

Belgium Facts



Belgium has an advanced high-income economy. It features a high standard of living, quality of life, healthcare and education. It is categorized as “very high” in the Human Development Index and also ranks as one of the safest and most peaceful countries in the world.

Belgium is a federal **constitutional monarchy** with a parliamentary system, and a population of nearly 12 million people. The country is divided into three highly autonomous regions: Flanders in the north, Wallonia in the south, and the Brussels-Capital Region. Belgium is home to two main linguistic groups or communities: the Dutch-speaking, mostly Flemish community, which constitutes about 59 percent of the population, and the French-speaking community, which comprises about 40 percent of all Belgians. A small German-speaking community, numbering around one percent, exists in the East Cantons.

Notably, Belgium is located in the heartland of Europe’s most **prosperous region**. The purchasing power of its residents and those living within 500 km of the region makes it a prime business location. Brussels, the capital of Belgium, is home to numerous international corporations and intergovernmental decision-making organizations, such as the EU and NATO.

Belgium has world-famous knowledge centres and **R&D** initiatives. The World Economic Forum and many other international spectators rank Belgium among the world’s elite in R&D and innovation.

Belgium is one of Europe’s main **logistics hubs**. Its infrastructure offers advantages when it comes to setting up European logistics or distribution activities with the seaports of Antwerp, Zeebrugge, Ghent and Ostend and the airports of Brussels, Antwerp and Ostend Bruges. Furthermore, the road, rail, waterway, and pipeline networks of Flanders are among Europe’s densest – ensuring fast connections with the European hinterland.



The **workforce** of Belgium is multilingual, highly-educated, and loyal. It is also the **4th most productive labour force in the world**, thanks to its diverse culture and the close proximity of internationally recognised, top-ranked universities and educational institutions.

Easily accessible and centrally located, the Port of Antwerp is key to Flanders’ renowned **chemical industry**. A state-of-the-art pipeline network facilitates product interchange. Antwerp is the largest chemical cluster in Europe, and the second largest worldwide.



According to the World Trade Report, Belgium is one of the top 15 **exporting countries** in the world. Its exports per capita are among the world’s highest.

Some famous Belgian companies with a global footprint include Van Hool (buses, trailers), Solvay (chemicals), Materialize (3D printing), FN Herstal (arms), Delhaize (supermarket chain), Katoen Natie (logistics), Neuhaus (chocolate), Jan Den Nul (maritime infrastructure), Cartamundi (cards and games), Barco (digital projection and imaging technology), Anheuser-Busch Inbev (Stella, Leffe and other beers), Jannsens (pharmaceuticals), Bekaert (steel wire). Did you know that nearly 80 percent of the world’s billiard balls are made in Belgium? Saluc AC, established in 1923, has its own chemical plant to produce phenolic resin, which gives Aramith balls their characteristic high-gloss and rock-hard finish.

Belgium More Facts



Belgium is known for its quality of life in the field of food, drink, culture, entertainment,...

Belgian is famous for its



Waffles



Food



Chocolate



Beer



Diamonds

(Antwerp has been known as the Diamond Capital since 1447)



Art

Rubens



Magritte

Tomorrowland is the world's largest Electronic Dance Music Festival. Belgium hosts a large variety of music, popular and cultural **festivals** throughout the year.



Festivals



Belgium is also known for its **inventions**, which include plastic, the saxophone, the Body Mass Index (BMI), Imodium and contraceptive pills. The country has also made significant contributions to the World Wide Web.

Belgium offers **multicultural diversity**, with large, expanding communities (including shops and restaurants) of foreign descent.



Belgium is the place where **Napoleon Bonaparte** was defeated. He suffered a crushing defeat in the Battle of Waterloo, a city south of Brussels, in 1815.



Belgium Working & Living



- ▶ You don't need to speak the local language. The locals are used to foreigners, so being able to communicate in English or French is usually enough.
- ▶ The **local population** is also used to European immigrants.
- ▶ **Housing** is usually cheaper than in neighbouring countries.
- ▶ **Salaries** are paid in euros, which reduces currency exchange risks (compared to Scandinavia or the UK, for example).
- ▶ A convenient geographical **location**, which makes contact with the "homefront" cheaper and easier. Belgium is not a large country, making all cities easily and quickly accessible.
- ▶ **Pension rights** are assigned to all recipients according to Belgian standards.
- ▶ Although Belgium has relatively high income taxes, thanks to child support, affordable housing and a reasonable the cost of living, **disposable income** is higher than in the Netherlands, Sweden, France and Great Britain (based on a study by Deloitte).
- ▶ The **minimum wage** in Belgium is among the highest in the European Union. In addition to having one of the highest minimum wages in Europe, Belgium also has labour laws in place to protect the rights of workers at the national level.



- ▶ **Healthcare and social security:** first-class and cheap (approximately EUR 7.50 per month), as well as relatively short waiting lines.
- ▶ A system of **meal vouchers** is often available (a daily voucher for purchasing food and beverages), compensating the relatively high income tax.
- ▶ Belgium provides an attractive system of financial **child support**.
- ▶ The salary package includes **vacation money** and a **13th month**.
- ▶ The foreign workforce is paid the same salary as the local Belgian workforce from the beginning. **Cheap labour** is prohibited by law. This means you earn a competitive salary from DAY ONE.

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Link2Europe:

- ▶ Offices in Belgium, Poland, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Serbia, Greece, Portugal and Spain
- ▶ The Community has obtained a quality label for interim agencies which operate within Belgium's strict legal framework.
- ▶ Link2Europe cares for its people and takes personal needs into consideration.
- ▶ You receive committed support from our staff in housing, registration, transportation, legal administration, and cooperation with the employer.