

# Belgium

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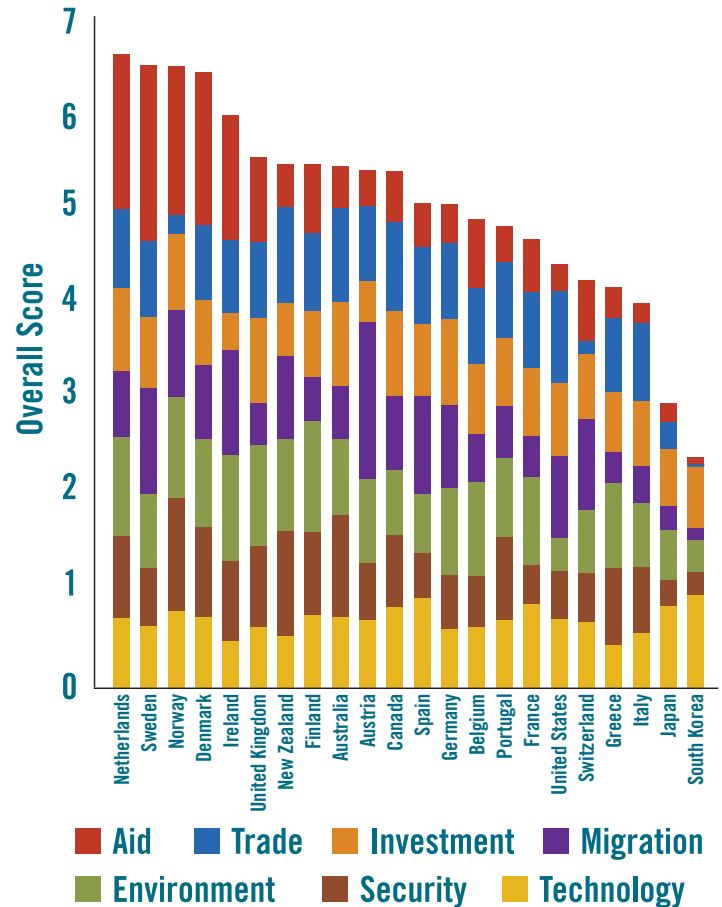
*The Commitment to Development Index (CDI) ranks 22 of the world's richest countries based on their dedication to policies that benefit poor nations. Looking beyond standard comparisons of foreign aid flows, the CDI measures national effort in seven policy areas that are important to developing countries: aid, trade, investment, migration, environment, security and technology. This report reviews Belgium's performance on the 2008 CDI.*

## Belgium's 2008 CDI Performance

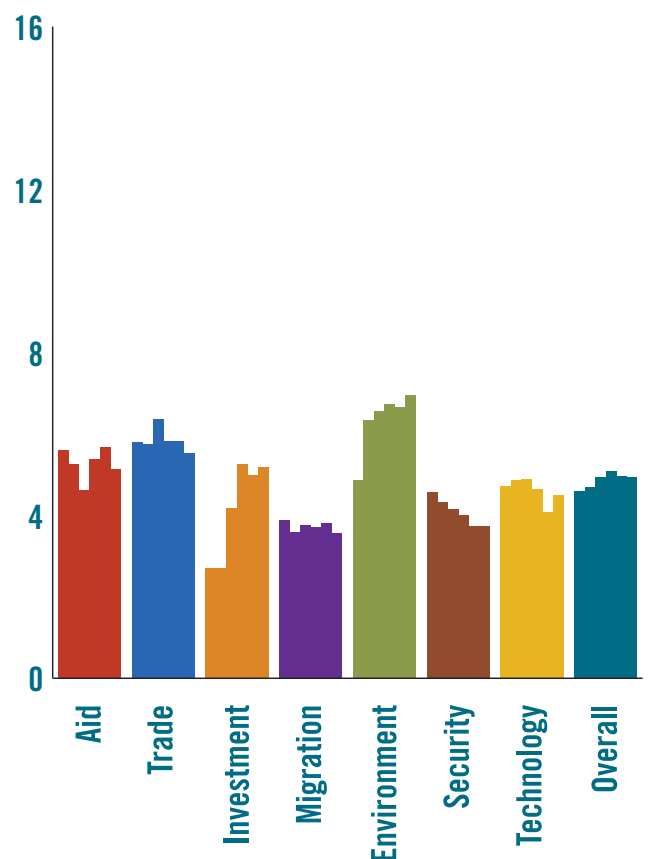
- Overall rank 2008: 14
- Overall score 2008: 4.9
- Change since 2003: +0.3  
(using 2008 methodology)

