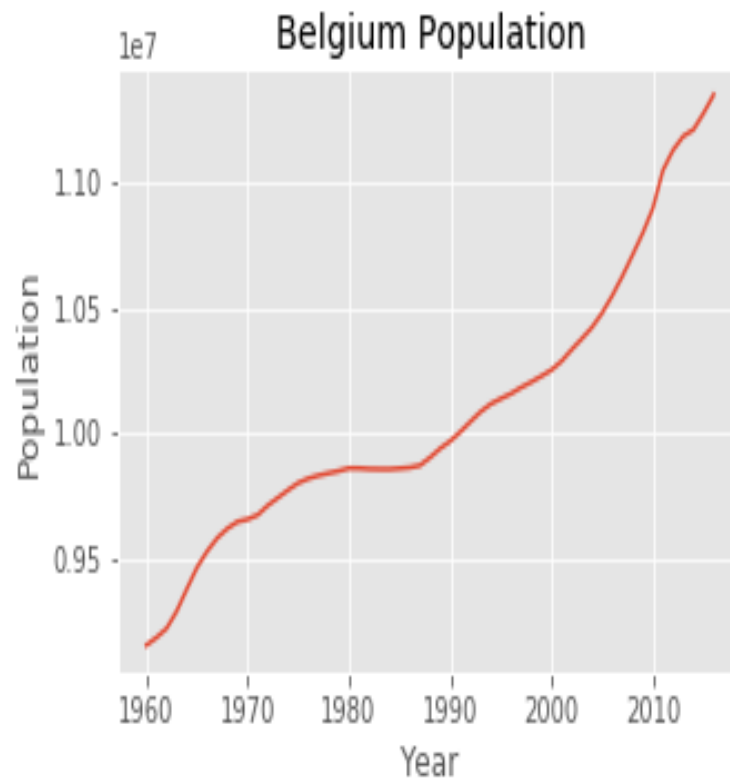


Belgium



Coordinates: 50°50′N 4°00′E﻿ / ﻿50.833°N 4.000°E﻿ / 50.833; 4.000 – in Europe (green & dark grey) – in the European Union (green)Belgium (/ˈbɛldzəm/ (listen)),[A] officially the Kingdom of Belgium, is a country in Western Europe bordered by France, the Netherlands, Germany and Luxembourg. A small and densely populated country, it covers an area of 30,528 square kilometres (11,787 sq mi) and has a population of more than 11 million. Straddling the cultural boundary between Germanic and Latin Europe, Belgium is home to two main linguistic groups: the Dutch-speaking, mostly Flemish community, which constitutes about 59 percent of the population, and the French-speaking, mostly Walloon population, which comprises about 40 percent of all Belgians. Additionally, there is a small ~1 percent group of German speakers who live in the East Cantons. Historically, Belgium lay in the area known as the Low Countries, a somewhat larger area than the current Benelux group of states that also included parts of Northern France and Western Germany. The region was called Belgica in Latin, after the Roman province of Gallia Belgica. From the end of the Middle Ages until the 17th century, the area of Belgium was a prosperous and cosmopolitan centre of commerce and culture. From the 16th century until the Belgian Revolution in 1830, when Belgium seceded from the Netherlands, the area of Belgium served as the battleground between many European powers, causing it to be dubbed the "Battlefield of Europe", a reputation strengthened by both world wars.