACTION 67. RATIFICATION OF THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION MECHANISM FOR RESPECTING HUMAN RIGHTS

LIST OF ACTORS INVOLVED AND ANTICIPATED PERIODS PER ACTION

Action	Actors involved	Anticipated period
HUMAN RIGHTS AND DUE DILIGENCE (HRDD): LEGISLATION AND SUPPORT		
1. Contributing to the EU Directive on Corporate Sustainable Due Diligence (CSDDD)	Federal government (FPS Economy, FPS Justice, FPS Foreign Affairs), Brussels government, Flemish government, Walloon government	In accordance with the discussions at an EU level
2. Signing of the German-Dutch common declaration on a liveable income and a living wage	Federal government	Ongoing
3. Contribution to the approach to the use of forced labour in the global value chains	Federal government (FPS Economy, FPS Justice, FPS Employment, FPS Foreign Affairs, FPS Finance, including Customs administration)	In accordance with the discussions at an EU level
4. Implementation of the regulation on the import of conflict minerals	Federal government (FPS Economy, FPS Finance, FPS Justice, FPS Foreign Affairs, and the other competent FPSes)	Ongoing
5. Sharing knowledge on chain management and appropriate due diligence in Belgian sectoral learning networks	Federal government (FISD)	2021-2023
6. Sharing knowledge on chain management and appropriate due diligence in Belgian sectoral learning networks	Federal government (FISD)	2023-2024
2. REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY RELATING TO BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS		
7. Converting the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) into Belgian law	Drafting: Federal government (FPS Economy), Belgian National Bank (BNB), Financial Services and Markets Authority (FSMA) Conversion: Federal government (FPS Economy and FPS Justice)	2023
8. Focus on human rights during the 'Awards for Best Belgian Sustainability Reports'	Federal government (FISD)	2022-2024
3. BUSINESS AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS		
9. Enhancing awareness-raising for all stakeholders as to the integration of children's rights into responsible business and making it easier to share information and good practices	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs)	Ongoing
10. Raising awareness among companies as to the use of the Directives on children's rights and companies (developed by UNICEF, Save the Children and Global Compact), including through facilitating exchange sessions with companies that are implementing these principles	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs, FPS Economy and FISD), Flemish Government (FIT)	Ongoing
11. Accessible and child-friendly legal and recovery systems and mechanisms that ensure children and their representatives have access to effective and adapted procedures	Federal government (FPS Justice)	Ongoing

4. HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT		
12. Better integration of respect for human rights into free trade agreements	All governments (Federal, Brussels, Flanders, Wallonia)	Duration of the plan
13. Monitoring of the recommendations from the Finexpo study	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs)	Ongoing
5. BUSINESS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND BELGIUM'S FOREIGN POLICY		
14. Contributions to the international and European initiatives on human rights	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs), Flemish government, Brussels government, Walloon government	Ongoing
15. Protection of human rights defenders and the <i>civic space</i>	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs, DGD, embassies postings on the ground)	Ongoing
16. Promotion of a new edition of the OECD guidelines for multinational companies	Federal government (FPS Economy and FPS Foreign Affairs), permanent representatives at OECD and Central Administration	Adoption of revised and updated tool in 2023
17. Integration of the human rights dimension into foreign missions of the Brussels-Capital Region (BCR)		
6. BUSINESSES AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION		
18. Support for the Belgian partnership <i>Beyond Chocolate</i>	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs – DGD)	Ongoing
Support and participation in the 'World Cocoa Conference'	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs) in collaboration with IDH (<i>The Sustainable Trade Initiative</i>), Brussels-Capital Region (Brussels Economy and Employment)	Ongoing
19. Support with promoting market access for sustainable manufacturers	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs – DGD) with the following actors involved: Enabel (Trade for Development Centre)	Ongoing
20. Support for the implementation of the 'SDG for international development programme'	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs – DGD) through a grant to <i>The Shift</i>	2021 – 2024
21. Support for the 'Better Jobs Accelerator Fund' programme	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs – DGD) in collaboration with IDH 'The Sustainable Trade Initiative'	Ongoing
22. Contribution to businesses in developing countries (BIO Invest)	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs – DGD)	Ongoing
22.1 Decent work approach with the UN, ILO and partner countries	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs – DGD)	Ongoing
22.2 Decent work approach with the World Bank	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs – DGD), BIO Invest	Ongoing
7. HUMAN RIGHTS IN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS		
23. Updating and enhancing social and ethical criteria in purchasing	Federal government (Policy and Support, FISC, Chancellery), Flemish government (Het Facilitair Bedrijf), Walloon government (SG, Sustainable Development Directorate), Brussels government (authorities and autonomous government institutions of the Brussels-Capital Region)	Depending on the type of action (late 2024 or ongoing)
24. Updating, developing and promoting suitable tools	Federal government (FISC), Flemish government (Het Facilitair Bedrijf), Walloon government (SG, Sustainable Development Directorate), Brussels-Capital Region (Environment Brussels and Brussels International)	Duration of the action plan

