

# Wallonia<sup>10</sup>

➤ **10 GOOD REASONS  
TO INVEST IN WALLONIA**

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# Wallonia<sup>10</sup>

## ➤ WELCOME TO WALLONIA, REGION OF BELGIUM

Wallonia “to the 10<sup>th</sup>” is a welcoming and successful region that has taken its future in its own hands and is opening its arms to you.

Wallonia is located in the backyard of the capital of Europe, at the heart of a gigantic market favourable to businesses.

An area of innovation and competitiveness where men and women appreciate work and effort.

An attractive and competitive region offering smart taxation and a customized financial assistance system.

A quality area open to the world, where the authorities promote creativity and initiative; a welcoming land of culture and traditions.

**The Wallonia Export and Investment Agency now makes it easier to set up your business.**





# A LAND OF GROWTH

With a territory of 17,000 km<sup>2</sup> and over 3,400,000 inhabitants, Wallonia is one of the three regions of federal Belgium: the French speaking region close to Brussels, with autonomy and powers

mainly in the following sectors: economy, external trade and employment, but also in the areas of applied scientific research, transport, energy and regional development.



# Create

## ➤ WHERE THE HEART OF EUROPE BEATS

Wallonia is in the immediate vicinity of Brussels and Western Europe's major cities. The area is home to the main offices of the largest international institutions and the headquarters of many multinationals.

**Brussels** with the European Commission, European Parliament, NATO, Eurocontrol, The World Customs Organisation, the SHAPE, 1,500 international organisations, 220 representative offices of cities and regions, 160 embassies, and most European professional associations and federations.

Brussels also hosts the largest journalist centres in the world, over 60 foreign banks, 1,700 international corporations, more than 300 international law firms or consulting businesses, and 21 international schools.

With Paris, Strasbourg, London, Amsterdam, The Hague, Luxembourg, Cologne, Frankfurt, or even Munich and Geneva within a few hours, Wallonia is directly connected to all decision making centres in Europe.



**GUY LEBEAU**

*Company Group Chairman,  
Johnson & Johnson Medical  
Devices & Diagnostics,  
Europe, Middle East  
and Africa*

"The effort made by the Wal-  
lonia region, in conjunction  
with its central location in  
Europe, the presence of the  
airport and transportation  
infrastructure, and the pos-  
sibility of teaming up with  
TNT Logistics were the key  
factors in making this invest-  
ment decision."



© BAXTER

### **BAXTER**

Baxter has been in Wallonia for over 50 years and employs close to 1,700 people in its production factory, its European logistics complex and its R & D centre.



© BURGO ARDENNES

### **BURGO ARDENNES**

A subsidiary of Burgo Marchi Group, a Southern Europe leader in coated paper, Burgo Ardennes holds a strategic place in Europe and is the 2nd largest industrial employer in the Belgian Luxembourg Province.



### Three international airports

With Liege and Charleroi, Wallonia has two airports handling 400,000 tons of freight and over 2 million passengers each year. And of course, Brussels-National Airport is not very far, with more than 16 million passengers and over 700,000 tons of freight annually.

### The densest road network in the world

Wallonia has a modern communication network to suit the needs of international companies, with close to 900 km of free flowing motorways interconnected to the European network.

### A rail system geared towards Europe and exceptionally dense

Not just several High speed train lines (Thalys, ICE, Eurostar), but also cargo links connected to the main European rail centres.

# Reach

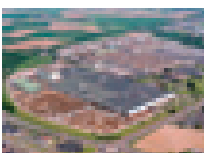
➤ **65 % OF THE EUROPEAN MARKET IN A FEW HOURS!**



The geographic location of Wallonia is beyond compare: the vast majority of the European market is directly accessible within a radius of 500 km!

A market within reach thanks to an impressive transport system and top quality infrastructures.

By road, you can cover an area that includes 20 of the largest European cities and 400 million consumers, in just one day. Being located in Wallonia increases your efficiency and allows you to deliver your products in record times.



#### CATERPILLAR

Prime world manufacturer of construction and mining equipment, engines and turbines. The Gosselies factory near Charleroi is the largest of its subsidiaries outside the United States.

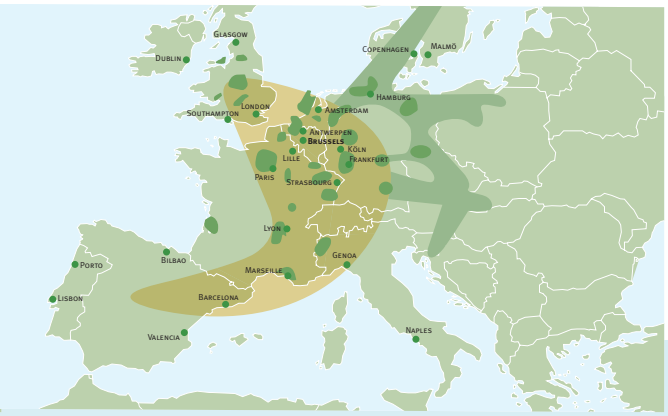
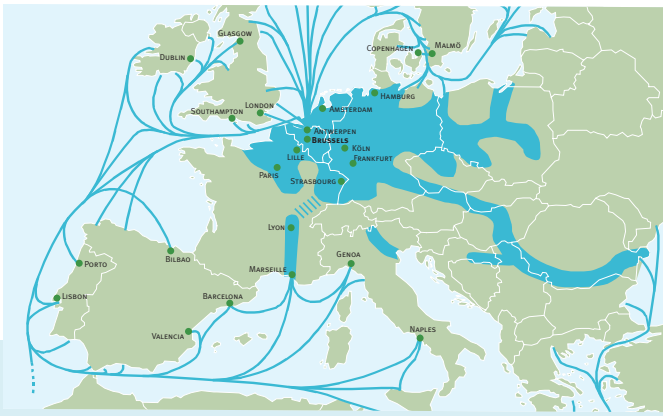
© CATERPILLAR



#### COCA-COLA COMPANY

With Coca-Cola Enterprises and Coca-Cola Services, Coca-Cola has made Belgium a hub for its research and development. Coca-Cola has a production site in Wallonia (Sources Chaudfontaine) and two distribution centres (Gosselies and Sources Chaudfontaine).

