



PLAN
MARSHALL
4.0

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Introduction

This is a particularly crucial moment in the history of Wallonia. The Sixth State Reform granted Wallonia greater autonomy, which is reflected in new skills and new responsibilities. These new responsibilities are an opportunity for Wallonia, as it now has at its disposal additional levers that are essential for its economic, social, territorial and human development.

This new institutional environment is taking shape against a backdrop of major socio-economic and environmental challenges. The social and budgetary consequences of the economic and financial crisis are making themselves felt, and are amplified by European accounting rules that greatly reduce States' margins for manoeuvre and capacity for action. Wallonia must also face the challenge of the environmental and energy transition if it is to provide the conditions for communal living. Finally, Wallonia must also manage significant demographic changes, in particular population growth and increased life expectancy.

Wallonia can count on its many resources, numerous strengths and its vast experience in this area. With the *Marshall Plan* in 2005, the *Marshall Plan 2.Green* in 2009 and the *Marshall Plan 2022*, Walloon civic forces created radically new governance tools which have led to the roll-out of an ambitious regional development strategy.

The undeniable early successes were recognised by a number of observers and highlighted in independent evaluations. Not only has Wallonia put a halt to the structural crisis that had been affecting it for decades, it also began an in-depth renovation of its economic fabric, restoring the foundations of a modern region and regenerating the pillars of its prosperity.

So we are perfectly equipped to consolidate these positive trends and accelerate the economic transition process currently underway in Wallonia.

Today more than ever, this process involves innovation and training in every sector and every type of business. This objective is the cornerstone of the Marshall Plan and has been the driving force behind its updates.

This ambition, whose aim is to boost structural change, will clearly be achieved over the long term. This explains why the Marshall Plan is always at the heart of Walloon strategy: because it targets the root of the problem and does so by both renovating our promising industrial sectors - the driving force of our economy - and changing the mentalities and image of Wallonia.

This is the aim of this Marshall Plan "4.0" during this tenure.

As the Walloon Economic and Social Council stressed in its report of 2 February 2015, this Plan "*does not represent the entire Government policy, or even all the measures that help to support economic activity and employment in Wallonia*", but "*is the heart of socio-economic restructuring actions*" that should unite social partners in a search for the broadest operational consensus possible.

Pursuant to the Regional Policy Declaration, each minister will also develop growth-generating projects in addition to or in synergy with the measures contained in the Plan. This refers in particular to the "Infrastructures" Plan, the Administrative Simplification Plan, the "Small Business Act", reforms to subsidies for employment, research and economic expansion and also the Spatial Development Code. All these reforms present opportunities to coordinate the measures of Marshall Plan 4.0 and other government actions and support the priority objective of restructuring and job creation.

The Government's objective is to produce an improved plan focussing on priority measures for economic redeployment that are likely to form an effective industrial policy based on innovation and including the principles of "good governance" that we have developed as we have gained experience.

To do this, we can use the lessons learnt from the first two plans and their theme-based and global evaluations. These evaluations allowed us to identify areas for improvement and new opportunities for action for the Walloon economy.

We can also use the areas identified at the end of the last tenure when the *Marshall Plan 2022* was being drafted. This Plan was drafted using an innovative method based around a forward-looking, participative approach and allowed us to identify objectives as well as strategies for achieving them in the next decade. The *Marshall Plan 2022* therefore offers a new framework for action so that we can outline the operational objectives and measures that the Government plans to prioritise during this tenure.

The Marshall Plan 4.0 capitalises on these different benefits, on the highlights of the "Marshall Plan" and "Marshall Plan 2.Green", as well as on the long-term forecasts identified by the Marshall Plan 2022.

This means that it will strengthen actions to promote a context favourable to the creation of jobs and activities, consolidate the priority given to training, research and its development, continue work to mobilise the region so as to boost the economic fabric and focus its support on the energy transition.

In addition to these assertions, the Marshall Plan 4.0. incorporates new guidelines, particularly for the greater integration of the "digital" dimension, with its many opportunities. The aim of this new direction is to place Wallonia at the forefront of the fourth industrial revolution which currently comprises the extensive digitisation of economic and productive exchanges within a connected global system.

The convergence lines and defining focuses of the Marshall Plan 4.0 are clear and ambitious.

They aim to:

- turn human capital into an asset through measures to strengthen the links between training and education; these measures will be drafted in coordination with the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, particularly through the development of sandwich-type training schemes;
- support the development of industry within a technologically proactive perspective, by finding more and better ways to involve SMEs;
- use the territory as an essential resource in our economic development;
- support efficiency and energy transition, particularly by integrating and strengthening the circular economy process;
- support digital innovation by integrating this dimension into industrial and social practices.

These areas also converge with the strategic guidelines adopted by the ERDF/ESF, producing leverage effects (training of workers, primarily by improving relations between education and training, integrating young people into the labour market, financial support for innovation and research, business development support, territorial development to promote economic activity, support for the sustainable production of energy and smart specialisation of the territory through competitiveness clusters, taking particular account of the digital dimensions).

Within the framework of the Marshall Plan 4.0., the Walloon Government also plans to create synergies between Wallonia and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation where these can be developed in an effective and mutually beneficial way. These synergies will be a priority in the context of the necessary links between training and education policies. The aim is to implement inter-linked policies that transcend institutional frameworks and to

offer convergent systems to meet the needs of citizens. Synergies will also be sought directly with the Brussels Region, particularly for calls for projects by the competitiveness clusters. Finally, appropriate partnerships will also be sought with the German-speaking community.

A total of over 2.4 billion euros will be allocated to this *Marshall Plan 4.0*, to which an additional 468 million euros of new alternative financing will be added. It should also be noted that alternative financing projects from the Marshall Plan 2.Green will be developed during this tenure, up to a maximum of 841 million euros.

The Marshall dynamic has always been characterised by the fact that it includes good governance principles. The Government intends to continue with and strengthen its tools for precise, thorough and objectified management through independent evaluations; such evaluations are necessary for an ambitious project.

To this end, the Walloon Government plans to:

- continue to confirm its choices by using independent juries and objective analyses;
- guarantee efficient and constant management of the plan, primarily through its coordination by the Special Delegate;
- monitor the progress of the plan on a quarterly basis;
- adopt management by "objectives" and thus by "indicators" of achievement and results, in close association with IWEPS (Walloon Institute for Evaluation, Prospective Studies and Statistics);
- under the auspices of IWEPS, ensure that independent experts, in association with the social partners, carry out periodic global evaluations of the plan with a view to the "continuous" improvement of the systems and to assess the work carried out and any areas for expansion;
- provide for a specific budget management tool to allow flexible and dynamic management of the Marshall Plan resources; this will facilitate budgetary adjustments in accordance with the implementation of actions.

The Marshall Plan 4.0 therefore involves continuing already-successful growth-generating measures and launching new initiatives that meet the current challenges that we want to turn into opportunities.

This plan is the Walloon strategy for its citizens and sets out the consensus reached among the social partners, who came together based on an analysis and several shared principles for action. These partners were heavily involved in defining the priority areas of this text and, together with the Government, will be responsible for its implementation.

Wallonia is entering a new stage in its development, within a context of unprecedented autonomy. It is united around its values, its objectives and its collective project, and intends to fully assume its responsibilities for creating a future consistent with the aspirations of all Walloon citizens.

