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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**2017: Accelerated growth in economic activity and total employment in all three Regions**

- In 2017, the economic growth amounted to 2.0% in Flanders, 1.6% in Wallonia and 0.9% in Brussels. These figures were higher than in 2016 for all three Regions.
- Total employment saw a further rise in 2017 in all Regions, with an extra 44,000 persons at work in Flanders, 17,200 in Wallonia and 3,300 in Brussels.

This press release sets out first regional results for economic growth<sup>1</sup>, employment and compensation of employees in 2017. A revised edition of the regional accounts for the previous years is published at the same time. The figures are consistent with the national accounts published in October 2018.

**Economic growth in 2017 highest in Flanders, followed by Wallonia, with Brussels some way behind**

In 2017, economic growth in all three Regions was higher than in 2016, reaching 2.0% in Flanders (+0.3 percentage points), 1.6% in Wallonia (+0.5 percentage points) and 0.9% in Brussels (+0.9 percentage points). The figure for Belgium amounted to 1.7% (+0.5 percentage points).

**INDUSTRIES WITH THE GREATEST IMPACT ON GROWTH OF GROSS VALUE ADDED IN VOLUME PER REGION IN 2017**  
 (Contribution to growth in percentage points)

<b>A38-industry</b>	<b>Brussels</b>	<b>Flanders</b>	<b>Wallonia</b>
Industry (C)	0.02	0.46	0.33
Of which: Manufacture of chemical products (CE)	-0.01	0.16	0.06
Manufacture of pharmaceutical raw materials and products (CF)	0.05	0.45	0.28
Manufacture of basic metals and fabricated metal products, excluding machinery and equipment (CH)	-0.03	-0.45	-0.41
Production and distribution of electricity, gas, steam and cooled air (DD)	-0.32	-0.23	-0.28
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (GG)	-0.32	0.08	0.12
Telecommunications (JB)	0.38	0.06	0.03
Computer programming, consultancy and related activities; information service activities (JC)	-0.11	0.22	0.11
Legal and accounting services, head offices, management consultancy activities, architecture and engineering activities, technical testing and analysis (MA)	0.54	0.55	0.32
Administrative and support service activities (NN)	0.27	0.34	0.33
Education (PP)	0.17	0.12	0.26
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>1.6</b>
Of which: Public sector	0.23	0.11	0.29
Private sector	0.66	1.92	1.33
<b>Note: total growth at current prices (%)</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>2.6</b>

Source: NAI

<sup>1</sup> On the basis of gross value added at basic prices, in volume.

In all three Regions, economic growth in 2017 was driven mainly by various business services (MA) and administrative and support services, while the production and distribution of electricity and gas had a negative impact on economic growth.

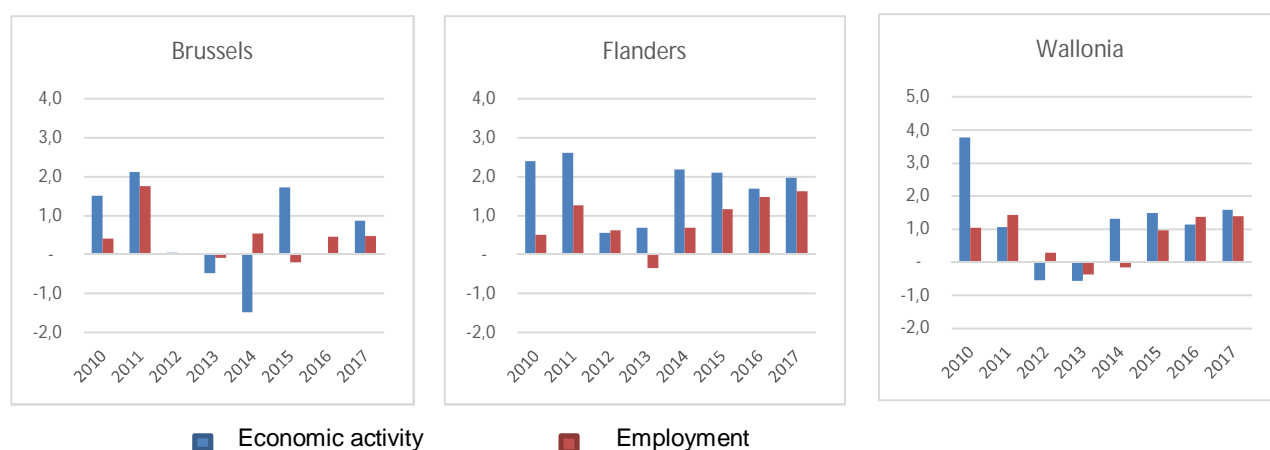
In Brussels, trade also exerted a negative impact. Conversely, telecommunications delivered a significantly positive contribution to growth.

In Flanders and Wallonia, industry as a whole – in particular the pharmaceutical industry – made a substantial contribution to economic growth in spite of the decrease from metal- and metalworking industry. In Flanders, computer and information service activities also realized a positive contribution. This was also the case for education in Wallonia.