© COCA-COLA COMPANY

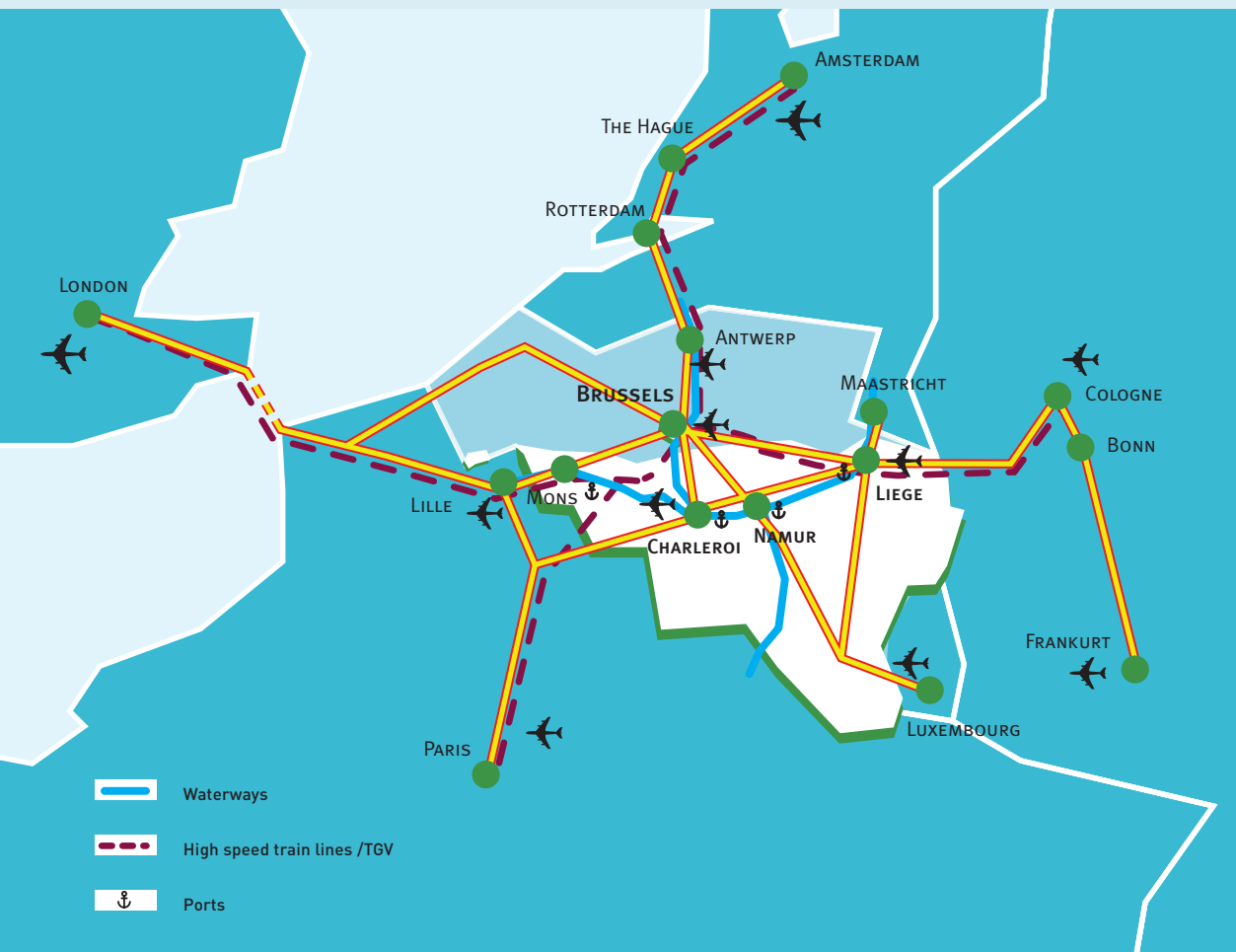


## At the very heart of the largest network of waterways in Europe

The four river ports including Liege, second inland port in Europe, handle 30 million tons each year. Wallonia has a key position in the Scheldt-Meuse-Rhine network.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century logistics where intermodal does marvels

Transport, warehousing, distribution and logistic services with high added value: with its six intermodal platforms spread across the entire region, Wallonia logistics has upgraded from "Third Party Logistics" to a vital player on the European scene.



**ANTHONY RANSON**  
General Manager  
UTI Logistics

"The region was an "obvious" one for a logistician with global ambitions. In logistics, of necessity, you try and set up close to a communication hub. Moreover, it is in the direction of our business close to a large motorway hub and access to the rail network; the port and the airport of Charleroi are close and easily accessible. Lille and Brussels are not far away."



© A. STEVENS

### EUROGENTEC

A spin off from the University of Liege has become one of the biggest suppliers for genome and proteomics research.



© EVS BROADCAST EQUIPMENT

### EVS BROADCAST EQUIPMENT

A Wallonia high tech company: 80 % of the world's market in idling hard disk televised systems.



