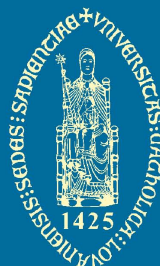


# *Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe:*



## The Labour Market for Archaeologists in Belgium in 2007-2008

Marc Lodewijckx  
K.U. Leuven  
2008



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Leuven, Belgium, 2008

ISBN 9789081346122

EAN 9789081346122

Design frontpage: Conor McDermott

Translation: Michiel Zeevaarder, *Everyman tolk en vertaalbureau*

Original report: Marc Lodewijckx, Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe – De Arbeidsmarkt voor Archeologen in België in 2007-2008

Also available in French: Le marché du travail pour les archéologues en Belgique en 2007-2008

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**DISCOVERING THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF EUROPE**

**THE LABOUR MARKET FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS  
IN BELGIUM – 2007-2008**

**Marc LODEWIJCKX**

**K.U. Leuven**

**Leuven – 2008**



## 1. Introduction

The project, '*Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe*' (<http://www.discovering-archaeologists.eu>), is a partnership of archaeological representatives from ten member countries of the European Union, namely Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. The project is supported by the *European Association of Archaeologists* (EAA) (<http://www.e-a-a.org>), which is also regarded as the eleventh partner in the project. In the meantime, several other countries including Austria and Hungary have also joined the group without having full partner status. The project will result in twelve national reports on archaeological employment in each of the participating countries and in a transnational summary and overview of the project, which will be written by Kenneth Aitchison, *Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe: Transnational Report, 2008* (<http://www.discovering-archaeologists.eu>). The Belgian report will be available in Dutch, French and English (<http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/wea/leonardo/index.htm> and [http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/wea/leonardo/index\\_fr.htm](http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/wea/leonardo/index_fr.htm)).

The project grew out of the formal and informal discussions that were held over the past few years in the working groups of the European Association of Archaeologists about the consequences of implementing the Malta Convention (also known as the Convention of Valletta) (<http://www.e-a-a.org/t2.pdf>) and the introduction of the Bachelor/Master educational structure pursuant to the Bologna agreements (<http://www.e-a-a.org/t1.pdf>). In most countries the implementation of the Malta Convention led to a strong increase in the amount of archaeological interventions and in the number of people employed in archaeology, whilst the introduction of a more uniform structure of education has had the effect, in particular, of promoting the mobility of archaeologists and archaeology students.

Nevertheless, quite a few obstacles still exist, for example, with regard to the recognition of diplomas and the evaluation of the competences and qualifications that are required. These problems were discussed extensively within the appropriate EAA working groups and in exploratory sessions during the annual EAA conferences. Eventually a group of archaeologists from various countries decided to carry out an evaluation of these problems within the context of European Union and to apply for a subsidy from the European Commission. The best formula proved to be to submit a project application in the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci Funding Programme (<http://www.leonardo.org.uk>). Under the rules of this funding programme only a proportion of the expenses is reimbursed from the grant; the remainder must be supplied by the participants themselves.

Because archaeology in Belgium is organised on a regional basis, one of the first problems that emerged was how Belgium should be represented in the project. During the preparatory phase, it was proposed that this task be given to me, as I was the only Belgian representative on the EAA working groups referred to above. To me this did not seem quite so obvious, in light of the complex structure of our country and the diversity of archaeological policies in the distinct regions of Belgium. At the prompting of the other committee members and initially with reservations, I eventually accepted this task because of my familiarity with all the issues and my involvement in the project's preparation. Another important precondition for joining the project was that the remaining funding to provide the national contribution in the project costs was obtained. In the end, the University of Leuven (K.U. Leuven) declared itself willing to assume the expenses and nominated me as the executive of the Belgian component of the project.

Partly because of the uncertainty in a number of countries about the national representations and the outstanding co-financing guarantees, the first project application submitted by the IFA was not approved. A revised proposal was then granted in spite of the large number of subsidy applications. The selection of the ten countries mentioned above occurred with the approval of the European Commission on the basis of a number of criteria which included the scope, location and structure of archaeological activities in these countries and, of course, the degree to which they were willing to participate in and co-finance the project. Originally, Malta was among the countries selected but was replaced by Slovakia at a later stage. Over the past months several other countries including Austria and Hungary have declared themselves willing to make a contribution to the project and have been included in the group of partner countries, but are not entitled to any funding. At a later stage in the project I was also asked to assess the archaeological situation in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, because this country is considered too small for partnership status. The Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) (<http://www.archaeologists.net/modules/tinycontent/index.php?id=1>) acts as the

coordinating agency. Kenneth Aitchison (IFA) is the project coordinator and Rachel Edwards the secretary. The project runs for a period of two years (2007-2008).

## 2. The European dimension

From the introduction above, it should be clear that the project is European in scope and that the input from the partner countries is intended to create a joint project with a European dimension. Undeniably, the unification of Europe affects our lives more and more. For example, almost all of our environmental legislation is now made in Europe and much of the work of the national governments is aimed at harmonising laws and regulations within the European Union to streamline life in a unified Europe to everybody's advantage.

This project is rooted in the same vision. If the European Commission chose to finance the project, this was primarily because of the symbolism of a shared archaeological patrimony whose significance far transcends any current national borders, and because of the desire to realise a greater level of international cooperation in this field. The Malta Convention was another milestone with the same motivation, i.e., increasing the focus on the preservation of our common heritage. Although the current state frontiers are only very recent ones from a historical perspective, the care of our common heritage is still primarily governed by national or regional laws and regulations that have scant regard for a European perspective. In this respect too, this joint project has been given a mission, ... to demonstrate that in the participating countries at least, there is enough motivation to develop a joint strategy with regard to our archaeological patrimony. We hope that we will be able to provide a positive contribution with regard to this aspect in particular.

The Malta Convention goes back to the year 1992 and, since then, many new initiatives have been taken, some by the European Association of Archaeologists (EAA), which have not all gained general attention. The problems confronting archaeology in the various partner countries, if not identical, are at least very similar, and solutions of a similar kind must usually be found. We are pleased to note that many countries have adopted customised versions of the *Code of Practice* ([http://www.e-a-a.org/-EAA\\_Codes\\_of\\_Practice.pdf](http://www.e-a-a.org/-EAA_Codes_of_Practice.pdf)) and the *Principles of Conduct* ([http://www.e-a-a.org/EAA\\_Princ\\_of\\_Conduct.pdf](http://www.e-a-a.org/EAA_Princ_of_Conduct.pdf)), whilst the more recent *Code of Practice for Fieldwork Training* (<http://www.e-a-a.org/codef.htm>) is also enjoying increasing support. Indisputably, European archaeologists are gradually tuning in to the same wavelength, and differences between them are rapidly becoming smaller. Naturally, there will always be regional differences in approach and vision, but disputes and dissimilarities are disappearing and mutual understanding is increasing. Speaking for my own country, it is hard to avoid thinking that these European initiatives have bypassed Belgium to a certain extent, for whatever reason. Evidence of this being the low number of Belgians who are members of the EAA or any other comparable organisation.

### 3. The issues

#### 3.1. General issues

The purpose of the project, *'Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe'*, is to give an outline of the current labour market in Europe with regard to archaeological employment. In general, the number of archaeologists and the career opportunities for archaeologists have shown a strong increase in some countries of the European Union over the past few years but, in other countries, hardly any positive evolution has occurred at all. The archaeologists from the latest partner countries in the east, in particular, are grasping the new opportunities with both hands and are proving to be very mobile... working in other parts of Europe to gain experience. Other countries appear to feel somewhat threatened by the new developments, which include 'commercial archaeology', and have adopted a cautious or even a conservative attitude.

We find that the same questions and opportunities are responded to in similar ways right across Europe. For example, when the required funding for archaeological research is available, organisers will look for those parties who can carry out the research effectively. Whether they employ these parties on a contract basis or recruit them via (temporary) associations under their own management, or find a party to carry out the work on a subcontract basis (contract archaeology), all these methods produce the same result: the job market increases.

During the first meetings of the working group, it soon became evident that the subject matter was very complex. To be able to give a picture of the archaeological labour market in the European Union, we first need to ask the question: 'Who are the archaeologists in the European Union, or who could be considered as such?' In most countries the title of archaeologist is not protected by law, so that anyone can call themselves an archaeologist whether they have obtained an academic qualification or not. The definition of an archaeologist as 'someone who carries out excavations' is not tight enough either, in view of the fact that in some countries, archaeological fieldwork is conducted by specialised technicians or even competent amateurs without any academic training.

Another problem in describing the archaeological labour market is the variety of the positions held in associated disciplines and in other professions which have a supporting role. All kinds of specialists who study archaeological materials or make environmental analyses (e.g., paleobotanists, zoologists), or those who are engaged in ICT, GIS, imaging, animation, education or in promotional activities supplement the core group of archaeologists. In some countries, the job market for university graduates in such disciplines is very limited, and the archaeologists carry out these tasks themselves as much as they can, whether they have had the appropriate training or not. Other countries which have greater financial resources at their disposal may outsource such work to specialised staff or outside companies.

The technical and administrative support that archaeologists can rely on also varies. In some countries there are specialised technicians who execute specific archaeological tasks. Often, such specialised staff can only be found at the larger scientific establishments. In other countries the archaeologists have to do this work themselves or subcontract it out to third parties. Certainly, with regard to the larger establishments which have various offices and departments, it can be quite difficult to determine what proportion of the staff, from secretaries to cleaners, the archaeologists can actually make use of. For this reason, we decided to use equivalents and only take general overviews of the sector into consideration.

Another problem that came up in the project was how to allocate the staff from foreign institutions, who carry out a large part of the archaeological research, certainly in the Mediterranean countries. We decided to allocate these people to the country where they have contractual agreements with the institutions or universities which undertake the foreign expedition. As regards archaeologists working in border areas, their place of work was taken as the key for allocating them to one country or the other. So, Belgian archaeologists who work in the Netherlands or in France but who continue to live in Belgium are allocated to the respective neighbouring country.

### 3.2. Specific Belgian issues

The question is how we can map out all these people and all the different cases. In Great Britain with its 9000 archaeologists, it is a hopeless task to approach all the people working in archaeology individually, so the method used there is to ask all the archaeological institutions and businesses about the composition of their staff. In other countries most government agencies or scientific institutions that are involved in archaeology employ only a few people, or else are a one-man businesses. The situation in Belgium proved to be very complex in this respect; it also varies according to the archaeological structure of the regions. Therefore, we chose to carry out a combination of questionnaires, not only asking about the structure and staffing policies of the various government agencies, scientific institutions, commercial companies and (non-profit) societies, but also about the working conditions and soliciting concrete comments by individual archaeologists and specialised researchers, technicians and even amateur archaeologists.

It must be understood that our task was limited in scope and that it was not expected that we could account for all the aspects of archaeological activities in Belgium in detail. We are well aware that the career issue is a very complex matter where many different factors play a role; these include archaeological policies and legislation, training at universities, the financial resources of the various agencies and institutions, the effects of commercial archaeology, the ways in which the Malta Convention can be applied, etc. Furthermore, the historical perspective is also very important and the current situation is closely related to the way in which the structures for heritage management in general, and archaeology in particular, have evolved. In elaborating the project, all these factors must be taken into account.

Thus it depends only partly on the individual representative as to how he or she carries out their task for their particular country. From the start they must keep in mind that at the end of the project, a single joint report will be submitted which will analyse the presenting situations in the ten participating countries and summarise them in one combined argument. This is why so many meetings were held by the representatives to work out the boundaries of a joint strategy that would enable us to achieve sets of results which could be compared. The task of the coordinator in this process should not be underestimated. The group is also accountable to the European Commission for the way in which it spends the budget allocated to it, and also to the EAA for the usefulness of the results of this project. Both organisations have responded positively to the interim reports, which show an understanding of the complexity of the issues and an appreciation of the constructive approach adopted by the representatives of the various countries. Meanwhile it has also become clear that the present course of events within the project is the best feasible result possible within the framework of the existing structures and the current budget.

The remarks above are intended to clarify all the options and limitations within which this project was realised. I recognised more than once that this project, besides offering interesting options and opportunities contained a number of pitfalls as well. It was clear from the start that it would always be difficult and dangerous to sketch an outline of archaeology in Belgium which everyone could agree with. Everyone has their own opinions and experiences in Belgian archaeology, which is a good thing in itself, of course. I have tried, first, within the limited time I had for working out the project, to present a clear overview of concrete figures and to comment on them. Although I have tried to formulate my comments as objectively as possible, it is evident that it was impossible to totally ignore my own personal experiences and insights. I apologise in advance if, in anyone's opinion, I have not fully succeeded in this endeavour.

I hope that this report will evoke positive reactions and form a basis for reflection. Comments are only to be expected, and it is likely that further refinement will be required. I am open to this and apologise in advance for any shortcomings, but I sincerely hope that we will not descend into any futile disputes or hair-splitting. This report is only a snapshot and everybody knows that the situation is evolving rapidly. It is not my intention to be used as the butt of an argument or to stimulate a debate about differences of opinion that centre on me personally. To the contrary, I am only the messenger who will try to word the message as best I can in the following sections. This message is based on the many replies and responses made by respondents who are all entitled to their own personal opinions.

Very occasionally, I have quoted typical statements made by colleagues to illustrate certain points in such a manner that it is impossible, or at least it is difficult, to identify the individuals themselves. I am



willing to listen to any comments and supplementary remarks which may arise but, in principle, everybody has had the opportunity to express their opinion. I also hope that those colleagues (a minority, happily) who reacted to the project in a negative way at an earlier stage and who did not want to provide any information about their agency or institution, for whatever reason, will refrain from criticism now.

## **4. Project objectives**

### **4.1. General objectives**

The purpose of this report is to present an outline of the labour market in the field of archaeology for each of the participating countries individually. The report has to be informative first of all and contain concrete figures about employment and career opportunities in archaeology. It must be made available to all the interested parties and must therefore be written in the various countries' national languages. In the case of Belgium, it will therefore be written in Dutch (Flemish) and French. We also hope that the report will be used to improve the opportunities for archaeologists on the job market so that they can develop interesting careers.

As stated above, each country report will only form part of a general final report about the labour situation in the ten participating countries of the European Union. Each of the reports must, therefore, also be made available to the partner countries and to the European Commission in English as the common language. The final report will be made available in all the languages of the participating countries, so also in Dutch and French.

The European Commission demands that the 'European dimension' form an important component of the final report. In particular, the question is ... to what extent the job market for archaeologists in the European Union is accessible to the archaeologists from all the individual countries. This is not an easy question to answer, of course, and whether this objective could be fulfilled was an important issue raised at the start of the discussions. For one thing, the figures for all the individual countries had to be drawn up in such a way that they could be integrated and compared. In view of the great differences in structure and employment options in the field of archaeology, this was a terribly difficult job. We hope that we have succeeded satisfactorily.

### **4.2. Specific objectives**

The representatives of all the countries agreed to collect the following information for each country:

- an estimate of the number of archaeologists who are active in each country. It must also be explained how reliable this number is, and who fall under the definitions used;
- the age and gender of the people who are active in archaeology, in divisions of 5 or 10 years, and in the form of a table;
- the percentage of people with disabilities in these groups;
- the origins of these people detailing temporary residence, foreign origin, having EU citizenship or not;
- the proportion of people in full-time or part-time employment;
- this proportion as it was 1, 3 and 5 years ago;
- expected numbers (decrease or increase) in the short (1 year) and medium (3 years) terms;
- the highest qualifications of the archaeologists concerned;
- the country in which they attained these qualifications (own country, EU country or elsewhere);
- the proportion of people with qualifications in archaeology;
- a table showing the highest qualifications in archaeology or related scientific disciplines;
- a table showing the qualifications and where they were attained;
- information from the employers about any educational shortcomings;
- salary scales and concrete information about remuneration in general.

## 5. Methodology

### 5.2. Questionnaires

It should be evident from the above that a large amount of data is required to prepare the reports. These data are not always easy to come by, to the contrary. Owing to continual changes in staff, it proved to be difficult even for heads of personnel departments to provide an unambiguous picture of their own staff complement. I thank all those concerned for their smooth cooperation and for supplying the information we asked for, in particular, Mr. André Matthys, who was Director of the *Direction générale de l'Aménagement du Territoire, du Logement et du Patrimoine* at the time and who made a personal effort to support the Walloon component of the project.

Because we wanted to receive the data in a standardised way, we designed a questionnaire that was relatively easy to use by the heads of all the various government agencies, scientific institutions, museums, private companies and voluntary societies. Dutch and French versions were made which were identical except for a few details, and I wish to thank Sylviane Mathieu of the Walloon Archaeological Offices for translating the terminology, which was quite technical and specific in places. We took care that there were no direct references to any personal information about specific employees. The respondents were always free to skip over any questions for whatever reason; there was space given for personal comments too.

To obtain a better picture of the individual archaeologists in Belgium, an additional form was designed which everyone could use to give details about their personal career as well as their opinions about specific aspects of archaeological activity in Belgium. This form could be filled in anonymously, something which only a minority of the respondents did. This form was also drawn up in Dutch and French (thanks again to Sylviane Mathieu of the Walloon Office for preparing the French version).

A third form was intended specifically for the 'amateur archaeologists' and their relationship to archaeological activities in Belgium. As it turned out, the category of amateur archaeologists could be taken very broadly – from people who attend lectures or visit exhibitions about archaeological subjects every so often, to people who are intensely involved in excavations or in processing archaeological objects and data. This category also includes metal detectorists and other specific groups. Moreover, the question arose as to whether or not the emeritus professors, for example, fall into this category just because they are no longer in salaried employment while still practicing archaeology. For these reasons, this questionnaire was only distributed on a limited scale and no French version was made. Another reason was that, according to some people, the non-professional archaeologists in the French-speaking part of Belgium should not be considered as outsiders, because they participate in archaeological projects as volunteers (*bénévoles*). This is something that could also be applied to Flanders, although – in my personal opinion – the structures and societies of amateur archaeologists in Flanders seem to be more independent from the professional archaeologists.

At the meeting of the participating countries which was held in Leuven in January of 2008, I was asked to carry out the same questionnaire in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, a country which is considered too small to act as an independent partner in the project. For this purpose, the French versions of the questionnaire for archaeological agencies, institutions, museums and businesses and the questionnaire for individual archaeologists were adapted for Luxembourg. Both questionnaires were distributed via the Archaeological Service of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (courtesy of Mr. Michel Polfer, Director of the *Musée national d'Histoire et d'Art* in Luxembourg).

## 5.2. Addresses

For a questionnaire like this to be representative it is important that all the relevant people are reached, and so we needed to have their contact addresses. Conveniently, I had kept a database of Belgian archaeologists for many years which had already proved its usefulness on several occasions when organising all kinds of activities and meetings. Because of the volatility of the employment market in archaeology, such a database must be updated and supplemented continually. To be able to use it as a summary for the distribution of the questionnaires via email, the database was supplemented and modified with the inclusion of information from various sources. First of all, the address list was updated using the lists of employees which we found on the websites of many government agencies and institutions. Next, the reports of the contact days of *Prehistorie/Préhistoire*, *Lunula-Archaeologia Protohistorica*, *Romeinendag-Journée d'Archéologie romaine* and *Archaeologia Mediaevalis* were consulted to find or supplement any missing names or details. We also used the notices on *ArcheoNet*, chiefly to collect the names of the project archaeologists, and checked for new address details in the many announcements of archaeological activities which are distributed to subscribers of mailing lists. This was a very time-consuming but necessary job and I owe a lot of thanks to Kristine Magerman who, pending the start of excavations in Asse, did a lot of the tracing work in early 2007 to supplement the database. As regards Wallonia, I owe thanks to Sylviane Mathieu, Marie-Hélène Corbiau and Michel Van Assche, who provided a lot of practical information about Walloon archaeology. As stated above, the questionnaires in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg were distributed via the *Musée national d'Histoire et d'Art* in Luxemburg.

The Dutch-language questionnaires were finally distributed in mid-June of 2007, after the last remaining problems regarding their content had been discussed at the partner meeting in May. The French-language questionnaires were not distributed until March of 2008 after all the problems concerning their translation and the composition of the address lists had been solved. Almost all the questionnaires could be sent to the respondents' email addresses. Printed copies were delivered to a limited number of agencies and people for whom we only had a postal address. In total, 420 people in Flanders and Brussels were sent emails with the Dutch-language questionnaire. French-language questionnaires were delivered by email to 222 people in Wallonia and Brussels. The project was also introduced in *ArcheoNet* and questionnaires were made available through this channel. The questionnaire was also available in both languages via the project website and the website of the University of Leuven – although the latter was somewhat belated; in Dutch: <http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/wea/leonardo/index.htm> and in French: [http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/wea/leonardo/index\\_fr.htm](http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/wea/leonardo/index_fr.htm).