### **Growth in total employment in 2017 also highest in Flanders, followed closed by Wallonia, with Brussels some way behind**

In 2017, the number of employed persons rose by 44,000 in Flanders (+1.6%), by 17,200 in Wallonia (+1.4 %) and by 3,300 in Brussels (+0.5 %), i.e. a greater increase than in 2016 in all three Regions. In that year, Flanders saw a 39,600 increase in the number of persons at work, Wallonia 16,800 and Brussels 3,100. In 2017, there was a rise both in the number of employees and self-employed persons in all the Regions. However, the figures for Brussels showed a slight slowdown in growth for employees and an accelerated growth in the number of self-employed persons. In Flanders and Wallonia the reverse was true: a larger rise in the number of employees than in 2016 and a smaller increase in the number of self-employed persons.

#### **ECONOMIC ACTIVITY<sup>2</sup> AND EMPLOYMENT PER REGION (% CHANGE COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR)**



The table on the following page shows the key variables from the regional accounts broken down by workplace for the last four years.

#### **Technical note**

Version of the NSSO database of establishments

For the estimate for the latest year, i.e. 2017, data from the social security office for the second half of 2017 was used. For those industries where to a great extent information from the DIBISS (Department for Special Social Security Systems) is used, the 2016 structure was retained in full.

The difference between the national figures and the sum of the three Regions is due to the extra-regional territory.

<sup>2</sup> Based on gross value added at basic prices in volume.

## KEY VARIABLES FROM THE REGIONAL ACCOUNTS BROKEN DOWN BY WORKPLACE

	In absolute numbers (€ million or number of persons or 1000 hours)	Share of each region in the total for the country (%)	Percentage change compared to the previous year			
			2016	2016	2014	2015
<b>Gross value added at basis prices, at current prices</b>						
Brussels	68.261,9	18,0	0,0	3,4	2,3	1,6
Flanders	223.342,4	58,9	2,7	2,9	3,5	3,8
Wallonia	87.508,5	23,1	2,0	2,1	2,6	3,4
Belgium	379.274,5	100,0	2,0	2,8	3,0	3,3
<b>Gross value added at basic prices, in volume – reference year 2016 – Economic growth</b>						
Brussels	68.261,9	18,0	-1,5	1,7	0,0	0,9
Flanders	223.342,4	58,9	2,2	2,1	1,7	2,0
Wallonia	87.508,5	23,1	1,3	1,5	1,1	1,6
Belgium	379.274,5	100,0	1,3	1,9	1,2	1,7
<b>Number of employees</b>						
Brussels	614.601	15,8	0,3	-0,6	0,3	0,2
Flanders	2.246.478	57,9	0,7	1,1	1,4	1,6
Wallonia	1.018.631	26,2	-0,3	1,0	1,4	1,5
Belgium	3.881.682	100,0	0,4	0,8	1,2	1,3
<b>Number of self-employed</b>						
Brussels	79.334	10,2	2,5	2,9	1,9	2,3
Flanders	473.511	60,9	0,7	1,3	1,8	1,7
Wallonia	225.039	28,9	0,4	0,9	1,3	1,0
Belgium	777.884	100,0	0,8	1,4	1,7	1,6
<b>Total employment</b>						
Brussels	693.935	14,9	0,5	-0,2	0,5	0,5
Flanders	2.719.989	58,4	0,7	1,2	1,5	1,6
Wallonia	1.243.670	26,7	-0,2	1,0	1,4	1,4
Belgium	4.659.566	100,0	0,4	0,9	1,3	1,4
<b>Number of hours worked by employees</b>						
Brussels	897.614	16,2	0,0	-0,9	0,3	n.b.
Flanders	3.213.857	58,1	0,6	1,0	1,6	n.b.
Wallonia	1.417.144	25,6	-0,7	0,7	1,6	n.b.
Belgium	5.531.808	100,0	0,2	0,6	1,4	n.b.
<b>Number of hours worked by self-employed persons</b>						
Brussels	153.092	9,1	1,5	2,0	0,8	n.b.
Flanders	1.025.357	61,2	0,6	-1,1	0,5	n.b.
Wallonia	496.915	29,7	0,2	0,6	1,7	n.b.
Belgium	1.675.364	100,0	0,5	-0,3	0,9	n.b.
<b>Total number of hours worked</b>						
Brussels	1.050.706	14,6	0,2	-0,5	0,4	n.b.
Flanders	4.239.215	58,8	0,6	0,5	1,4	n.b.
Wallonia	1.914.058	26,6	-0,4	0,7	1,6	n.b.
Belgium	7.207.172	100,0	0,3	0,4	1,3	n.b.
<b>Compensation of employees</b>						
Brussels	39.628,4	18,9	1,0	-0,6	1,0	1,6
Flanders	119.540,9	56,9	1,8	1,4	1,9	3,6
Wallonia	50.779,4	24,2	0,5	0,7	1,8	4,1
Belgium	210.093,6	100,0	1,3	0,8	1,7	3,3
<b>Gross fixed capital formation</b>						
Brussels	13.351,5	13,5	5,5	7,0	-0,9	n.b.
Flanders	62.701,3	63,3	5,2	-1,1	11,0	n.b.
Wallonia	23.013,7	23,2	8,3	11,6	-7,9	n.b.
Belgium	99.132,4	100,0	6,0	3,1	4,4	n.b.

Source: NAI