Rent (Euro/m<sup>2</sup>):

<b>Belgium Wallonia</b>	<b>38 - 42</b>	Hungary	54 - 60	Belgium Brussels	57 - 60
Belgium Antwerp	45 - 50	The Netherlands	55 - 70	Italy	57 - 92
France	46 - 55	United Kingdom	56 - 128	Czech Republic	58 - 62

Source: DTZ

# Grow

## > 130 STATE OF THE ART BUSINESS PARKS

### Property costs in Wallonia are among the lowest in Europe

In Wallonia, entrepreneurship is second nature. No wonder that everything is done to welcome and help companies develop by offering them the lowest property prices on the market:

- **130 fully equipped Business Parks** are now hosting close to **5,000 companies** and are creating more than **150,000 jobs**.
- **6 Science Parks**, directly connected to research centres, laboratories, universities, business centres and incubators are vital partners in the technology sectors.
- **More than 4,000 acres (1,700 ha)** fully equipped and available at the lowest prices in Europe



#### EXXONMOBIL CHEMICAL FILMS EUROPE, INC

Set up in the Belgian Luxembourg province, 500 people make oriented polypropylene film for wrapping food and non-food products. Over 95 % of the production is exported.

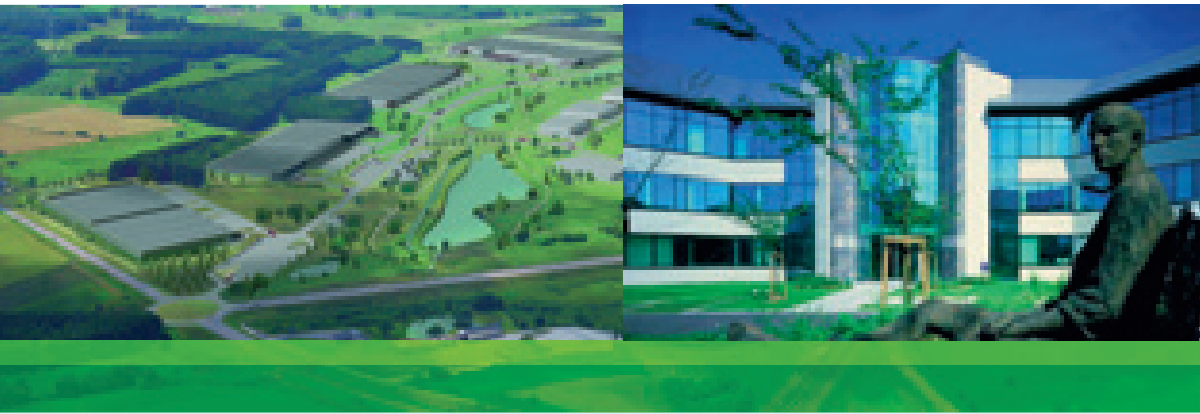
© EXXONMOBIL CHEMICAL FILMS EUROPE, INC



#### FERRERO

One of the world leaders in the chocolate and confectionery sector: Arlon is one of the company's largest production units in the world.

© FERRERO



## Infrastructure and efficiency

Wallonia Business Parks are strategically located over the entire territory and managed locally. They are perfectly equipped and benefit from a direct access to all European communication and transport networks. Almost everywhere in Wallonia, huge areas are still available at very competitive prices.

