BELGIUM

INTRODUCTION
Belgium became independent from the Netherlands in 1830. The country prospered in the past half century as a modern, technologically advanced European state and member of NATO and the EU. The capital city of Brussels is home to numerous international organizations including the EU and NATO.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
King PHILIPPE
Head of Government
Prime Minister Alexander DE CROO
Government Type
federal parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy
Capital
Brussels
Legislature
bicameral Parliament consists of the Senate or Senaat (in Dutch), Senat (in French) (60 seats) and the Chamber of Representatives or Kamer van Volksvertegenwoordigers (in Dutch), Chambre des Representants (in French) (150 seats)

GEOPGRAPHY
Area
Total: 30,528 sq km
Land: 30,278 sq km
Water: 250 sq km
Climate
temperate; mild winters, cool summers; rainy, humid, cloudy
Natural Resources
construction materials, silica sand, carbonates, arable land

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
high income economy with strong but moderate growth; high public debt; aging labor force; low labor force participation of low-skilled, migrant, and older workers; strong welfare system; high congestion; complex business permitting and judicial systems
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $557.1 billion (2020 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $48,200 (2020 est.)
Industries - engineering and metal products, motor vehicle assembly, transportation equipment, scientific instruments, processed food and beverages, chemicals, pharmaceuticals
Agricultural products - sugar beets, milk, potatoes, wheat, pork, lettuce, poultry, maize, barley, pears
Exports $414.8 billion (2020 est.)
cars/vehicle parts, refined petroleum, packaged medicines, medical cultures/vaccines, diamonds, natural gas (2019)
partners: Germany 17%, France 14%, Netherlands 13%, UK 8%, US 6%, Italy 5% (2019)
Imports $412.9 billion (2020 est.)
cars, refined petroleum, packaged medicines, medical cultures/vaccines, diamonds, natural gas (2019)
partners: Netherlands 16%, Germany 13%, France 10%, US 8%, Ireland 5%, China 5% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
11.8 million (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
0.59% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
Belgian 75.2%, Italian 4.1%, Moroccan 3.7%, French 2.4%, Turkish 2%, Dutch 2%, other 10.6% (2012 est.)
Language
Dutch (official) 60%, French (official) 40%, German (official) less than 1%
Religion
Roman Catholic 57.1%, Protestant 2.3%, other Christian, 2.8%, Muslim 6.8%, other 1.7%, atheist 9.1%, nonbeliever/agnostic 20.2% (2018 est.)

as of November 2021