A number of email addresses proved to be wrong and a small number of people let us know that they had left archaeology in the meantime and did not feel motivated to fill in the questionnaire. Others came forward because they had heard of the project via friends or colleagues. Some weeks after the first contact a reminder was sent to both the Dutch and the French speakers, which a considerable number of people and agencies responded to.

In total, 78 Dutch-language and 46 French-language forms were returned by individual archaeologists. The government agencies, scientific institutions, commercial businesses and (non-profit) societies returned 11 Dutch-language and 5 French-language forms, while another 34 Dutch-language forms were returned by volunteers. Many forms contained personal comments and observations. All of this gave us a detailed and also a very complex picture of Belgian archaeology, and I wish to thank all those people who took the time and trouble to fill in the questionnaires, also for the sometimes very personal information which they provided.

To be able to check all this information and, where necessary, supplement it, we asked several agencies and institutions for additional information. For example, the various universities were asked to supply lists of graduates which we used to work out, among other things, the archaeologists' ages and their involvement in Belgian archaeology via their thesis subjects. Alas, by no means all our requests and questions were answered, so that the information which is available is incomplete in certain areas. These areas should be regarded as random checks rather than as statistical results.

### **5.3. Representativeness**

Of all the questionnaires that were distributed, about 15 % were filled in and returned. That is a disappointingly low number, of course, but it should be seen in perspective. We collected most of the information about the Belgian job market from other sources. The purpose of the questionnaires was to check this information and to refine it on the basis of more detailed information from the government services, scientific institutions, businesses and societies, and also from the individual archaeologists.

The questionnaires that were filled in by the individual archaeologists give us a detailed picture of the career of the average archaeologist in Belgium, and they also contain their opinions about the employment situation in archaeology. The questionnaires were very detailed in this respect and sometimes very personal, and the forms submitted present a unique picture of Belgian archaeologists, a picture which – *mutatis mutandis* – we can generalise to the whole archaeological community in Belgium. The questionnaires that were returned by the government services, scientific institutions, commercial businesses and societies also present a very detailed picture of current structures and staffing. They allow us to check the information from other sources and to supplement and refine it.

### **5.4. Databases**

To organise all the information and make it easier to process, several databases were made. They were made in the Microsoft Access programme to make them easy to use. The forms were processed under anonymous serial numbers and we did not modify or manipulate the information in any way.

Because the questionnaires which were returned may contain very personal information and opinions, the forms and databases are not made accessible to third parties, nor will they be made publicly available at a later stage. I have tried to process the information myself as fully as possible while avoiding references to personal forms, so that a number of specific details or exceptional cases have not been included because they would point to individual colleagues.

All the information collected, which could be of a very varied nature and origin, was organised in very detailed documentation files which are not easily accessible to outsiders because of their complexity. In this report, I have tried to include all the relevant information and to present it methodically, also for people and agencies who may be less familiar with archaeological organisation and activities in Belgium. Naturally, this report will contain little that is new to archaeologists who have had long careers in Belgian archaeology. Others may discover issues that they had not considered until now. Young archaeologists at the start of their careers may find interesting information that can help them in planning their futures.

Unavoidably, the information is incomplete and may be obscure or difficult to interpret regarding certain areas or aspects. These items will be dealt with cautiously avoiding any premature conclusions. I hope that everybody will appreciate this and interpret the conclusions with prudence.

## 6. A brief history of archaeology in Belgium

### 6.1. The period of national archaeology

For a better understanding of the current situation regarding the organisation of, and employment in archaeology in Belgium, a brief history of Belgian archaeology seems meet. We will not go back to the remote past – for instance, the discovery of the grave of Childeric in Tournai in 1653 or the publication of the finds in 1655 – but simply state that curiosity about the past is inherent in human nature. The attention given to the past by society is of a more recent nature. Previously, the conservation and management of heritage and any other valuable remains of the past was a matter of the individual owners.

The common interest in valuable heritage soon led to its conservation, chiefly of ‘castles and churches’. Interest in what was buried underground and, thus, only very partially preserved was less obvious, of course. Still, by the end of the nineteenth century no fewer than fifty *sociétés* and *académies* existed that were active in the fields of local history, art history, architecture and monument management and also archaeology, with occasional excavations. A National Service for Excavations (*Rijksdienst voor Opgravingen – Service des Fouilles de l'État*) was founded in 1903 which was attached to the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels. Its first director was Baron A. De Loë who was succeeded by his assistant, E. Rahir. At the behest of J. Breuer, this service was acknowledged as a scientific institution in the nineteen thirties, but it was not until 1945 that it got its own staff consisting of two scientists and two technicians. By this time, other services and institutions were also active in the field of archaeology, such as the Gallo-Roman Museum in Tongeren which drew on the former archaeological societies in Tongeren for its first collections.

At the instigation of H. Roosens, the National Service for Excavations was split off from the Royal Museums of Art and History in 1957, and in 1965 the staff complement was increased from nine to nineteen, only five of whom were scientific staff. In 1958 the National Centre for Archaeological Research (*Nationaal Centrum voor Oudheidkundige Navorsingen – Centre national de Recherches archéologiques*) was founded, whose duties included the publication of various repertories. As activities increased so did the number of people who engaged in archaeology, and the universities started to organise educational programs relating to archaeology. A major obstacle existed in that there was no legal framework for the protection of the archaeological heritage, probably because of indifference or, possibly, because of a political lobby. More than in other countries, archaeology in Belgium was restricted to the world of science and received little social recognition.

Due to brisk economic growth accompanied by the construction of many large-scale infrastructural works, and the large number of accidental finds, the number of excavations and rescue investigations continued to increase and resources were sought in various ways to finance these activities. Often it was the local authorities who raised the necessary resources in imaginative ways. In the nineteen seventies, because of an economic slump which was exacerbated by the oil crisis, no initiatives could be expected from the government. The alarming increase in unemployment led to the introduction of employment programmes after 1977, and almost all the archaeologists of the older generations started their careers via these job opportunities. But, in anticipation of the further devolution of national competences relating to culture and education to the regions and communities, nothing structural was done for archaeology.

Employment in archaeology during the national period is shrouded in the mist of time more or less. Training in archaeology and specific archaeological subjects was not yet split off from the traditional domains of research such as Ancient History, Art History or Classical Philology, which trained students for specific jobs and occupations. As a result, no separate certificates in archaeology existed and archaeologists couldn't profile themselves properly on the labour market as archaeologists. Many people still regarded archaeology as an activity for, preferably, a limited number of people who worked within services such as the National Service for Excavations, the National Centre for Archaeological Research, the major universities, the occasional municipal service or one of the bigger museums.

This situation continues to this day, to some extent, and many people who carry out ‘archaeological’ work have much wider duties in the heritage sector or within the even wider sector of cultural activities

within a municipality, province, museum or government agency. In such a context, the archaeological sector is hard to define.

## 6.2. The regionalisation of Belgian archaeology

The National Service for Excavations and the National Centre for Archaeological Research were terminated on 31 December 1988 and their staff was *de facto* dismissed in anticipation of a (possible) take-over by the regions and/or the communities.

The Walloon government soon set up the *Direction générale de l'Aménagement du Territoire, du Logement et du Patrimoine*, within which the *Direction de l'Archéologie* was, and still is, responsible for the conservation, study and valorisation of the archaeological heritage in Wallonia (<http://mrw.-wallonie.be/DGATLP/dgatlp/Pages/Patrimoine/Pages/Directions/Archeologie.asp>). The Francophone staff of the former national services was taken over while retaining their employment rights and contracts. The new agency since then has had its headquarters in Jambes and is divided into a number of provincial services located in the respective provincial capitals which are responsible for the archaeological heritage in their provinces. The agency acts as a focal point for the provision of good management and employs additional archaeologists on a temporary basis or via local non-profit societies (*associations sans but lucrative*, abbr. *a.s.b.l.*) according to need. This might lead one to believe that archaeology in Wallonia is strongly centralised and that no commercial archaeology is allowed, but that is not the case and will be clarified further on. It should also be noted that, on 1 January 2000, archaeological responsibility for the East Cantons was transferred from the Walloon region to the German-speaking Community of Belgium.

The Brussels Capital Region also assumed responsibility for its own historical heritage soon after the regionalisation was completed (<http://www.monument.irisnet.be>). This took place partly under the aegis of the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels. Eventually, the Historic Monuments and Sites Department of the Brussels Capital Region was established with an Archaeology department which gradually came into its own. One of its achievements to date is the publication of a series of Atlases of the Archaeological Subsoil of the Brussels Region.

In Flanders, much time was lost in discussions about the legal status of the new service and it was only in 1991 that the Archaeological Heritage Institute (*Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium*, IAP) was established. The IAP was given the status of a scientific institution and so was independent of the ministerial services for Historic Monuments and Sites. The fact that the IAP had its headquarters in the small community of Asse-Zellik outside Brussels is symbolic in this regard. Initially, scientific status seemed the best option for the IAP, but when the government had to comply with the Maastricht standards after the European monetary system was introduced in 1991, the annual grant came under strong pressure and budgets were suddenly drastically reduced, which meant a reduction in staff members, whilst the ministerial services suffered less. In the meantime, the atmosphere in Flemish archaeology had been fouled by interminable discussions about competencies, powers and privileges. Eventually, on 30 June 1993, an executive order for the protection of archaeological heritage was issued by the Flemish government. The first implementation decree – which regulated the protection procedures, the licensing and appeals procedures and the use of metal detectors – dates from 20 April 1994. With this decree, the powers relating to archaeological research, conservation and management were assigned to the IAP. The lack of an adequate policy for archaeology led the Minister to decide, in 2004, to add a number of archaeological curators to the Historic Monuments and Sites Department and to transfer the powers relating to archaeological conservation and management to this service. Initially, the IAP retained the exclusive right to conduct research but, on 1 March 2005, it was incorporated into the new Flemish Heritage Institute (*Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed*, VIOE) along with a number of similar services of the Historic Monuments and Sites Department. At the same time, the Historic Monuments and Sites (and Archaeology) Department was being transformed into the Flemish Agency for Town and Country Planning and Immoveable Heritage (*Agentschap Ruimtelijke Ordening en Onroerend Erfgoed Vlaanderen*).

The division of the national agencies and institutions set a trend. In principle, the division did not affect the other institutions (including the universities and the urban archaeological services). The universities had, in fact, either already implemented a division into a Flemish and a French section long before (e.g., the University of Leuven) or had changed their language regime (Dutch replacing

French as the official language at the University of Ghent, for example). But, as regionalisation advanced, the division was also gradually implemented in many other government services and institutions, such as the National Fund for Scientific Research (NFWO-FNRS), resulting in two (or more) services which then increasingly functioned according to their own regulations adapted to the specific needs of their Community.

Despite all the divisions, a lot of collaborations continue to exist such as the annual meetings of *Prehistorie/Préhistoire*, *Lunula-Archaeologia Protohistorica*, *Romeinendag-Journée d'Archéologie romaine* and *Archaeologia Mediaevalis*, which are organised regularly in the traditional way by the institutions and agencies of the three regions jointly. The brochures with contributions in Dutch and French also promote good understanding between the two communities and the three regions. In 2007, the *Forum pour l'Archéologie en Wallonie* was founded following the example of the Flemish *Forum voor Archeologie*, and more such collaborations may develop in the future.

The European Union also can, and has, promised to contribute to streamlining archaeological activities throughout Europe. The Malta Convention and the agreements made to define European and World Heritage according to common standards are good examples. Approval of the present project and the easy international cooperation now experienced are also clear indications. At the same time, any region will undoubtedly retain its own identity in the field of archaeology so that, for the time being, any Eurosceptics among us don't need to worry.

## 7. The current actors in archaeology

### 7.1. General outline

It is not our intention to give a complete overview of all the scientific institutions, government services, commercial businesses and (non-profit) societies which are active in the field of archaeology. Detailed information about their organisation, duties and current staff complement can be found on their websites. Copying this information, without checking it, also proved to be a tricky business because it was often incomplete, inaccurate or outdated. Furthermore, their involvement in archaeology is not always easy to identify clearly as they often have a variety of duties.

The most important actors are listed below.

Federal institutions in Brussels, which are bilingual (Dutch and French) and have authority in the whole territory of Belgium:

- the Royal Museums of Art and History (*Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis – Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire*),
- the Royal Institute for the Natural Sciences (*Koninklijk Instituut voor Natuurwetenschappen – Institut royal des Sciences naturelles*),
- the Royal Institute for the Study and Conservation of Belgium's Artistic Heritage (*Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium – Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique*),
- the Royal Library of Belgium (*Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België – Bibliothèque royale de Belgique*) and its Cabinet of Coins and Medals (*Penningkabinet – Cabinet des Médailles*),
- the Royal Museum for Central Africa (*Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika – Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale*), in Tervuren, outside Brussels.

Brussels Capital Region:

- the Historic Monuments and Sites Department of the Brussels Capital Region (*Directie Monumenten en Landschappen van het Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest – Direction des Monuments et des Sites de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale*),
- archaeologists in the service of the various Brussels municipal authorities, including the local museums,
- local archaeological societies and associations,
- volunteers and *bona fide* amateur archaeologists including the metal detectorists.

Flanders:

- Department of Town and Country Planning, Housing Policy and Immovable Heritage,
- the Flemish Agency for Town and Country Planning and Immovable Heritage including the provincial cells,
- the Flemish Heritage Institute (VIOE),
- the Flemish Land Company (VLM),
- archaeologists in the service of the provincial governments including the provincial museums,
- archaeologists in the service of city and municipal authorities including the local museums,
- the Intermunicipal Archaeological Services (IADs),
- archaeological businesses including (part-time) independent archaeologists,
- the universities of Brussels (VUB), Ghent (UGent) and Leuven (K.U. Leuven),
- the Forum for Archaeology and other organisations in Flanders such as Erfgoed Vlaanderen, VCM, etc.,
- local archaeological societies and associations,
- volunteers and bona fide amateur archaeologists including the metal detectorists.

Wallonia:

- the *Direction de l'Archéologie*, which is a department of the *Direction générale de l'Aménagement du Territoire, du Logement et du Patrimoine*, including the provincial cells,
- archaeologists in the service of city and municipal authorities including the local museums (*Musée royal de Mariemont, Musée des Celtes*, etc.),
- the universities of Brussels (ULB), Liège (ULiège), Louvain-la-Neuve (UCL) and Namur (Facultés Notre Dame de la Paix),
- the *Forum pour l'Archéologie en Wallonie* and other organisations in Wallonia (Archéolo-J, etc.)
- local archaeological (non profit) societies (the so-called *a.s.b.l.s*) and other associations,
- independent archaeologists, most of them working part time,
- volunteers and bona fide amateur archaeologists including the metal detectorists.

## 7.2. Different organisations and missions

The types of work and the staff in all the different categories is as varied as it is multifaceted. A brief overview follows below with specific attention being given to staffing and employment.

The federal institutions enjoy international reputation because of their enormous collections and the many publications of renowned researchers who work or have worked there. In the current Belgian context, where the call for further regionalisation is becoming louder, their future is unclear and their present form of organisation is uncertain. As a result, they are unable to get more resources but instead, even though their workforce is not being actively reduced, it is no longer automatically supplemented when a staff member reaches retirement age or leaves the organisation for a different reason. But they still employ a good many researchers and scientists who play important roles both nationally and internationally. Most of them also employ a large body of support staff who manage the collections, among other things, and, because they are incorporated scientific institutions they can still dispose of considerable resources and offer career opportunities to young researchers via temporary projects, usually in an international context.

The Brussels Capital Region is the smallest of the three regions in federal Belgium and its agencies are bilingual by definition, although French speakers usually make up the majority. The Historic Monuments and Sites Department of the Brussels Capital Region is responsible for heritage management and conservation in general, and the role of the Archaeological Service within this department is rather limited. All the same, the quality of work is high and the publication of archaeological atlases of the individual Brussels communities exemplary. Some other institutions also provide archaeological input, especially the Royal Museums of Art and History and the Brussels universities.

After the recent reorganisations which led to the establishment of the Flemish Heritage Institute (VIOE) and the Flemish Agency for Town and Country Planning and Immovable Heritage (R.O. Vlaanderen), the influence of the Flemish government on archaeological policy has increased again. However, the emphasis is now primarily on the efficient management of the archaeological heritage and on providing the requisite tools for this, such as the Central Archaeological Inventory (CAI), the



application of the Malta Convention, support for the Intermunicipal Archaeological Services (IADs) and so forth. Within the VIOE, guarantees are built in to ensure that the government plays a prominent role in scientific research, not only in Flanders but internationally too. Many experienced people from the former services (e.g., the IAP) transferred to these new bodies, while quite a few competent young archaeologists got an opportunity too. Thus the Flemish government (in whatever shape – independent agencies, for example) is taking its responsibilities seriously, also through other services – such as the Flemish Land Company (VLM) – and it employs archaeologists for specific projects where necessary.

The local and provincial authorities in Flanders have also always taken their responsibilities for their archaeological heritage seriously. The big historical cities have had their own archaeological services since the nineteen seventies but their activities in this respect usually go back much longer albeit that, formerly, they were usually carried out by committed researchers on a voluntary basis. Many smaller towns have also established archaeological services over the years, but only for limited periods of time if acute problems or large-scale projects presented themselves and if employment programmes were available. As soon as such projects are finished, however, the municipalities usually reconsider the need and expense of having their own archaeological service and go back to relying on local societies and the universities to provide archaeological support whenever they need it.

The benefits of intermunicipal archaeological services (IADs) were demonstrated decades ago by the Waasland Archaeological Service (ADW). Many attempts to set up such a service have since been made in other regions but, because of the instability inherent in such a political commitment, many of these attempts were not viable until, some years ago, the Minister provided the necessary budgets for supporting such initiatives by allocating substantial sums for five-year periods. Quite a few municipalities have made commendable efforts to agree on collaborations with their neighbours, but the number of IADs is still limited today. The main problem seems to be the lack of community support for investment in local archaeology.

Instead of committing themselves for longer periods of time, local authorities prefer to engage one of the archaeological businesses which have recently entered the market and which offer their services to anyone who is confronted by a problem of an archaeological nature, be it inventorying, presenting finds, completing a site assessment or doing a large-scale excavation. A lot of new archaeological businesses have arisen over the past few years, either as subdivisions of existing firms which are not primarily engaged in archaeology or as specifically archaeological businesses or in the shape of self-employed archaeologists working part-time. From experiences abroad we know that these formulas have a lot of advantages in terms of flexibility and the building up of specific competencies, but there are drawbacks too which will crystallise in the next few years. This is not to criticise the emergence of commercial archaeology, far from it.

In Wallonia, archaeology is organised differently. All heritage activities are concentrated efficiently in a strong central agency which has branches in all the Walloon provinces. In this way, archaeology is an intrinsic component of the whole package of heritage management which includes the conservation of historic buildings and landscape management as well. This effective integration of archaeology in heritage policy contrasts sharply with the situation in Flanders, where archaeology was promoted by the government as a science for a long time and was kept separate from the Historic Monuments and Sites Department. While the latter service had ample budgets at its disposal, thanks to a series of committed ministers, the grants allocated to the IAP as a scientific institute were curtailed so that even core staff had to be temporarily put on the dole. While the Flemish IAP, as a scientific institution, was soon in direct competition with the archaeological departments of the Flemish universities – the permit system being one cause of the many bitter disputes – the Walloon universities received subsidies for their excavations and domestic archaeological research. Besides collaborating with the universities as knowledge centres, the Walloon service has also invested a lot of energy in creating a wide network of local organisations including many museums and non-profit organisations (the a.s.b.l.s) which manage historical buildings and sites. Good scientific support and attractive subsidies enable these societies to manage their archaeological heritage efficiently. Thanks to their strong local attachment, community support for archaeology is much greater in Wallonia and greater efficiency is achieved at many levels. For example, the provinces, cities and municipalities don't employ archaeologists and there is no need for intermunicipal archaeological services (the IADs of Flanders) because the staff of the non-profit societies can be employed in a variety of places and tasks. Being non-profit societies, good financial management is guaranteed. The central agency in Jambes coordinates all the archaeological activities

for the whole Walloon region whilst the cells in the provincial capitals ensure local commitment. The main drawbacks of this centralist form of organisation are firstly that archaeology in Wallonia is much more dependent on the budgets which the Walloon government decides to allocate to heritage management, and secondly that this system does not invite any financial contributions to be made by other interest groups. As a result, the Walloon system may be less flexible and may come under pressure from the rapid increase in archaeological work. As stated above, archaeological responsibilities for the Eastern Cantons were transferred to the German-speaking Community of Belgium in 2000, which has since maintained its own archaeological service (<http://www.dglive.be/Desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1729/searchcategory-260>).