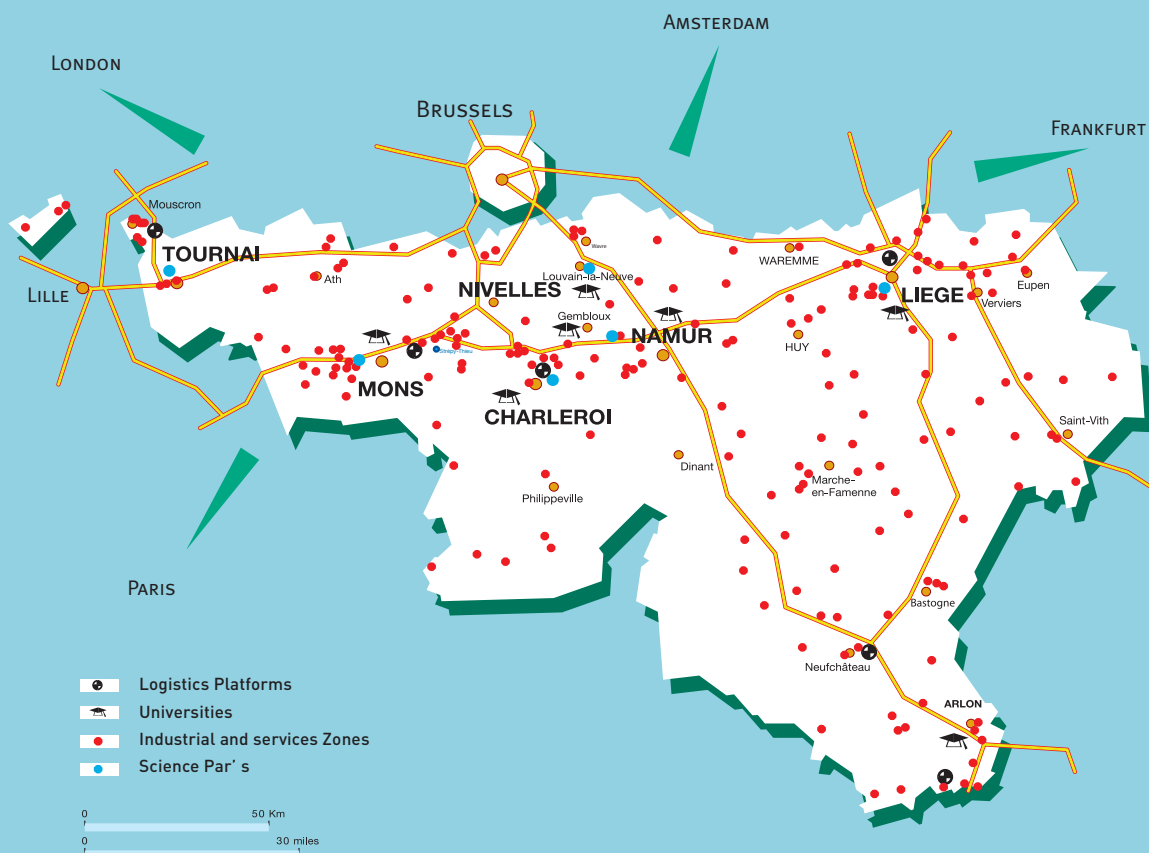
## Power and competitiveness

Over a total area of close to 600 ha, the "Wallonia Science Parks" are directly connected to 7 R&D centres and laboratories, 4 incubators, 7 business centres and are linked to 9 university centres. They can host companies following simple and rapid procedures. The services offered cover infrastructure, consulting, information and networking.



**KO NUIJTEN**  
First Vice President  
for ProLogis

"With criteria based on location and expandability, we selected a 241,000 square feet facility. This new facility is expandable to almost one million square feet, which will allow us to grow our capabilities on an as-needed basis in an efficient and controlled manner over the 25 year lease period. It is ideally situated on a main European transportation route, with easy access to rail and barge, allowing us to distribute our products around the continent with ease".



© A. STEVENS

### GLAXOSMITHKLINE BIOLOGICALS

One of the main vaccine producers and designer of drugs in the world; employs around 6,200 people worldwide, including more than 4,000 in the Wallonia Brabant province.



© IBA, Siège Social de Louvain la Neuve (©photo: Globalview)

### IBA

This spin off from the University of Louvain-la-Neuve designs and produces cyclotrons producers of radioisotopes for brachytherapy, protontherapy and industrial sterilization.



# MEN AND WOMEN

Wallonia has developed an extended, highly performing educational network of colleges, universities and graduate schools. The training meets market requirements since the large majority of graduates from higher or univer-

sity education get a job as soon as they finish their studies. Businesses benefit from a quality workforce: productivity is 20 % higher than the European average...



**300 public and private centres of research and more than 11,000 researchers**



**20 centres of excellence serving the competitiveness of companies**



**9 university centres open to the world and close to 200 spin-offs created**

# Innovate

## ➤ 11,000 RESEARCHERS SERVING INNOVATION

Basic research, applied research, public or private laboratories, high level university training and centres of excellence: Wallonia has huge resources serving business performance.

### Competitiveness centres and corporate networks

5 competitiveness centres (Aeronautics and Space, Agro-industry, Life Sciences, Transport and Logistics, Mechanical Engineering) take part in the new growth dynamics initiated by the Government and position Wallonia at the heart of the Knowledge Communities. Innovative projects arising from public and private initiatives (companies, university research centres, training centres) are also supported in order to create the technology of tomorrow.

Moreover, numerous companies have formed networks in order to develop their business and increase their competitiveness. Ten sectors are currently involved: aeronautics, AutoMobility, ceramics, solid waste, eco-construction, space, nutrition, clinical research, ICT and transport and logistics. The companies extend their international contacts and prove to be more innovative.

### This offensive strategy places Wallonia among the most successful regions of Europe



**JEAN STÉPHENNE**  
*CEO and Chairman of GSK Biologicals*

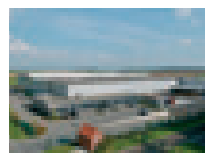
“The four large universities are playing a part in the industrial redeployment. The vice-chancellors now consider they have a part to play in economic development. Consequently, the universities are closer to market requirements and current industrial developments. They see change positively, and like the SMEs, want to contribute to it”. The success of centres of competitiveness will not be able to materialize without a close synergy between all the players.”



© KRAFT FOODS

### KRAFT FOODS

The second largest food group in the world has a soft cheese and snacks factory in Namur and a coffee roasting factory in Liege. Over 90 % of products manufactured in Namur and in Liege are for export.



© L'Oréal

### L'OREAL

One of the world leaders in cosmetics: the factory in the Belgian Luxembourg province is the company's largest manufacturing unit globally. Nivelles hosts L'Oréal Luxury Products' distribution centre for northern Europe.



# Manufacture

## > A PRODUCTIVITY 20 % HIGHER THAN THE EUROPEAN AVERAGE

Many international studies show that Wallonia is a region of Europe where work efficiency is a major asset, whether in terms of motivation, productivity or skills. According to European statistics, Belgium is one of the countries that spends the most in education\* and in training.

This talent for performance is linked not only to the diversity of companies and to a culture open to the world, but also to an education and professional training system in which many resources have always been invested. Therefore, it is not surprising that many Wallonia and foreign entrepreneurs say that they are highly satisfied with the quality of the workforce available.

