



## Belgium

David Roodman and Scott Standley

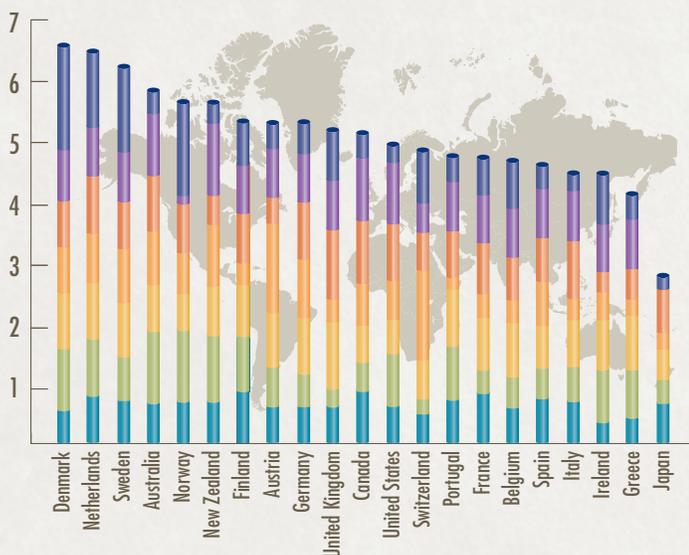
The Commitment to Development Index (CDI) ranks 21 of the world's richest countries based on their dedication to policies that benefit poor nations. Looking beyond standard comparisons of foreign aid flows, the CDI measures national effort in seven policy areas that are important to developing countries: aid, trade, investment, migration, environment, security and technology. This report reviews Belgium's performance on the 2005 CDI.

### Belgium's 2005 CDI performance

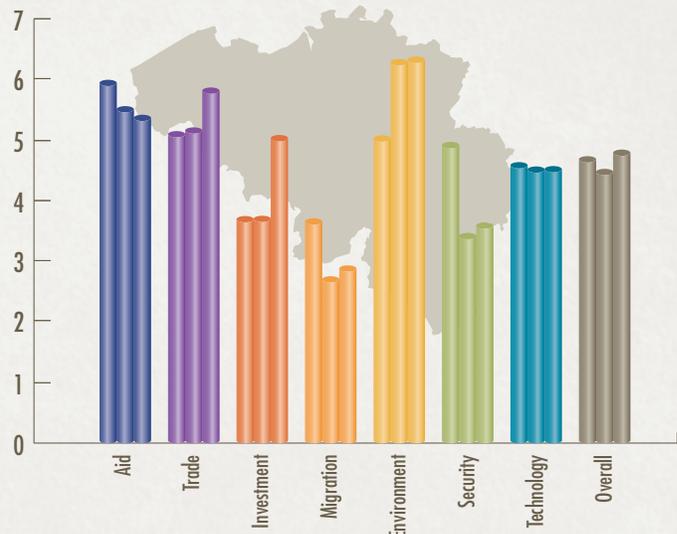
- ▶ Overall score: 4.8
- ▶ Overall rank 2005: 15
- ▶ Change since 2003: +0.3

Belgium ranks 15<sup>th</sup> overall in 2005. Belgium does not place in the top third of CDI countries in any component, though Belgium's foreign aid program and its environmental performance are above the CDI average. Belgium's overall score is hurt most by small contributions to international peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions, its low level of government support for research and development, and the small number of unskilled immigrants from developing countries entering Belgium during the 1990s.

COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT INDEX, 2005



BELGIUM'S CDI PERFORMANCE, 2003-05



## 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: 5.4**
- ▶ **Rank: 8**

### STRENGTHS

- High net aid volume as a share of GDP (0.42%; rank: 6)
- Small share of tied aid (1%; rank: 5)

### WEAKNESSES

- Weak on selectivity; large share of aid to less poor and undemocratic governments (rank: 18)

## 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: 5.8**
- ▶ **Rank: 13**

### STRENGTHS

- Low barriers against textiles (rank: 3)
- Low barriers against apparel (rank: 3)

### WEAKNESSES

- High total aggregate protection of agricultural commodities (rank: 13)
- High agricultural subsidies (rank: 15)

## 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: 5.0**
- ▶ **Rank: 16**

### STRENGTHS

- Provides wide official insurance coverage against political risk
- Provides official support for outflows of portfolio investment

### WEAKNESSES

- Does not allow domestic investors to take advantage of developing country tax incentives
- Allows foreign taxes as an expense instead of a credit

## 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: 2.9**
- ▶ **Rank: 14**

### STRENGTHS

NA

### WEAKNESSES

- Only a small increase during the 1990s in the number of unskilled immigrants from developing countries living in Belgium (rank as a share of population: 18)
- Small number of immigrants from developing countries entering Belgium in 2002 (rank as a share of population: 12)
- Small share of foreign students from developing countries (47%; rank: 17)

## Environment

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

► **Score: 6.3**

► **Rank: 9**

### STRENGTHS

- Large decline in greenhouse gas emission rate between 1999-2003 (*average annual growth rate/PPP GDP, -2.4%; rank: 8*)
- High gas taxes (*rank: 8*)
- Low fishing subsidies (*\$0.34 per person; rank: 3*)

### WEAKNESSES

- High greenhouse gas emission rate per capita (*15 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent; rank: 15*)

## 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: 3.6**

► **Rank: 16**

### STRENGTHS

NA

### WEAKNESSES

- Small financial and personnel contributions to internationally sanctioned peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions (*overall contribution rank over last 10 years as share of GDP: 16*)
- No protection of global sea lanes
- Arms exports to poor and undemocratic governments (*rank as share of GDP: 17*)

## 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: 17**

### STRENGTHS

- High business expenditure on R&D as a share of GDP (*rank: 8*)
- Low share of government R&D expenditure on defense (*0.4%; rank: 3*)

### WEAKNESSES

- Low government expenditure on R&D (*rank as share of GDP: 18*)
- Low tax subsidy rate to businesses for R&D (*-1%; rank: 14*)
- Offers patent-like proprietary rights to developers of data compilations, including those assembled from data in the public domain

## For more information

For details of the 2005 CGD/FP Commitment to Development Index, see "The Commitment to Development Index: 2005 Edition" by David Roodman, available at [www.cgdev.org/cdi](http://www.cgdev.org/cdi). The CGD website contains reports on each of the 21 countries in the index, as well as background papers organized by 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.

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For more information about the 2005 Commitment to Development Index, visit [www.cgdev.org/rankingtherich](http://www.cgdev.org/rankingtherich).

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