*Belgium ranks 14<sup>th</sup> overall in 2008. Belgium places among the top third of CDI countries in only two components: foreign aid and environmental performance. Of the remaining five components, Belgium is among the bottom third of CDI countries in three: migration, security, and technology. Belgium's overall score is hurt most by the small number of unskilled immigrants from developing countries entering Belgium during the 1990s, its arms exports to poor and undemocratic governments, its small contributions to international peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions, and its low level of government support for research and development.*

## Commitment to Development Index 2008



## Belgium's CDI Performance, 2003–08



## Aid

Aid quality is just as important as aid quantity, so the CDI measures gross aid as a share of GDP adjusted for various quality factors: it subtracts debt service, penalizes “tied” aid that makes recipients spend aid only on donor goods and services, rewards aid to poor but relatively uncorrupt recipients, and penalizes overloading poor governments with many small projects.

■ **Score: 5.1**

■ **Rank: 7**

### Strengths

- High net aid volume as a share of the economy (0.41%; rank: 7)
- Large amount of private charitable giving attributable to tax policy (rank by share of GDP: 7)

### Weaknesses

- Contributes to project proliferation; small average project size (rank: 14)

## Trade

International trade has been a force for economic development for centuries. The CDI measures trade barriers in rich countries against exports from developing countries.

■ **Score: 5.5**

■ **Rank: 13**

### Weaknesses

- High tariffs on agricultural products (38.7% of the value of imports; rank: 15)
- High agricultural subsidies (equivalent to 14.0% tariff; rank: 19)

## Investment

Rich-country investment in poorer countries can transfer technologies, upgrade management and create jobs. The CDI includes a checklist of policies that support healthy investment in developing countries.

■ **Score: 5.2**

■ **Rank: 9**

### Strengths

- Employs foreign tax credits to prevent double taxation of corporate profits earned abroad

### Weaknesses

- Does not provide assistance in identifying direct investment opportunities
- Does not let investors enjoy developing country tax incentives

## Migration

The movement of people from poor to rich countries provides unskilled immigrants with jobs, income and knowledge. This increases the flow of money sent home by migrants abroad and the transfer of skills when the migrants return.

■ **Score: 3.6**

■ **Rank: 15**

### Weaknesses

- Only a small increase during the 1990s in the number of unskilled immigrants from developing countries living in Belgium (rank by share of population: 16)
- Small share of foreign students from developing countries (42%; rank: 20)

# Environment

Rich countries use a disproportionate amount of scarce resources, and poor countries are most vulnerable to global warming and ecological deterioration, so the CDI measures the impact of policies on the global climate, fisheries, and biodiversity.

■ **Score: 6.9**

■ **Rank: 6**

## Strengths

- High gas taxes (\$0.99 per liter; rank: 6)
- Low fishing subsidies (\$0.49 per person; rank: 8)
- Decrease in greenhouse gas emissions rate in 1996–2006 (average annual growth rate/GDP, -2.6%; rank: 8)

## Weaknesses

- High greenhouse gas emissions rate per capita (14.0 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent; rank: 18)

# Security

Since security is a prerequisite for development, the CDI rewards contributions to internationally sanctioned peacekeeping operations and forcible humanitarian interventions, rewards military protection of global sea lanes, and penalizes arms exports to poor and undemocratic governments.

■ **Score: 3.7**

■ **Rank: 16**

## Weaknesses

- High arms exports to poor and undemocratic governments (rank by share of GDP: 18)
- Small financial and personnel contributions to internationally sanctioned peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions over last decade (rank by share of GDP: 17)
- Provides little protection of global sea lanes that are important to international trade (rank by share of GDP: 15)

# Technology

Rich countries contribute to development through the creation and dissemination of new technologies. The CDI captures this by measuring government support for R&D and penalizing strong intellectual property rights regimes that limit the dissemination of new technologies to poor countries.