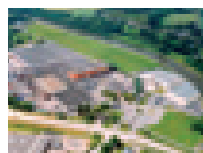
[\* Statistics Eurostat 2003 - as a percentage of GDP]



© LYRECO

### LYRECO

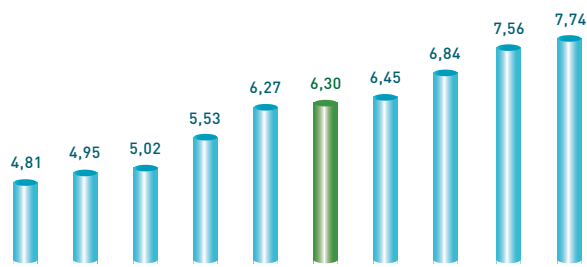
The office supplies and IT consumables distributor has offices in 27 countries and is market leader in Belgium. Distribution centre in Liege.



© MATERNE-CONFILUX

### MATERNE-CONFILUX

One of the biggest European producers of jams and preserves exports over 60 % of the production from its factory in Namur province.

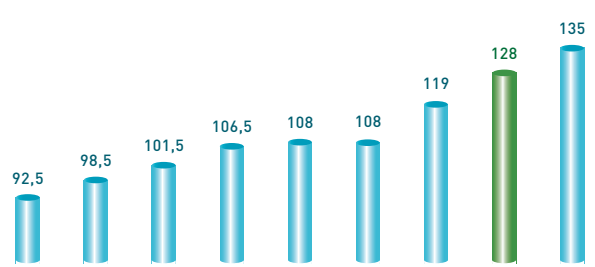


AVAILABILITY OF A SKILLED WORKFORCE

Source: IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2005

### It is easy to have a skilled workforce in Belgium

Corporate managers rank Belgium highly, almost on a par with Japan and France.



PRODUCTIVITY TRANSLATED INTO GDP CREATED PER WORKING PERSON (2005) (EU25 = 100) / Source: Eurostat

### Productivity in Belgium is much higher than the European average.

This is explained by a motivation of workers that is among the highest in the world (survey- IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2006). It is a major advantage of the Belgian workforce.

## > MULTICULTURAL AND MULTILINGUAL, THE WORKFORCE IN WALLONIA IS A REAL RICHNESS

Wallonia has always benefited from many external influences. This natural openness to the world can be explained by several factors: proximity of major European countries, presence of international institutions, an important industrial history, an attrac-

tive educational system and the flow of workforce. In Wallonia, multiculturalism stands out: this cultural richness goes hand in hand with a knowledge of foreign languages that is proven to be among the highest in the world (according to the OECD).



ANDRÉ HEINRICH

President of Sysmex Molis

“One of the key assets for our company being in Wallonia is the use of several languages. As the Belgian market only covers 5 % of our clientele, we are lead to work with the neighbouring countries.

Knowledge of several languages is as a result an advantage in our company and even a highly important criterion when selecting our staff.”



© MÖLNLYCKE

### MÖLNLYCKE

European leader specialized in the manufacture and distribution of single use surgical consumables. The Waremme site runs a production and sterilization factory, a customer service section and a distribution centre serving clients across Europe.



© A. STEVENS

### NOMACORC

Present in 35 countries, Nomacorc represents over 30 % of the synthetic stoppers market. Its stopper manufacturing and finishing factory is located in Wallonia, in the vicinity of Liege.



# ENHANCING YOUR COMPETITIVENESS

## AMONG THE MOST ATTRACTIVE IN EUROPE

Recent steps taken by the Wallonia Government aimed at reducing any anti-economic taxation to a minimum (in particular the suppression of tax on power, the tax exemption of investments involving equipment and tools) make Wallonia the least taxed region of Europe and of Belgium.

Government authorities have made Belgian and Wallonia taxation one of the most com-

petitive of countries in the Euro area, both for companies and for expatriates.

This political will is accompanied by considerable financial assistance at all stages of the company development: set up, equipment, R&D, employment, training, exports, etc. An entire range of regional and European aids that make Wallonia one of the most attractive regions of Europe.

## Corporate tax in 2006

(\* average effective rate after deduction for notional interest)

Ireland	12,5 %	Denmark	28 %	United Kingdom	30 %
Austria	25 %	Sweden	28 %	France	33,33 %
<b>Belgium*</b>	<b>26 %</b>	Greece	29 %	Spain	35 %
Finland	26 %	The Netherlands	29,6 %	Italy	37,25 %
Portugal	27,5 %	Luxembourg	29,63 %	Germany	38,34 %

### A competitive nominal tax rate

The nominal corporate tax is highly competitive compared with the other countries of Western Europe.

In addition, simple and profitable tax arrangements can make this nominal rate even lower. For example, small and medium size companies with a small taxable income can benefit from a reduced rate of taxation.

### Taxes are drastically reduced. A system unique in Europe!

Another example: with the concept of "notional interest deduction", financing based on equity is processed in the same way as financing based on loan. As a result, companies can deduct a fictional interest each year, based on their equity. This particular system, which is unique in Europe, brings the corporate tax rate back to an actual rate of approximately 26 % on average.

# Take advantage

## ➤ OF SMART CORPORATE TAXATION

### Advance Tax Ruling: the tax authority becomes your partner!

The tax authorities can analyze and calculate tax consequences based on a specific situation or transaction. This is fundamental in assisting businesses in their choices and in determining the future impact of decisions in terms of direct and indirect taxes.

This procedure guarantees legal certainty for investors in compliance with international laws.

There are also particularly favourable tax regulations for different types of businesses. These regulations - which make use of the "cost plus" or "resale minus" systems - apply to service centres (shared service centres, call centres, etc) and distribution centres.

### Expatriates: a fair and favourable regulation

A special tax regulation can apply to non-residents, foreign executives and scientists temporarily in Belgium.

First advantage: business expenses are tax exempt for some actual additional expenses: moving costs, certain trips to the home country, education fees for children, "tax equalization", etc.