The implementation of the Malta Convention and the concomitant introduction of the 'disturber pays' principle raises the question of the efficiency of the various types of archaeological organisation applied in Belgium. A similar evolution is occurring in other countries and various developments are possible. We don't want to express any preference here for one system or another and, anyway, any response to the problems and opportunities must be a complex one as well as pay respect to the traditions and existing structures of each of the individual countries and regions. At any rate, the principles of the Malta Convention (and earlier conventions such as the London Convention of 1969) have already been applied in Belgium for some time in large-scale infrastructural works such as the laying of natural gas pipes and high-speed railway lines for international trains. The 'disturber pays' principle has, in fact, been applied in Belgium for dozens of years without much protest. For the financing of smaller-scale research more flexible modes of financing will probably be required such as the *Archaeofund*-system in which all builders pay the expenses for the archaeological investigations needed in certain areas. Another possibility would be to take out insurance to protect oneself against archaeologists and threatening archaeological investigations on one's premises !

## **8. The academic education**

### **8.1. The role of the universities**

Universities are educational institutions by origin but they also conduct (high quality) scientific research. These two elements are interrelated so courses must be based on the lecturer's scientific knowledge and the students must be involved in aspects of scientific research. Now, assessing to what extent the Belgian universities fulfil these roles is not the purpose of this report to measure. In principle, the universities determine the content of their curricula and the individual components themselves; these are often related to the lecturer's personal interests and the availability of funds for research. The quality of education is reviewed at regular intervals of five to seven years by the universities themselves and also by external review committees composed of experts from the discipline in question and from the education sector, who may make recommendations.

The current archaeology curricula of the Belgian universities have grown out of more traditional courses such as Ancient History, Art History and Classical Philology, disciplines which basically prepared students for teaching in classical secondary education. From the nineteen sixties and seventies, more attention was gradually given to the methodology of archaeology proper and to a broader knowledge of archaeological structures and finds assemblages. Bit by bit, the curricula were modified and, as new lecturers were appointed, the emphasis shifted to actual archaeological competencies. Even so, the universities' archaeology courses have always been determined by scientific pragmatism and for a long time the universities were loath to focus courses purely on archaeological issues. The close relationship to History and Art History was retained for a long time and is still being maintained in most cases so that students are given a broad education which will give them opportunities in various sectors of the job market.

As archaeology has become more professional, the universities have been giving more attention to the integration of scientific research in their courses and the students are being trained as 'professionals' more than they were in the past. All of this still doesn't satisfy many students' thirst for knowledge. This is clear from the large number of students who want to take advanced courses and who have to go abroad because there are not enough interesting archaeology courses being offered in Belgium. The great demand for further training (continuing professional development) is also characteristic of the rapid evolution of the profession. The Belgian universities have difficulty in meeting this demand partly because of their small staff numbers.

## 8.2. The archaeological training

Formerly, archaeology courses in Belgium used to last four years. After two years of successful studies the student was awarded a candidate's diploma, and after four years concluded by a thesis, the licentiate diploma. Almost all the archaeologists in Belgium possess a licentiate's diploma, often in Ancient History or Art History with archaeology as a special subject. Candidates' training was normally composed of a fixed set of methodological and cultural-historical subjects, but licentiate students could usually choose optional subjects and their theses might be very specialised. In principle, the employment market did not differentiate between diplomas from the various universities and the thesis subjects. Naturally, students with in-depth specialism's and experience of fieldwork in (national) archaeology would more easily enter the archaeological job market, while others would seek a job in the cultural or education sectors.

In principle, the licentiate diploma was only recognised in Belgium but in theory it enabled people to work abroad too, as an employee of a Belgian institute or university which was carrying out research in another country, or as an employee of a foreign institute if the competencies listed on the diploma were explicitly recognised in that country and, preferably, if they could show relevant experience and references from archaeologists of repute. An additional problem in this connection was that in other countries a Bachelor's degree was enough to get a job in archaeology. A Master's degree was seen as evidence of scientific competence, forming the foundation for an academic career and the basis for obtaining a doctorate.

This state of affairs is unacceptable in a unified Europe, of course, which is why the Bologna Convention was adopted: it introduced a uniform educational structure consisting of a three-year Bachelor program followed by a one or two-year Master's course. Because the former licentiate course lasted four years, Flanders initially opted for a one-year Master's program. Wallonia, following the example of most foreign universities, resolutely opted for a two-year Master. Although the first Master students are only graduating in 2008, Flanders is already considering changing to a two-year Master's program in the near future. That would pose the problem of some people having a one-year and others a two-year Master's degree. How the labour market will respond to this difference is not yet clear. Presently, archaeologists can only obtain personal research permits (for surveys or excavations) after four years of study. In law, the four-year Master's course will be regarded as equivalent to the former licentiate degree.

A limited number of students want to obtain a doctorate after attaining their licentiate or Master's degree. The procedure is still the customary one of defending a dissertation which contains original research results. During the past few years doctoral students have also been required to follow a doctoral course while preparing their dissertation. The possibilities for obtaining a doctorate with grant funding via a mandate (from the Scientific Research Fund, for example) or in the framework of a research project are limited. Others try to write their dissertation while working full-time or part-time, but these graduates often obtain the doctorate too late for it to be of any benefit to their career path.

Scanning the lists of archaeologists who graduated from Belgian universities in the past few years, it is depressing to see how few of them have actually found work in archaeology and also managed to make a living from it. It is true that the figures are difficult to assess because many graduates have a degree in archaeology/art history, which makes it hard to distinguish the archaeologists from the art historians, at the same time there are also some archaeology students who prefer to be involved with the material remains of the past in a contemplative manner. But the overall impression is that many graduates do not want, or dare, to commit to practical archaeology because of the uncertain career prospects and, instead, find jobs in other sectors which may be less satisfying and pay less but which provide greater security and better future perspectives.

## 9. The social context

### 9.1. The heritage sector

The heritage sector in Belgium has taken on a more distinct profile and has become more professional over the past few years. This is part of an evolution which has already been going on for many years, of course. The conservation of cultural and archaeological heritage used to be the concern of (local) historical circles, but step by step it has been updated by the government on the one hand and by local initiatives on the other. At any rate, the demand for more and better professional support has strongly increased in the heritage sector in all its domains and in every aspect.

As outlined above, the government has done a lot over the past few years to make policies more efficient and to provide a well thought out legal framework, better qualified staff and sufficient budgets in all three regions and all three communities of Belgium.

At the same time, there is an opposite grass roots movement. The success of the Heritage Days and other initiatives are abundant proof that people are interested in our heritage and the values it represents, more so than ever. Many local societies strive to preserve as many local monuments in their areas, which may not all be of great historical or scientific importance but which have sentimental value for the local community.

Many initiatives to support this undercurrent of enthusiasm are being taken by a variety of organisations which have mainly a supervisory and coordinating role. I will give some examples from Flanders, which I am most familiar with, but I have been assured that similar support organisations exist elsewhere as well (one example being *Archéolo-J*). Monument Watch Flanders (*Monumentenwacht Vlaanderen*) carries out inspections of listed and unlisted privately owned buildings to spot whether any repairs are required to ensure that more efficient maintenance takes place. Heritage Flanders (*Erfgoed Vlaanderen*) manages problematic sites and monuments in complex legal situations and seeks tailored solutions for better long-term management. The Flemish Contact Forum for Heritage Societies (*Vlaams Contactforum voor Erfgoedverenigingen, VCM*) supports its 'user members' if they have any questions or problems regarding local heritage management and also presents initiatives to the authorities and the field to find solutions for shared problems relating to heritage, for example, with respect to volunteers, insurance and accountability.

In short, we have nothing to complain about, even if lots of things can still be improved upon. It is also important to keep one's eyes open to the rapid evolution of heritage management, not just in Belgium but in all the countries of the European Union – and elsewhere, of course – because any measures that are taken may soon become outdated.

### 9.2. The amateur archaeologist

People are naturally curious about their past and certainly about any aspects of it that are easily accessible such as the tools and utensils which archaeologists dig up from the soil. This is why archaeology has always been popular, and this popularity will grow as people get a better education and have more free time.

In a field of study which suffers from a chronic lack of funds, volunteers are a necessity. The role of the amateur archaeologists and volunteers at excavations has always been essential to archaeology and will continue to be so in the future... so it makes no sense to limit their role or to regard them as superfluous. Archaeological excavations are temporary by definition, and the need for personnel is tied to peak times when urgent activities have to be performed.

The authorities, too, assume that part of the archaeological work can be done by amateur archaeologists and unpaid personnel. This, by the way, also applies to many other interesting fields of work where the number of paid jobs is limited, and people seek opportunities to do work that they enjoy doing even if they can only do it on a temporary and unpaid basis.

In this perspective, the annually recurring complaint by VDAB, the Flemish Employment Mediation and Professional Training Service, and Forem, its Walloon counterpart, that so many young people choose courses of education that offer poor job prospects, merely demonstrates a lack of understanding which is based on the viewpoint of economically stronger industries. People will always choose a field of study which they are interested in, hoping to be among the select few who can find a permanent job in that field, rather than choose an occupation which may offer better opportunities on the job market but which, in their eyes, is less interesting and entails boring routine work. As a matter of fact, a remarkably large number of students start their archaeology studies after they have failed a different course of study that gives access to economically more viable industries – often one which their parents pressed them to take.

Because of the limited number of professional archaeologists in the past, competent amateur archaeologists enjoyed a comfortable position and were well regarded, but as archaeology has become more professional and the number of jobs for academically trained archaeologists has grown, the position of the amateur archaeologists has come under pressure.

The best solution to this complex problem is to finally do something about amateur archaeologists' training. To be able to hold their own in a sector which is subject to ever stricter regulations (safety coordinators and all) amateur archaeologists must get proper training and gain enough experience to be able to function well and not constitute a danger to their fellow workers at an excavation or to the undertaking in general.

Anyhow, all the people employed at excavations are more skilled nowadays than they used to be. The unskilled labourers of the past who carried out the groundwork are being replaced more and more by competent personnel who can carry out their duties efficiently and with the insight required. It is gratifying to note that the number of archaeologists employed at excavations is increasing at the expense of less well trained people. The time frame within which digs have to be carried out plays an ever more important role, and using more efficient workers usually easily outweighs the costs of paying higher wages to skilled personnel.

For these reasons, and in the present context, the level of competence and professionalism of amateur archaeologists and other unpaid personnel at excavations must be raised. The amateur archaeologists and volunteers are well aware of this, and the demand for further training is high for almost all domains of archaeology. There is a constant demand for accessible publications, informative lectures and conferences and suitable (refresher) courses. Naturally, many initiatives have already been taken in this respect in Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia. The market and opportunities in this area are expanding, but at too slow a rate and with too little focus. For example, there are dedicated amateur archaeologists with many years of experience who, at an advanced age, get the opportunity to work part time or take a career break and commence archaeological studies at an academic level either to obtain a diploma so that they can apply for a permanent job in archaeology, or to maximise their archaeological knowledge and understanding.

Many so-called amateur archaeologists actually have an academic degree, usually in related disciplines such as history, art history or heritage conservation but sometimes even in archaeology itself. These are people who chose jobs with greater financial security and better career prospects after graduating. Some of them are so expert in archaeology or specialist niches (e.g., castellology) that they are highly respected in the world of professional archaeology even though, officially, they are only amateurs.

It should be clear from the above that the world of amateur archaeologists is very varied and diverse and has a lot of potential which the professional archaeologists shouldn't ignore; rather, more possibilities for professional development should be provided. Incidentally, I am pleased to note that in countries where professional archaeology has developed rapidly, amateur archaeology is also flourishing, and that social support for archaeology and the associated possibilities for research funding have increased proportionately.

### **9.3. The metal detectorists**

In the eyes of many professional archaeologists, the amateur metal detectorists are a special breed which, some say, should not be regarded as amateur archaeologists but should be branded as robbers and plunderers. As in any group of individuals, undoubtedly there are some detectorists who are not too particular about the Code of Conduct and who may be tempted not to report special finds to the archaeological community, even if they are exceptional ones such as the Nebra disc which can shed new light on our archaeological insight.

In this case too, we must seek to avoid competition and conflict. Certainly, the detectorists should be heard and supported better. After all, archaeology is a germ which one can't rid oneself of and, although one can question their approach to archaeology, the detectorists are smitten by it too. Better integration of the amateur detectorists in professional archaeology is indispensable for the future. The success of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (<http://www.finds.org.uk>) in England, for example, demonstrates that many problems and frictions can be avoided and that time-consuming conflicts can be turned into win-win situations.

### **9.4. A role for professional associations of archaeologists ?**

In contrast to some of our neighbouring countries, no professional associations of archaeologists exist in Belgium. We may regret this or be indifferent about it, but this debate has already been held several times and we would do better to ask ourselves what role such an association would have in Belgium or, rather, the Belgian regions. In both language communities, pressure groups – made up chiefly of young archaeologists – have arisen over the past few years whose main purpose is to denounce abuses and express feelings of frustration. The *Forum voor Archeologie* (<http://www.f-v-a.be>) was founded in Flanders in March of 2006, and in late 2007, the *Forum pour l'Archéologie en Wallonie* followed in Francophone Belgium. More information about the role and function which these groups see for themselves in archaeology can be found on their websites.

## 10. Archaeologists in Belgium

We begin this section by presenting an overview of all the people who are employed in archaeology in Belgium, including the amateur archaeologists. As stated before, all the figures are based on estimates and full-time equivalents (FTEs).

### 10.1. Notes to the table (next page)

The title of archaeologist is not a legally protected one in Belgium, so anyone can call themselves an archaeologist. The question as to who should be regarded as an archaeologist in the counts made for this report was discussed extensively in the meetings of the project group, because the situation was different in each of the participating countries. To obtain figures that could be compared it was agreed that, in principle, everyone who earns a living from archaeology should be included.

In practical terms, this means that the following occupational categories were included:

- university-trained archaeologists who practice archaeology as an occupation;
- university-trained researchers who are involved on a (more or less) full time basis in archaeological fieldwork or in the processing of archaeological materials, more specifically, who perform analyses, dating work, etc.;
- technicians and specialised support staff;
- administrative staff, insofar as they assist archaeologists in archaeological activities;
- unskilled workers and lower-grade staff, insofar as their work relates to supporting archaeologists in archaeological activities.

In these last two categories, in particular, we used full-time equivalents (FTEs) because it proved that many people in these positions such as administrative staff, maintenance staff and educational workers only work on a part-time basis. The total number for Flemish and French archaeologists and support staff results from the sum of the figures in the Flemish, respectively the Walloon provinces + the Flemish, respectively French archaeologists and support staff with a job in Brussels.

An important criterion used for our counts was that the place of work of the archaeologist or employee should be in Belgium. In other words, we only counted the archaeologists who currently (live and) work in Belgium, irrespective of whether they conduct research in Belgium or abroad. The foreign archaeologists who currently (live and) work in Belgium have also been included in the tables. Belgian archaeologists who work in foreign countries (the Netherlands or France, for example) have not been included even if they still live in Belgium. In principle, these people are included in the counts taken by our colleagues in those countries.

By archaeological activities we mean all the activities which are carried out in connection with excavations and other archaeological fieldwork, the processing of archaeological materials right up to their presentation in museums, and also any activities relating to the management of archaeological sites and archaeological heritage. Thus archaeologists who work in secondary education were not included, nor were archaeologists who are employed in the heritage sector in a broad sense, as cultural coordinators for example, but who do not carry out archaeological work as described above. For the bigger institutions and agencies which carry out a lot of commissions, we tried to isolate the archaeological component as much as we could and to use full-time equivalents for the amount of archaeological work performed by staff members.

Our task was to give 'estimated numbers' and I believe that the figures which we are presenting in this survey meet this requirement. It is hard to say to what degree they deviate from 'reality', because this 'reality' cannot easily be defined and inherently includes many elements which are open to argument. All the figures are therefore debatable, depending on the definitions used. I have adhered to the agreements that were made by the working group of the partner countries after lengthy discussions. The figures presented, therefore, can also be regarded as the 'best possible' ones given the current circumstances, that is to say on the basis of the information that was provided to us by the government agencies, scientific institutions, commercial businesses, (non-profit) societies and individuals, or the information which we could deduce ourselves from the available sources (websites, for example) or which we were able to supplement through personal contacts.

	Archaeologists										Scientists		Technical staff		Admin. staff		Unskilled workers		Amateur archaeologists	
	Government agencies		Universities		Local authorities		Firms + societies		Project archaeologists											
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Brussels – Dutch	18	17	8	6		2		1	3	1	8	6	11	6	8	16	3	3	5	2
Brussels – French	9	7	29	37	1		3	6	5	6	4	5	13	7	8	19	8	5	4	2
Antwerp		3			9	4	3		11	9			6	2	1	4	7	4	14	4
East Flanders		4	28	9	19	11	3	2	14	14	4		10	3	10	14	14	5	11	4
Flemish Brabant		1	21	13	2	3	1		8	10	3	2	5	4	2	8	5	3	9	2
Limburg	3	1			5	10	2	6	3	3	1	1	9	5	12	12	8	4	9	3
West Flanders	2	1			11	5	2	3	5	4			4	2	2	8	15	4	10	2
Total Dutch	23	27	57	28	46	35	11	12	44	41	16	9	45	22	35	62	52	21	58	17
Hainaut	1	5			3	3	9	8	5	4	3	1	6	3	2	8	11	3	11	3
Liège	4	5	21	11	2	2	19	21	5	3	2	2	11	4	4	12	11	6	10	3
Luxemburg	2					2	11	6	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	8	5	5	6	1
Namur	3	6	6	5	1		16	22	8	6	5	2	8	4	4	12	12	6	13	4
Walloon Brabant	3	1	18	15		2	4	2	4	4	2	2	4	2	2	6	4	2	8	2
Total French	22	24	74	68	7	9	62	65	29	26	17	13	44	21	22	65	51	27	52	15
Total Belgium	55	51	131	96	53	44	73	77	73	67	33	22	89	43	57	127	103	48	110	32



By academically trained archaeologists we mean everyone who has a university degree which has the term 'archaeology' in it, for example, 'archaeology and art history'. The majority of Belgian archaeologists hold a licentiate degree and a minority hold a doctorate degree. Some only possess a candidate's diploma in archaeology but, in almost all cases, this is a supplementary diploma to a licentiate or doctorate diploma in a related discipline. Scholars or scientists who work in archaeology usually have a degree in history, biology, anthropology, geology, geography or a different associated discipline. Most of them are attached to large research institutes at federal or regional level, or to a university.

Technicians and specialist support staff were defined as those people who have taken specific specialist training, such as restorers or draughtsmen. They may be self-employed, in the employ of a big institution or a combination of these.

Administrative staff were included insofar as they were specifically employed by archaeological government agencies or scientific institutions. When we assessed the archaeological agencies which belong to a bigger establishment and which can rely on a pool of administrative personnel, we used equivalents. We found that in most of the smaller agencies, the archaeologists carry out nearly all the administrative duties themselves (except for payroll administration).

The category of lower staff includes unskilled workers at excavations and the maintenance personnel who work for larger agencies and institutions. The numbers given by the heads of the various agencies were supplemented by a fixed equivalent for the staff who are employed for temporary work such as excavations. Often, they are employed via temporary staffing agencies, or via other (government) agencies offering temporary employment (e.g., municipalities or Public Welfare Offices).

A wide range of different contracts and employment agreements are used in archaeology. Only a limited number of archaeologists and personnel in other categories have permanent appointments or contracts. The majority of staff have contracts for an unlimited period of time, which is less secure than having a permanent appointment. Others have contracts for a limited period of time which offer opportunities and prospects for the future, such as a mandate from a Scientific Research Fund. Others again are only in temporary employment, although this can mean that they go straight from one contract to the next so that they have a measure of security about the continuity of their employment. The type of contract that an individual has is usually age-related in some way. Normally, recent graduates without any experience will only be offered temporary contracts, while employees who have proved to be reliable may get contracts for longer periods of time. People who have accrued a lot of experience and who are able to deal with a variety of problems and difficult situations will generally be able to find a job which allows them to pursue an interesting career. When organising the archaeologists into the tables, we applied this reasoning in the following way: if the names of the archaeologists concerned occurred in publications of the same service or institution for a number of consecutive years, we assigned them to that agency or institution. Archaeologists who were listed as employees first here and then there were categorised as project archaeologists.

Finally, we have also tried to map out the amateur archaeologists as best we could. This task primarily concerns those amateur archaeologists who play an effective role in Belgian archaeology and whose names occur as (co-)authors of publications and lectures. Volunteers who only engage in archaeological activities for a limited number of days every year, for example, in excavations, have not been included.

The table also takes language into account. Naturally, we took the official language of the service or institution where the individual was employed as the decisive factor. Regarding bilingual agencies and institutions, we distinguished between the language and the basic qualifications of the staff concerned. We realise that many archaeologists are bilingual or multilingual and may not agree with such a compartmentalisation... and we sympathise. It was merely for the sake of convenience that the archaeological service in the German region, for example, was included under Wallonia and, so, falls under the French-language component; we apologise for this. When processing the figures, we usually dealt with the Dutch-language replies first, because they became available earlier, and also because the number of Dutch-language respondents was higher percentage-wise, so the figures probably reflect reality better.