**PRIORITY AREA I:
Turning human capital into an asset**

I.1. Promote sandwich courses as a measure for providing access to the employment market or a return to work

Wallonia must do a better job of exploiting the potential of sandwich courses. This educational method directly meets businesses' needs for skills, making them more competitive while satisfying the specific requirements of several demographic groups who are currently seeking qualifications (learners, job-seekers, workers, etc.). Sandwich courses must be identified as a benchmark area for high-quality professional integration. To achieve this, we need to develop a cross-functional approach in collaboration with the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, in order to remove the main barriers to the growth of this area.

This measure will involve the following actions:

I.1.1. Increase the number of in-company training places and facilitate their management

The increase in sandwich courses will require more company internships, mainly on the basis of sector-based agreements. To achieve this, we need to bring the supply of and demand for internships together. The aim of this action is to develop a unique interactive platform, managed by OFFA (French-Speaking Office for Sandwich Courses), on which employers and trainees/learners can cross-check their respective internship requirements.

I.1.2. Harmonise the status of sandwich-course learners and the business management modalities

The objective of this action will be to make the system more attractive, more qualitative and less competitive for both learners and employers. This will involve:

- reconfiguring financial incentives for sandwich courses;
- harmonising training standards through greater monitoring.

I.1.3. Improve recognition of the knowledge and professional skills acquired outside the traditional learning and training pathways

This action will aim to increase the number of professions whose skills can be validated by the Consortium¹, principally by:

- developing a list of skills to be validated, focusing on the professions of the future;
- creating the corresponding tests;
- approving *ad hoc* validation centres.

I.1.4. Develop pilot experiences to generalise the issuing of certificates equivalent to those issued by the education system.

In cooperation with the education system, the aim is to allow sandwich course providers to issue a qualification certificate equivalent to that in the education system, in addition to their own. A second objective is to allow young people who have taken a sandwich

¹ The Consortium for the Validation of Skills comprises a series of public ongoing professional training institutions (Brussels-Training – French Community Commission, Social Promotion Education -WBF, Forem, IFAPME, Training Service for SMEs – French Community Commission). Its aim is to recognise citizens' professional skills, beyond those obtained in school (up to age of 18).

course to obtain a certificate of study equivalent to that of the education system and/or an equivalent higher education certificate.

I.1.5. Improve the quality of the training and supervision provided in sandwich course centres.

This involves the reform of arts and science courses to make the sector more attractive and more competitive.

I.1.6. Strengthen the link between the training offer and the professions of the future.

This will involve creating a register of the professions of the future, in coordination with the "Qualifying Education - Training - Employment" (EFE) centres, on the basis of a training provision adapted to sectors and businesses.

I.1.7. Cultivate sandwich courses as a learning method in higher education

The evaluation report on the pilot experiments carried out over the last four academic years highlighted the satisfaction felt by the different stakeholders (colleges, students and partner businesses) and the educational benefits. The objective of this action will therefore be to extend the pilot projects developed in partnership with the IFAPME and to make sandwich courses a permanent part of higher education. This will primarily involve the modification of the current regulatory texts.

I.2. Develop life-long guidance for learners

A career path is based mainly on a good knowledge of the labour market and the opportunities for learning. Although there are currently several stakeholders and a number of initiatives in place for providing information on professions and jobs, many citizens still encounter problems in choosing the correct learning path.

This measure, implemented in collaboration with the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, must involve the public as a whole (pupils, students and workers, whether employed or unemployed, etc.). It must aim to develop a life-long guidance process so that every citizen becomes a stakeholder in their own career plan and also becomes part of a training or education process that meets business needs and their own personal aspirations. Particular attention will be paid to actions linked to the professions of the future and to growth sectors.

This work will also allow learning, education and guidance professionals to obtain the high-quality tools and information they need to perform their roles.

I.2.1. Create an information, awareness and guidance service

For information to be useful and high-quality, it is essential that we have a tool able to list and analyse this information, model it for the different sections of the public and distribute it quickly and in accordance with the appropriate vectors. The objective is therefore to create a unique service working on "life-long" guidance. This service would be autonomous and structured around the three *Trade Centres*, - combining the expertise and systems of the Carrefour Emploi Formation Orientation (CEFO) and the Centre Psycho-Médico-Social (CPMS) ; it would also be based around a multi-partner network that was open to the world of business and worked to support the sector's stakeholders by being directly accessible to the relevant sectors of the public (learners, parents, etc.). It will be based on:

- the dynamics of the "Qualifying Education/Training/Employment" centres;
- a range of tools and methodologies targeting the different sections of the public;
- a multi-disciplinary team;
- partnerships with community-based guidance providers, industries and the business world.

To develop effectively, this service will use a resource centre that brings together and creates educational tools to aid guidance and the identification of skills. It will be created with and for guidance-providers, in collaboration with the institutions in contact with the beneficiary public and with the support of university experts.

In addition to developing this service and while waiting for it to be rolled out, it will be necessary to:

- expand and diversify the number of people to be notified of guidance issues;
- decentralise the services provided by the Trade Centres to make them accessible.

A network of partners, whose work involves providing "guidance", will have to be created for each Trade Centre, particularly through the relevant bodies in Wallonia and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation;

- develop an information and awareness strategy.

This strategy (press, websites, etc.) will be supplemented by campaigns to raise awareness of the professions of the future.

I.2.2. Improve "trade experience" measures

"Trade experience" allows beneficiaries of any age to choose their training based on concrete, practical information by trying one or more trades either at a training centre or in business. The action will aim to improve this life-long guidance system by focusing primarily on the professions of the future, particularly in the sustainable construction sector and sectors linked to competitiveness clusters and digital technologies.

I.3. Update the equipment in the training centres

Equipment must be updated and renewed so that it responds to or even anticipates technical and technological change; this will allow providers of guidance, training and socio-professional integration to offer a range of high-quality services and the skills expected by businesses. Updating equipment will also allow digital technologies to be integrated into the educational system.

I.4. Continue and improve the "Language Plan"

Learning one or more foreign languages remains a significant asset within a skills portfolio. As the existing measures have proved effective, they should be continued and made even more efficient in accordance with the needs of the target public; this will take place in collaboration with the Wallonia- Brussels Federation.

I.4.1. Optimise and rationalise grant packages

The objective is to improve the grant packages currently offered to different sections of the public, to provide greater clarity for users and greater effectiveness as a lever for socio-professional integration.

This will involve:

- optimising grant packages for linguists.
 - Review their modalities (amount, number, nature and destination);
- optimising grant packages for sandwich-course learners and job-seekers.
 - Stress the individual nature of personal career paths, based on participants' level of knowledge of the language, their objectives and their career plan;

Customising the paths of learners and job-seekers will allow them to receive the appropriate guidance, effective linguistic preparation and support at the start of their professional course;

- focus on packages that support integration into a professional environment; these allow participants to use linguistic knowledge that may be useful for training and/or socio-professional integration;
- optimise grant packages for higher education students.
 - Review language immersion in business in the so-called "BRIC" emerging countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China), to promote guidance towards professional courses linked to employment opportunities in emerging sectors and the professions of the future, including digital technologies.

I.4.2. Support remote language-learning, particularly through the *Wallangues* platform

The *Wallangues* platform now has a high number of users and has become very successful in terms of usage. Efforts must now focus on high-quality work that targets a broad demographic, so that as many people as possible can begin, complete or optimise their learning of the four languages on offer and improve their consistency and diligence, working to achieve efficient progress to ensure that they remain consistent and diligent throughout the self-learning path.