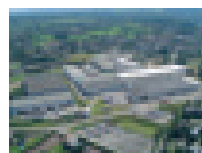
In addition, they are only taxed on revenues from work in Belgium, and not on professional activities abroad, including business trips.



© A. STEVENS

### SAINT-GOBAIN

The world leader in glass crafts business has based its Benelux head office in Namur province and has a network of over 50 subsidiaries. Saint-Gobain Sekurit Benelux, Autover Distribution and Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics have four different sites in Wallonia.



© SCA HP

### SCA HP

European leader in the manufacture of paper hygiene products, packaging products and paper for newspapers, produces mainly in the surroundings of Verviers, a toilet paper unique in Europe amongst which 90 % is for export.



# Benefit

## > FROM FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND ACCESS TO CAPITAL

A complete system of financial incentives has been implemented to make it easier to set up a business in Wallonia.

These incentives not only are a significant contribution to the cost of setting up a business (up to 20 %), they also lower tax and social costs, promote hiring and staff training, make it easier to pay for consulting, help with export plans and promote the use of renewable energy and environment initiatives.

In addition, several very useful European financial assistance programs are also available.

Moreover, access to venture capital is made easy thanks to a large number of private or public funds, readily available to participate in creating or expanding successful businesses. In Wallonia, more than elsewhere, businesses have the reputation of offering a high return on investment in the medium range.



© SHANKS

### SHANKS

One of the biggest European independent companies in waste management, industrial cleaning and soil rehabilitation is in Seraing, in Mont-Saint-Guibert and in Hainaut province where it also produces electricity from gas from disposal centres.



© SIEMENS

### SIEMENS

One of the leaders in technological solutions in communication, energy, lighting, transport, security and health for businesses and consumers. Operates in Wallonia mainly in development, maintenance, installation, consulting businesses.



## EXAMPLES OF ASSISTANCE AND FINANCIALS INCENTIVES

### European Electric Distribution

Investment of € 2,500,000  
 50 jobs created  
 Set up for 4 years

**Government support:**

- Subsidies of 15 % for set up costs: € 375,000
- Employment aid for creating jobs over 4 years: € 173,000

### Medical Device Europa

Investment of € 33,000,000  
 160 jobs created in an economic development area

**Government support:**

- Subsidies of 20 % for set up costs: € 6,600,000
- Support from the region for selecting and recruiting workers
- Professional training plan for some warehouse workers with a 7.8 % reduction of wages cost
- Property tax exemption for 5 years: gain of € 350,000

### Tilapia Belgium

Investment of € 15,000,000  
 28 jobs created in an economic development area

**Government support:**

- Subsidies of 20 % under its set up costs: € 3,000,000
- Exemption for 5 years from property tax



**GUIDO QUINTING**

*Site Manager NOMACORC SA in Thimister-Clermont*

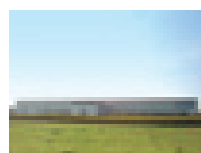
“We have found in Wallonia a worthwhile base from a geographical and logistics point of view. What is more, we have benefited widely from the services of the OFI which has done everything possible to advise us and to assist us to find the tax benefits most suited to our situation.”



© SIOEN FABRICS

### SIOEN FABRICS

A leader in coating of fabrics for protective clothing and for mattress protection, airbags and lorry tarpaulins, the company has two sites in Wallonia.



© SKECHERS

### SKECHERS

A US giant in the manufacture and distribution of shoes for men, women and children. Belgian distribution centre in the vicinity of Liege Logistics.



# A TRADITION OF OPENNESS

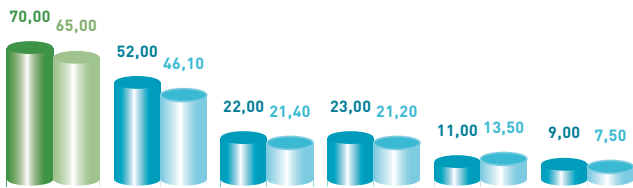
Wallonia's know-how, quality of products and natural resources have been highly successful all over the world for a very long time and many 'Wallonians' have become famous worldwide for centuries.

The political will to support the export capacities of Wallonia businesses is generating spectacular results. The volume of exports is rising each year in all sectors and is making the region one of the largest exporters per capita.

Over time, Wallonia has proven to be a welcoming place for international businesses, whose activities occupy an important place in the economy.

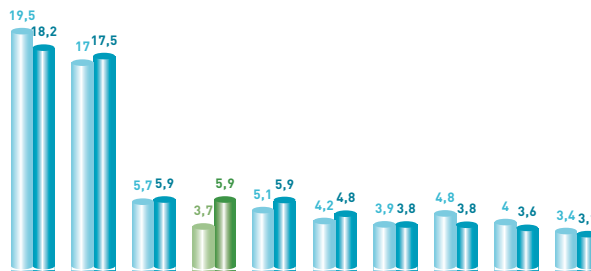
That is why the Wallonia government has created an agency that is a unique partner for foreign companies wishing to set up a business in Wallonia. The main goal of this agency is to provide information, assistance, contacts and solutions suited to prospective foreign investors.

■ % EXPORT SALES ■ % IMPORT SALES



**% OF SALES MADE ON EXPORT AND ON IMPORT**  
Source: Awex

■ MARKET SHARE 2004 ■ 2005 (AS A %)



**FOREIGN INVESTMENTS IN WESTERN, CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**  
Source: Ernst & Young European Investment Monitor 2006

### An economic tradition based on trade

Wallonia is a region that has always based its development on trade with adjacent countries but also with distant countries. The ideal geographic location and the high quality of transport facilities have also heightened this natural predisposition of Wallonia businesses to explore foreign markets.

