



## Global Investment and Innovation Incentives *Gi<sup>3</sup>* alert

### Are you aware of the latest developments in the Belgian cash grant landscape?

The dynamic funding landscape in Belgium has evolved over the past few months; granting new opportunities to request cash grants, but also among other relevant developments:

- A new **regional state aid** map for Belgium was approved by the European Commission;
- A federal call for proposals regarding “**5G pilot projects**” was launched;
- Federal project calls to increase the **cyber resilience** of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);
- Applications may be submitted for project grants supporting “Clean Power for Transport” for **electric charging infrastructure** in Flanders; and
- Flanders Innovation and Entrepreneurship (VLAIO) has announced that it will be **mandatory to submit a “climate plan”** when requesting certain funding as from 1 October 2022.

### New regional state aid map

The European Commission announced that has approved, under the EU state aid rules, Belgium’s map for granting regional aid from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2027 within the framework of the revised Regional Aid Guidelines (RAG).

Belgium’s regional map defines the Belgian regions eligible for regional investment aid. The map also establishes the maximum aid intensities, depending on the location and the size of the company. Under the revised RAG, the following Belgian locations are included in the regional map:

- The entire region of the Luxembourg province (BE); and
- Designated areas that are parts of the following, to address regional disparities: the Brussels-Capital Region, the Limburg province, the Oost-Vlaanderen province, the West-Vlaanderen province, the Brabant Wallon province, the Hainaut province, the Liège province, and the Namur province.

## Federal call for proposals: 5G pilot projects

The Belgian federal public service for the economy (“FPS Economy”) has launched a project call to encourage the creation of new 5G applications, with a deadline of 16 October 2022 for submitting grant applications. The goal of the call is to increase the uptake of 5G technology in Belgium, as Belgium is lagging behind other countries in this respect. The call aims to support 5G test environments and 5G pilot projects that support innovative solutions.

Under this 2022 call for proposals, the total available budget is set at EUR 24 million, with a **maximum of EUR 4 million of funding available per project**. Project topics can be in the categories of "**experimental development**" and "**research infrastructure**." Applicants need to hold a 5G license in Belgium, individually or as part of a consortium that is applying for a grant. Public authorities also may participate in the project call if they collaborate with a legal entity that submits the project proposal as a consortium leader. The project must be for the benefit of Belgian society.

## Federal project calls to increase cyber resilience of SMEs and self-employed individuals

In the framework of the Belgian Plan for Recovery and Resilience (PRR), the FPS Economy has launched five calls for projects to improve the cyber resilience of SMEs (with fewer than 50 full-time employees), including self-employed individuals, that are active in traditional sectors (non-technological sectors) and that have a low maturity level in terms of cybersecurity. The deadline for submitting a grant application is 31 October 2022.

The five different project calls (four at a national level and one at a regional level that is subdivided into three lots, one per region) are as follows:

- National project call: theme 1: organizational measures: This call aims to stimulate action by SMEs regarding the importance of having a clear view of their cybersecurity situation and their capabilities to prevent and react to a cyber incident.
- National project call: theme 2: technical measures: This call aims to stimulate SMEs to take action regarding the importance of using the right defensive tools.
- National call for projects: theme 3: training and access to skills: This call aims to enable SMEs to be trained and to determine the best route to access the necessary cybersecurity skills.
- National project call: theme 4: professional support: This call aims to provide individualized support to SMEs to enable them to carry out a complete cybersecurity diagnosis/audit and to reduce identified vulnerabilities and security flaws; to carry out a market survey to allow them to choose the most appropriate offer/solution; and to support them in the implementation and monitoring of the offer/solution selected by the company.
- Regional project call: theme 5: specific transversal projects: This call aims to improve the cybersecurity (awareness, skills, support, etc.) of two specific groups of SMEs: female entrepreneurs and local retailers.

The amount of support granted varies according to the type of call and ranges between EUR 50,000 and EUR 750,000.

# Project grants “Clean Power for Transport” supporting electric charging infrastructure

In light of the EU “Clean Power for Transport” directive, EU member states are transitioning to zero-emission vehicles. Organizations may benefit from a cash grant when they make plans to invest in charging infrastructure in Flanders for electric vehicles. The deadline for submitting a grant application is 15 September 2022 and charging infrastructure for the following is eligible for support:

- Electric cars and vans (both normal and fast charging);
- Vans deployed with the aim of achieving zero-emission urban logistics (both normal and fast charging); and
- Trucks (fast charging only).

The charging infrastructure for electric cars and vans referred to in the first bullet above qualifies for support only when it is semi-publicly accessible (e.g., in parking lots of shopping centers).

The total support available is equal to **20% of eligible costs**, with a maximum of EUR 1,000 per realized charge point equivalent and EUR 300,000 per project.

## Mandatory submission of climate plan in Flanders when requesting certain funding

Flanders Innovation and Entrepreneurship (VLAIO) has announced that a climate plan will be required to be submitted when requesting cash grants under a large number of its research and development funding mechanisms as from 1 October 2022. The climate plan is mandatory **for large companies and energy intensive enterprises** (with annual energy consumption > 0.1 PJ). The climate plan must describe the approach of the applicant company toward a low-carbon business operation in a climate-neutral Europe in 2050, taking into account the objectives of the Flemish Energy and Climate Plan (Horizon 2030).

## How can GI<sup>3</sup> be of assistance?

Deloitte Belgium’s experienced GI<sup>3</sup> team can assist with questions regarding the developments discussed above, including whether a project would be eligible for an application in response to one of the calls for proposals/project grants. The team also can provide support in preparing the application and/or the climate plan. Please feel free to contact one of our GI<sup>3</sup> experts via the contact details below.

### Contacts

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