The following actions will be undertaken with a view to this:

- launch a new public procurement bid in 2015, on the basis of special specifications that include the new directions validated by the Walloon Government;
- strengthen the qualitative development of the proposed approach, focusing on interactivity, coaching and educational supervision to prevent drop-out;
- in the educational content of the language modules, take account of "professional" guidance focusing on the professions of the future and high-demand economic sectors;
- improve the current "French as a Foreign Language" component to make the educational tool more appropriate to those with few qualifications;
- consult social promotion education with a view to upgrading the skills acquired by learners.

I.4.3. Increase workers' levels of foreign language skills via the "language cheque"

This will involve:

- reforming the system by taking greater account of the languages spoken in the border regions and countries and those that are useful for the international expansion of businesses and the international mobility of Walloon workers;
- promoting the system to a greater extent among employers.

I.4.4. Train young Walloons in international professions, in collaboration with Walloon export businesses

This measure will aim to perpetuate and strengthen the measures of the Explort programme.²

The following actions will be undertaken:

- continue the programmes of overseas courses and training for students;
- continue the programmes of overseas courses and training for job-seekers;
- create the conditions for businesses to offer a sufficient number of courses for students/job-seekers.

I.5. Improve access to higher education and life-long training

This will involve the implementation of a cooperation agreement between Wallonia and the Wallonia- Brussels Federation to create and develop collective higher education structures dedicated to in-service training and life-long learning.

These structures will make high-quality equipment and infrastructures available to all higher education establishments and professional training providers, with a view to developing a local training and higher education offer that meets local needs.

They will be aimed at university, non-university and social promotion higher education students, education suppliers and trainers as part of their in-service training, as well as to employed workers, job-seekers and IFAPME learners.

They will also aim to provide a more effective response to socio-economic needs by providing harmonised training based primarily on the network of Skills Centres, in connection with the professions of the future identified by FOREM.

I.6. Raise awareness of entrepreneurship

This measure aims to create an environment favourable to the creation and development of activities by activating all the stakeholders and measures that offer support to the creation of employment and self-employment.

This will involve coordinating and approving the actions to stimulate the spirit of innovation and enterprise through an "enterprising generation 2015-2020" programme. The objectives will be the following:

- to support entrepreneurial education: openness to entrepreneurship in the training of future teachers, integration of courses on entrepreneurship in higher education and university curriculums, greater cooperation between schools and the business world, etc.

² "Explort" is a programme of training and courses in international trade, developed in partnership with the Forem Training Management & Commerce Skills Centre and AWEX. The courses are produced on behalf of Walloon businesses that receive concrete aid to approach foreign markets and expand internationally.

- to invest in future entrepreneurs through initiatives such as "entrepreneurial schools" to bring out concrete entrepreneurial vocations and through the adoption of an "entrepreneur student status";
- to take more action, particularly by developing student incubators and showcasing entrepreneurial successes;
- to initiate and support coordinated action to support female entrepreneurs.

During the implementation of these objectives, collaboration will be launched and/or encouraged between all parties involved in raising awareness of entrepreneurship and supporting the creation of businesses.

**PRIORITY AREA II:
Support the development of industry through a policy of innovation and
business growth**

II.1. Innovation

II.1.1. Renew the research strategy

The objective is to improve the development and competitiveness of the regional economy through a process of smart specialisation; this will involve the emergence of new sources of growth linked to innovation, with particular focus on SMEs.

The creation of the smart specialisation strategy is a dynamic process which will be further developed through new initiatives and/or ensuring consistency, as set out in the Regional Policy Declaration and based on the evaluation of the policies carried out to date.

The objective will be to develop both the tools and the modus operandi of all the stakeholders in the regional innovation ecosystem by pushing new means of collaboration and interaction between stakeholders.

The implementation of the new "research" decree and the desire to simplify financing methods will be part of this global vision and will improve the links between the measures. The roles of all the stakeholders will be specified/redefined so that they become part of a global "landscape", independently of the origin of the financing and their own objectives.

The following actions will be undertaken with a view to this:

- reorganise the "research" decree;
- reorganise the project and call for projects templates;
- simplify the administrative procedures;
- integrate these procedures into the global project for a single business portal.

II.1.2. Renew the strategy of the competitiveness clusters on the basis of smart specialisation

The policy of the competitiveness clusters will act as a foundation for the overall consolidation of the regional sustainable industrial innovation policy, and as a contribution to European objectives in the area of re-industrialisation and innovation.

It will act as a basis for improving business competitiveness, by acting on the different drivers of factor productivity (investment, research and development, innovation and creativity, information and communication technologies, internationalisation and skills) and by supporting these during the transition towards an even more efficient model; this will improve their cost competitiveness (reduction of energy costs, process efficiency, reuse and recycling, etc.) and enable them to bear the costs of this transition.

The new strategy of the competitiveness clusters will be based on the recommendations of the thematic evaluation of this policy, carried out as part of the Marshall Plan 2.Green, the recommendations of the international jury and the Regional Policy Declaration.

Its objectives will be:

- the implementation of breakthrough innovation projects, whether technological or non-technological;
- the extension of industrial promotion, marketing and the link to markets, to obtain greater benefits in terms of creating added value and employment;
- the greater participation of SMEs in calls for projects;
- the internationalisation of stakeholders and projects from the clusters;
- the development of collaborative structural projects based on the model developed for the "Proton Therapy" and "Reverse Metallurgy"³ projects;
- the inclusion in the projects of aspects relating to the circular economy (Next programme, Verdir project, etc.), information and communication technologies (*Big Data*⁴, etc.) and sustainable development (clusters, etc.);
- the development of skills for launching and implementing innovation supported by the clusters.

In this context, the following actions will be implemented:

- o intensify international inter-business/university collaboration projects.
The projects will aim to support the area of activity of the businesses/universities and will be based on common themes;
- o increase links with European programmes and strengthen the involvement of the clusters in European networks.
- o increased collaboration between the clusters and the economic and technological operators.
This increasingly close collaboration is intended to create a connection between projects that result from research and the requests/needs of businesses;
- o encourage the use of key enabling technologies.
KET⁵ - see Horizon 2020 - identifies six key enabling technologies as being the most promising: nanotechnology, microelectronics, biotechnology, photonics, advanced materials and advanced manufacturing and processing;
- o create links with the Brussels clusters (complementarity and exploiting opportunities).
Links will be sought with regard to the financing granted by the Brussels-Capital Region to support the projects;
- o adapt the training offer of the Skills Centres towards the areas of the clusters or the new cross-cutting areas.

³The "Reverse Metallurgy" project involves technological innovation in the metal recovery and recycling sector. Its aim is to maximise effectiveness and expertise in every stage of the metal recycling process in terms of the circular economy and sustainable development.

⁴The term *Big Data* refers to:

- the huge and ever increasing volume of increasingly accessible data generated by different sources such as trade, social networks and online registrations.
- the new data processing paradigm that will be developed for the collection, storage, research, sharing and analysis of this data in order to generate new information to help with decision-making. This new paradigm represents a significant potential for growth.

⁵ The European Commission has identified six technologies (micro-nanoelectronics, advanced materials, nanotechnology, biotechnology, photonics and advanced processing) that are referred to as "key" because they are considered to be a major source of growth and employment in Europe. Promoting investments in the Key Enabling Technologies (KET) is also one of the three priorities of the Horizon 2020 Programme for Research and Innovation launched by the European Commission.

II.1.3. Support the industrial promotion of the projects developed by the competitiveness clusters

The objective will be to finance equipment, infrastructures and the development phases of products created by businesses, spin-offs or others, resulting from the projects of competitiveness clusters or investment funds specialised in the areas of activity of the clusters.