### Investments confirm the attraction of Wallonia

Belgium ranks 4<sup>th</sup> among the 20 most attractive European countries in terms of investments, and attracts 6 % of all foreign investment projects in Europe. The survey carried out with international corporate managers confirms the benefits of its central location in Europe, its sound logistics infrastructure and its targeted financial incentives (Ernst & Young Research 2006).

# Export

## ➤ WALLONIA, A REGION NATURALLY OPEN TO THE WORLD

### A real exporting power

Wallonia exporting power also shows up in the figures. For around a decade, exports have continued to grow considerably (close to 10 % per year on average), which is way ahead of the European average and most of the neighbouring countries. A genuinely impressive performance, especially when we know that over half its GDP comes from exports, in a wide range of sectors clearly illustrating the diversity of the production performance from our businesses.

### Breakdown of export sectors

Chemical	17.2 %	Ceramics & Glass	4.1 %
Equipment	12.9 %	Transport	3.3 %
Metallurgy	17.1 %	Paper & Wood	3.7 %
Agri-food products	5.1 %	Minerals	15.6 %
Plastics	8.5 %		

Source: Results Awex - 2005

### The Wallonia Export and Foreign Investments Agency: a passport for growth

Thanks to its experience and missions for promotion, information, training and consulting about Wallonia, the Wallonia Export and Foreign Investment Agency is a genuinely efficient partner to all businesses.

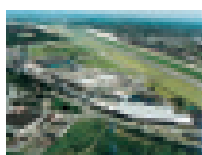
One hundred and five offices worldwide can assist you in analyzing, exploring, and developing your international markets. Many experts in all sectors will inform and assist you in projects canvassing foreign clients. Financial assistance can also be granted for certain purposes.



© SOLVAY

#### SOLVAY

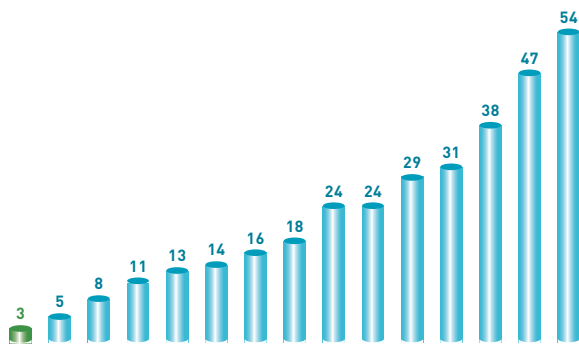
This Belgian crown jewel stands out in the fields of chemicals, pharmaceuticals and plastics and is present in 50 countries and employs over 30,000 people. Its Chemicals and Plastics site is located in the province of Hainaut.



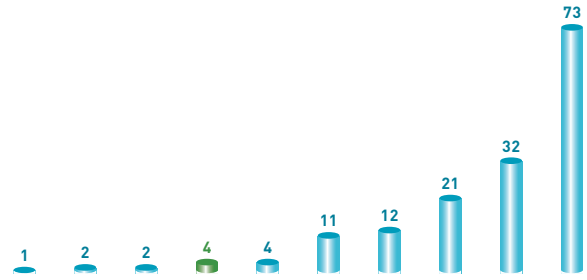
© SONACA

#### SONACA

Based in the province of Hainaut, SONACA is a world leader in the design and manufacture of leading edges for plane bodies for Airbus, Embraer and Dassault Aviation.



BE DK FR NL IT FI SE UK DE IR AU PL GR ES PT  
**NUMBER OF DAYS NEEDED TO CREATE A BUSINESS IN THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES** / Source: Belgian Government



JP PL DE BE NL UK FR US IT ES  
**STRIKES: DAYS LOST ANNUALLY PER 1,000 INHABITANTS (PERIOD 1999-2003)** / Source: ILO and Eurostat

### Start ups: European champion!

The efforts to promote economic development are bearing fruit. It is now possible to start up a business in only 3 days, which makes Belgium (and Wallonia), the most successful country in this field.

### A fair weather social climate

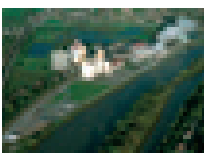
Productivity and work motivation are vital components for developing a business and a region. For several years, the Wallonia authorities and the unions have been recognizing and supporting a particularly serene social climate enabling businesses to stay competitive and successful.

# Communicate

## ➤ KNOW EACH OTHER TO BETTER INNOVATE

Setting up and doing business in Wallonia cannot happen without contacts with authorities and policy makers. Therefore, it is vital that these contacts be quick and efficient, and that formalities be reduced to a minimum. The great proximity of Wallonia authorities (government, administration, etc) and the administrative simplification promote this efficiency.

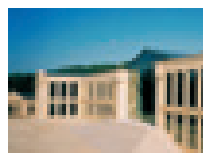
For many years, Wallonia has entered a logic system of administrative simplification and “e-government” aimed at making formalities easier, more efficient, and lighter: suppression of certain constraints that have become unnecessary, electronic handling of procedures, simplification of documents, traceability of files, smart interactive forms, etc. Wallonia authorities are actively participating in the economic growth of the region.



© SÜDZUCKER

### SÜDZUCKER

The German sugar giant Südzucker is present in two large production sites located in Wallonia.



© SWIFT

### SWIFT

Based in Wallonia Brabant province, a few kilometres from Brussels, Swift supplies secure and standardized messaging services and interface software to over 7,800 financial institutions in more than 200 countries.



