

24 May 2023 -12:11

Belgium Unveils its New International Branding Campaign Highlighting its Openness for Innovation

Today, Belgium unveiled its new international branding campaign titled “Embracing Openness”.

Primarily targeted at economic decision makers and the broader research community, the initiative has been launched by the FPS Chancellery of the Prime Minister to strengthen Belgium’s openness for innovation, as supported by partnerships and diversity. The campaign will run until April 2026.

Belgium is open to innovation, partnerships, and diversity

A strategic survey conducted by the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation in 2022 revealed that Belgium is generally held in high regard by the international community. Opinion leaders from around the world expressed their positive perception of Belgium as a country, highlighting its open-mindedness, innovative spirit, willingness to collaborate, and commitment to the rule of law and human rights.

The survey further indicated that Belgium has a favourable reputation among researchers, opinion leaders, investors, and NGOs. However, it was found that the country lacks sufficient visibility and often displays excessive modesty.

These survey findings have served as the basis for Belgium's new country branding strategy, along with an accompanying campaign that emphasizes Belgium's commitment to innovation, partnership, and diversity, encapsulated in the baseline "Embracing openness".

Belgium's commitment to openness for innovation in difficult times

“Whether it is the production of COVID vaccines, pioneering biotech and semiconductor research, or our leading role in offshore energy, Belgium has consistently shown that openness for innovation is vital for a successful society. Embracing partnerships and diversity is an integral part of this. By collaborating across different perspectives, building bridges, and forging alliances, we can make substantial progress both economically and socially. This approach is an essential part of Belgium’s DNA. While others might choose to isolate themselves, Belgium radically chooses for openness as the way forward.” – Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo, announcing the launch of the "Embracing Openness" campaign.

Embracing innovation – to tackle tomorrow’s challenges

To meet challenges such as climate change, European strategic autonomy and security of energy supplies, the campaign will showcase Belgium’s innovative side.

With a proven track record in technological and scientific excellence, Belgium is a bustling hub of innovation. Notable Belgian achievements include leading the charge in biopharma R&D, nanoelectronics, and offshore energy combined with world-class research institutions and universities.

Belgium is driving the high-tech chip revolution through collaboration between its IMEC laboratories and KU Leuven, named the seventh most innovative university in the world by Reuters. In addition, thanks to research from Ghent University, ULB & VUB, Belgium is leading the way on medical discoveries on life-

altering conditions including cancer, Alzheimer's, and AIDS.

As for the energy transition, Belgium has co-founded the North Sea Coalition to create the largest source of renewable energy in Europe, aiming to quadruple combined offshore wind capacity to 65 gigawatts by 2030 and to at least 150 gigawatts by 2050.

Driving progress and innovation with the support of partnerships

The campaign will also show how innovation and sustainable solutions for the public good are made possible through partnerships. Because no single entity can tackle complex problems and fully capitalize on opportunities alone.

This sense of cooperation is ingrained in Belgium's DNA. It is no coincidence that Belgium, a founding member of both the United Nations, NATO and the European Union, hosts key European and international organisations. Belgium will place a special emphasis on promoting partnerships for innovation during its upcoming 2024 Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Fostering prosperous innovation with diversity at heart

More than ever, Belgium fosters its belief in the virtues of an open, tolerant, and inclusive society to boost innovation and ensure progress and prosperity for all.

"Embracing openness" will show that Belgium is a shared home of many communities and cultures with diversity at its heart – as evidenced by its ranking in second place in the Rainbow Index, its third place in the KOF Globalisation Index, as well as its participation in the global SheDecides movement and its co-supervisory role in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

A multi-channel campaign telling Belgium's story

As a nation, Belgium is not known for heavily promoting its achievements. As the campaign helps to address this, it has invited people from other countries to share their feelings on why Belgium is great; perspectives captured in the new campaign baseline: "We don't say Belgium is great, others do".

The campaign is based on people from other countries who will talk about their experiences with Belgium and Belgians in their own language. With stories that focus on the three pillars of the campaign: innovation, partnerships, and diversity. This mix is precisely what makes Belgium unique.

Through digital channels and stakeholder activation events, the new campaign aims to enhance Belgium's global presence, attract investors and researchers, and showcase its prominent industries, all while upholding fundamental Belgian values.

The "Embracing Openness" campaign's goal is to contribute positively to the reputation of Belgium on the international stage. The campaign will also be promoted through Belgian embassies and diplomatic posts across the world.

Starting from June and running for three years, the new Belgian country branding will be visible at Brussels Airport, extending a warm welcome to international travellers, professionals, and innovation partners. The

twentieth anniversary of the legalization of same-sex marriage in Belgium in June will be one of the campaign's first milestones.

In the coming years, additional campaign moments will align with trade missions, international conferences, and stakeholder events. With a global perspective, the campaign will initially concentrate on Europe, preparing for Belgium's upcoming presidency of the Council of the European Union, starting in 2024.

For more info, please visit www.embracingopenness.be

Follow us on:

- Facebook: <https://facebook.com/belgium>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/belgium/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Belgium>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/Belgium>

Contact :

FPS Chancellery of the Prime Minister
EmbracingOpenness@belgium.be

About Belgium

Located in the heart of Europe, Belgium is a highly developed nation of over 11.5 million people with a reputation for innovation, hard work, partnership, and multilingualism. Strategically located between Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Luxembourg, and only a stone's throw from the UK, it lies at the centre of the richest and most densely populated area in Europe. A member of the European Union, Belgium enjoys full access to the world's most advanced single market and customs zone which ensures extensive frictionless trade.

Belgium boasts a highly developed transport infrastructure, including the second largest seaport in Europe (Antwerp). Belgium is home to world-leading research and innovation facilities, multi-national corporations, and artisanal businesses supported by the investor-centric approach of public services.

FPS Chancellery of the Prime Minister
Rue de la Loi - Wetstraat 16
1000 Brussels
Belgium
<https://chancellery.belgium.be>
contact@belgium.be