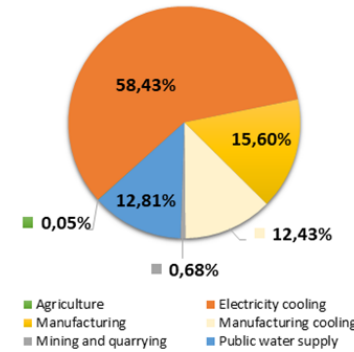
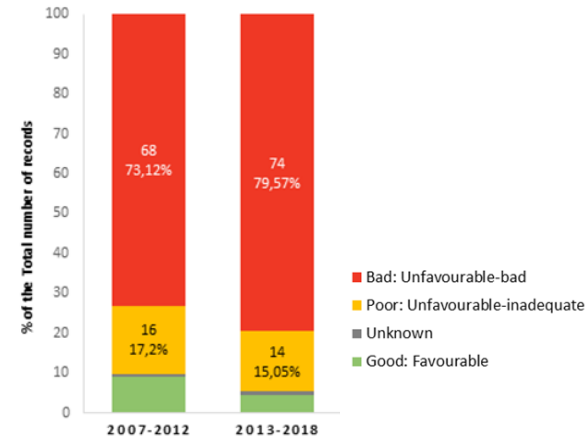




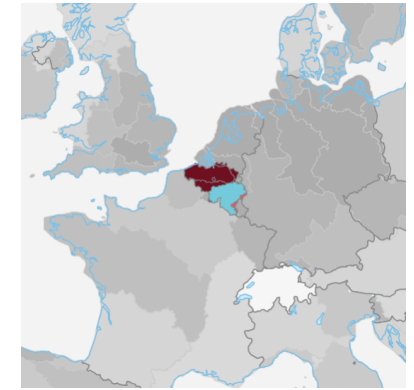
# of inhabitants **11.6 million**  
Surface area **30 452 km<sup>2</sup>**  
GDP per capita **121 pps [1]**  
Significant bodies of water (RBDs) **Meuse; Scheldt**  
Polity **complex federal state**  
Layers of government **central government; 3 regions; 10 provinces; 581 municipalities**  
Legislative powers at the sub-national level **Yes**  
Decentralisation index **2.1 (7 out of 27) [2]**  
Water Exploitation Index plus (WEI+) **7.31% (2017) [3]**



Water abstraction per sector in Belgium - Source: EEA (2022)



Conservation status for habitats in 2007-2012 and 2013-2018 in Belgium - Source: EEA (2021)



Water bodies with less than good ecological status in Belgium - Source: EEA (2021)

**Main actors responsible for WEFE nexus relevant governance**

**NEXUS PILLARS**

**POLICY MAKING**

**POLICY EXECUTION**

**Water**

Ministry of Climate, Environment, Sustainable Development and Green Deal

Federal Public Service for Public Health; Food Chain Safety and Environment; Brussels Environment; Environnement Wallonie; Flanders Environment Agency; municipalities

**Energy**

Ministry of Energy

Department for Energy Wallonie

**Food**

Ministry of Self-Employed, SMEs and Agriculture, Institutional Reforms and Democratic Renewal

Ministry of Self-Employed, SMEs and Agriculture, Institutional Reforms and Democratic Renewal

**Ecosystems**

Ministry of Climate, Environment, Sustainable Development and Green Deal

Federal Public Service for Public Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment; Brussels Environment; Environnement Wallonie, Flanders Environment Agency; municipalities



More information on WEFE nexus governance in the EU

[1] EU purchasing power standard

[2] <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Decentralization-Index.aspx>

**WEFE NEXUS PERSPECTIVE**

**CHALLENGES**

- Assess the why and how of new modifications to water bodies
- Improve water quality by tackling nitrates pollution in particular
- Establish conservation objectives and measures for all Natura 2000 sites
- Invest in water infrastructure and wastewater treatment installations

[3] The threshold for water scarcity is set at > 20%

[4] <https://bluedeal.integraalwaterbeleid.be/about-blue-deal>

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Under the umbrella of Blue Deal Belgium[4], Flanders aims to accelerate its water-retention actions through:
  - the restoration and creation of wetlands
  - integration of waterbodies and other natural environments together into a broader network that includes both cities and rural areas
  - the installation of water buffers at large scale
  - the use of innovative water-saving technologies
  - investing in research on water conservation
- Flanders facilitates compliance with the Nitrates Directive by offering online tools for farmers and promoting peer-to-peer learning

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