## **10.2. The total number of archaeologists and archaeological staff in Belgium**

According to the calculation above, the total number of archaeologists in Belgium is 765; this also includes the scientists who work in archaeology. Of the total, 416 are French speakers and 349 Dutch speakers. These figures may be higher than many people expected, but we built in as many objective criteria as we could into our count. We included archaeologists who work at foreign sites full time or part time on commission from Belgian institutions or universities and who, therefore, are less 'visible' in the Belgian archaeological world. The higher number of French-speaking archaeologists is caused mainly by their preponderance at the universities and the federal research centres. There is no simple explanation for this except, perhaps, historical reasons.

The group of archaeologists and researchers are assisted by 132 technicians and other specialised personnel, 67 of them Dutch speakers and 65 French speakers. We estimated the number of administrative staff at 184 full-time equivalents of whom 97 were Dutch speakers and 87 French speakers. The number of unskilled staff and other lower staff was 151, of whom 73 were Dutch and 78 French speakers. The number of prominent volunteers was estimated at 88, of whom 47 were Dutch speakers and 41 French speakers. For these categories therefore, in contrast to the archaeologists, the proportion of Dutch and French speakers is roughly equal. As stated earlier, we have used full-time equivalents derived from a 'reality' which we defined on the basis of the criteria agreed by the working group of the partner countries.

## **10.3. Distribution across the country**

Each employee was assigned to a certain province on the basis of the address of the government service, scientific institution, commercial business or society which he or she was attached to at the end of 2007. If it was not clear what organisation an employee was employed at – as in the case of the project archaeologists – we looked at the location of the archaeologist's work activities on the basis of the publications in their names in the various journals. Originally, a small number of people remained about whom we had too few clues, but in the end we were able to assign everyone to a province, usually on the basis of their place of residence, although we are aware that the situation is often more complex.

Surveying the figures, we find that 112 French-speaking and 70 Dutch-speaking archaeologists and scientists were employed in the Brussels Capital Region in ministries, federal institutions, the Brussels universities or in the smaller agencies or institutions. A number of archaeologists work in Brussels as project archaeologists or on temporary contracts.

A total of 304 archaeologists and scientists work in Wallonia: 42 in Hainaut, 97 in Liège, 28 in Luxemburg, 80 in Namur and 57 in Walloon Brabant. The figure for the Flemish provinces is 279, of whom 39 work in Antwerp, 108 in East Flanders, 64 in Flemish Brabant, 35 in Limburg and 33 in West Flanders.

These figures show that the various categories of employees are not evenly distributed across the provinces and regions. This can easily be explained by the presence of the federal institutions and certain regional agencies in Brussels, and universities in other provincial capitals. The number of support positions is also strongly related to the presence of large institutions and/or universities. Smaller agencies usually have very few support staff of their own but can avail themselves of a pool of such staff. On the other hand, the number of archaeologists per province in Flanders also depends on the provinces' cultural policies and the local governments. In East Flanders, for example, a large number of archaeologists are in the employ of the provincial government and the local authorities, while the number of project archaeologists is also significantly higher there than elsewhere. This effect is less clear in Wallonia, but we do see that there are a higher number of archaeologists active locally in the provinces of Liège and Namur.

#### 10.4. Distribution according to age

We had various sources at our disposal for determining the subjects' age distribution. In the first place, there were the questionnaires filled in by individual archaeologists, which almost always stated the respondent's age. Secondly, we had the staffing information from the agencies and institutions. Then there were the lists of graduates which we received from the various universities and from which we could deduce the subjects' ages by approximation. We also used bibliography] and information about degrees or positions, the employment status (e.g., doctoral student funded by a Scientific Research Fund) and other clues to determine the subjects' ages, and if it was too uncertain we often simply asked them. Admittedly, our information about the French speakers is less reliable than our information about the Flemish archaeologists.

We used 5 year divisions, in accordance with the project plan. The category between 20 and 25 years is smaller than the other categories, because archaeologists only graduate after four years of study, so most of them only start work at the age of twenty-two or later. All the figures are approximate and not absolute.

All of this led to the following table, in which we have also included the category of gender.

	Dutch-speaking		French-speaking	
	M	F	M	FV
20-25	38	42	29	42
25-30	43	40	39	53
30-35	37	36	32	39
35-40	24	18	27	23
40-45	11	8	34	17
45-50	13	3	22	11
50-55	18	2	17	10
55-60	8	2	5	7
60-65	3	1	4	3
65 +	2	0	2	0
Total	197	152	211	205

As stated above, the figures in the table are only indicative, and no far-reaching conclusions can be drawn from them. All the same, the table is very informative regarding archaeologists' employment and career opportunities.

As most archaeologists do not start their working lives until they are 22 or 23 years old, the number of archaeologists in the first age group, the 20-25 year olds, should be doubled compared to the other groups. Then, generally speaking, the number of archaeologists declines with each subsequent age category. There are some anomalies, though, and the figures do not justify any far-reaching conclusions being drawn. The number of Dutch-speaking archaeologists in the age group of 50-55 years, for example, is higher than that of the two age categories below it; this may be due to the fact that this category includes individuals who have been able to support themselves working in archaeology via temporary employment programmes. Curiously, it seems that this had no, or a much smaller, effect on female archaeologists, and had no lasting effects in Wallonia at all.

The figures can be interpreted in two ways. The large number of young archaeologists could indicate that there has been a drastic improvement of employment opportunities over recent years, or it could mean that there is a serious shortfall in career opportunities for young archaeologists who discover after a number of years that they could easily find a job as a project archaeologist, but that the opportunities for permanent employment are very limited. These individuals eventually find a job outside archaeology. Other considerations are also relevant in this respect, but we will come back to this issue as a whole in more detail later on.

## **10.5. Distribution according to gender**

Female archaeologists predominate in the youngest age categories, and more so in Wallonia than in Flanders. This corresponds to the gender distribution of student populations on either side of the language boundary, where the number of women is also approximately two thirds of the total number of graduates. On the basis of the available data we might conclude that women have even greater misgivings about finding a job in archaeology than men do.

In the older age categories, we find that these proportions are soon reversed and that the number of male archaeologists is greater than that of women. This has nothing to do with different gender rates among earlier student populations. To the contrary, according to our data about graduates of the various universities in the past, the proportion of women students was always larger than that of the men. This is also evidenced by the older publications in archaeological journals in which young female archaeologists are well represented, certainly since the late nineteen seventies and early eighties. Again, these aspects of this complex matter will be elaborated below.

## **10.6. Full-time and part-time work**

It is difficult to get a clear picture of the relationship between full-time and part-time work in archaeology but, at any rate, university-trained archaeologists and scientists rarely work part time. Part-time jobs are most common in support occupations such as administration and the museum sector.

Many different formulas occur. Real part-time jobs are found mainly in administration, where legal rules and regulations apply in full and it is easy to work, say, four days a week. We also found that people sometimes work in a full-time job less than the 38 hours per week required by law; for example, only 35 hours.

In other work situations different rules usually apply and greater flexibility can, or has to, be applied to the number of actual working hours per day or per week. During excavations, but also during the preparations for, and the setting up of, exhibitions, it is often impossible to work part time or even to go on leave for one reason or another. Deadlines have to be met and overtime work may either be paid or compensated for in quieter periods. But even in such cases, it may be possible to work part time contractually, i.e., less than 38 hours per week.

Many occupations in the archaeological sectors which we surveyed prove to be part time by their nature, so to speak. Many jobs in the museum and educational sectors are often part time by law, and the staff is expected to work at specified times to keep the library available for visitors, to give tours or to receive groups of visitors generally. Many jobs in the supporting administration and among technical and maintenance personnel are also part time, especially in the smaller agencies which have a low volume of work.

Both men and women are represented in this category, but the majority of all the part-time jobs are held by women. The percentages depend strongly on the nature of the occupation. Most men who work part time are technicians or maintenance personnel or work in the educational sector, in museums for example. In administration, almost all the part-time jobs are held by women, but part-time women workers can also be found among maintenance personnel and in the educational sector. The questionnaires show that many of them only started working part time later in their career so as to be able to combine work and family life or for other personal reasons.

## **10.7. Physical disabilities**

The number of people working in archaeology who have a medically recognised disability appears to be very limited. Archaeological work usually involves a certain amount of physical labour, and most archaeologists proved to be fit. The general requirements of archaeological work entail a definite physical threshold so that a number of archaeology graduates with physical limitations, obesity for example, do not (dare to) seek employment in archaeology.

At any rate, the responses to the questionnaires rarely mentioned any medically recognised disabilities. This could be due to embarrassment so the percentage of people with physical limitations might be higher in reality. Some respondents stated that they were disabled as the result of an accident at work. Others have been, or still are, absent from work for long periods of time because of a non-work related accident or illness. We all know that physical ability declines as the years pass, and switching to less physically strenuous work can be welcome. In any case, we did not find evidence of any legally inadmissible restrictions or rejection of people with disabilities in archaeology.

## **10.8. The nationalities of the archaeologists**

As far as we could ascertain, most people who are active in Belgian archaeology are of Belgian nationality. The reasons for this are, on the one hand, that certain government agencies and institutions are not allowed by law to employ foreigners or to keep them in permanent employment, and on the other hand, because knowledge of the local heritage is often essential for the employee to be able to function well at their agency or institution, and candidates are selected on these criteria. For many employers, a Belgian diploma is the best guarantee for the proper functioning of their future employee.

This does not mean that there are no exceptions in the border areas – Dutchmen who have obtained a Belgian diploma in archaeology, for example, or Belgians working in the Netherlands or France. There are virtually no differences in archaeological approach on either side of the border, and certainly the archaeological heritage is identical. Some of these people are so well integrated that others do not even know that they have a foreign passport or have been naturalised only recently. The same applies to a number of Belgians who work abroad.

Foreign employees can be found chiefly at the universities, which actually prefer internationally composed research groups and have developed special formulas specifically tailored to foreign employees. These special employment contracts make the foreign workers difficult to trace within the organisation's structures or employee files. They are often recruited for specific projects, thus for only short periods of time. By implication, their research usually concerns archaeological research at foreign sites or in foreign regions.

## **10.9. Integration of the immigrant community**

The reason for discussing the integration of the immigrant community in archaeology in this report is that the European Commission, quite rightly, made it a point of particular interest. The information available is very limited, but sufficient to conclude that the immigrant community, insofar as it can be regarded as such, is well integrated. A number of graduates in archaeology proved to be second or third generation immigrants, not just from countries within the European Union but also from outside it. They are very well integrated and most of them probably have Belgian nationality, so that the dividing line between native and immigrant can be regarded as non-existent.

It follows that the threshold for university studies was not too high for them and that the choice of archaeology as their course of study, not the most obvious choice, apparently was not a problem either. On the other hand, most of them are no longer active in archaeology, but this also applies to most graduates with a native background, so that we have no reason to suspect any discrimination.

Insofar as the available information allows we may conclude that, percentage-wise, more people of immigrant origin work in support jobs in archaeology, which means that the archaeological activity of immigrants in Belgium reflects the current composition of Belgian society. Nonetheless, there are many differences. Among technical and administrative personnel we find various employees of immigrant origin, also from the first generation. They, apparently, are well integrated. In the category of manual workers and maintenance personnel, however, many foreign names occur and we were not able to determine the degree of integration of these individuals. Recent immigrants and asylum-seekers are often sent to archaeological excavations by local authorities or Public Welfare Offices because it is regarded as relatively simple work which gives newcomers the opportunity to learn the language and become accustomed to work practices in Belgium.

## **10.10. Archaeologists' qualifications**

As stated above, almost all Belgian archaeologists possess a licentiate diploma from a Belgian university. This is as good as a prerequisite for obtaining a job in Belgian archaeology. Many older archaeologists have, or had, university degrees in related disciplines such as Ancient History, because no separate diplomas in archaeology existed at the time. As we explained above, most Belgian universities issue (or in many cases, issued) diplomas in Archaeology and Art History or some other combination, depending on the importance of archaeology in the respective curriculum. A graduate holding such a diploma can work as an archaeologist and obtain a licence for archaeological research. Because the supply of graduates in archaeology has always exceeded the demand, there has never been any need to attract archaeologists from abroad.

A number of people are active in archaeology who do not have a specific archaeological diploma but who hold a licentiate diploma in one of the partner disciplines such as biology, geology or geography. Most of them do not participate in excavations but work at, or for, specialised research centres where they carry out specific duties or commissions.

Various people have additional diplomas, which may be a candidate's diploma, a licentiate diploma or even a doctorate in a different discipline. This may be a related discipline such as history or geography, or be of a quite different nature such as civil engineering or medicine. In some cases this is the first university diploma which these people obtained and they only began their study of archaeology later on, often paying for the course out of their own pockets after first complying with their parents' wishes as to their course of study.

The questionnaires revealed that very many archaeologists obtained additional diplomas or certificates, not so much out of scientific curiosity as to improve their chances on the job market. Most commonly this concerns senior secondary school teaching qualifications, library science certificates, courses in heritage conservation, practical training courses in the conservation and restoration of archaeological materials, courses in business or culture management, language courses (usually the other main language spoken in Belgium) or IT courses; GIS being the most popular subject in the latter category. The main purpose of taking such additional courses was to increase their job opportunities in the labour market.

The only chance of rising up the ladder in archaeology is by obtaining a doctoral degree. In the past, a doctorate could be obtained on the basis of a dissertation which had to be defended in public. It would be accompanied by one or more theses which might also have to be defended in public. Nowadays doctoral students have to take a doctorate course, which means that they have to attain a number of credits before they submit their dissertation, which is still compulsory and which they still have to defend in public. A doctorate can be obtained in three ways, generally speaking: via a mandate as a doctoral student funded by the Scientific Research Fund (4 years), by achieving a research project, or by preparing the doctorate on one's own at one's own expense. Those who take the latter path often do this in combination with a full-time job within or outside archaeology.

Most archaeologists who have a doctorate got it in their own country, usually at the university where they also received their licentiate diploma. In most cases, the subject was the same as that of their licentiate thesis or was related to it, and the dissertation supervisor often was the same person too. Some Belgian archaeologists received their doctorate at a foreign university, usually because these offered scholarships to foreigners or because of other practical advantages. After all, doctorates are

recognised more easily internationally than licentiate diplomas are. The number of foreign doctorate holders is very small and restricted to the universities. Some Belgian doctorate holders have found work at foreign universities.

It is difficult to get a full picture of the number of Doctors of Archaeology in Belgium, as the universities supplied only incomplete data or even none at all. We therefore made a table of all the doctorate holders who are still active in archaeology ourselves, including those scholars or scientists who have doctorates in different disciplines. The situation proved to be complex. The figures below should, therefore, be treated with caution as they are only indicative.

	Archaeologists						Other scholars/scientists					
	Universities		Agencies		Other		Universities		Agencies		Other	
	M	V	M	V	M	V	M	V	M	V	M	V
Dutch-speaking	27	10	7	4	1		6		5	3	1	
French-speaking	25	14	7	3	1	1	3	3	7	3	1	
Total Belgium	52	24	14	7	2	1	9	3	12	6	2	

According to our counts, there are about a hundred archaeologists who hold a doctorate and are (still) active in Belgium. Considering the great investment they have made in gaining knowledge and experience, it is not surprising that most doctorate holders are still active in archaeology. Remarkably, only one in three of all the doctorate holders is a woman whilst the majority of graduates in archaeology are female and the employment of licentiates more or less balances out as regards gender (see above).

Most archaeologists holding a doctorate work at one of the universities or in one of the federal or regional research centres. They are seldom found in the lower government agencies or museums, and not (yet) in any of the commercial businesses or non-profit societies. Some are unemployed while others are self-employed and carry out minor commissions. Many government agencies and scientific institutions do not especially remunerate employees holding doctorates, so a doctorate does not offer any financial benefits. On the other hand, it can be useful for one's advancement in a service and, certainly at the universities, is a precondition for obtaining a permanent position as a lecturer.

## 11. Employment conditions

The figures presented below are based mainly on the analysis of the individual questionnaires returned. No names of individuals occur in our databases. The information from all the returned questionnaires was entered with anonymous serial numbers, and in processing the information we never referred to the names of individuals, only to the parameters entered. This may have been a disadvantage in terms of the correct interpretation or evaluation of the information, but we wanted to keep matters as objective as possible. Because of the low number of respondents – ca. 15 % of all people who are active in archaeology – the data are only indicative and should be treated with caution. As stated above, we processed the information from the Dutch-speaking respondents first and then dealt with the French-language questionnaires, because the latter arrived later and there were fewer of them percentage-wise.

### 11.1. Types of employment contracts

About 40 % of the Dutch-language respondents stated that they had contracts for an indefinite period of time (the way the questionnaires were organised, this was the only possible way of indicating a permanent or a long-term contract). It transpires that contracts for an indefinite period of time are used by all the agencies and institutions at all levels of government (federal, regional, provincial and local), by the universities and also by commercial businesses. Approximately 10 % of the respondents stated that they had temporary contracts for 3 to 6 months, 6 to 12 months, 12 to 24 months or more than 24 months, and 8 % had contracts for less than 3 months. The various types of contracts were used by all the agencies and institutions as well as by the universities and commercial businesses. Almost all of these temporary contracts concerned fieldwork and were, therefore, project-related. Ca. 7 % of the respondents replied that they were currently unemployed, and ca. 5 % were self-employed or worked as freelance archaeologists, researchers or technicians (e.g., restorer).

Of the French-language respondents, 2 in 3 (ca. 67 %) had contracts for an indefinite period of time. About half of these were with government agencies of the Walloon Region. The other employment contracts for an indefinite period of time were mainly with federal institutions, universities, non-profit societies or, occasionally, city or municipal agencies (in particular, museums), the Brussels Capital Region, etc.. The other respondents had temporary contracts, most commonly for 1 or 2 years, or were unemployed.

### 11.2. Salary scales

The salary scales used in public agencies can be summarised as follows. An archaeologist starting out earns 22,850 euros gross per annum. After six years seniority he or she can be promoted to a higher salary scale of 28,100 euros gross. The next salary scale requires at least 18 years seniority and pays 36,350 euros gross. The level after that can be reached after 27 years and pays 41,150 euros gross. Obviously, promotion opportunities also depend on regular individual assessments of the employee and on the financial resources of the agency or institution in question. We will give some examples in the next couple of paragraphs.

What does this mean in practice in terms of an employee's net salary ? The questionnaires yielded many examples which we will try to interpret. It is very difficult, however, to take account of all the factors that play a role and in some cases we wondered about the correctness of the figures mentioned by the respondents. In any case, the picture is not consistent. The minimum net wages of a young archaeologist (22-25 years) with a full-time contract at a government service, scientific institution, commercial business or non-profit society is about 1,400 euros. At the age of around 30 it is 1,700 euros net. Obviously, there is a net difference between the salary of a single person and that of someone who has several children to support (this was not asked so cannot be inferred from the database).

No noticeable differences became apparent between the salary scales that are used in the Brussels Region, Flanders and Wallonia, or between those used by federal, regional, provincial and municipal



government agencies, businesses or societies. In principle, there are no differences between the salaries paid to men and women, nor did we discover any differences between the salaries of archaeologists with temporary contracts and those with permanent contracts. However, the salary is a bit lower if the archaeologist is recruited via a temporary employment agency, while the universities use somewhat higher salary scales. As observed above, obtaining a doctorate makes little difference in terms of remuneration. Submitting additional certificates of IT, GIS or language courses, for example, does not make much difference to one's salary slip either but, as stated above, can make a difference in terms of selection and promotion opportunities.

Young archaeologists (under 25) can, in fact, also earn net salaries from 1,400 to 1,650 euros, and at the age of 30 the salary can vary from 1,700 to 2,000 euros net. We suspect that previous seniority is important in this respect. Many young archaeologists stated that, at the start of their careers, they worked in the catering industry, sales, the educational sector (as tour guides), administration or comparable sectors and this, of course, does not contribute to the building up of professional seniority.

Most archaeologists of middle age have contracts for an indefinite period of time at official agencies or institutions. As far as these figures are still representative enough, they earn between 2,000 and 3,000 euros net with a minority earning more than 2,500 euros net. Net salaries above 3,000 euros are rare and are paid only to some high-ranking civil servants and to university professors of the highest ranks (full professor).

It is impracticable to discuss the salary scales relating to the staff of all the other archaeological agencies, institutions, commercial businesses and societies in any detail, such as the technicians, draughtsmen, restorers, library staff, educational staff, administrative staff, manual workers at excavations, maintenance personnel, etc.. In brief, the salary scales that apply to them are also established by law and are applied generally. Because of the nature of their training or qualifications they earn less than archaeologists. It leaves only to note that a limited number of archaeologists also hold such positions, whether in full-time or part-time employment, usually in anticipation of getting a more suitable job at the same establishment.

