



Belgium

and its collaboration with the Joint Research Centre



The **Joint Research Centre (JRC)** is a **Directorate-General of the European Commission**. Our mission is to provide **independent, evidence-based knowledge and science**, supporting **EU policies** throughout the entire policy process to positively impact society.

Our **2 800 staff** are based in **Belgium, Germany, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands**. In addition to performing our own research, we make sense of collective scientific knowledge from multiple sources for smarter EU policies. We often work in partnerships with universities, government offices, agencies and stakeholders at national and regional level.

JRC approach & priorities

The JRC provides reliable and comprehensive knowledge to support EU policies. We strive for excellence in all our activities and remain agile, by regularly evaluating and adapting our strategy and ways of working to ensure that they remain fit to respond to current and emerging challenges.

We support every stages of the policymaking process in close collaboration with other DGs of the European Commission. The JRC revitalised Strategy 2030 emphasized its added value around a set of three pillars: Anticipation, Integration and Impact.

The 2023-2024 work programme of the JRC is structured around 33 portfolios, covering the areas of research of the JRC. Those fields of research range from sustainable economy to space, migration and security, but also cover digital transformation and innovation in science and policymaking. The JRC also works on energy, mobility and climate, sustainable resources, health, food and nuclear security and waste management.



Discover the diversity of our portfolios!
<https://europa.eu/kbjK3N>

Partnerships are a key element of the JRC's strategy. We embrace new partnerships across Europe and internationally to broaden the knowledge base and impact of our work to ensure that science delivers for EU policy.

The JRC maintains a network of National Contact Points (NCPs) to provide guidance, practical information and assistance. You can reach out to your JRC NCP for more information here:

<https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/find-your-ncp>

The cooperation in a nutshell

The JRC has established a strong and productive partnership with Belgium in the fields of nuclear research and reference materials. Through this collaboration, the JRC has worked closely with Belgian national authorities, research institutions and other stakeholders to exchange knowledge, share expertise, and jointly address common challenges. This partnership has led to the development of innovative solutions and the implementation of impactful projects that have benefitted both parties. Regular visits of Belgian partner organizations and institutions to JRC laboratories take place to explore new areas of cooperations and increase cooperation through knowledge exchange and joint programmes.

Belgium is home to the JRC headquarters in Brussels and one of its six scientific sites in Geel. JRC-Geel employs around 250 scientists and experts who focus on various research areas such as biotechnology, food and feed safety, healthcare, nanotechnology, nuclear safety and security, and threat detection.

Examples of collaboration

Public health surveillance of congenital anomalies

The JRC and Belgium, represented by the Institut de Morphologie Pathologique and the Provinciaal Instituut Voor Hygiene, collaborate on the European network of population-based registries for the epidemiological surveillance of congenital anomalies (EUROCAT). Their partnership focuses on advancing epidemiological surveillance and rare disease registration in Europe, ensuring the sustainability of EUROCAT activities and results, supporting the Central Registry/Central Database, coordinating European-level activities, and facilitating mutual interest and experience exchange. The JRC's expertise and resources contribute to the development and maintenance of EUROCAT, ultimately enhancing our understanding of congenital anomalies and public health policies in Europe.

Cooperation in the nuclear field

The JRC and the Centre d'Etude de l'Energie Nucléaire (SCK-CEN)/Studiecentrum voor Kernenergie collaborate on various topics. Their cooperation focuses on gathering scientific data for nuclear research, fostering collaboration in the management of radioactive waste disposal and storage of nuclear materials. They also address scientific, economic, and social matters concerning nuclear research, while supporting PhD student programs and facilitating scientific research and seminars. The cooperation underscores the JRC's and Belgium's commitment to advancing nuclear research and developing innovative energy solutions for the future.

Science Flash: Belgium

Your country-specific newsletter. Read in your language about our activities and research in partnership with and about your country.

Register

Previous editions



<https://europa.eu/WymwHX>



<https://europa.eu/yCTBh8>

JRC Board of Governors

The JRC Board of Governors advises the Director-General and the European Commission on the strategic role, scientific, technical, and financial management of the JRC. Board members, nominated by the Commission upon designation of the country's authorities, also represent the interests of the JRC in their respective countries.