This will involve endorsing the clusters (through the Sofipole or any other tool) and being involved in the industrialisation and marketing of research products.

There are also plans to finance projects in the digital sector (*Big Data*, etc.), which is considered a cross-cutting area of competitiveness cluster policy because it provides important support to innovation. Priority will therefore be given to supporting collective and business projects that are part of the Digital Plan for Wallonia, possibly through specialised investment funds.

This means that new resources will be devoted, possibly in collaboration with private partners, to financing the industrial promotion of innovation that comes from the clusters and partner businesses.

This will involve promoting the end development in Wallonia of industrial production activities that result from completed research projects, part of whose risk has been assumed by Wallonia through research incentives.

The following actions will be undertaken with a view to this:

- strengthen the capacity for action of the financial tools (Sofipole, spin-off funds, Sofinex, etc.);
- extend the policy of investing in certain specialised Private Equity⁶ funds;
- meet the significant financing needs of certain cluster projects;
- provide support in the preparation of stock market listing or subscription operations;
- develop the role of training in the reindustrialisation processes of large businesses.

II.2. Growth

Walloon businesses are characterised by an average SME size and a number of mid-sized businesses lower than in the regions with the best economic performance.

The objective is therefore to:

- increase the growth potential of Walloon businesses;
- promote the emergence of new champions in the Walloon economy, and above all to increase the presence of mid-size businesses that have a ripple effect on the economy, as do large businesses.

The vectors of business growth are:

- innovation;
- internationalisation;
- support for investment and access to financing;
- support in the different phases of development.

II.2.1. Support business innovation

⁶*Private Equity Funds*: funds specialised in investing in non-stock-exchange companies and aiming for long-term performances that are higher than those of the financial markets.

In addition to the dynamics of the clusters, support for business growth through innovation will involve several actions:

- supporting innovation in processes and organisation.
This will involve supporting operational performance in the areas of production and distribution, with the aim of improving the competitiveness and added value of the business;
This consists of setting up human resource management relating to the workplace and the business's internal and external shareholders;
- continuing and extending support for the development of a culture of creativity.
Actions related to creative industries (design, etc.) will be developed, whilst extending the integration of creativity into the industrial sector and the emergence of start-ups;
- guaranteeing the financing of technological and non-technological innovation.
Private investors will be attracted through the launch of the *Euroquity* platform. This may provide them with greater motivation to invest in innovative businesses;
- guaranteeing the financing of spin-outs and start-ups;
- improving access to the network of "incubators" for innovative businesses.
This access to the network of "incubators" will allow innovative businesses in high-growth areas identified by Wallonia to develop from "the idea" to "the product", guaranteeing access to cutting-edge skills at every stage, including during design and ownership.

II.2.2. Support business internationalisation

The actions will aim to:

- simplify all the systems involved in international expansion and export;
Processes will be simplified to offer a portfolio of aid that meets the needs of businesses and is clearer and more user-friendly;
- finance export activities by implementing the appropriate mechanisms;
- provide support for new set-ups and "pre-financing" models for export.

II.2.3. Finance the growth of businesses

The actions carried out in the context of this measure will:

- reform investment aids.

The reform will aim to provide greater support to the most intensive businesses in terms of job creation, innovation and export and in the highest-growth sectors, particularly those targeted by the competitiveness clusters;
- simplify all the other support measures.

processes will be simplified to offer aid portfolios to meet the needs of businesses; these portfolios will be clearer and more user-friendly.

In addition to these simplifications, a unique "virtual" office will be created and will act as the entry point for all aid requests. This entry point will allow entrepreneurs to follow all their dealings with Wallonia and will provide "Walloon public tools" with all the information they need for their targeted business support policy;
- promote access to public procurement and "key accounts":
 - extend the sub-contractor certification measure developed in the Skywin cluster to other sectors,
This measure will allow businesses to develop significant levels of certification and thus become part of high added value production chains.
 - design specifications that are open to SMEs and pay particular attention to payment deadlines, particularly for relations between businesses and public authorities,
 - support businesses that become involved in public procurement.
- offer financial products that meet the needs of businesses

These products, including even more integrated guarantee activation modalities, will make it possible to become help entrepreneurs in financing their production tools;
- develop local "markets";

Support will be given to short supply train and circular economy projects of any size, if they are part of either distribution processes or industrial value chains; this will allow activities and basic production to be relocated. The different economic operators will act to support the emergence of such procedures within the context of their missions;
- extend the support measures for business transfers.

This involves supporting growth through external acquisitions and the financing of business transfers. Business transfers are a real challenge for the economy. It has been shown that the survival rate for a transferred business is much higher than that of a business created less than five years ago;

It is therefore essential to ensure that all businesses that could be taken over are transferred in the best possible conditions.

Business takeovers are also a means of quickly guaranteeing the (external) growth of our SMEs. In this respect, particular attention will be paid to the transfer of agricultural businesses, in view of the changing number of farms, the age of the farmers and the growing price of agricultural land.

Similarly, specific credit and guarantee tools will be created to support the takeover of businesses by workers.

II.2.4. Supporting the development of companies

The following actions will be undertaken:

- improve governance and management skills.
Particular attention will be paid to businesses that aim to improve their management structures and make their different councils, including their management boards, more professional. This will involve financing CxO management measures (interim CEO, CFO, etc.);
- create a network of "growth experts".
The experts will support businesses in accelerating their growth, in line with the reform of aids;
- develop a network of interim managers.
The interim managers will support businesses in managing a temporary situation, redirecting them towards sustainability and growth;
- develop a real network of independent administrators to benefit businesses.
This will involve intensifying the measure that has already been launched;
- adapt the economic and technological leadership strategy with a view to:
 - detecting businesses with a high growth potential and offering them specific support,
 - providing specific support for "starters",
 - modelling the monitoring of new self-employed persons and business managers,
 - increasing the involvement of structures that attract business.

<p style="text-align: center;">PRIORITY AREA III: Mobilise the territory for economic development</p>
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III.1. Continue to develop infrastructures for economic activity

The territory's attractiveness and competitiveness are major assets that Wallonia must exploit. Therefore, if we want to create the conditions for economic redeployment, we need to mobilise the territory on a massive scale to boost the economy and implement a far-reaching programme that will prepare the region to welcome businesses. Business parks will also be created near the main communication infrastructures, as will multi-modal sites that can inter-connect with the European network of inland waterways.

Reconverted business sites represent a huge potential in terms of territorial and economic development. We need to continue their redevelopment to make land available for economic purposes.

III.1.1. Work on all the infrastructures intended for economic activity

The following actions will be carried out with a view to creating a permanent land reserve for economic activity:

- execute the Sowafinal 2 Plan (Walloon alternative financing company), adapting it if required;
- draw up a new and ambitious Sowafinal 3 alternative financing programme that will create the 200 net hectares a year required to meet business needs;
- rationalise and simplify the laws on expropriation in the public interest in order to accelerate acquisitions/expropriations procedures;
- improve the management of strategic land in Wallonia by creating a regional pre-emptive right for wet land that could be used as a port.
- encourage the involvement of private partners in servicing land for economic purposes.

III.1.2. Make economic activity zones a lever for deployment

If we are to make supply match demand, we need to make new spaces available for investors and also redevelop ageing business zones. The infrastructures that will house businesses must also be high quality, eco-efficient and high-connected⁷, in line with the digital industry 4.0. As well as integrating information and communication technologies, the new business parks will also have to promote the emergence of the circular economy and reduce businesses' energy dependence.