### **11.3. Statutory benefits**

Quite a few archaeologists are not aware of the statutory benefits which their contracts provide. The questions which related to medical insurance, accident insurance, holiday pay, annual bonuses, pension contributions, the opportunities for taking social leave, parental leave, early retirement schemes and pre-pension were often filled in very sloppily and inconsistently as if the respondents were either ignorant of them or not interested. They would do well to take time out to read their contracts or to enquire about the implications of this and that at their personnel department. Most male respondents did not answer the questions about pregnancy leave and breast-feeding leave, naturally, but they also usually skipped the question about parental leave, which both parents are ordinarily entitled to and which was in the same group of questions.

Generally speaking, no exceptions are made for archaeologists regarding the statutory benefits either in a positive or a negative sense, and their contracts are in line with those of other public servants and employees – the status which applies to all the archaeologists who are in the service of any of the various categories of employers. We noted no complaints or remarks in this respect, although the terms of employment are not always the same for everyone. The temporary contracts also appear to be legally correct and, in most respects, are identical to those of employees with permanent appointments or contracts for an indefinite period of time. The same applies to the other categories of employees in the archaeological sector.

#### **11.4. Extra benefits**

Although archaeologists' salaries are traditionally subject to fixed salary scales, they can be supplemented by benefits in kind; these are not restricted to the world of business, as one might assume. About 1/3 of the respondents stated that they receive meal vouchers. The numbers are proportionate between the Dutch and French speakers. Meal vouchers are issued by federal government agencies, provincial and local authorities and intermunicipal archaeological agencies as well as by commercial businesses and non-profit societies, but they are not offered by the universities. They are not in general use in any category of employer, but it is difficult to trace what particular criteria, such as the availability of a staff canteen, play a role in whether meal vouchers are issued to employees, although they are not much use to staff doing fieldwork. We assume that agencies, institutions, businesses or societies that issue meal vouchers, issue them to all the categories of staff and not just to archaeologists or university trained staff.

About 1/3 of the respondents stated that they can use mobile phones which are provided by their employer. Here again it is not clear which agencies make mobile phones available to what category of their staff. From the questionnaire we deduced that it is mainly the archaeologists carrying a degree of responsibility who have mobile phones provided by their employer, and therefore that the others, including the other categories of staff, do not.

Reimbursement of home to work travelling expenses was not specifically addressed by the questionnaire but was often mentioned by the respondents; frequently this takes the shape of reimbursement of public transport passes. Reimbursement of bicycle transport for home to work travel was also mentioned. This applies to all the categories of staff.

Costs of official travel are reimbursed in almost all cases. Official travel is usually by public transport and sometimes by the employee's own car. This only applies to the archaeologists and any other employees who are allowed to travel on official business, such as planning archaeologists. A number of respondents also specifically mentioned their agency reimbursing travel expenses to excavations. Some mentioned having an official car at their disposal for travel from their agency. A few high-ranking civil servants even have an official car and driver. Nowhere, however, did we read anything about company cars being available (permanently) to archaeologists.

Reimbursement of conference expenses was mentioned by some respondents but is by no means automatic. Often, expenses are only reimbursed if the participant gives a lecture or presents a poster, or attends in the context of further training. Reimbursement of accommodation expenses is usually even more problematic. It is exceptional for Belgian archaeologists to attend conferences abroad and the reimbursement of accommodation expenses seems possible only for the staff of universities or internationally-orientated research centres which also have the necessary dedicated budgets. Normally, local archaeologists can only participate in such events at their own expense.

#### **11.5. The official working week**

Most of the archaeologists replied that their official working week is 38 hours. Of the Dutch speakers, one in three archaeologists had a 40 hour working week, against only one in five of the French speakers. It is possible that many of them were referring to past conditions. Some stated 37 hours or 37.5 hours as a full working week and a few even stated only 36 or 35 hours, which borders on part-time work.

Less than 10 % of the respondents had part-time jobs, so, worked 25 to 32 hours per week, which comes down to 3/5 or 4/5, respectively. In almost all cases, this concerned women although there were also some men who only worked part-time, whether voluntarily or not. Part-time work occurs in various sectors of archaeology, not just in the museum world or the educational sector; field or planning archaeologists may also work part time. The category of lower grade personnel is poorly represented in the questionnaire, so that part-time work in the archaeological sector is no doubt underrepresented in this analysis, as has already been discussed above.

## 11.6. Overtime

The majority of the archaeologists who returned the questionnaire stated that they work more hours than is strictly necessary. The academic staff of the universities and the staff of the federal research centres in both parts of the country work on average about 15 hours a week above their official working week. In the regional institutions, we find a marked difference between employees of the Flemish and the Walloon institutions. Employees in Flanders stated that they work an additional 15 hours or so overtime per week while those in Wallonia work only 3 hours overtime per week. The archaeologists, mainly those in Flanders, who work in heritage management or in the service of a province, an intermunicipal agency, a city or a municipality stated that they work an additional 5 hours per week. The staff of museums, agencies and non-profit societies work hardly any overtime at all, while the number of overtime hours at commercial businesses in Flanders varies strongly and is probably related to time pressure when projects have to be completed. In all the categories there were some people who did not mention overtime or wrote that they do not (want to) work overtime at all.

The tables do not reveal any relevant differences between the overtime hours stated by men and women. However, we got the impression that the number of overtime hours increases somewhat with people's age and their level of qualification, in other words, that older people who often have greater responsibilities work more overtime than younger people. No differences stand out between regions or between people on temporary contracts and those on contracts for an indefinite period of time.

Overtime payment is only referred to explicitly in a few cases. Commercial businesses aside, the occasional other references appear to be due to carelessness on the part of the respondents, in view of the fact that other employees from the same organisations do not mention it. In almost all cases, compulsory overtime is compensated by additional leave. In the majority of the other cases, however, the employer regards any overtime worked as a 'freebie'. This certainly applies to the universities, but other research institutions also assume that job satisfaction is more important to archaeologists, or any other scholars or scientists, than any financial consideration. For the lower echelons, it is much more normal to go home when the work day is over.

Quite a few archaeologists in various categories indicated that they also take part in archaeological activities outside their professional environment. The number of hours is usually limited but can run up to 15-20 hours a week in individual cases. We have no information about how these hours are spent but it probably concerns private interests (attending lectures, visiting museums) and activities in the context of local societies.

## 11.7. Leave

Annual leave entitlement depends to a great extent on contractual stipulations, such as age and (other) factors which were not always clear to us, but which may be related to benefits in kind which are offered to make the jobs more attractive. We will therefore limit ourselves to recording the number of holidays stated by the respondents. It was clear from certain responses that not everybody knew this precisely or had the information to hand. At any rate, academics in permanent employment do not have holiday registration cards stating a fixed number of holidays. They are expected, apart from fulfilling their specific duties of teaching and supervising students, to spend their time efficiently on scientific research and providing services and to decide themselves how much time they take off for holidays or any other activities (the 'academic freedom'). The same principle applies to self-employed archaeologists and restorers, and some senior civil servants can avail themselves of this freedom as well. A number of respondents on temporary contracts (via temporary employment agencies, for example) stated that they were not entitled to any holidays.

The number of holidays stated most frequently by the respondents were (approximately) 20, 25, 30, 35 or 40 days per year. These steps of five years may be based on certain contractual increments or the respondents may have rounded the numbers off themselves. If the respondent worked half time, we doubled the number of leave days. On this basis, the division for the Dutch-speaking respondents is: ca. 20 days (23 %), 25 days (30 %), 30 days (12 %), 35 days (29 %) and 40 days or more (6 %), and for the French-speaking respondents: ca. 20 days (36 %), 25 days (36 %), 30 days (23 %), 35 days (5 %) and 40 days or more (0 %).

Remarkably, the French speakers on average reported considerably fewer holidays than the Dutch speakers did. The greatest number of holidays available to French speakers is at the government agencies of the Walloon Region and, especially, the Brussels Capital Region. Of the Dutch speakers too, it is the respondents who have public servant status who receive the most holidays, and considerably more than their Francophone colleagues do. For the respondents who stated a low number of holidays, the picture is especially complex and it is not clear to us what causes the differences. More definite findings were that employees with permanent contracts and those on temporary contracts stated the same number of holidays, young and older employees appear to have the same number of holidays, and low and high numbers of holidays occur in all the various categories of employers, from the federal institutions to the commercial businesses, and among field archaeologists as well as museum staff.

## **12. Working in archaeology**

### **12.1. Job titles**

We suggested a number of job titles in the questionnaires, asking the archaeologists and other staff which of these best described the archaeological work they usually perform. Quite a few new job titles have only recently been introduced in archaeology, such as planning archaeologist. Indeed, as the duties of archaeologists have expanded, more specialised occupations have arisen which require specific training or experience. This was already the case in scientific research, where the study of animal or human bone material, seeds, stones and other organic materials has been in the hands of specialists instead of archaeologists for a long time, but in the context of museum activities and exhibitions as well more and more work is being outsourced to firms which specialise in the presentation of the results of archaeological research. Finally, archaeological heritage management and the related laws and regulations have become so complex that specialists are needed in this field too.

In the Dutch-language questionnaires about 1/3 of the respondents called themselves 'field archaeologist', followed by 'academic researcher' and 'planning archaeologist', and then 'urban archaeologist' and 'intermunicipal archaeologist'. Exceptional job titles mentioned were 'educational employee', 'curator', 'restorer' and 'professor'.

The French-language archaeologists usually described themselves as 'heritage management archaeologist' or 'field archaeologist' or, in many cases, both. Often, they also explicitly stated their task to communicate with the public. Other titles given were 'academic researcher', 'curator', 'technician', 'museum employee', 'educational employee', 'urban archaeologist' and 'lithic expert' (*'lithicien'*).

The content of these job titles will become clearer in the following paragraphs, which summarise how the respondents described their duties.

### **12.2. The various packages of duties**

The questionnaires listed various packages of duties which the respondents were asked to tick if they corresponded to their own job description. For the sake of convenience we composed rather broad packages of comparable duties or duties pertaining to a specific position. As a result, the respondents' actual work is described in general terms and they usually had to mention duties in several sectors. The combination of these packages of duties sheds an interesting light on the complexity of archaeologists' work. However, because we cannot be sure that the returned questionnaires are truly representative, the figures are only indicative and should be treated with caution.

After the returned questionnaires for the Dutch-language region had been processed, the following picture emerged:

- almost 2/3 of all archaeologists conduct fieldwork as their main occupation, combining it with management and policy support duties in 1/4 of all cases;

- ca. 1/3 state that they are engaged in museum duties or public communication, usually in combination with fieldwork and, sometimes, management and policy support duties;
- ca. 25 % perform management duties, often in combination with fieldwork;
- ca. 20 % of the respondents work in the academic sector, sometimes combining it with fieldwork or specialist research;
- a minority state that they carry out specialist or support duties, such as curating or restoring, usually in combination with occasional fieldwork, museum work or scientific research;
- the category of 'other work' includes specific job titles or work such as 'project manager', 'professor', 'living archaeology' (re-enactor).

The picture presented by the French-speaking region is a bit different:

- Similarly, 2/3 of the respondents state that fieldwork is their main occupation, but in 60 % of all the cases they combine it with management and policy support duties;
- Turning these figures on their head, one could say that half of the respondents are engaged in management and policy work and that almost 90 % of them also carry out fieldwork;
- Ca. 50 % work in museums or in public communication, often combining it with other duties such as fieldwork and management duties;
- Ca. 25 % work in the academic sector teaching and conducting research, and in these cases too, the combination with fieldwork or specialist research is the rule rather than the exception;
- Ca. 20 % state that they are engaged in specialist research and support functions about equally, usually in combination with fieldwork, museum work or academic research;
- Among the other specific job titles or duties stated, we find 'museum director', 'experimental archaeology', 'depot staff' and 'administration', always in combination with other categories of work.

An interesting result of this analysis is that in Wallonia (and Brussels) many more archaeologists combine fieldwork and management duties whilst these duties are more often separated in Flanders, where archaeologists either have management and policy duties or are engaged in fieldwork. As regards the other packages of duties, such as the museum world and the academic sector, there are few differences between the Belgian regions and communities. As stated above, the figures and percentages are only approximate and are based on a limited number of respondents, but some of the results of the survey are similar to those gleaned from our own investigation. For example, there appear to be more French-language researchers than Dutch-language ones.

### **12.3. Working conditions and support**

An interesting aspect which can be investigated in such an (anonymous) questionnaire is working conditions and, in particular, the employees' perceptions about their working conditions. The question asking whether the employee was satisfied with the level of support which they received from their agency, institution, business or society, could be answered by 'yes', 'no' or, more nuanced, 'good enough'.

The Dutch-language respondents replied 'yes' in about 40 % of all the cases and 'good enough' almost as often, while about 11 % ticked 'no'. The remaining 9 % was made up of respondents who did not reply to this question because they were heads of agencies etc. themselves or were self-employed. Looking at the employers of the respondents, we find that almost all the categories of employers were mentioned and that the support given by the federal institutions, the regional, provincial, municipal governments, the universities and the commercial businesses could be assessed as being positive or negative, depending on the respondent. Because of our promise of confidentiality regarding the processing of the questionnaires, we cannot give any more details either about the identities of the respondents or about the relevant employers. As both the question and the answers were couched in such general terms anyway, no conclusions as to people's identities can be drawn from them.

Of the French-speaking respondents, only a few did not answer the question (3 %), while 27 % replied 'yes', 33 % 'no', and 37 % 'good enough'. The affirmative replies therefore formed a clear minority, which indicates the existence of a problem. Again, the question and the answers were worded in very general terms, and our promise of confidentiality prohibits us from divulging any more details. We will take this element into account when making our general conclusions.

The next question was: "In what area would you like to receive more support or guidance from your employer?" This question was intended to clarify any negative answers given to the preceding question. The areas listed were:

- logistics (e.g., more equipment),
- administration (e.g., too much paperwork),
- staff (e.g., more assistants, labourers, technicians, etc.),
- financial (e.g., a larger budget),
- training (e.g., ICT, GIS, management, etc.),
- more flexible hours of work, more holidays,
- more freedom (e.g., to attend conferences),
- other, namely ...

As a preliminary remark, half of the respondents who gave a positive answer to the previous question still ticked one or two areas where support or guidance could be improved. People who replied negatively to the previous question often ticked all the items, which was not conducive to getting a clear picture either.

The Dutch-language respondents ticked logistics in 36 % of the total questionnaires returned, administration in 32 %, staffing in 33 %, finances in 25 %, training in 21 %, flexibility in 5 % and freedom in 17 %. Sometimes the answers were qualified by additional comments, for example, one employee mentioning that he/she would welcome more support from their employer regarding the 'subject matter'. Reviewing the respondents' employers, we find that comments were made about all of the categories of employers and that shortcomings of various kinds were mentioned. The general picture is chaotic and largely reflects the personal frustrations of respondents. If we can draw any conclusions at all, it is that planning archaeologists tend to complain about too much administrative work, field archaeologists about lack of logistic support and employees in commercial businesses about staff shortages, whilst university employees emphasise the need for specialist training courses. Finance is mentioned by people from all categories.

On the French-language side, roughly the same picture emerged with slightly different percentages. The respondents ticked logistics in 37 % of the total questionnaires returned, administration in 30 %, staffing in 60 %, finances in 39 %, training in 16 %, flexibility in 11 % and freedom in 16 %. The answers were sometimes qualified by two or more ticks being placed in the same box or by additional comments about specific needs, such as their employer's need for a 'stratégie'. Although the number of categories of employers is more limited in Wallonia and Brussels than in Flanders, a similar picture arises when we take the packages of duties of the respondents themselves into account. Most of the comments concerned deficiencies relating to work duties, although the replies of the Francophone respondents were more varied than those of their Flemish counterparts. The exceptionally high score for staff shortage given by the French-language respondents deserves special mention. The complaints appear to relate to the number of duties that an individual employee can have, on the one hand, and a lack of specialised staff for certain tasks on the other. Lack of financial resources also appears to be more compelling in Francophone Belgium than in Flanders.

#### **12.4. Satisfaction with working conditions**

From the preceding discussion, the question logically arises as to whether people are generally satisfied with the working conditions of their current jobs. Of the Dutch-speaking respondents, 35 % replied that they were very satisfied, 49 % were satisfied, 8 % were moderately satisfied, about 1 % were dissatisfied and 7 % did not answer the question because they were unemployed or self-employed. Of the French speakers 29 % were very satisfied, 37 % were satisfied, 26 % were moderately satisfied, 6 % were dissatisfied, and 2 % did not answer the question. Adding up the scores for 'very satisfied' and 'satisfied', the total score for the Dutch speakers is 84 % against 66 % for the French speakers, which constitutes a notable difference.

Naturally, a relationship exists between the answers to this question and the preceding ones. Respondents who complained of a lack of support in the answers to the previous questions, and gave examples, obviously do not feel comfortable at work. Adequate support from the employer almost automatically implies that people are (very) satisfied with their job. Here again, we were not able to link the category of employers and the degree of job satisfaction, because the number of respondents was too low and the replies were too vague to draw any conclusions from them. If we take the ages of the

respondents into account, older archaeologists appear to be more satisfied with their working conditions than the younger generations are, which seems logical to me.

## **12.5. Satisfaction about career opportunities**

The next question asked whether the respondent was satisfied with the career opportunities offered by their agency, institution, business or society. The answers possible were 'yes', 'no' or 'I'll see'.

Of the Dutch speakers, 32 % replied 'yes', 36 % 'I'll see' and 18 % 'no', while 9 % did not answer the question. This question is related to the previous question, of course, but is also a question on its own. Where 60 % of the respondents answered 'very satisfied' to the preceding question, they also answered 'yes' in this case, and 27 % answered 'I'll see'. The others answered 'no' and, apparently, are satisfied with their jobs but not about their chances of promotion. Again, there is no correlation between the respondents' answers and the categories of employers; the respondents assess their chances of promotion at different employers within the same category quite differently. In other words, both positive and negative answers are given by the employees of federal institutions, regional, provincial and municipal governments, universities and commercial businesses. However, the older archaeologists in particular, who have actually risen up the ladder, are positive about their chances of promotion at their current employers, while the younger generations, including the middle-aged group, tend to give a negative or 'wait and see' answer.

Of the French speakers, 20 % answered 'yes', 26 % 'I'll see' and 48 % 'no', while 6 % did not answer the question. The difference from the Dutch speakers is notable in this case too, with the percentage of people who are dissatisfied being very high in comparison. Moreover, we have to add most of the respondents who did not answer the question because they are unemployed and thus do not have an employer or any chances of promotion. Among the French speakers as among the Dutch speakers, satisfied and dissatisfied respondents are spread across all the categories of employers. Again, the older employees are more often satisfied about their chances of advancement than the younger ones are.

## **12.6. Satisfaction with the world of archaeology**

The logical follow-up question was: "Are you looking for a job with better prospects and, if so, are you also considering jobs outside archaeology?" The answers possible were 'yes', 'no' or 'I'll see'. Admittedly, it would have been better to divide the question into two parts to better bring out the distinction between 'within' and 'outside' archaeology.

The answers from the Dutch speakers were divided as follows: 22 % replied 'yes', 21 % 'I'll see' and 51 % 'no', with 7 % not replying. Obviously, those archaeologists who were very satisfied with their work and their chances of advancement answered that they were not looking for another job. Equally obviously, most of the dissatisfied people answered that they were.

Of the French-speaking respondents 17 % replied 'yes', 24 % 'I'll see' and 52 % 'no', while 7 % did not reply. These figures correspond to those for the Dutch speakers. Again, the people who stated that they were not satisfied with their jobs were looking for a new job.

If we compare the answers to the three previous questions with each other, the results cannot be interpreted unambiguously. As stated above, the answers do not reveal whether the respondents are looking for a new job within the archaeological world or outside of it, although some made it clear that they had had enough of archaeology and were looking for a job in another sector that offered better prospects. Older archaeologists, in particular, were not looking for a new job and were satisfied with what they had achieved. Remarkably, many middle-aged respondents stated that they were looking for a job with better prospects. For the rest, the picture is complicated. For example, respondents might be satisfied with their current employment but not with their chances of promotion, but were not looking for a new job (outside archaeology). Others indicated that they were satisfied with their job and chances of promotion but were looking for a new job all the same.

## 12.7. Satisfaction with pay

The series of questions relating to pay included some about the respondents' satisfaction with their current salaries. The first question was, "Are you satisfied with your salary?" The answers possible were 'yes', 'no' or 'well enough'. Of the Dutch-speaking respondents, 54 % answered 'yes', 15 % 'no' and 24 % 'well enough', while 7 % did not reply to the question because they were unemployed or self-employed. Of the French-speaking respondents 30 % answered 'yes', 28 % 'no' and 35 % 'well enough', while 7 % did not reply. Again, the French speakers were more often dissatisfied than the Dutch speakers were, with the caveat that these figures must be seen in the perspective of the limited number of respondents. Looking at the salaries, the types of contracts, the employers and the ages of the respondents who were not satisfied with their pay, we find that it is often the older archaeologists with contracts for an indefinite period of time who, considering their seniority, are not well paid. As regards the French speakers, it was mainly the archaeologists in the employ of the Walloon Region who were not satisfied with their salaries. Regarding the Dutch speakers the picture is a bit more complex but, again, it was more often the older archaeologists, working in a variety of agencies or institutions, who stated that they were not satisfied with their current level of pay.