### The power to decide quickly

Government officials and authorities in Wallonia have the advantage of a great proximity, not only physically, but also culturally. An application can rapidly cross the various levels of responsibility and lead to a quick decision. Meeting a minister or a top official is much simpler than in many other countries. Moreover, useful information and advice are readily available thanks to the presence of local administrative branches. In Wallonia, economic development is a priority in which all levels of power participate.

### Foreign businesses in Wallonia and very happy to be there!

The authorities' strategic choice to promote foreign investment has proven to be highly effective. Some foreign businesses have already set up in Wallonia. For example, from 2000 to 2005, foreign firms have invested in total close to 3 billion Euros in Wallonia, which lead to the creation of close to 10,000 direct jobs. Qualitatively, these businesses state that they are extremely satisfied with the hospitality and assistance granted to them in the framework of their setting up and development. [INRA]

## A COMMITMENT TO GROWTH

The government policy has propelled Wallonia in an era of growth and development. Priorities have been set forth: to focus on certain sectors to become European leader (these are the so-called Competitiveness Centers), to promote scientific research and collaboration between research, training centres and businesses, to strengthen assistance to business start-ups and to reduce tax pressure on companies in certain regions. Additionally the government has stepped up efforts to train young people, in particular in learning foreign languages. A total of 1.5 billion Euros have been invested over a 4 year-period. With such a program, Wallonia has become one of the most competitive regions in Europe!



**PATRICK LONCOL**  
*Administrative and Finance Manager, L'Oréal Luxury Products Belgilux*

"With help of the Wallonia authorities, we were directly involved in an economic Business Park close to Brussels that offered interesting competitive advantages in the eyes of the group and a proximity of suppliers and clients. It is easy to understand that we found the best conditions there for running our business in a healthy setting".



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### TECHSPACE AERO

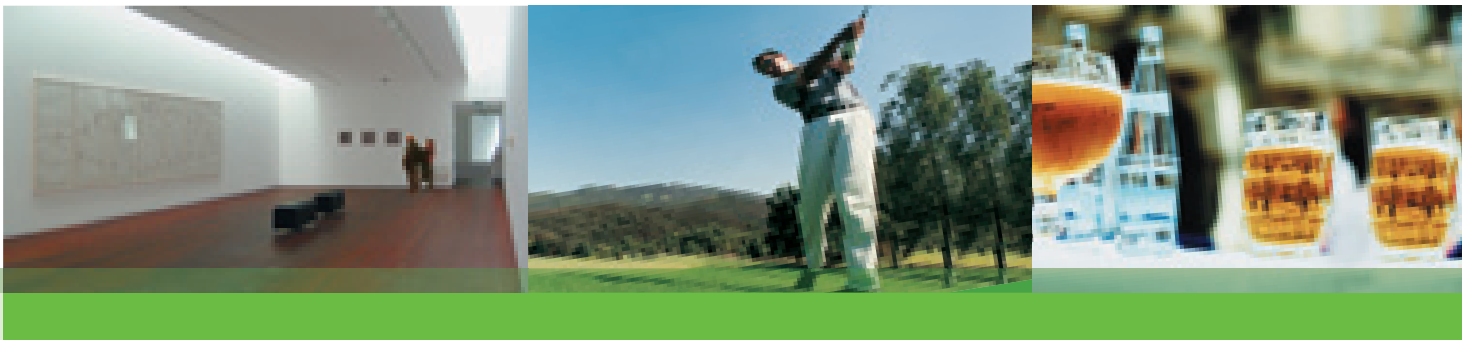
A Wallonia company originally, and part of the SAFRAN Group since 1989, a specialist in modules, equipment, services and test benches for aeronautical and space engines.



© A. STEVENS

### TOTAL PETROCHEMICALS - FELUY

The greatest production's plant of polymers plastics of the Total group. Each year, 1,200,000 tons of granulated of polypropylene, polyethylene and polystyrene are produced in Feluy. Linked to the plant, the research center of the group combines technological innovation, development of new products and customers' help desk.



# Relax

## ➤ NATURE, CULTURE, LEISURE, FUN, ETC

Wallonia is not short on strong points or attractions. Harmoniously alternating rural and urban areas, cities and villages, Wallonia is a land full of charm in many aspects: hospitality, love of a good time, age old traditions, its architectural masterpieces recognized as Unesco World Heritage, a legendary gastronomy, warm-hearted welcome, relaxation, and more.

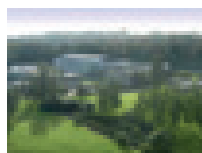
But beyond its evident charms that draw hundreds of thousands of tourists each year, Wallonia is also a quality area where the following are easy to find: spacious accommodation, accessible schools, and a remarkable health and social protection system. International studies prove it: according to the United Nations Development Program, Belgium ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the world.



### TNT EXPRESS

With a large ground and air transport network for express freight in Europe, TNT Express set up its European sorting centre in Liege Airport and connects daily to more than 200 countries worldwide.

© TNT EXPRESS



### UCB

A Belgian biopharmaceutical company, a world leader in areas such as central nervous system, the immune system, allergies, respiratory illnesses and oncology. In particular, UCB has set up its main R&D and production centre in Wallonia Brabant province.

© UCB





Acting as an interface with governments, European, federal, regional and local entities, the OFI will help you find a global solution to set up your business and will take care of your needs in terms of land and property (search for buildings and land), finance and tax (tax optimization), recruitment and training.

To find out more about what Wallonia has to offer to businesses in your sector or to get specific information for your company, if you have any question, wish to receive information or documentation, please do not hesitate to...

## CONTACT US

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