⁷If infrastructures are "high-connected", it means that they have very powerful Internet access and networks (very high-speed fibre optics).

The following actions will be undertaken:

- develop a regional register of the available land.
This register will be linked to dynamic project mapping, for the coordination of land needs and availability;
- establish a specific budget for large plots of land (min. 30 ha) located near major communications infrastructures such as motorways, ports and airports and thus allowing multi-modal transport;
- redevelop public spaces and roads within the former zones (revamping⁸) to make them more attractive;
- with operators, identify under-used spaces within parks so they can be re-used for economic purposes;
- create "business parks 4.0" that incorporate the new information and communication technologies.

The following actions will be undertaken:

- promote the pooling of amenities in business parks.
These amenities (wastewater purification, energy production, waste management, heat recovery, mobility, etc.) can be pooled during the design and initial occupation of the land plots.
- develop the concept of the circular economy when designing business parks.

This will involve urban development and leadership charters.

III.1.3. Support autonomous ports

Autonomous ports should be supported to stimulate economic activity linked to waterways (dry and wet land), and the programme of dredging navigable waterways should be continued. In this context, autonomous ports will act as an interface to mobilise public support and aid, will be part of urban development policy as projects to renovate fallow land and industrial blights so they can be used as ports and will contribute to general mobility through the development of multi-modal and inter-modal infrastructure and logistics centres. The following actions will be undertaken:

- study how the management of the land given over by Wallonia to the ports for management can be optimised.
This will involve analysing the possibility of a partnership system that includes rights in rem to the land given up for management;
- promote the use of "freight" river shuttles between ports;
- study the possibilities for extending the working hours of hydraulic structures (locks-boat lift-inclined plane).

This action will take account of the needs of the stakeholders involved in river transport and navigation.

III.1.4. Recycle renovated business sites for the development of new activities

Continuing the remediation and redevelopment of renovated business sites in strategic locations allows us to meet the objectives of environmental protection, economic redevelopment and the attractiveness of Wallonia.

⁸ Revamping involves reviewing the design of functional equipment to improve its production, economic and environmental performance and reliability.

It also provides support to the construction and environmental technology sectors and offers a real opportunity to develop new districts and cities. Putting this land back on the market helps to limit urban sprawl onto agricultural land and reduces peri-urbanisation.

The following actions will be undertaken:

- make site-recognition procedures faster and more efficient.
This will involve the revision, which has already started, of the CoDT (Walloon Land Development Code), in order to support the construction sector in its search for land that can be rapidly urbanised;
- reform the soil management decree and the regulatory provisions on excavated land.
The aim of this action is to accelerate and simplify the remediation of renovated business sites, without affecting the objectives relating to public health and the protection of workers;
- define new modalities for intervention and project creation.
This will involve accelerating the processes and increasing the impact of public action;
- develop an integrated chain for the management of polluted land in Wallonia.
The aim of this action will be to maximise the effects of the depollution sites on the regional economy.

III.1.5. Guarantee accessibility to economic development clusters: the "routes to employment"

The aim of this measure is to guarantee and improve accessibility to the zones where activity and value are created. The "Routes to Employment" are major roads that serve business clusters, major tourist sites and services to the population (e.g. hospital zones). These major roads are characterised by high vehicle numbers creating traffic congestion and/or road security problems on a daily basis and making access to existing, expanding or developing employment clusters difficult. The following action will be carried out:

- identify the links to be created or strengthened and prioritise the best "cost-benefit" ratios in cooperation with the existing employment clusters and those currently under development.

III.1.6. Increase support for shared workshops and incubator centres, whether these are agricultural or logistical with an agricultural focus

The aim of this action is to promote the formation and sustainability of private initiatives by continuing to support the creation of incubator centres and shared workshops for small-scale or industrial processing, with particular attention paid to initiative supported by co-operatives. The following actions will be undertaken:

- create an inventory of current public support;
- analyse the implementation of the call for "Agricultural incubator centres" launched in 2011;
- map the current stakeholders;
- issue a call for projects that takes account of the lessons learnt.

**PRIORITY AREA IV:
Support efficiency, energy transition and the circular economy**

IV.1. Ensure that buildings are energy efficient

The aim of this measure is to encourage non-profit and public economic stakeholders to carry out effective and integrated energy-efficiency actions, to facilitate their implementation and to increase the skills of these stakeholders.

This measure targets energy efficiency in a broader context than just buildings; it encompasses buildings and groups of buildings in their environments, whether this environment already exists (redeployment of over-urbanisation) or not (new districts and cities): the "smart city" and the integration of renewable energies, electricity networks, energy storage systems (at domestic or network loop level), mobility and transport systems and information and communication technologies, ensuring that they all work together in an integrated manner. Projects for new districts and cities will constitute pilot smart city projects, laboratories of excellence in terms of energy production and consumption.

IV.1.1. Refocus the Green Job Pact on construction renovation

The objective of the Green Job Pact is to improve energy efficiency and employment in Walloon construction. This means that the Pact needs to refocus on renovation in order to reduce consumption. Energy efficiency will also be a major objective of the projects to develop new districts and new cities. The following actions will be undertaken:

- evaluate the Green Job Pact.
This evaluation will be carried out with the social partners and with professionals from the construction and training sectors so that the situation and the effectiveness of the measures carried out are correctly analysed;
- refocus this Pact on measures that constitute a global building renovation project.
The Pact will be refocused in order to improve energy performance and thus support and develop the economy and employment, using innovative and sustainable Walloon products (respecting the three pillars) and the skills developed in the relevant Skills Centres;
- within the refocused Pact, promote the energy efficiency of existing buildings in urban and rural centres.
The emphasis will be on wasteland and buildings that are dilapidated but can be redeveloped;
- through these different actions, use the environmental and ethical social clauses of public procurement to support training actions in these specific professions.

IV.1.2. Reform the system of loans and grants for Energy and Housing

Evaluations of loans and grants for energy and housing have shown that a lack of harmonisation can sometimes make the conditions for accessing the different loans and grants seem complex.

There is also the issue of windfall effects and the equally important issue of the thresholds necessary to incentivise households on the lowest incomes to undertake work.

In this respect, the Regional Policy Declaration stresses its intention to optimise and simplify policies on household loans and grants to finance energy-saving and building renovation works, with particular focus on the size of the households and those with low and medium incomes.

It is with this in mind that reforms will be made to the regulatory framework for loans and grants to individuals at subsidised rates:

- giving priority to the most effective energy-saving work, with a view to working towards European requirements, and renovation work that is essential for hygiene reasons;
- modulating the amount of aid according to income and the composition of the household.

Energy grants for SMEs/VSBs will also be reformed, in line with the development of "simplified sectoral agreements" (see below) and in keeping with the other business aids.

IV.1.3. Create financing mechanisms to promote energy efficiency in public sector and non-profit sector buildings

The objective of this action is to make funds available to promote access to energy services for public sector and non-profit stakeholders. The following actions will be undertaken with a view to this:

- o evaluate financing experiences (third-party investors and interest-free loans) in Belgium and abroad;
- o set the objectives for buildings and fittings in terms of energy performance and the rational use of energy, including renewable energy sources;
- o introduce a financing mechanism (third-party investors, repayable advances, etc.) in partnership with public and private institutions.