■ **Score: 4.5**

■ **Rank: 16**

## Strengths

- Low share of government R&D expenditure on defense (0.0%; rank: 3)

## Weaknesses

- Low government expenditure on R&D (rank by share of GDP: 16)
- Offers patent-like proprietary rights to developers of data compilations, including those assembled from data in the public domain

## Background Papers and Contributors

See “The Commitment to Development Index: 2008 Edition” by David Roodman, available at [www.cgdev.org/cdi](http://www.cgdev.org/cdi). The website also has background papers for each policy area: David Roodman on foreign aid, William R. Cline on trade, Theodore H. Moran on investment, Elizabeth Grieco and Kimberly A. Hamilton on migration, Amy Cassara and Daniel Prager on environment, Michael E. O’Hanlon and Adriana Lins de Albuquerque on security, and Keith Maskus on technology.

## Commitment to Development Index 2008

Country	Rank	Aid	Trade	Investment	Migration	Environment	Security	Technology	Overall Score	Change since 2003
Netherlands	1	11.4	5.9	6.1	4.9	7.2	6.1	5.1	6.7	0.0
Sweden	2	13.0	5.6	5.2	7.8	5.4	4.3	4.6	6.6	+0.3
Norway	2	11.0	1.4	5.6	6.4	7.5	8.3	5.6	6.6	+0.3
Denmark	4	11.3	5.5	4.8	5.5	6.5	6.7	5.2	6.5	-0.6
Ireland	5	9.2	5.4	2.8	7.7	7.9	5.9	3.4	6.0	+0.7
United Kingdom	6	6.2	5.6	6.3	3.1	7.5	6.0	4.4	5.6	+0.1
New Zealand	7	3.2	7.1	3.9	6.1	6.8	7.7	3.8	5.5	-0.4
Finland	7	5.1	5.7	4.9	3.2	8.2	6.2	5.3	5.5	+0.4
Australia	7	3.1	6.9	6.1	4.0	5.6	7.5	5.2	5.5	-0.2
Austria	7	2.7	5.5	3.0	11.6	6.2	4.2	5.0	5.5	0.0
Canada	11	3.8	6.5	6.3	5.5	4.7	5.4	5.9	5.4	+0.2
Spain	12	3.3	5.6	5.3	7.3	4.3	3.3	6.6	5.1	+0.7
Germany	12	2.9	5.5	6.3	6.2	6.4	4.0	4.3	5.1	0.0
Belgium	14	5.1	5.5	5.2	3.6	6.9	3.7	4.5	4.9	+0.3
Portugal	14	2.6	5.6	5.0	3.9	5.8	6.2	4.9	4.9	+0.4
France	16	4.0	5.6	5.0	3.0	6.6	2.9	6.2	4.7	0.0
United States	17	1.9	6.8	5.3	6.0	2.5	3.6	5.0	4.5	+0.3
Switzerland	18	4.5	1.0	4.8	6.6	4.6	3.6	4.8	4.3	-0.4
Greece	19	2.3	5.5	4.4	2.3	6.3	5.7	3.1	4.2	+0.5
Italy	20	1.5	5.7	4.8	2.7	4.7	4.9	4.0	4.1	0.0
Japan	21	1.4	2.0	4.2	1.8	3.6	2.0	6.0	3.0	+0.8
South Korea	22	0.6	0.0	4.6	0.9	2.3	1.7	6.8	2.4	n/a

This table ranks the 22 countries in the CDI, showing their scores in seven policy areas. A country's overall score is the average of its seven policy scores. The final column shows the change in each country's overall score since the CDI began in 2003, using 2008 methodology.

The CGD website ([www.cgdev.org/cdi](http://www.cgdev.org/cdi)) has reports on each of the 22 countries in the CDI, as well as graphs, maps, spreadsheets and background papers.

The Commitment to Development Index is designed by the Center for Global Development, an independent think tank that works to reduce global poverty and inequality by encouraging policy change in the United States and other rich countries through rigorous research and active engagement with the policy community.

David Roodman, the architect of the Commitment to Development Index, is a Research Fellow at the Center for Global Development.