



Create > Exchange > Grow

# Wallonia / Belgium

## > The pursuit of technological excellence

Wallonia, the French-speaking region of Belgium, has a two-century history of mechanical and chemical engineering. Drawing on this tradition of entrepreneurship and excellence, the Regional Government of Wallonia has launched an ambitious strategy to enhance and exploit the technological skills of the region. The region spends over 2 % of its GDP on R&D, with 75 % of basic research in the advanced educational field funded from the public sector. Foundation stones are Wallonia's research resources and a skilled multilingual workforce.

### All a technology talent scout could wish for!

- > 9 universities, 130 higher education institutes, 300 research centres, 20 'new generation' training units
- > 11,000 researchers in innovation
- > one of Europe's most effective multilingual workforces: productivity is 20% higher than the European average!

A distinctive feature of the Walloon environment is the symbiotic relationship between the region's universities and the private sector: in 2006 alone, this resulted in no less than 60 spin-offs in key technological areas. A team of 'technology promoters' stimulates this cross-fertilisation between academia and the private sector by providing consultancy services free of charge.

### Wallonia's science parks: a broad spectrum of skills and technologies

- > **Aéropole**, Gosselies (aeronautics, graphic arts and life sciences)
- > **Créalys**, Gembloux (life sciences, quality control)
- > **Initialis**, Mons (new materials, ICT, engineering)
- > **Liège Science Park** (electronics, space sciences, biotechnologies)
- > **Louvain-la-Neuve Science Park** (pharmaceuticals and life sciences)
- > **Qualitis**, Enghien (innovative start-ups).

Focal points of the Walloon Government's strategy are 5 Competitiveness Clusters (aeronautics and aerospace, life sciences, mechanical engineering, logistics and agribusiness). These bring together the resources of private industry and business, government research institutes and the advanced educational and training sector, backed by a massive four-year € 280 million investment plan. Government-funded projects are under way in the fields of IT security systems, nuclear fusion, power electronics, hydrogen fuel cells and other areas of technology.

Other specialised clusters focus on automotive innovation (linked to the Spa Francorchamps Formula 1 circuit), clinical research, ICT, eco-construction, solid waste and, most recently, audiovisual technologies. Centres of excellence are located at Seneffe and Feluy (petrochemistry) and Arlon and Bastogne (environmental technologies).

### Did you know that...

- > **EVS Broadcast Equipment**, pioneer of instant tapeless technology and inventor of the slow-time playback systems used on TV sports programmes, is based in Wallonia?
- > **Bureau Greisch**, involved in the development of the Millau suspension bridge in France (2.46 km long, up to 280 m high, eight 171 m long spans) is a Walloon company?
- > **Eurogentec**, leading provider of products and services to the life sciences, diagnostic and pharmaceutical community and developer of key technologies for oligonucleotide synthesis, is Walloon born and bred?
- > **AMOS**, the mechanical and optical engineering company behind such projects as the Ariane rocket motor vacuum test chamber and the Auxiliary Telescope System for the European Southern Observatory in Chile, is based in Wallonia?
- > **Flying-cam**, developer of the helicopter drone camera used in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* and other films, is a Walloon company?

### Interested?

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