The second question was, "Are you looking for a job within archaeology with better pay and employment conditions?" The answers possible to this question were 'no', 'yes' or 'I'll see'. Of the Dutch-speaking respondents, 51 % answered 'no', 22 % 'yes' and 20 % 'I'll see', while 7 % did not answer the question. Of the French-speaking respondents 43 % answered 'no', 9 % 'yes' and 33 % 'I'll see', with 4 % not answering. Comparing these answers with the answers to the previous question, we find consistent sequences of answers, namely: 'Yes, I am satisfied with my salary and I am not looking for another job', 'No, I am not satisfied with my salary so I am looking for another job' or 'My salary is not too bad, but I'll see'. At the same time, there are those who are satisfied with their pay but are nevertheless looking for a new job, and dissatisfied people who seem to accept the situation and are not looking for other work. Adding up the percentages for 'Yes, I am looking for another job' and 'I'll see', we get a total of 42 % for both the Dutch speakers (22 % + 20 %) and the French speakers (9 % + 33 %) of all the respondents who are not satisfied with their salaries to some degree. The French speakers are less inclined to find a new job and more often answered 'I'll see' (33 %), possibly because there are fewer categories of employers in Wallonia and the Brussels Capital Region than in Flanders.

The third question was, "Would you take a job *outside* archaeology if you could earn more?" The answers possible were 'yes', 'no' or 'I'll see'. Of the Dutch-speaking respondents, 68 % answered 'no', 12 % 'yes' and 15 % 'I'll see', and 5 % did not answer the question. Of the French-speaking respondents 63 % answered 'no', 15 % 'yes' and 18 % 'I'll see', with 4 % not answering. Thus, two thirds of the respondents was not considering finding a job outside archaeology even if they could earn more. Comparing these answers with the answers to the two previous questions, not surprisingly it emerges that those people who are satisfied with their job in archaeology are not looking for other work. There are some exceptions of people who are satisfied with their current pay but who are nevertheless looking for another job and want to earn more, even if it were outside archaeology, or people who are not satisfied with their pay who are looking for a new job but want to keep working in archaeology. Who then are the people who would accept a better paid job outside archaeology in any case? More than half of the respondents stated earlier that they were satisfied with their current pay but are now indicating that it is important for them to earn more. This applies both to the French and the Dutch speakers.

## 12.8. Successive contracts

Most respondents stated that they had had many other contracts and jobs before their current position. For many of them this was a long time ago but for others finding a new job is a stark reality. Many respondents took jobs outside archaeology after their studies, as we described earlier, waiting for the opportunity to put their diploma in archaeology to good effect. Most of them also had many temporary contracts before they got a contract for an indefinite period of time, if they got one at all.

On the basis of the information which the respondents provided we find that, of the Dutch-speaking respondents who now have contracts for an indefinite period of time, about 1/3 had hardly any



previous contracts, about 1/3 had temporary contracts for about five years and the remaining 1/3 had lived in uncertainty for more than ten years. Of the French-speaking respondents, about 40 % had had to wait for a contract for an indefinite period of time for five years, while the two other categories of people who had to wait for a permanent contract for a shorter or longer time, are smaller. The number of employers which the respondents had had is more or less proportionate to the number of contracts that they had carried out, in other words, more contracts means more employers. About half of the respondents stated that 90-100 % of these contracts related to archaeological work. The other half had had a lot of jobs outside archaeology (working as teachers or in other positions in the educational sector, catering industry, administration, sales, libraries, etc.).

By analogy, those people who hadn't yet got a contract for an indefinite period of time were in a similar situation, in other words, they were still working under temporary contracts. Most of the respondents, Dutch and French speakers alike, had had various contracts. About half of them had almost only had contracts within archaeology. The others made a living from temporary jobs in catering, sales or education. One person mentioned that he/she had left a permanent job and accepted temporary contracts so that he/she could work in archaeology again.

### **13. Efforts to keep working in archaeology**

We can only admire the respondents' commitment to, and their efforts to stay in archaeology. From the comments which some of them added to the questionnaires we can conclude that some people's enthusiasm is undiminished but that others are ready to throw in the towel. All of us will know some archaeologists who have eventually left archaeology to take a job in another sector but who still regularly attend archaeological gatherings and conferences. There are also a lot of examples of people on either side of the language boundary who started studying archaeology later on in life hoping to work in archaeology at some time.

#### **13.1. Continuing education**

One way of improving one's chances of staying in archaeology and having an interesting career is, obtaining a doctorate aside, by taking continuing education courses to stay abreast of the latest developments. Regular refresher courses are common practice for physicians, lawyers, magistrates, teachers and other professions in which knowledge and science develop rapidly, and often they are also legally compulsory if one wants to keep one's occupational licence. Many public servants working at municipal, provincial, regional or federal agencies are also regularly required to attend further training courses to ensure that they function effectively, and their permanent appointment and chances of promotion often depend directly on the certificates which they can show. Quite a few archaeologists who are public servants and have positions of responsibility (as department heads, for example) are also obliged to follow courses at certain times to train their management skills, develop meeting or linguistic skills, etc... Such courses can usually be taken during working hours and the fees, which are usually considerable, and other expenses (for travel and, sometimes, accommodation) are almost always reimbursed by the employer.

In foreign countries where there are various categories of archaeologists, such certificates of specific competence (for GIS, for example) are usually necessary to be able to get promotion and more interesting work. In England, for example, archaeologists who are just starting out cannot get permits for complex excavations, and the Netherlands have a tiered system of junior, medior and senior archaeologists. The commercial archaeological firms, to be eligible for certain commissions, usually also have to prove that they have employees who have the necessary competencies. Such aspects of professionalisation are not yet a reality in Belgian archaeology but will undoubtedly be introduced in due course. This level of professionalism will be required if Belgium is to compete in an international context.

Belgian archaeology is gradually recognising the need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD), which has been coming in various shapes and forms. Currently, most Belgian archaeologists keep track of the latest developments and finds via the annual contact days of *Prehistorie/Préhistoire*, *Lunula-Archaeologia Protohistorica*, *Romeinendag-Journée d'Archéologie romaine* and *Archaeologia*

*Mediaevalis*, via *ArcheoNet* or other portal sites for archaeology, or via their own personal contacts. There are no opportunities for systematic further training unless they attend courses abroad on their own initiative and at their own expense, which must be considered exceptional.

The question, “Do you believe that there is a need for continuing education in archaeology ?” was answered affirmatively by almost all the respondents. The few people who ticked ‘no opinion’ were either involved in basic archaeological education (e.g., university lecturers) or were respondents from partner disciplines. No one answered ‘no’.

In the next section of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to tick those areas in which they wanted further training themselves. Some of them ticked all the areas, which is one way of emphasising the need for a system of further training, others were more precise. A number of general conclusions can be drawn from the answers, namely... museum staff believe that there is a need for greater cultural-historical knowledge; field archaeologists emphasise the need for further education in the area of survey and excavation techniques and knowledge of materials; planning archaeologists want more attention to be given to heritage management and the conservation of historic sites and buildings; restorers want better training in conservation and restoration techniques; respondents from the partner disciplines believe that archaeologists need further training in the area of analysis techniques; archaeological businesses stress management skills; and respondents who are engaged in scientific research, in particular, emphasises the desirability of knowing languages.

The preferences for further training marked by the Dutch-language respondents were: general cultural and historical background knowledge (29 %), survey methods (33 %), excavation techniques (33 %), analysis techniques (37 %), dating techniques (33 %), conservation techniques (28 %), knowledge of materials (56 %), conservation of historic buildings (23 %), heritage management (31 %), Information and Communication Technology (45 %), Geographic Information Systems (55 %), management techniques (35 %) and linguistic and writing skills (9 %). Knowledge of materials, GIS and ICT are thus regarded as the areas in which further training is needed most, but management, analysis of materials, survey and excavation techniques, dating and conservation were also frequently mentioned. A number of respondents indicated more specific needs, notably spatial planning, landscape archaeology, social legislation, legal training, negotiation skills and product development. It is clear that archaeologists no longer focus solely on studying the remains of the past, but that the integration of archaeology in the heritage sector, spatial planning and business management is well under way and will require a lot more attention in the future.

The French-language respondents stated the following preferences for further training: general cultural and historical background knowledge (15 %) survey methods (24 %), excavation techniques (33 %), analysis techniques (22 %), dating techniques (20 %), conservation techniques (48 %), knowledge of materials (13 %), conservation of historic buildings (13 %), heritage management (26 %), Information and Communication Technology (30 %), Geographic Information Systems (24 %), management techniques (24 %), meeting and negotiation skills (26 %) and linguistic and writing skills (35 %). We added ‘meeting and negotiation skills’ to the French-language questionnaire because it had become clear from the Dutch questionnaire that there was a need for the further training of these skills. Comments added by the respondents related mainly to other branches of science such as anthropology, geophysical survey methods, building techniques and buildings archaeology. One respondent commented that exchanging information rather than further training but should be a priority. In general, the individual French-speaking respondents indicated far fewer areas for further training than the Dutch speakers did. Whether this means that the French speakers feel there is less of a need for further training is not quite clear.

Taking the rather limited number of respondents into account, especially of the French speakers, the results and, in particular, the differences with the Dutch answers are remarkable. Conservation techniques is at the top of the French speakers’ list with 48 %, followed by linguistic and writing skills with 35 %. Excavation techniques, information and communication technology (ICT), heritage management and meeting and negotiation skills come next. Only then do we find survey methods, geographic information systems (GIS) and management techniques. Knowledge of materials is right at the bottom, while it is at the top of the Dutch speakers’ list. It makes one wonder whether archaeology courses in the two language regimes are very different or whether the needs of the archaeologists on either side of the language boundary differ so much in practice. Then again, it could relate to the way in which we processed the questionnaires (sic).

We have tried to discover correlations between these answers and other parameters, but the result was chaotic. Employees from the various (types of) organisations chose differently all the time, nor could we discover any regularity on the basis of age, gender, qualifications, region, the nature of the respondents' employment contracts or any other factors. In any case, the number of returned questionnaires was too low for such an exercise.

The government agencies, scientific institutions, commercial businesses and non-profit societies were asked about what areas their recently qualified staff had problems with, and in what areas they desired further training. We received completed forms from various sectors of archaeology with answers that were very varied, on the one hand, but also contained quite a few common elements. The number of returned forms was too small, however, to allow statistical processing. From the answers we can conclude that the agencies, institutions, businesses and societies are generally satisfied with the level and quality of graduate archaeologists.

Most of the questionnaires returned were from city and intermunicipal agencies, commercial businesses and non-profit societies. Shortcomings in training mentioned by them principally related to survey techniques, insight into excavation problems, skills in handling equipment (GIS, in particular), inadequate knowledge of materials and a lack of experience of conservation techniques on site. Many also emphasised that newly qualified staff often also lack knowledge and experience of meeting and negotiation techniques (which are important when dealing with property developers, for example), project management and leadership, topographical measurement techniques, digital photography and the application of Photoshop techniques, the drawing up of reports and planning maps, ICT applications (e.g., 3D reconstructions), writing for and addressing a large audience, exhibitions and public communication in general. Most of these skills are relatively new and are related to the new 'Malta archaeology'. The same differences appear between the Dutch and the French speaking agencies, institutions, businesses and societies as between the two groups of individual respondents, but they are less pronounced. Different matters are emphasised on either side of the language boundary, but the number of respondents was too small to attach much value to the figures. Finally, many questions were not answered by the French respondents, which may indicate that they are less concerned in general about further training.

### **13.2. The organisation of further training**

Next, the individual respondents as well as the government agencies, scientific institutions, commercial businesses and non-profit societies were asked who should organise further training courses. The following options were offered: their own organisation (for ICT, management and language courses, for example); the universities; the regional agencies or institutions (e.g., the Flemish Heritage Institute and the Ministry of the Walloon Region); provincial agencies or museums; private companies and organisations with relevant expertise; highly qualified (foreign) institutes; or other. The French-language forms also offered the option of local agencies. We are aware that 'own organisations' is not a clearly defined category and may distort the figures a little.

The answers of the Dutch-speaking respondents were divided as follows: universities were ticked on 77 % of all the forms returned, regional agencies on 65 %, people's own organisations on 50 %, private firms on 45 %, provincial agencies and museums on 38 %, and highly qualified (foreign) institutes on 35 %. In ca. 15 % of all cases the individual respondents ticked (almost) all the options to indicate that they (largely) do not care who organises further training courses as long as someone does. Under the heading 'Other', suggestions were made such as 'those who have the most experience'.

The answers of the French-speaking respondents were divided as follows: the regional agencies (i.e., the Ministry of the Walloon Region) were ticked on 37 % of the forms, highly qualified (foreign) institutes on 33 %, the universities on 30 %, people's own organisations on 20 %, private firms also on 20 %, and the provincial and local agencies only on 3 %, which is hardly surprising because they are not well developed in Wallonia. Most of the French-language respondents only ticked one or two options, which indicates that they are focused on just one agency or institution, although this option includes almost all the agencies and institutions in Wallonia, and we could not find any clear correlations between the institutions and the employers of the respondents in question. One of the suggestions under the heading 'Other' was, 'the most competent organisation in its field of work'.

The Dutch-language government agencies, scientific institutions, commercial businesses and non-profit societies all regard the universities as the most obvious candidates for organising further training courses. The regional agencies and private businesses are also highly regarded, followed by highly qualified (foreign) institutes and the provincial agencies. Most of the French-language agencies, institutions and societies mentioned the Ministry of the Walloon Region and the universities, if they answered this question at all.

### 13.3. Preconditions for following further training

First of all, we asked the agencies, institutions, businesses and societies if they offered their staff any opportunities for further training. A large majority of the Dutch-speaking respondents replied that this was not a problem and that their staff could indeed take additional courses. The bigger agencies and institutions even provide a number of compulsory courses for newly qualified employees themselves, mainly relating to the internal operations of the organisation and for learning computer programmes that are essential to the organisation. Not all of the French-speaking respondents answered this question, but the answers given presented a more diverse picture. The question about whether the organisation had a budget for reimbursing the costs of further training was answered affirmatively by 8 out of 10 of the Flemish organisations, including all of the agencies and institutions which completed the questionnaire. Only one-man businesses and small commercial companies stated that this was not automatic or was only partly possible. The number of French-speaking respondents was too limited, but their answers were similar.

The individual respondents were asked whether, in their opinion, it should be possible to take further training courses during working hours, and whether their employer should pay for this. Of the Dutch-speaking respondents, 76 % replied 'yes', 8 % 'no' and 16 % had no opinion. Of the French speakers, 76 % replied 'yes', 11 % had no opinion and the others respondents did not reply (nobody replied 'no'). Because almost all the respondents were of the opinion that continuing education is necessary in archaeology (see above), we tried to find reasons for the 'no' or 'no opinion' replies to this question, but we could not discover any. It could be that the respondents concerned are heads of an agency or institution and do not have an adequate budget to meet such demands from their staff.

The next question put to the individual respondents was: "Would you pay for further training courses (for which you would obtain a certificate) yourself?" Of the Dutch-speaking respondents 60 % answered 'yes', 15 % 'no', and 25 % had no opinion or did not reply. Of the French speakers 30 % replied 'yes', 44 % 'no', and 26 % had no opinion or did not reply. Again, there is a marked difference between the replies of the French and the Dutch speakers, but we should point out that the number of respondents may have been too low to be sufficiently representative of the whole group.

To the question, "Would you travel abroad to follow such (necessary or advisable) courses?", 72 % of the Dutch-speaking respondents replied 'yes', 20 % 'no', and 8 % had no opinion or did not reply. Of the French-speaking respondents, 76 % replied 'yes', 4 % 'no', and 20 % had no opinion or did not reply. In this case it was the older respondents, in particular, who did not reply to the question or who gave 'no opinion' as their answer, although – to put this into perspective – quite a few young people also replied 'no' and many older respondents replied 'yes'. For the rest, we could not find any patterns based on gender, region, employer, nature of the respondent's contract or commission, or any other parameters.

The final question on continuing education was, "In your opinion, have you been adequately informed about the opportunities for following specialised training courses abroad?", to which question 14 % of the Dutch-speaking respondents replied 'yes' and 74 % 'no' while 12 % had no opinion or did not reply. Of the French speakers, 2 % replied 'yes' and 70 % 'no' while 28 % had no opinion or did not reply. If we compare the answers to the last two questions, we find that a small minority is simply not interested (anymore) but that most of the respondents would be interested in taking training courses abroad, but state clearly that they have not been adequately informed about the possibilities. The respondents who state that they have been properly informed are attached to universities, where contacts with foreign countries are more common, but in this case too, the survey results are too limited for any definite conclusions to be drawn.

### 13.4. Mobility

A matter which the questionnaire did not specifically address but which we can form a picture of on the basis of the information provided, is archaeologists' mobility. All the respondents stated which province they were born in, where they currently lived and where they (chiefly) worked. With the exception of the last item, where some respondents stated several provinces, the information is unambiguous. Obviously, we did not trace precisely what had happened to each of the respondents since their births or why they no longer live in or near their birthplaces... there could be all sorts of reasons such as the mobility of their parents, remaining in the city where they studied, moving to their partner's place of residence, or looking for work. Also, they could be living somewhere close to their place of work but in a different province.

Of the Dutch-speaking respondents, 50-70 % live in the province where they were born and 35-50 % also work there. The figures for the French-speaking respondents are less transparent but they are clearly more mobile, specifically, migrating from southern Wallonia to northern Wallonia and to the Brussels capital region.

Comparing the data for where (in which province) the archaeologists live and work, a large majority of the French speakers prove to be living in the same province that they work in, whilst only half of the Dutch speakers do; as regards the latter, only the figure for the province of West Flanders is slightly above 50 %. The most plausible explanation for this phenomenon is that the French speakers have no problem in migrating to the region where they find work, and that Flemish people are more home-loving and prefer to commute.

Looking at the relationship between the provinces where the archaeologists were born and the universities at which they studied, we established that more than 75 % of the respondents who graduated from Ghent University were from the provinces of West and East Flanders and that, of the alumni of the University of Leuven, approximately 40 % were from the province of Antwerp, ca. 20 % from West Flanders, ca. 20 % from Limburg, ca. 15 % from Flemish Brabant and Brussels, and ca. 5 % from East Flanders. The Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) recruits students mainly from Flemish Brabant and Brussels.

The figures for the Walloon universities are even less transparent. The University of Liège's main catchment areas are the provinces of Liège and Luxembourg; the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL) recruits students mainly from Walloon Brabant and Brussels; and most of the students at the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) are from Brussels and Hainaut. Students from the province of Namur are divided equally across all the French-language universities.

All the figures should be taken with wide margins and treated with reserve, because it is not clear what proportion of the total number of university alumni and active archaeologists the respondents represent. The outline presented in this report should certainly not be regarded as having any statistical value.

We would have liked to include some observations in this report about archaeologists' mobility across the language boundary and the regional boundaries, but hardly any data are available. On the basis of a very limited sample of address details of university alumni, we see that only a small minority of students – of both the Dutch-language and the French-language universities – give a home address which is on the other side of the language boundary, but this is not enough to ascertain their native language, of course, particularly if the address is on the outskirts of Brussels. Nevertheless it seems that only a very limited number of students choose to obtain a degree in Archaeology in the other national language. Most of them subsequently found jobs in their own region and so are hard to trace.

Given the restriction, in the context of the Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe project, to include only archaeologists who work in Belgium in our survey, we were not able, on the basis of the information which we collected, to determine how many Belgian archaeologists live and work in foreign countries. Although the emigration of unemployed Belgian archaeologists is a hot topic, it proves to involve no more than ten to twenty individuals, most of whom live in the border areas and work as archaeologists or restorers in the neighbouring country, usually the Netherlands or France. Within the context of the project we did enquire about whether people were willing to go abroad for professional reasons; this will be discussed in the next section.

## 14. Archaeologists and Europe

The context in which the present project is being conducted is the increasing role of 'Europe' in many aspects of life in the European Union. An important matter which this report must therefore address is archaeologists' attitudes vis-à-vis this growing influence. Do they regard it as a threat to the way in which they habitually practice archaeology or do they regard it as offering new opportunities for the future? In other words, how Europe-minded are the archaeologists of Belgium?

### 14.1. Europe-minded archaeologists?

The first question, to test the ground, was, "Do you regard the internationalisation or 'globalisation' of archaeology as a good thing?" To this question, 64 % of the Dutch-language respondents replied 'yes', 9 % 'no' and 24 % had no opinion or did not reply. Of the French-language respondents, 56 % replied 'yes', 11 % 'no' and 33 % had no opinion or did not reply. From these responses we can conclude that, in general, the archaeological sector in Belgium is positive about the removal of the country borders and the unification of Europe. The answers of the Dutch-language and the French-language respondents were comparable, on the whole, and we did not discover any relationship with other parameters such as the respondents' age, gender, qualifications, contract or employer.