25. Sharing knowledge through project operations and learning networks	Federal government (FISD), Flemish government (Het Facilitair Bedrijf), Walloon government (SG and Sustainable Development Directorate), Brussels-Capital Region (Environment Brussels)	Duration of the action plan
26. Monitoring and follow-up of sustainable criteria	Federal government (Policy and Support in collaboration with FISD), Flemish government, Brussels-Capital Region	Duration of the action plan
27. Research into potential new actions in the future	Federal government (Policy and Support and FISD)	Duration of the action plan
8. PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND COVENANTS RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS		
28. Within the nature sector: support for the TruStone initiative	Flemish government (FPS Foreign Affairs)	Duration of the initiative
29. Within the textiles and clothing sector: promoting a multi-stakeholder initiative for sustainable purchasing	Walloon government, Brussels-Capital Region (Brussels Economy and Employment & hub.brussels)	Duration of the action plan
9. RAISING AWARENESS, TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR COMPANIES AND ORGANISATIONS RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS		
30. Creating and updating tools around human rights	Federal government (FISD), Flemish government (FIT and MVO Vlaanderen), Walloon government (SPW Wallonie, Sowalfin), Brussels government (hub.brussels)	Duration of the action plan
31. Information on human rights through training and other communication channels	Federal government (FPS Foreign Affairs and FPS Economy), Flemish Government (FIT, MVO and VLAIIO), Walloon government (AWEX, Sowalfin) Brussels-Capital Region (hub.brussels)	Ongoing
32. Raising awareness about human rights among Belgian officials and businesses active abroad and during economic missions	Federal government, Flemish government (FIT), Walloon government (Sowalfin and AWEX), Brussels government (hub.brussels)	2023 – 2024
33. Taking action in terms of responsible consumption	Federal government	Ongoing
34. 'Sustainable food systems' – 'sustainable food labelling'	Federal government (FPS Economy and FPS Public Health), Brussels-Capital Region (Environment Brussels)	Ongoing
35. The awareness-raising tool in respect of corruption	Federal government (FPS Justice, FPS Economy and FPS Foreign Affairs)	2024
10. MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS IN BELGIUM		
36. Monitoring the implementation of the actions from this NAP and evaluation	Federal government (FISD and FPS Foreign Affairs)	Ongoing
37. Extra focus on human rights in the SDG barometer	Federal government (FISD)	2024
11. MEASURES AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET		
38. Continuation of the activities for the launch of a national plan to combat racism	Federal and federated governments	Ongoing
39. Setting up a system for diversity and discrimination monitoring at a sectoral level	Federal government (FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue)	2022 – 2024
40. Conversion of the 'Pay transparency' guideline	Federal government (Institute for the Equality of Women and Men and FPS Employment)	Prior to 7 June 2026