Find out who is Belgium's Board member
<https://europa.eu/!CD4cyn>

Working together?

Using our labs and infrastructures

Since 2017 the JRC has opened up 17 of its physical research infrastructures to academia, research organisations and Industry to conduct experimental work and receive training and capacity building in the fields of nuclear safety and security, chemistry, life sciences, physical sciences and ICT. Moreover, the JRC is offering EU innovators the chance to use 'living labs' at its sites in Geel, Ispra, and Petten, which simulate urban and rural environments where innovative solutions can be co-created and tested in close to-real-life conditions. Current pilot projects focus on future mobility and digital energy solutions. Future applications will include advanced connectivity and positioning, and indirect infrastructure monitoring.



Open infrastructures:
<https://europa.eu/IYwqyqy>
Living labs:
<https://europa.eu/v6GhWn>

JRC support for standardisation

Standardisation and harmonisation promote innovation and competitiveness. They also build consumer trust and are essential for the European single market. For these reasons, more than 70 % of the JRC's projects involve work on standardisation and harmonisation. The JRC also participates in more than 140 technical committees linked to standardisation organizations. The JRC further plays a key role in the development of reference materials. The JRC carries out research to lay the scientific foundations before a standard is adopted, for example, by developing analytical methods.



<https://europa.eu/IJrTHcd>

Partnership for regional innovation

The JRC hosts the Smart Specialisation Platform, which helps European countries and regions identify which research and innovation areas to invest in. The Platform takes into account a country or region's existing strengths and upcoming challenges. We have provided science-based advice for policymakers, businesses and research institutions. And we have developed more than one hundred Smart Specialisation Strategies for various European regions and Member States, e.g. for the agri-food and energy sectors. The Platform has helped foster many partnerships both within the EU and beyond.



<https://europa.eu/It8vjYt>

Working at the JRC

From within the heart of Europe, JRC researchers contribute to evidence-based policymaking to improve our society. They experience a diverse and enriching environment where we nurture innovation and creativity, offering rich learning and development opportunities for them to grow professionally. For experienced researchers we have two main types of contracts: as Contractual Agents for up to 6 years, or as permanent civil servants. For PhD students, we offer partnerships through which they can come and do their research at the JRC during their PhD. For recent graduates, we offer a paid five months JRC scientific traineeship, specifically for scientists that have finished their bachelors.



<https://europa.eu/I4CJHhB>

Knowledge centres and competence centres

The JRC hosts several Commission Knowledge Centres and Competence Centres. These Centres bring together experts, stakeholders and knowledge from both within and outside the European Commission. Knowledge Centres are built around topics, while Competence Centres focus on analytical tools. Together, they inform policymakers, stakeholders and the general public about the latest scientific findings that are relevant for policy. They provide contextualised evidence, reviews, data analysis and data visualisation.



<https://europa.eu/Ilt34fJ>

Collaborative doctoral partnerships

In 2016, the JRC launched the Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships programme to establish strategic cooperation with institutions of higher education that have excellent research credentials and an international reputation. The programme is designed to train a new generation of doctoral students in specific scientific fields, with a focus on the science-policy interface.



<https://europa.eu/lbqyF4m>

Centre for Advanced Studies

The JRC Centre for Advanced Studies (CAS) aims to enhance our capabilities to better understand and address complex and long-term societal challenges facing the EU. Together, JRC and external scientists, research in areas that could become relevant for policy making in the coming 3 to 5 years. This close relationship provides access to exceptional research capacity and knowledge. The results of this collaboration forms part of the JRC's knowledge base.



<https://europa.eu/IGCxGQY>

Accessing our databases and models

In line with our values of openness and transparency, we grant access to the JRC's services, databases and tools, including more than 100 models.



<https://europa.eu/IRRvdDJ>

Science for policy

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) provides independent, evidence-based knowledge and science, supporting EU policies to positively impact society.



EU Science Hub

[Joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu](https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu)



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