The next question was: "In your opinion, are there enough opportunities in Belgium for building up an interesting career as an archaeologist?" The replies given by the two groups of respondents were very similar and also very negative, 9 % of the Dutch speakers answering 'yes' and 82 % 'no', with 11 % expressing no opinion, while 6 % of the French speakers replied 'yes', 85 % 'no', and 9 % had no opinion. Again, there was no differentiation according to, for example, age, contract or the category of employers. In other words, older respondents with permanent contracts and young people just starting out in commercial archaeology agreed that there were not enough opportunities for building up a career; a proof of solidarity.

The answers to the question, "Would you be prepared to work in a foreign country if an interesting opportunity was offered?" were also comparable for both language groups, with 60 % of the Dutch speakers replying 'yes' and 20 % 'no', with 20 % not expressing an opinion or not replying, while 59 % of the French speakers replied 'yes', 26 % 'no' and 15 % had no opinion. Remarkably, most respondents who do not want to move abroad believe that Belgium does not offer enough opportunities for pursuing a career in archaeology, and not vice versa. On the other hand, there are a number of respondents who believe that Belgium offers enough opportunities but who would still move abroad if they found better opportunities there.

We next asked the respondents for reasons for moving abroad in more detail. The percentages for the option 'more interesting work (e.g., better preserved sites, more interesting finds)' were 51 % (Dutch speakers) and 35 % (French speakers); for 'better pay and/or other financial advantages' 38 % and 35 %, respectively; 'better working conditions (with regard to staffing, financing of research)' 61 % and 56 %; 'more possibilities for (specialist) training courses or further training' 38 % and 22 %; 'working in international research groups with specialists from a variety of countries' 49 % and 48 %; 'more possibilities for building up a career' 36 % and 41 %; 'more opportunities for (international) publications' 18 % and 26 %; 'developing languages or linguistic skills' 22 % and 15 %; 'climate (no rain or mud)' both 9 %; and 'adventure/change of environment' 31 % and 11 %. As these figures show, there are no great differences between the two language communities, though the Dutch speakers seem to be a bit more adventurous. Other reasons that were mentioned were: more and better opportunities for specialisation (e.g., underwater archaeology, African archaeology), a different scientific approach, greater expertise in certain areas... Several respondents emphasised that better chances of archaeological work, in particular, would tempt them to move abroad. Others wrote that their family or family life stopped them from looking for a job abroad.

These observations were repeated in the answers to the next question, which was: "Would you be willing to move to a foreign country if you had the opportunity of building up a career in archaeology there?" To this question, 40 % of the Dutch-speaking respondents replied 'yes', 38 % 'no' and 22 % had no opinion or did not reply. Of the French-speaking respondents 48 % replied 'yes', 24 % 'no' and

28 % had no opinion or did not reply. Regarding these answers, we should mention that it was the older respondents, in particular, who skipped this question or ticked 'no opinion'.

The next question was, "In your opinion, should foreign archaeologists have more opportunities to work in Belgium?" Of the Dutch-speaking respondents, 40 % answered 'yes', 18 % 'no' and 42 % expressed no opinion or did not answer. Of the French-speaking respondents, 48 % gave 'yes' as their answer, 9 % 'no' and 43 % expressed no opinion or did not reply. In view of the limited number of respondents, the answers from the two groups can be regarded as comparable. Remarkably, only half of the respondents want to open the borders to foreign archaeologists.

The next question asked how foreign archaeologists should be given these opportunities. The percentages for the option 'via placements and exchange of students/graduates' were 36 % (Dutch speakers) and 54 % (French speakers) respectively; 'via temporary employment contracts on an individual basis (chiefly via commercial firms)' 23 % and 22 %; 'via international (scientific) collaboration projects' 47 % and 67 %; 'via international (scientific) exchange agreements' 29 % and 54 %; and 'via foreign (commercial) businesses which carry out projects in Belgium' 15 % and 2 %. A number of people who replied negatively to the previous question or skipped it, consistently ignored all the options. Others ticked (almost) all the options. A notable difference between the Dutch and French speakers relates to the role which (commercial) businesses might play in this context. We could not discover any differences between the answers of the various categories of respondents.

#### **14.2. Employers' position regarding foreign employees**

Most of the government agencies, scientific institutions, commercial businesses and (non-profit) societies declared that they were willing to employ foreigners (archaeologists, specialists, other). The figures, and the reasons given, are comparable for both language groups but are too limited to allow statistical evaluation. The main reasons given for employing foreigners were that there are no, or not enough, qualified people available in Belgium and that foreigners often have specific competencies or qualifications. The opportunity for international collaboration was also mentioned. Some respondents reminded us that any prospective employees must be residents of the European Union (for administrative reasons).

A number of agencies and institutions wrote that they do not accept foreign employees mainly because their statute or charter does not allow it and all employees must have Belgian nationality at the time of their recruitment. From the answers given, we can tentatively conclude that either the agencies concerned do not have uniform rules in this respect or that the respondents in question were not sufficiently aware of them. Other reasons that were mentioned were that there are enough qualified people in Belgium and that foreign employees are not familiar, or not familiar enough, with the local archaeological heritage. Often, it was expressly observed that everyone with the necessary competencies and commitment should have a fair chance. There was not a single mention of reasons such as 'foreign staff are cheaper, more flexible, less well trained, are less particular about employment conditions' or 'they are too expensive, not flexible enough'.

## 15. The evolution of employment in archaeology

### 15.1. Employment in archaeology in the past

Looking at the names of the authors of publications in archaeological journals over the past few decades, we can see a number of names recurring over a long period of time, but we can also see that many people have left archaeology as well. It is difficult to retrieve any figures about this. Only a few government services and institutions, mostly in Flanders, have provided such information, but only for the past five years. From this information we can deduce that employment numbers have gradually increased, especially since the late nineteen seventies and the early eighties. In the fifties and sixties, employment in archaeology was virtually limited to universities and national institutions. Only a few archaeologists were well-known in that period, most of them professionals. During the nineteen sixties the number of archaeologists increased slightly as the staff of the national institutions was enlarged and more archaeology-oriented courses were offered at the universities. In this same period the foundations of the urban archaeological services which took proper shape during the seventies were laid. In the late seventies archaeology was boosted by government employment programmes. Initially, this employment was temporary, but the archaeological world took advantage of the situation by submitting as many projects as they could, and so kept young archaeologists at work for lengthy periods of time. Local authorities also seized on these opportunities to have areas and sites of historical value investigated for their archaeological value and to integrate them in the urban infrastructure or rural landscapes. Many archaeologists of the older generation got the chance to learn archaeological practice in this way.

During the nineteen eighties these employment programmes were phased out in the cultural sector, but new opportunities were sought to capitalise on the fresh élan. In the meantime, many experienced archaeologists had found work in other sectors. When Belgian archaeology was regionalised in 1989, a lot of restructuring and consolidation of employment took place, in Wallonia in particular, where strong central institutions were created as well as provincial cells to guarantee local anchoring. In Flanders, regionalisation and a hesitant government led to endless discussions and competition developing between the regional agencies, the universities and also the many local services, which all tried to maximise their influence in the existing 'power vacuum'. All the bickering didn't do employment numbers any good and it was only at the beginning of the twenty-first century that a balance was found between the various government services, scientific institutions and other actors. New formulas were developed to further the main objective of the government which was to create a structural and legislative framework, to focus primarily on the policy relating to, and the management of, the archaeological heritage, and to leave all other activities to the other parties, which have become widely differentiated in the meantime. In Brussels, regionalisation led to the establishment of a regional service for the management of its monumental and archaeological heritage. This was only possible because of the vigorous support of the Royal Museums of Art and History which have had an exemplary role in urban archaeology in Brussels.

The structural and social evolution led to a gradual growth of employment in archaeology across all three regions. The number of active archaeologists has more than doubled since the early nineteen eighties. Some government agencies, however, including the federal agencies, have experienced hardly any growth at all and their staff is still not secure. Employment at the universities has increased very little in a structural sense, but they have more opportunities for temporary mandates now than they had in the past. The number of archaeologists in government institutions and urban archaeological services in Flanders has increased somewhat, mainly because the latter have increased in number, but the greatest increase has taken place at the Intermunicipal Archaeological Services (IADs) and new commercial businesses. Because of the increase in the amount of commissions in the context of the Malta Convention, they can employ a large number of archaeologists, albeit often for only short (sometimes very short) periods of time. In Wallonia and the Brussels region, staff is under increasing pressure because of a steady increase in the volume of work, and new employment opportunities are realised mainly via the non-profit societies, which causes administrative and legal problems because their constitutions provide only limited opportunities for employment. To remedy this problem and to offer better perspectives to a number of archaeologists with a certain record of service, a large number of vacancies were created by the Walloon service in May 2008.



## 15.2. Prognoses for employment in the future

Almost all the government agencies and institutions both in Flanders and in Wallonia anticipate the stagnation of employment in archaeology in the immediate future and hope for a slight increase in the more distant future. Some government agencies, including the federal institutions, fear a reduction of employment. The commercial businesses' responses were very varied: most hope for a strong increase in the long term but are cautious in their prognoses for the near future, whilst others expect strong growth in the near future followed by stagnation. The Intermunicipal Services are also generally optimistic, but their ambitions regarding employment opportunities are modest.

It is difficult to predict what the future will bring. On the basis of the current situation, stagnation or a slight increase in employment can be expected at most of the institutions including the universities and research centres, except perhaps at the federal institutions, where a slight decline in numbers cannot be ruled out. The public services, such as the municipal and the intermunicipal archaeological services in Flanders, may continue to grow and so may the official services in the Walloon and Brussels Regions. We hope that the number of municipal and intermunicipal services, in particular, will increase in the future and that a more finely-meshed network of archaeologists can be deployed in Wallonia too. This would be more useful than any growth of employment in existing services. A more pronounced growth is expected in the commercial businesses in Flanders and the non-profit societies in Wallonia. Here too, growth could consist of an increase in the number of businesses and societies rather than in the number of jobs at organisations already in existence. In any case, it should be possible to attain more employment growth at local level by consulting local policy-makers and getting better returns for the local communities.

## 16. The amateur archaeologists

### 16.1. The survey approach

The issue of the amateur archaeologists in Belgium has already been touched upon in the introductory chapters of this report. Although it was not provided for in the general project plan, we felt that they should be included as well and so we drafted a separate questionnaire which was sent to all the amateur archaeologists known to us; it was also made available as a download on the *ArcheoNet* website. The questionnaire was initially only available in Dutch, but the intention was to have it translated into French and sent to the Francophone amateur archaeologists as well.

A total of 34 Dutch questionnaires were returned. The responses demonstrated, yet again, how difficult it is to define *the* amateur archaeologist or *the* volunteer. Some of the forms were, in fact, submitted by qualified archaeologists who had taken jobs outside archaeology that gave them greater financial security and better career prospects, and who now practice archaeology as a 'hobby'. Because these respondents are not professionally involved in archaeology, certain questions on the original form for professional archaeologists were left out because they were not relevant; those about their relationship with their employer or their salary, for example. Several emeritus professors also filled in the amateur archaeologists' form because they are no longer in employment. Other amateur archaeologists never ventured to take up the study of archaeology because of the limited job opportunities and obtained academic qualifications in other related disciplines such as history, art history or architecture, but some of them are now, in fact, deeply involved in archaeology and are highly regarded in the archaeological world. Partly because of this ambivalent situation, but especially because of a number of practical problems related to the translation and the list of addresses at our disposal, we decided not to send out a French-language version. However, a number of French-speaking amateur archaeologists filled in and submitted the form intended for the professional archaeologists, sometimes adding valuable observations. We will include the information they gave in this review.

## 16.2. Characteristics of the amateur archaeologist

The first questions on the amateur archaeologists' form concerned their age, gender, nationality, any physical limitations and whether they were of native or immigrant origin. Approximately 80 % of the respondents were men between the ages of 45 and 75; this corresponds to the counts which we had carried out earlier (see above). The oldest Dutch-speaking respondent was 80, the oldest French-speaking one 78. Several respondents stated that they had sought an activity after (early) retirement. Most of the remaining 20 % were young people, men and women, many of them students or recently graduated. In other words, the age group from young adulthood to middle age was poorly represented. The most likely explanation for this is that at that age people spend most time with their families and have little time to spare for hobbies. The same explanation applies for why women are poorly represented. The female respondents were either in their twenties or in their fifties or older, in other words, they either did not yet have children or their children had left home. A number of respondents were of immigrant origin including some first-generation ones. Most of the respondents had a qualification in higher professional education (short or long course) or a university degree. They were physically fit or, at any rate, did not mention any physical limitations or disabilities.

Most of the respondents stated that they were involved in archaeology both actively and passively, that is, they attended lectures and visited exhibitions but were also actively engaged in the physical work. Most of them were members, often board members, of one or more societies engaged in archaeology or in local history and heritage in general. They kept abreast of developments in archaeology via the media, professional literature and conferences and lectures; they usually had good personal contact with professional archaeologists too. Most of the respondents were interested in more than one archaeological period or subject, which could be far apart, and which they could engage in, often by chance, because a site was being investigated near their home. Quite a few of the respondents had switched to other activities or subjects over the years as opportunities to undertake more interesting archaeological work had presented themselves.

Most of the amateur archaeologists replied that they were involved in archaeology year round but that they only carried out fieldwork seasonally. The fieldwork most frequently mentioned was excavations, followed by surveys which included field investigations with or without using metal detectors. A few of the respondents were occupied only, or primarily, in the processing of materials or the management of archaeological collections. Others had very specific interests, such as numismatics, epigraphy, conservation or restoration techniques, or were chiefly involved in historical research or collected certain types of curiosities. Thus, some operated almost entirely on their own while others only engaged in archaeological activities, essentially excavations, in groups. The principal partners or 'employers' they mentioned were universities and the smaller archaeological services, such as the municipal or intermunicipal archaeological services, often working hand in hand with a local society. A number of respondents were (largely) engaged in archaeological excavations abroad.

## 16.3. Support of the amateur archaeologist

To the question, 'Do you get enough support/understanding from the professional archaeologists?' the majority of the respondents replied 'yes' or 'good enough', but some explicitly replied 'no'. The next question addressed whether the support of amateur and hobby archaeologists could be improved, and here the answers were even more divided among 'yes', 'no' or 'no opinion'. Most of the respondents indicated one or more areas of knowledge which they would like to have more information about or support for. The answers possible were the same as those for the professional archaeologists, namely, cultural historical background knowledge, survey methods, excavation techniques, analytical techniques, dating techniques, conservation techniques, knowledge of materials, conservation of historic buildings, heritage management, information and communication technology (ICT) and Geographical Information Systems (GIS). The subject areas about which more information or support was desired, were closely related to the respondents' interests. Some ticked (almost) all the subject areas, whilst others mentioned specific domains such as numismatics, geophysical surveys, World War I heritage, or even the theory of archaeology so that they could gain more insight into past cultures and societies. More than once, it was emphasised that there are not enough institutions or agencies available to respond to questions and problems or to provide support regarding specific

interests. It was also noted that the amateurs are led too much by coincidental individual contacts so that a lot of opportunities for archaeological investigation remain unused.

The answers to the question as to who should be responsible for organising further training courses were also varied and, as with the previous question, the respondents' suggestions were closely related to the government agencies, institutions or societies which they were already familiar with. A certain preference was expressed for the universities, the regional agencies or institutions – the Flemish Heritage Institute (VIOE) or the Ministry of the Walloon Region (MRW) – or the local services and societies. The provincial agencies, private companies and highly qualified institutions were mentioned less frequently. Project archaeologists were also commented on as being the best qualified people to act as supervisors. A number of respondents urged that more interaction between amateur and professional archaeologists should take place. The question as to whether the respondent him/herself was prepared to pay for training (for which a certificate would be awarded) was replied to affirmatively by the majority of respondents. Most of the others replied 'no opinion', with a minority saying 'no'. It is worth mentioning that a large number of respondents, including people already in their fifties, replied 'yes' to the question about whether they wanted to make archaeology their profession some day.

The last question that was posed to the amateur archaeologists and the volunteers was, 'Are you satisfied with the role which you can play in archaeology?' Most replies were divided across the categories 'very satisfied' and 'satisfied', but remarkably many respondents replied 'good enough' or 'no'. Their dissatisfaction principally concerned the degree of independence with which they were able to carry out archaeological work, whether or not this was in direct collaboration with professional archaeologists. As stated several times in this report, the problem here lies in the lack of opportunities for amateur archaeologists to participate in the rapid professionalisation of Belgian archaeology. At the same time, it is apparent from other sections of the questionnaire that there is a greater need than ever for more participation from amateurs and volunteers. In consequence, professional training and supervision of amateurs and volunteers should be taken up swiftly and thoroughly so that they can obtain competencies in Belgian archaeology that are more tightly defined, in the shape of an official certificate of competence if necessary.

## **17. Conclusions**

The main objective of this report is to sketch an outline of the Belgian archaeologists and, therefore, of the current condition of archaeology in Belgium. For this purpose we have gathered as much information as possible which we will present in a methodical way. The archaeologists themselves were the most important source of information. Similarly to the other partner countries in the project, this overview relies to a large extent on the limited number of respondents who replied to the questionnaires or who provided information in other ways about the agency or institution which they work for. This report should, therefore, only be thought of as a random sample, a snapshot. Although I have endeavoured to avoid it as much as possible, inevitably this report is also coloured by my own personal experiences, contacts and opinions about Belgian archaeology; but everyone is free, of course, to impose their own personal opinion and interpretation on the available data.

To conclude the report, I will not simply summarise the results of the questionnaires but, instead, I will focus on a number of points of particular interest. Here too, it is unavoidable that my personal perceptions and opinions will shine through but, again, everybody is free to translate the results of the questionnaires in accordance with their own views.

### **17.1. The general structure and policy**

As written above, Belgium is a complex country as well as a country with a lot of complexes. Ongoing regionalisation is not a matter of choice anymore but is a necessity if the country is to remain governable. Since as long ago as 1989, the authorities regarding archaeology were transferred to the Regions and the Communities and, since then, these have modified their organisational structures and, over time, have grown even farther apart. In this respect, there is no way back for Belgium.

As a kind of counter-movement, there is the increasing influence of a unified Europe, which has gradually begun to regulate all the various aspects of society – politically, socially, economically and culturally. In the field of archaeology, the Malta Convention (1992) was an important milestone, even if its full significance is not quite obvious yet. In Belgium, its impact will only become completely clear when the Convention is ratified and can be implemented more efficiently. A massive negative reaction by town and country planners and the construction industry was anticipated, but this has not occurred, and contacts with these groups are, in fact, of a positive and constructive nature. The introduction and application of all the provisions of the Malta Convention can be rolled out gradually in Belgium but, nonetheless, will require major changes to be made in the archaeological sector. Currently, solutions are being sought to manage the rapid expansion in the volume of archaeological work and the stricter rules regarding deadlines and research resources, without overburdening the existing organisational structures. In my personal opinion, the market economy will be able to anticipate these new needs and opportunities faster and better than the traditional system could, but I believe that regulation and control by the competent authorities is equally necessary to contain any excesses and to ensure that the interests of society and science prevail. In this respect, I do not want to express any preference about the choices and options which currently prevail in Brussels, Flanders or Wallonia. I hope that the people setting out the policies will find interesting clues in the results of the questionnaire as they consider what measures are necessary in the context of the anticipated developments. Presumably, the joint report of the partner countries will present additional ideas and possibilities in this respect.

### **17.2. Number and distribution of archaeologists**

The number of archaeologists in Belgium is greater, no doubt, than most of my fellow archaeologists would have expected. This is because there are a number of niches in the sector which may not be well-known to the practitioners of other domains of research. Most of us only know the colleagues in our own niches or, more generally, those who were involved in the former 'national' archaeology, because these people would meet at regular times on the national contact days. At the universities, however, entire teams of archaeologists and specialists are now at work whose focus is on the research of foreign sites and who have contact mainly with colleagues in other countries. Many archaeologists and specialists, the French-speaking ones in particular, still work in the federal

institutions, where they usually manage the collections and conduct specialised scientific research. It is also difficult to obtain an overview of the multitude of local agencies which are engaged in research, making inventories or managing their local archaeological heritage, often in very different ways. Finally, commercial businesses are flourishing in Flanders, something which many people are not quite aware of. It is only their urgent advertisements for stress-proof project archaeologists on *ArcheoNet* that give some idea of their increasing activities and, so, the speed with which archaeology in Belgium is changing. The forces of expansion are operating in Wallonia too, but here the additional work in archaeology is usually carried out by the official agencies in close collaboration with the non-profit societies (*a.s.b.l.* societies). All in all, it is clear that the existing systems in the three regions will come under increasing pressure and that creative measures are required to employ the necessary number of archaeologists in the several regions for the variety of duties and assignments.