41. Ending discriminatory practices	Federal government (Institute for the Equality of Women and Men and Equal Opportunities service of FPS Justice), Flemish government (Equal Opportunities service of ABB), Brussels-Capital Region (Brussels Economy and Employment, Equal Brussels, Actiris and the competent administrations)	Ongoing
42. Application of the new legal framework on combating discrimination, which introduces better protection against reprisals for witnesses and victims of discrimination	Federal and federated governments (FPS Justice and all other departments involved (politics, asylum and migration, public health, defence, youth, etc.)), Flemish government (Equal Opportunities service of ABB)	Ongoing
43. Equal treatment to combat discrimination	Federal government (Institute for the Equality of Women and Men and Equal Opportunities service of FPS Justice) Flemish government (Equal Opportunities service of ABB)	Ongoing
44. Ensuring a work-life balance	Federal government (Institute for the Equality of Women and Men and FPS Employment) Flemish government (Equal Opportunities service of ABB)	Ongoing
12. COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND COMBATING SOCIAL FRAUD AND SOCIAL DUMPING		
45. Implementation of the federal strategic plan 2022-2025 to combat social fraud and social dumping and the further implementation of the fourth Action Plan for the battle against human trafficking	Federal government (Social Intelligence and Tracing Service in collaboration with the social inspection services (NSSO, TSW, NEO, NISSE, NIHDI)) and FPS Justice)	2022 – 2025
46. Raising awareness and training first-line actors on the rights of victims of economic exploitation, in particular from third countries	Federal government (Social Intelligence and Tracing Service, FPS Employment, NSSO, TSW, FPS Home Affairs)	2022 – 2024
47. The use of social media and the Internet as a research tool for the social inspection services	Federal government (Social Intelligence and Tracing Service in collaboration with TSW and NSSO)	2022 – 2024
48. Information and good practices as to compliance with the stipulations regarding the application of the non-punitive clause in the Criminal Code	Federal government (FPS Justice)	Ongoing
49. Improving knowledge on the use of new technologies in human trafficking	Federal government (FPS Justice)	Ongoing
50. Statistics on human trafficking so as to combat this better	Federal government (FPS Justice)	Ongoing
13. ACCESS TO RECOVERY		
51. Development of a free digital tool relating to access to remediation in Belgium	Federal government (FPS Justice)	2023 – 2024
52. Enhancing the National Contact Point (NCP) as regards corporate social responsibility	Federal government (FPS Economy)	Ongoing
53. Better access to legal and judicial support for vulnerable people	Federal government (FPS Justice – Order of Flemish Bars / Order of French and German-speaking Bars)	Ongoing
54. Providing new collective complaints mechanisms or supporting the existing ones, in accordance with (future) EU Directives	Federal government (FPS Economy)	Ongoing

55. Providing a first-line support mechanism for reporting human rights violations	Flemish government (Flemish Human Rights Institute, VMRI)	Ongoing
14. LABOUR PROTECTION AND HEALTH AT WORK		
56. Monitoring, implementation and evaluation of the legislative amendments regarding the nature of labour relations for platform workers	Federal government (FPS Employment and FPS Social Security)	2022 – 2024
57. Participation in the discussions on the proposal for a Directive concerning the improvement of labour conditions in the context of the performance of labour through a platform	Federal government (FPS Employment and FPS Social Security)	2022 – 2024
58. Implementation of the action plan for combating social fraud for 2023-2024	Federal government (FPS Employment, NSSO and NISSE)	Ongoing
59. Implementation of Phases 2 and 3 of the Federal Action Plan for 'Mental well-being at work'	Federal government (FPS Social Security, FPS Public Health, FPS Economy, SMEs, Civil Society and Energy, FPS Employment and Policy and Support)	Phase 2: late 2022 Phase 3: late 2022 – early 2023
15. PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT		
60. No serious detracton from environmental objectives	Federal government	Ongoing
61. Approval of the Act on the protection of humans and the environment when prospecting, exploring and operating sea and ocean floor resources and their substrata beyond the borders of national jurisdiction	Federal government (FPS Public Health, Safety of the Food Chain and Environment, Directorate-General for the Environment (DGEM), Marine Environment service, BMM and AD Energie))	2023
62. Ratification of the new treaty for the protection and sustainable development of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ)	Federal government (FPS Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment and FPS Foreign Affairs)	Prior to late 2024
63. Brussels Air-Climate and Energy Plan	Brussels-Capital Region (Brussels Environment, Brussels Housing, Brussels Economy and Employment, urban.brussels, perspective.brussels and Brussels Mobility)	2030
16. VARIOUS ACTIONS		
64. Making government support dependent upon respect for human rights	Walloon government	2024
64.1 Government support in the context of the Shifting Economy	Brussels-Capital Region	2030
65. The Brussels-Capital Region is to become the first 'Fair Trade' region	Brussels government (Government of the Brussels-Capital Region, administrations and autonomous government bodies) Enabel (Trade for Development Centre)	2029
66. Inspection of the import, export and transit of weapons, munitions, military equipment, peace-keeping equipment and dual-use equipment in the Flemish Region	Flemish government (FPS Foreign Affairs and VLAIO) Brussels-Capital Region (Licences service)	Ongoing
67. Ratification of the optional Protocol to the Treaty Convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and establishment of an independent verification mechanism for respecting human rights	Federal government (FPS Justice and all other departments involved (politics, asylum and migration, public health, defence, youth, etc.) Flemish government Wallonia-Brussels Federation German-speaking Community	Ongoing