This mechanism must be capable of mobilising significant resources, particularly in order to carry out large-scale building renovations (including buildings such as public swimming pools for work directly linked to energy efficiency) and to facilitate the integration of technical solutions based on investments that facilitate the smart management of energy or energy savings.

This mechanism will also allow the pre-financing of energy audits, without prejudice to the mobilisation of existing European incentives (subsidies) for carrying out these audits.

These audits may be "360° energy audits". This is an energy auditing system that goes beyond traditional audits and allows the identification of innovative solutions linked to smart meter technologies (digital technologies).

Each audit would include a full audit of all flows, an analysis of the beneficiary's potential for flexibility, recommendations, a list of the necessary investments and support for the beneficiary in carrying out the administrative formalities for obtaining subsidies;

- o Define a framework of intervention in order to "guarantee" results.

IV.2. Develop innovation in the energy efficiency and renewable energy sector

The objectives of the actions will be to develop innovative themes:

- in the area of energy efficiency, such as the optimisation and/or reduction of the use of the energy consumed in high-population areas in Wallonia (smart grids) and innovative techniques for achieving real energy efficiency in buildings;
- in the area of renewable energies throughout Wallonia, in accordance with its assets. The aim of this is to reduce Wallonia's energy dependency in accordance with the European and international framework, and also to develop a local economy that supports high-quality and knowledge-rich employment.

With regard to renewable energies, the actions will aim to:

- encourage economic stakeholders to be involved in developing renewable energies and to seize opportunities for industrial development;
- integrate the development of renewable energies into electricity, gas and heat distribution and transport networks;
- develop renewable energies for all citizens, guaranteeing social acceptability and the involvement of citizens in the new energy management techniques.

These actions may take advantage of the new opportunities linked to the modification of the "Research" decree (concept of demonstrator), involving research stakeholders (universities and research centres), businesses and public operators (municipal, inter-municipal, regional companies, etc.).

Projects to create new districts and cities will be laboratories for energy innovation (cf. construction, local energy production, storage, public lighting, mobility, smart grids, urban heating, etc.).

The above-mentioned innovative themes may involve:

- improving the efficiency of public/private lighting.
This measure aims to deploy economic lighting technologies such as LED or public, industrial and domestic sector regulations in public, private, static or dynamic lighting projects with a view to reducing consumption and supporting energy savings and the development of flexibility solutions on the distribution network through Power-to-Gas⁹ technology.

The requirement for constant balance between imports and exports into electric networks places increasing constraints on the distribution networks. New technologies must be implemented to guarantee this balance.

Promising areas for development are being discovered, particularly in Power-to-Gas. In concrete terms, this involves producing combustible gases (synthetic methane or hydrogen), which can be easily stored and transported to natural gas distribution infrastructures, from cheaply produced electricity, for example in the event of intermittent over-production at a low marginal cost;

⁹ "Power-to-Gas" is a technology for the conversion of electricity into gas.

- the increased injection of biogas into the distribution network.

Biogas production units are generally equipped with co-generation units in order to receive Green Certificates (GC), even if the heat requirements do not justify this investment. The idea is to allow the direct injection of biogas into the networks of distribution network operators (DNO), to avoid co-generation where it does not provide added value;

- the creation of collective projects for the production of electricity from a renewable energy source (RES) for households involved in the project;
- the implementation of an "Energy Cloud" project.

This measure will allow Walloon SMEs to reduce their energy bills by installing shared local production units and, potentially, storage units. The solution helps to increase the energy independence of businesses in the Cloud by allowing them to use their own (production and storage) capacities.

These themes may be the subject of conditional programmes/calls for projects to demonstrators and financial incentives for these demonstrators ("Research" decree).

If required, the existing normative frameworks will be adapted to allow these themes to be consolidated.

IV.3. Support business competitiveness

The Government plans to set up mechanisms allowing businesses to manage their energy costs, so that economic stakeholders can receive energy at a competitive price compared with neighbouring countries, similarly to an energy standard. This will involve:

- the optimisation and management of their energy bills;
- the optimisation of existing sectoral agreements and the development of simplified sectoral agreements;
- an increase in the financing of energy efficiency projects, particularly through the creation of financing mechanisms;
- the promotion of self-production mechanisms, particularly those focused on photovoltaics and cogeneration;
- the introduction of a "carbon leakage" mechanism.

IV.3.1. Promote the management of energy bills

To participate in this strategy, we need to optimise the three components of a typical bill, i.e. the "commodities" aspect ("energy production cost"), the "Management of the local Transport and Distribution Network" aspect and, finally, the "Taxes and Surcharges" aspect.

The following actions will be undertaken:

- o take action on the "Commodities" component:
 - set an optimal energy mix for Wallonia as part of a legal framework, in accordance with the targets defined for Belgium and Europe for 2030/2050;
 - develop a legislative framework that encourages certain public stakeholders and groups of businesses that consume energy to be involved in production (joint-venture);
 - extend and raise awareness among SMEs of all the measures and facilitators for identifying and comparing the energy component between suppliers in accordance with the type of profile and meter, and even for facilitating negotiation between B-to-B partners with a knowledge of their consumption profile.

- Take action on the "transport and distribution" component:
 - define a tariff framework in which the Walloon Energy Commission (CWaPE) can develop a methodology and action plan for each objective;
 - study the possibility of gradually harmonising distribution tariffs, the cost of public service obligations and regional public levies with the aim of rationalising costs and preserving investments throughout the territory;
 - encourage the use of "smart metering"¹⁰ for reducing costs to a certain extent through greater network management;
 - finalise the implementing texts of the "Applicants" decree and produce an improvement action plan.
- Take action on the "Taxes and surcharges" component:

This involves deliberation on the different surcharges payable by consumers.

Certain actions will have to be discussed with the Federal Government on a case-by-case basis.

IV.3.2 Create and implement a system for supporting SMEs and VSBs that is similar to the simplified sectoral agreements

This action will involve creating an effective and simplified support mechanism for SMEs and VSBs to reduce their energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions and improve their competitiveness.

The action will aim to create and implement a system for supporting SMEs and VSBs, called "simplified sectoral agreements", based on local stakeholders. On the basis of the results of the SMEs and VSBs over time, this support system will provide access to aid so that they can significantly improve their performance, starting with the measures with the best cost/efficiency ratio, moving towards increasingly costly measures (in summary: targeting waste and behavioural measures, then measures targeting the consumption of their equipment, measures to pool their flows and their means of heat production and electricity and, finally, the building envelope). Its priority will be to reduce the energy bills of participating SMEs and VSBs through fast and cheap measures (quick wins).

In the context of developing actions:

- the system for granting "Energy" grants to SMEs/VSBs will be optimised, simplified and harmonised;
- an improved system will be designed on the basis of the SMART PARK pilot experience¹¹.

¹⁰The "smart meter" is able to monitor consumption in detail and in real time.

¹¹The "Smart Park" programme involves the installation of smart meters in businesses. An analysis of the data provided by these meters and an *in situ* meeting with managers will lead to the identification of areas for improvement and any anomalies and will also focus on any technical or organisational solutions for the smart management of electrical energy.

IV.3.3. Implement an energy efficiency financing mechanism for SMEs/VSBs in accordance with the simplified sectoral agreements

The objective of this action is to promote access to energy services for SMEs/VSBs. The following actions will be carried out with this in mind and in accordance with the drafting of simplified sectoral agreements:

- evaluate financing experiences (interest-free loans) in Belgium and abroad;
- set objectives to be achieved for buildings and fittings in terms of energy performance and the rational use of energy, including renewable energy sources;
- introduce a financing mechanism.