An aspect which is closely related to this is the distribution of archaeologists across Belgium. In the past, complaints were frequently, and justly, expressed that archaeologists had their favourite areas where they would carry out research year after year, because a find would also provide clues about other sites in that area. Thus, the archaeological distribution maps in Belgium often indicated the zones in which certain archaeologists or institutions were active, rather than the actual distribution of the categories of sites and finds. Over the past few decades, the authorities in the various regions have made the political and strategic choice to focus on cataloguing and managing our archaeological heritage, not only that which is already known but also that which is still unknown underground. This does not solve the actual problem, of course, and we need to maintain constant vigilance to take measures for the whole of our archaeological heritage instead of just some cherished parts of it. Initiatives to thoroughly update archaeological inventories, to draw up a scientific research agenda, to integrate archaeological issues in planning efficiently, such as structure plans and advisory maps, are all initiatives which can help archaeology move forward rapidly. Another qualitative policy choice consisted of giving financial support to the establishment of Intermunicipal Archeological Agencies (IADs) in Flanders, which often systematically map out areas which are less well known archaeologically. In Wallonia too, there are clear moves being made to employ more parties in the various areas, also via the non-profit societies (*a.s.b.l.*) mentioned earlier. It is indeed very important, more so than ever, for archaeology to operate comprehensively, which will not only have positive implications in terms of a fair division of the costs and duties across all the local authorities, but which will also lead to reports and overviews being drawn up which have a better scientific base.

### **17.3. Commissions and activities**

The questionnaire shows that archaeologists' commissions are more varied than they used to be. A few decades ago, archaeology was still synonymous with scientific research, and the limited amount of administrative duties which were necessary was linked to fieldwork organisation. Since the regionalisation of competences in archaeology, in Wallonia and Brussels first, and later on in Flanders as well, the focus was on the inventorying of archaeological sites and their efficient management. In Wallonia and Brussels, the management and research of heritage sites is concentrated in coordinating agencies; in Flanders these two aspects have largely been separated. The proper conservation and opening up of the available archaeological collections to researchers and the public now receives much more attention than it did in the past. Thanks to the development and refinement of new techniques, the investigation of archaeological sites and collections can also yield more useful information about a variety of aspects of the past. All of this has resulted in a greater diversity of the average archaeologist's work and has given individual researchers the opportunity to specialise more and more.

At the same time, the scope of archaeology has also broadened. Not only are heritage management and the greater integration of archaeology in society receiving more attention, archaeologists have also become involved in new domains where archaeological methods and expertise can be useful. Examples of such new developments are forensic archaeology, building archaeology, the heritage of World Wars I and II, and underwater archaeology off the Belgian coast and in rivers and wetlands. This variety also became apparent from the questionnaires, and the respondents have eagerly listed the diversity of their duties and commissions. In this respect too, we can observe that in Brussels and Wallonia an extensive package of duties is entrusted to a group of policy archaeologists, whilst in Flanders there is a tendency towards greater specialisation of the commissions given to individual archaeologists by public agencies or institutions. We found in our survey that more and more

archaeologists are focusing their attention – and also their activities, so far as they can – on certain limited aspects of archaeology, hoping that the market for their specific expertise will expand enough for them to make a living out of it.

#### 17.4. Training courses and professionalisation

Evidently, the greater diversity of archaeologists' duties must be reflected in their training. It is mainly the students themselves who demand tailored courses which give them the best chance of integrating as quickly and efficiently as possible in the most dynamic archaeological agencies and commercial businesses. For the teaching staff it is not quite so obvious that they should replace their carefully composed curricula with flexible educational systems which constantly adapt to new developments and demands. As it is, students 'shop around' and, more often than they used to, seek suitable postgraduate courses to gain additional qualifications in an increasingly competitive job market.

As a result of the rapid professionalisation of archaeology, the universities have to adapt in two domains in the short term: to survive in the competition for subsidised students they have to offer attractive basic education at Bachelor level and, in the expanding market of lifelong education, they have to compete with all the specialised businesses that are rapidly taking over this sector. Already, there are universities which resolutely allocate the larger part of their resources to education and update their curricula every year. For the time being, the archaeological sector is still relying on initiatives taken by their own universities, but if these don't materialise, foreign universities and highly qualified businesses and private institutions will undoubtedly obtain a large share of the market for higher archaeological and professional training.

A solution is therefore urgently needed for the growing problem of practical archaeology courses given by universities. Until now, students had to do fieldwork placements at excavations that were conducted by scientific institutions at home or abroad. In the near future, the number of this kind of excavation may be greatly reduced in favour of fieldwork which is carried out by the commercial businesses. The question then arises as to whether we can send our students to such excavations. For one thing, because these commercial companies can make use of unpaid workers, there is seriously unfair competition among commercial businesses and between companies and universities. For another thing, the universities want to know to what extent the commercial businesses will be able to free up enough time to train and supervise students on placement in today's hectic work environment. Obviously, students must be able to do their placement in a work environment which resembles the kind of environment which they will be working in after graduation. They may also meet interesting contacts and find opportunities for their further careers. To clear up any problems in this area and avoid any resentment, it should be discussed at regional level whether this should be allowed or not, and under what conditions university students can do placements in commercial businesses. A similar, if less pressing, problem occurs in Wallonia, where the non-profit societies are often paid flat rates for their services. The same discussion could, for the same reasons, include the use of volunteers in excavations. They too are a welcome supplement to the excavation potential but, in a more strictly regulated and more commercial system, the conditions of their deployment and duties should be defined more tightly.

Another aspect of professionalisation which, as yet, has received little attention in Belgium, is the further differentiation of the categories of staff which will inevitably result from the growth which we can expect in Belgian archaeology. We have always been used to archaeologists supervising excavations, for which they would have a team of workers, volunteers and students at their disposal. In such a situation the hierarchy is clear. In bigger and more complex excavations, however, more staff with specific competences are required. A simple model is that of having senior, medior and junior archaeologists, the system used in the Netherlands, where the senior archaeologist is the project manager who is responsible for the contracts and the organisation, the medior archaeologist coordinates the daily activities on the site, and the junior archaeologist leads a smaller team and often carries out specific duties. This system is also commonly used at major excavation campaigns abroad. In Belgium, there are usually not enough resources to apply this simple model, but this will have to be done in the future, at least for part of the excavations. In Germany, professional Bachelor courses for *Grabungstechniker* (excavation technician) have existed for a long time, and further education courses are being prepared for *Ausgrabungsingenieur* (excavation engineer) or *Master Grabungstechnik* (Master of Excavation Techniques). Similar courses have been started in the Netherlands at the level

of Higher Professional Education, and in other countries too a variety of specialised courses exist for technical occupations in archaeology. In Belgium, it has been proposed that students who did not progress beyond their Bachelor degree be employed for such duties. The excavation permit and the supervision of excavations will, no doubt, remain in the hands of archaeologists who have a Master's or a licentiate degree. Certainly when the two-year Master's training course becomes the rule, and the threshold for obtaining individual excavation permits is raised even higher, this option may be a solution for efficiently employing people who have adequate knowledge and skills in Belgian archaeology. This debate must certainly be held in the near future, and streamlined at European level.

## **17.5. Employers and employment conditions**

A general overview of the government agencies, scientific institutions, commercial businesses and non-profit societies which have archaeologists in salaried employment has been presented earlier in this report. Each of these entities is bound, to a greater or lesser extent, to the legal provisions relating to employment conditions, salary scales and promotion opportunities. Our questionnaire and the information gleaned from our contacts showed that there are no problems in Belgium in respect of the application of legal provisions relating to employment law or terms of employment. The salaries are determined by law, largely, and are comparable to the salaries paid in surrounding countries, or are even higher. We established that the market economy is playing an increasingly important role and that more and more additional perks are being granted as a cheap way of recruiting employees, or of holding on to employees who perform well.

The federal, regional and provincial authorities, as well as the universities, are the most popular employers in this respect, because they have the most stable financial and administrative organisations and can also offer long-term prospects. The possibility of building up seniority and the regularly recurring chances of promotion are two elements which make this type of employer attractive. However, because of the government's policy of gradually withdrawing from certain sectors, recruitment freezes are common, at any rate for tenured staff.

Local authorities, intermunicipal agencies and commercial businesses are not quite as able to offer the same security. They are much more dependent on political (in)stability, the evolution of their financial resources and the market economy. Usually, they can only offer contracts for limited periods of time, or project-based commissions. The larger the organisation, the more stability it can guarantee. The major historical cities, for example, have had well-functioning archaeological services for a long time, but the recent past has shown that the smaller cities and municipalities are not able to make an archaeological service within their area a permanent priority. We hope that the intermunicipal agencies will prove to be less dependent on local politics so that their future will be secure in the long term. In my opinion, however, additional stimulating measures must be worked out to achieve this.

In the present circumstances, the archaeological businesses in Flanders and the non-profit societies in Wallonia are also (still) very dependent on incidental events regarding the volume and continuity of their assignments. Because of the financial limitations and the occasional recruitment freezes at many agencies and institutions, they have the greatest potential for increased employment. We hope that, eventually, bigger and more economically stable organisations which can carry out a large part of the work in archaeology, will emerge out of the current embryonic structures. In view of the fact that a stop-and-go start has been made to systematically apply the provisions of the Malta Convention, we can expect that, after the Convention has been ratified by all the relevant authorities, archaeological work will expand exponentially as it also has in other countries. In Ireland, for example, the number of archaeologists increased by 250 % in five years time (2002-2007) and the commercial sector now has a market share of 89 %. Because of the good prospects in the long run, the larger businesses, in particular, can offer their staff better terms of employment and more stable careers.

However, there is a danger that, in a more competitive context, wages will come under pressure, and that the commercial businesses will seek cheaper solutions for paying their staff. The first signs of this are already evident from the replies to the questionnaire: On the one hand, archaeologists and other staff who are recruited by temporary employment agencies for the duration of an excavation earn considerably less, in net terms, than the average graduate does, but, on the other hand, we can see that the commercial businesses offer additional perks to their staff in the shape of meal vouchers, to which a lower tax rate applies. Whether the one thing compensates for the other, and what the future

will bring in this respect, is impossible to predict. In addition, we see that businesses are increasing the pressure on their staff to meet their contractual deadlines and, certainly if a site yields a larger number of finds than was expected, oblige them to work (an unreasonable amount of) overtime. Operational efficiency undoubtedly plays an important role in this respect, and we trust that the legislature will prevent any excesses occurring by consistently applying social legislation and working conditions laws to the archaeological sector as it does to other sectors.

As stated in the analysis of the results of the questionnaire, contracts in archaeology are very diverse. The number of positions which guarantee lifelong work of the same kind, including chances of promotion and regular salary increases are very limited in archaeology. Almost all employers conduct ongoing assessments of the job content and the job holders. Opportunities for developing an interesting career can be found mainly in the federal institutions and the universities, but are available only to archaeologists who possess the necessary qualifications and experience. Vacancies are rare and are often the occasion of intense lobbying activities. More than once, the responses to the questionnaires refer to the scarcity of desirable jobs and how acrid the conflict between candidates can be. Repeatedly, respondents state that vacancies in archaeology often are only advertised internally or in a camouflaged way, so that it is essential to have an extensive network of contacts. Many agencies use contracts for an unlimited period of time. These offer the prospect of building up a career and provide a stimulus to the employee but, here too, the replies to the questionnaires bring frustrations to light about the limited opportunities of promotion within the (too) small agencies and the pressure (often of a political nature) to do more and perform better all the time.

For many Belgian archaeologists, temporary contracts are all that they can hope for. Archaeology in the form of surveys and excavations is temporary by definition. In fact, the variation in work activities is one of the things which make archaeology so interesting. On the other hand it requires continual adaptations of one's way of life and mobility which can be difficult to realise, certainly if people have growing families, and so, many archaeologists depart from the scene of battle prematurely even before they have any prospects of greater regularity in their archaeological work. Others persevere, often against their better judgement, only to capitulate eventually. Still others have the good fortune of finding an interesting job before their stamina runs out. But even then, the battle is not over, and the questionnaire shows that those archaeologists who have been so fortunate, so to speak, as to go from one contract to another can still experience a good deal of frustration and problems and may eventually take a different kind of job to provide for their future.

Another knotty problem in archaeology is how to combine work and family life, certainly at the start of one's career. This is also the case in many other industries, of course. Because of the personal nature of this subject it was not addressed by the questionnaire, but a lot of personal annotations by the respondents referred to this theme in greater or lesser detail. In principle, everybody should determine for themselves what the consequences of their choices in life are, and to what extent their ambitions to have a career in archaeology are influenced by their relationship and/or wanting to have a family. A lot of archaeologists, both men and women, prove to be childless or have postponed starting a family until they find a more steady job, although it must be said that these figures probably don't differ that much from comparable occupations. However, this problem appears very clearly when we look at the employment of female archaeologists. The number of women archaeologists decreases rapidly with age and, for women of middle age, is only a fraction of the number of graduates of their generation. Irregular working hours and the limited opportunities for carrying out part-time work may cause women archaeologists to find their happiness and a career elsewhere.

Contracts in archaeology are a matter of opportunity, luck, patience, frustration and many other things, whether positive or negative. This is no different than it was in the past. A look at the CVs of most of today's 'well-respected' archaeologists will show that many of them, too, only found promising jobs after a long period of searching and waiting. A lot of archaeologists spent years working in other sectors before they could return to archaeology thanks to some rare, happy opportunity. The questionnaire results show that many others are still waiting for such a chance. Our archaeological services are too small and the general framework is not suited for building up an interesting career. In other words, there is no middle management, and the perspectives are too limited. Time and time again, we are losing the experience and commitment of the young generation of archaeologists who, around the age of thirty, start looking for a better life outside archaeology. In anticipation, they populate the Dutch and French-speaking forums, hoping to be heard.



So, the archaeological sector is continually losing skilled people who have attained the requisite competencies with courage and self-sacrifice, and have laid solid foundations for productive careers. Although the conditions for young archaeologists have been the same for decades, we cannot tolerate this any longer. In all of our neighbouring countries, whether it concerns government-controlled or commercial archaeology, this problem is not as bad, and the bottle neck is not as narrow as it is in Belgium. As in other countries, we should at least be able to offer a substantial proportion of our young archaeologists transfer opportunities and better opportunities to develop a reasonable career. Everywhere else in the economic world it is normal to make every possible effort to hold on to skilled workers but in archaeology, by contrast, there is a constant unacceptable waste of talent.

## **17.6. Potential influx of foreign archaeologists**

As in other sectors, it is not inconceivable that archaeologists from other European countries enter the Belgian labour market. Already, there are more Polish archaeologists working outside Poland than in Poland itself, and of all the archaeologists working in Ireland approximately 45 % is of foreign origin, a quarter of them Polish. Clearly, the archaeological job market in Europe is changing, but this evolution has, so far, bypassed Belgium. In Eastern Europe, in particular, graduate archaeologists look for opportunities to work in well-paid jobs abroad. Even if they don't earn more than their colleagues in that country, a job such as this substantially increases their purchasing power in their native country. Seen in this light, it is not so strange that only a small majority of the respondents was positive about the internationalisation of archaeology, or that only a small minority is of the opinion that foreign archaeologist should have better opportunities for entering the Belgian job market. On the other hand, a majority of the respondents say that they would be interested in an attractive job abroad.

In this context, it must be emphasised that academic courses which are more internationally oriented, and the possibility of lifelong education in various sectors of archaeology, are an absolute necessity for offering our graduates enough work opportunities in the job market of the future. A course of study or a placement abroad not only opens people's eyes to opportunities abroad, but also contributes effectively to improving their chances of having an interesting career at home. Knowledge of foreign languages, a theme covered by the questionnaire, is regarded as indispensable for making contacts; the French-speaking respondents, in particular, emphasise this as an area which is capable of improvement.

It emerges from the questionnaire that employers in archaeology have no objections to the influx of foreign workers, but there may be administrative impediments to the recruitment or appointment of foreign employees, in particular if they are from outside the European Union. The main reason for the low number of foreign employees, and archaeologists in particular, is that the labour market in Belgium is not saturated and that there are enough Belgian archaeologists who are willing to fill the vacancies. All the same, commercial businesses are experiencing increasing problems lately in finding suitable staff for the many temporary jobs which they offer. So it is important to take the recent developments in the job market within the European Union seriously and to evaluate the situation in the short term.

Finally, no problems in the integration of the immigrant community in archaeology became apparent from the questionnaire. The ranks of both the professional and the amateur archaeologists include quite a few descendants of second or third generation immigrants. The proportion of immigrants and natives among support staff is similar to their proportion outside the archaeological sector so that, in this respect, employment in archaeology reflects the current composition of Belgian society. The respondents did not mention any examples of discrimination at job interviews or in exercising their hobby or professional activities in archaeology.

The replies to the questionnaire reveal the same reassuring picture about the employment in archaeology of people with disabilities or physical limitations. The profession is a physically demanding one and this automatically creates a threshold for people with limitations, but the respondents didn't mention any cases of discrimination on this count.

## 17.7. The integration of the amateur archaeologists

Something which is less reassuring is the limited degree of integration of amateur archaeologists and volunteers. That this is the case is evident not only from our counts, where we estimated the number of amateur archaeologists liberally, but also from the responses of the amateur archaeologists themselves. Although many of them have many years of practical experience and have often played important roles in archaeological surveying and inventorying of certain regions, and in the research into certain sites, they now feel sidelined and undervalued by the professional archaeologists. It is true, indeed, that legislation regarding permits has been tightened and that, justifiably, more guarantees are now demanded to ensure a high level of scientific research and reporting about the work performed.

The further professionalisation of archaeology is a necessary and irreversible process, and the amateur archaeologists understand this. But significant potential is now being neglected and, instead of sidetracking the amateur archaeologists it would be better to train and supervise them so that they could have a specific role within the world of archaeology. In this way, they are also the best propagandists of archaeology and can increase support for it in society considerably. In all the countries where archaeology is developing successfully, the amateur archaeologists have a substantial share in the various stages of archaeological activities, from surveying and the making of inventories, through management and investigation of the archaeological heritage, to the presentation and promotion of the research results.

If we are committed to improving the education and lifelong training of professional archaeologists, why shouldn't we make a similar effort for amateur archaeologists? Many of them are eager to follow (modified) training courses to be able to work at a higher scientific level. The questionnaire reveals that most of them have the required intellectual capacity as well as the ambition to serve the archaeological sector effectively. Most are able to work independently or can be employed through specific societies under the supervision of professional archaeologists. This also applies to the metal detectorists. As they have specific knowledge and skills, it would be better to integrate them in the archaeological sector rather than to regard them as perennial competitors or lump them, as some do, as people who destroy archaeological heritage. After the example of England (*English Heritage*, the *National Trust*) the archaeological sector should take pains to integrate the amateur archaeologists and to devise a well thought-out strategy to involve the general public in the sector more. In fact, some commendable efforts for this purpose have actually already been made in the past.

## 18. Summary

Our investigation and the questionnaire survey which we carried out for this project reveal, above all, the great enthusiasm of the average archaeologist in Belgium. The sector is very dynamic and committed, but is often confronted by misunderstanding on the part of policy-makers and, even more, by structural and financial limitations. It is no wonder that people get frustrated at times.

In comparison to other countries, employment is not low and we expect strong growth in the near future, although not everybody agrees with this view. Still, the number of candidates in Belgium will exceed the number of jobs that are available for the time being, and there is little danger that foreign archaeologists will supplement the labour market. But we should keep in mind that, certainly in the areas of education, lifelong training and commercial archaeology, more actors from abroad will be entering the market.

The nature of archaeological employment is temporary by definition, and one of the main problems facing Belgian archaeology is the lack of a middle management so that little perspective can be offered to young archaeologists. We hope that, as the opportunities for employment increase, more prospects can be created for interesting careers in archaeology.

Although archaeology is already better integrated in society than it used to be, and efforts are being made to achieve a better return of the research results to the general public, social support is still limited and amateur archaeologists, in particular, are not involved in archaeological activities enough.

To conclude, it is inevitable that the role of the European Union will become more prominent in archaeology. From our international contacts we know that archaeologists from all the countries of the European Union work together harmoniously and that they regard consultation and collaboration as something natural. This offers new opportunities, unexpected chances and the space for joint initiatives. The future of archaeology in Belgium and Europe looks bright, so let us apply ourselves to this future.

This report is a first step in the project, '*Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe*'. It is available in Dutch, French and English (<http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/wea/leonardo/index.htm> and [http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/wea/leonardo/index\\_fr.htm](http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/wea/leonardo/index_fr.htm)). The report will be combined with the national reports from the other partner countries and will result in a transnational summary by Kenneth Aitchison, *Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe: Transnational Report*, 2008 (<http://www.discovering-archaeologists.eu>).

Leuven, May 2008

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