This mechanism will also allow the pre-financing of energy audits, without prejudice to the mobilisation of existing European incentives (subsidies) for carrying out these audits. These audits may be "360° energy audits".

- define a framework of intervention in order to "guarantee" results.

IV.3.4. Support the self-production of energy

This measure has the following objectives:

- help to control the energy costs of businesses by supporting the self-production of energy, particularly through the emergence of "photovoltaic" or co-generation installations together with the means of storage;
- improve energy independence and the security of the supply by encouraging the coupling of electricity production with a means of storage, providing a solution to the intermittent nature of photovoltaic production;
- promote use by supporting innovation and investments in the energy production and storage process.

The following actions will be undertaken:

- analyse and adapt the regulations on the self-production of energy and the expansion of Renewable Energy (RE) for the industrial sector (including finalising the reforms already underway);
- adapt the strategy on the renewable mix;
- adapt the system of aid for Sustainable Energy Use (SEU), to encourage investment in the self-production of electricity and joint projects;
- support research and development on the production and storage of energy and the implementation of demonstrators (experimental pilot units).

Certain actions will have to be discussed with the Federal Government, on a case-by-case basis.

IV.3.5. Introduce mechanisms for offsetting the additional costs of the exchange system for greenhouse gas quotas to protect the competitiveness of businesses

Walloon businesses are characterised by a relatively high dependence on energy. Energy costs do not vary significantly throughout Europe, however associated costs such as taxes create significant distortions, particularly in the area of electricity costs. It is therefore important to support electro-intensive businesses so that the carbon transition does not affect their competitiveness.

The measure involves limiting the impact of the exchange system for greenhouse gas quotas on the cost of electricity for electro-intensive businesses in Wallonia. As the

system is already in place in Flanders and Germany, the measure will make up some of the cost differential for electricity with Wallonia's main neighbours.

IV.4. Support the development of the circular economy and the functional economy

The principle of the circular economy lies in the idea that unused material from a certain industry can be redirected to become the raw material for a different industry or that the waste or by-product of a certain type of production can be used as a resource in a different type of production. Resources should therefore be considered throughout their life-cycle, not just in stages. This economic model could allow economic growth to be separated from the consumption of resources. It should make it easier to manage resources and flow loops without them becoming the subject of speculation.

The functional economy is an alternative economic model whose objective is to replace the sale of a commodity by the sale of the service that fulfils the same functions as if the commodity had been purchased. Businesses no longer sell commodities, they sell guarantees of satisfaction. The functional economy allows new products that use fewer resources (material or energy) and/or are more efficient, to be designed and sold without harming businesses' balance sheets. For example, before becoming waste, commodities can be used/reused in accordance with models that correspond to services; the aim is to create positive externalities, particularly by consuming fewer resources and less energy, and by recreating other types of social link.

The European Commission stresses that the transition towards a more circular economy requires changes throughout the value chains, from product design to new models of businesses and markets and from new waste recovery methods to new consumer behaviours.

The objective of this measure is to complete industrial pilot projects for the application of the circular economy and the functional economy, particularly by financing sector-based studies, prototypes and feasibility studies, using the regional and international network of skills, and to implement the mobilisation of education and the Skills Centres.

IV.4.1. Create the conditions for the development of a circular and functional economy

The aim of this action is to create the conditions in which Walloon economic stakeholders can be encouraged to consider and propose projects for the development of the circular economy or the functional economy. This involves in particular:

- implementing a system for monitoring these emerging economic models and making economic stakeholders aware of the opportunities available, primarily by proposing new management training and encouraging education in this area;
- identifying new sources of growth for the circular economy through the Walloon Waste Plan and an ambitious environmental policy:
 - prevention (eco-design, optimised use of products and by-products, pooling of tools and provision of services instead of products),
 - reduction of waste (including re-employment, repair and reuse),
 - reclassification of waste as by-products or products,
 - effective sorting with a view to efficient recycling,
 - maximum recycling;
- defining or adapting the legal framework for the expansion of circular economy or functional economy projects.

The end objective is to promote the use and full recovery of the resources used in Wallonia by Walloon business, throughout their life-cycle.

IV.4.2. Support circular economy and functional economy projects

The objective is to complete industrial pilot projects for the application of the circular economy, particularly by financing sector-based studies, prototypes and feasibility studies, using the regional and international network of skills.

The objective of these pilot projects is to produce a ripple effect in the different economic sectors.

This will involve in particular:

- promoting the emergence of industrial projects by matching supply and demand:
 - setting up channels for the collection of waste/raw materials that will be used by industry,
 - creating exchange platforms (e.g. "Clic Recup"),
 - creating a standard contract for stakeholders,
 - expanding the "Reverse Metallurgy" project by investigating and creating other channels,
 - placing the NEXT programme cross-functionally in the network of competitiveness clusters (see Priority Area II), with the support of the clusters (Tweed, Cap 2020 and Eco-Construction).
- carrying out economic promotion actions throughout the region to encourage businesses to normalise partnerships for the recovery and exchange of by-products or different flows (hot water, gas, etc.) in coherent territorial zones;
- recover agricultural and industrial waste to increase the reuse of waste or by-products as a new resource.
Multi-stakeholder (farmers, local authorities, businesses, etc.) biomethanation projects will be encouraged for organic products;
- develop territorial synergies:
 - strengthen the business of designing new zones by creating the role of main contractor on sites with specific characteristics favourable to the emergence of collaborative inter-business projects,
 - integrate a "circular economy" aspect into the construction and/or construction materials aspects of specifications for new district or city projects.

To achieve these objectives, incentives will be used in the areas of support (consultancy grants, etc.), the development of research and the financing of projects (investment aids, financial tools, etc.), waste recovery and innovative tools for reintegrating residues into the economic circuit.

**PRIORITY AREA V:
Support digital innovation**

V.1. Create an integrated digital transition plan

The digital transition does not concern just one sector. It is systematic and cultural. It is important to not only "take the digital train", but also to anticipate the opportunities that will arise in the future.

The future Digital Plan for Wallonia aims to boost the Walloon digital economy by developing a digital industry producing digital goods and services, promoting the integration of digital technologies to aid business growth and competitiveness and, more generally, by developing a "digital culture" among citizens, more specifically young Walloons undergoing training.

The objective of the Digital Plan is to identify and focus on the implementation of priority measures which will create added value and jobs that fall within the four main development areas:

- talent;
- industry 4.0;
- the digital economy;
- administration 4.0

The Plan will be drafted based according to a "bottom-up" process that will involve the relevant stakeholders through the organisation of "Assises du numérique" (digital conferences), at the end of which the Government will adopt the Digital Plan for Wallonia. Its framework will comprise the measures described below.

V.1.1. Support change

The digital transition is systematic, cultural and therefore involves a significant change to the processes of creation, innovation and the organisation of society and businesses.

Specific systems will be implemented to support business changes in line with the opportunities and risks inherent in the development of digital technologies. The following can be given as examples:

- awareness-raising and support for the development of strategic intelligence;
- the managerial process for controlling and protecting the relevant strategic information;
- the entry of businesses into the e-commerce era by creating the conditions favourable for its development;
- support for the development of working methods: NWOW (New Ways of Working);
- the simplification and specialisation of the environment for supporting businesses with digital technologies (clusters, specialised incubators for each area of competence, etc.).

The "vocational training" aspect will include the following actions:

- updating the list of digital professions and adapting the training offer;
- optimising the digital training offer of the Skills Centres;
- Supporting the development of digital skills among workers and members of the public undergoing socio-professional integration;
- developing the use of digital technology in training and pre-qualification pathways, particularly by optimising the impact of the PMTIC (ICT Action Plan).

The digital school will continue to support the increased use of digital technologies by investing in the best educational tools.

V.1.2. Support the development of "Industry 4.0"

A fourth industrial revolution is currently underway, as digital technologies are used extensively in economic and productive exchanges in a connected global system. The entire production process takes place thanks to the Cloud, Big Data analytics and the industrial Internet of Things, with interactions between products and machines and between the machines themselves.

In terms of public policy, priority will be given to supporting the modernisation of the industrial productive system. In this context, the following actions will be implemented:

- support to boost investment through incentives and suitable financial products;
- support SMEs with "flash"¹² assessments and consultancy
This action will aim to facilitate the adoption of modern production approaches by SMEs;
- set up demonstrators of the factories of the future;
This action will aim to disseminate new practices by integrating the necessary transformations;
- include digital innovation programmes in the roadmaps of the relevant competitiveness clusters.

V.1.3. Support the development of the digital sector

With regard to the growth potential of the digital sector over the next few years and the benefits of developing digital services as a driver of innovation and growth for other businesses, it is necessary to actively support the development of this sector, possibly through specialised investment funds.

The following actions will be implemented:

- finance collective and business projects that fit with the Digital Plan for Wallonia based on the Big Data project;
- support the creation of start-ups;
- increase support for research in the digital sector.

V.2. Develop the Administration 4.0

This will involve making digital technologies a vector in the simplification of the administration. It is essential to exploit the potential offered by digital tools in order to modify administrations' ways of working and simplify the administrative processes of citizens, businesses and the community. However, particular focus will have to be given to the most marginalised sections of the public and to those who do not have access to digital technologies.

This does not involve computerising what already exists, but rather transforming working processes and performing public services differently, taking account of the new possibilities in terms of:

- data exchanges;
- Big Data;
- business intelligence tools;

¹² This fast assessment is intended to help businesses assess their capacities/opportunities in terms of digital development.

- geo-localisation;
- portability;
- mobility;
- etc.

V.2.1. Develop the digital channel for interaction with administrations

To meet the challenges of the Administration 4.0, the digital channel will be developed as a "default" means of operation for the Administration. In the context of setting up cross-functional IT systems within the SPW, this will involve:

- o developing the catalogue of administrative procedures (ABC of procedures);
- o continuing to make forms and processes paper free, providing users with electronic forms that can be completed online and whose data can be pre-completed and recovered directly from the databases of the administrations;
- o finalise the implementation of electronic offices so that each type of user can perform their administrative processes via the Internet.

This involves "Personal space" on wallonie.be for citizens, different types of "Professional space" for businesses on the "infoentreprises.be" portal (AEI) and space for the local authorities on the local authorities portal.

V.2.2. Develop the Crossroads Bank for Data Exchange (CBDE)

From the point of view of users, the exchange of data between administrations means that they do not have to produce the same information several times for different administrations. This exchange between administrations is made possible in a structured and secure way by the Crossroads Bank for Data Exchange.

This action aims to:

- o consolidate the services offered to Walloon administrations by the CBDE;
The measure also targets the implementation of new flows of data exchange between administrations in order to apply the "only once" principle during administrative practices;
- o develop new sources of authentic Walloon data.

V.2.3. Develop a digitisation strategy with a view to providing a better service to stakeholders in the employment market

Given the importance of the employment public service and the Walloon Department of the Economy and Employment in the socio-economic redeployment strategy for our region, projects will be carried out within Forem in line with the DG06-SPW in order to create Administrations 4.0.

An electronic job-seeker's passport will be created and will involve the creation of a unique user dossier and a unique business dossier. These unique dossiers will contain all the administrative data, actions, processes and follow-up of users and businesses within the employment process.

V.3. Technological and digital territorial intelligence

V.3.1. Support the technology and digital services of the city of the future (re-classified existing urban districts, new districts and cities)

As with the creation of new cities and districts (urban and rural), the revitalisation and regeneration of existing urban areas cannot occur without the integrated use of information and communication technologies. Urban development programmes (UDP) and prospective specifications for new districts or the redeployment of over-urbanisation

will include an important aspect dedicated to technological and digital territorial intelligence.

The management and processing of the data available to the public authorities and the interactions and cross-overs between them, are the basis for the creation of the digital smart city of tomorrow.

Here, the issue involves improving information sharing and developing coordination between the different city services by setting up a technical platform for sharing information between public authorities, citizens and businesses based on the OpenData strategy¹³ which will be defined at regional level, and supporting the creation of exemplary new districts and cities.

- Set up a data exchange platform to ensure inter-operability between local and regional authorities (OpenData)
- Identify the sources of the local authorities' generic data and make these authorities aware of the integration of the future regional OpenData strategy into their PST¹⁴

V.3.2. Develop connectivity in the region

Developing the regional fibre optic network, in line with operators in the cities and other strategic locations, has the benefit of increasing connectivity between the region's various stakeholders, i.e.

- schools in the context of the policy on digital schools and new technologies to aid training;
- business parks, to enable businesses to seize the opportunities of the digital economy and reinforce the attractiveness of this kind of infrastructure;
- citizens in the context of the 'smart cities' initiative, and accessibility to new technologies;
- public authorities in the context of their modernisation and administrative simplification, but equally for the development of smart territory strategies, at the local or supra-local level.
- high-speed mobile networks to cover the region, including sparsely populated areas.
- the projects for new districts and cities and redeveloped existing urban districts that will act as connectivity laboratories.

V.3.3. Support smart mobility initiatives

Satellite networks, innovative mobile applications and digital data processing will make mobility chains much more streamlined, secure and optimised, benefiting economic development. For businesses, movement must become a source of added value rather than a cost centre.

The following actions will be undertaken:

- create sustainable, innovative and smart mobility by creating a real Express Car-pooling Network

The aim is to support the development of a car-pooling network through the appropriate technological innovations (including remote, real-time

¹³"OpenData" is digital data of public or private origin. It can be produced by a community, a public service or a business. It is disseminated in a structured way in accordance with a methodology and an open licence, guaranteeing free access and re-use by all, without technical, legal or financial restrictions.

¹⁴ The communal cross-functional strategic programme is a process for helping communes to progress towards modern governance by developing a culture of planning and evaluation. It should allow every commune to have a global vision that will then be broken down into strategic and operational objectives and finally into actions. This is all brought together in a single, evolutive document that will guide communal action throughout the tenure.

management of supply and demand), in addition to the development of suitable infrastructures as part of the mobility policy.

This will involve using digital innovation to design and deploy the Express Car-pooling Network, particularly for the remote real-time management of supply and demand and the optimisation of parking spaces;

- develop High Level of Service lines (LHNS).

A structuring urban public transport system helps to manage traffic and parking and reduce urban sprawl. It must continue to develop in and between Walloon cities, with the integration of modern flow management and connectivity tools into the structure and the management of the public transport network. This will involve, among other things, commercial high-speed and high-capacity solutions, such as high level of service lines, for example between Charleroi-Sud station and Charleroi airport;

- encourage, in the specifications of calls for projects, innovative mobility solutions in the heart of new districts and towns as well as existing upgraded urban areas, by incorporating innovative digital technology ((electric) car sharing, bicycles, smart carpooling, connected urban public transport, etc).