

ACTIVITY REPORT

2025

Belgian  Chambers

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FOREWORD

The way we will remember 2025 largely depends on ourselves. Will we see it as the year in which Europe was the plaything of the true global powers, China and the United States? That the Draghi and Letta reports largely remained a dead letter? That the Brussels Region failed, after a year and a half, to form a government? That railway unions went on strike for 27 days? Or will we rather remember that the Commission proposed several omnibus packages to roll back excessive regulatory zeal? That the government finally decided to put an end to the aberration of unlimited unemployment benefits over time? That the Brussels stock exchange broke its 18-year-old record and surpassed the 5,000-point mark?

” But what we truly celebrated that day, is a network that helps entrepreneurs grow.

We want to remember 2025 as the year in which we celebrated our 150th anniversary.



The Federation of Belgian Chambers of Commerce and Industry was founded in 1875 by the chambers of that time, which in that same year lost their official status as advisory bodies to the government and felt the need to unite as private business organizations. Since then, the chambers of commerce have evolved significantly: fewer in number, but larger and more effective organizations thanks to numerous mergers, with a highly professional operation through accreditation, and constantly evolving to meet the needs of their members. The Federation has also changed over these 150 years, but its mission remains the same. We support the chambers so

that they can be the closest, most reliable, and most competent partner for businesses. A bridge between the business world and the authorities, between businesses and citizens, and between companies themselves.

On September 25, the official celebration of our 150th anniversary took place, in the

presence of H.R.H. Princess Astrid and Prince Lorenz, numerous politicians and business leaders, as well as representatives of chambers from Belgium and abroad. But what we truly celebrated that day was the strength of the Belgian chamber network. A network that helps entrepreneurs grow: by defending their interests at every possible level, by providing appropriate services at every stage of their development, and by giving them the opportunity to connect with one another.

Never has the role of chambers of commerce been more relevant than it is today. They are advisors and coaches, a sounding board and a source of inspiration, guiding entrepreneurs through unprecedented geopolitical shifts, ever-accelerating technological disruptions, and demanding sustainability challenges. And as a Federation, we will ensure that the chambers can continue to carry out these tasks over the next 150 years.

René Branders
PRESIDENT

Chamber of commerce: local roots, global outreach

OUR MEMBERS

13

Chambers of commerce in Belgium working to create an environment where free enterprise is encouraged as a source of prosperity and well-being and that supports business at every stage on their development path.

39

Belgian Chambers of Commerce Abroad (BLCCA) help companies internationalise and work to promote our commercial and economic relations abroad.

OUR INTERNATIONAL NETWORK



- is the voice of business on the international stage;
- believes in open, fair and free trade as a basis for prosperity and peace;
- unites and connects a network of **12.000 chamber** of commerce around the world.

EUROCHAMBRES

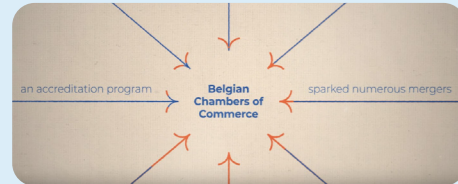
- unites **1.700** national, regional and local chamber of commerce in **43 European countries**;
- represents the interests of more than **20 million businesses** towards European policymakers in Brussels.



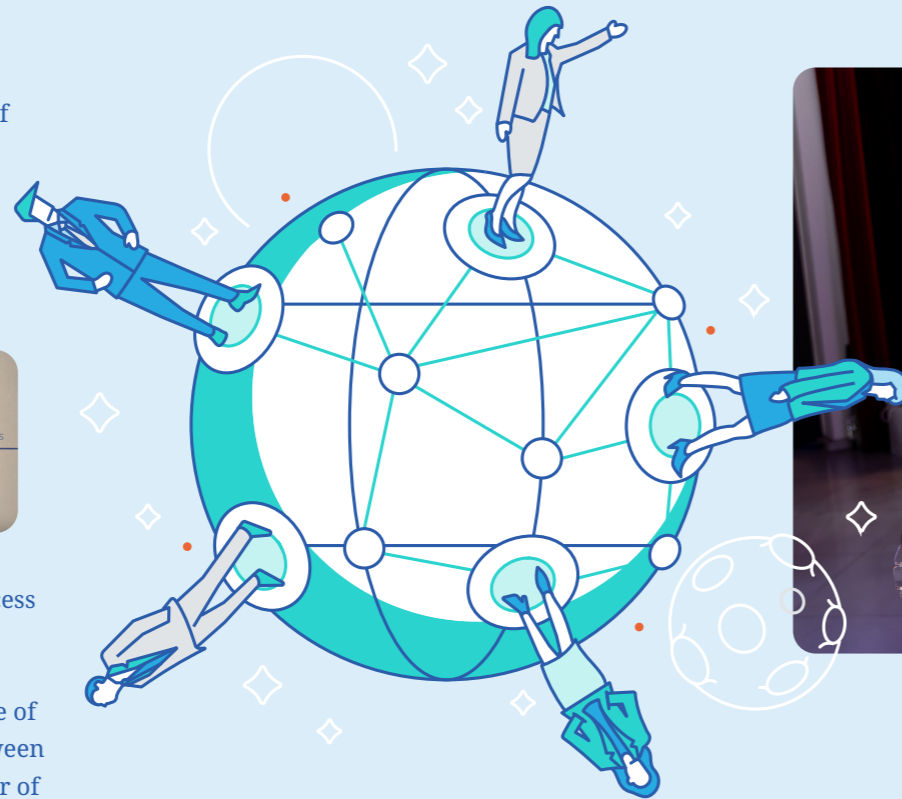
150 years Belgian Chambers

1875, the birth of a network

The Federation of Belgian Chambers of Commerce was founded in 1875. In that same year, the local chambers in Belgium lost their official status and decided to unite.



It marked the beginning of a long success story, during which the Chambers gradually evolved into the strong organizations they are today: the voice of the business community, the link between entrepreneurs, and the trusted partner of exporting companies.



2025, a milestone worth celebrating

On 25 September 2025, a celebration held in great elegance, honored by the presence of H.R.H. Princess Astrid and Prince Lorenz. We looked back on the many achievements of past years while also looking ahead to the future and the many challenges companies face, to which the Chambers aim to provide answers.



Representatives of AKT, AVED-IHK, Beci, and Voka highlighted how the Chambers defend the interests of Belgian companies at every level: local, regional, national, European and international.



At every stage of a company's life, the Chambers of Commerce offer tailored services. Business leaders explained how the Chambers help them grow, expand internationally, strengthen their sustainability efforts and innovate.

Testimonials from the business community

The true strength of the Chambers lies in their members. In the connections that unite them. In the network. Every service offered by the Chambers only gains its full value thanks to the companies that use them, share their experiences, and listen to one another in order to move forward together. Businesses are the engine; the Chambers provide the fuel. Our anniversary book “The power of a network helping entrepreneurs grow” tells the stories of entrepreneurs who explain how the Chambers support them through their many programs and learning

networks. It is an invitation to entrepreneurs who are not yet members to discover what a Chamber can offer them. It is also meant to encourage members to explore the other services provided by the Chambers. Finally, it aims to be a source of inspiration for our colleagues in Chambers abroad who seek to better support their businesses.

Curious?
Download the anniversary publication for free.



International and sustainable entrepreneurship



” These two days were a reminder of what truly a successful academy looks like:

- **Not just presentations** – but genuine curiosity and active engagement
- **Not just business cards** – but real relationships and future partnerships
- **Not just theories** – but tangible ideas and collaborative momentum

Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Türkiye



BLCCA Academy



Belgian and Belgian-Luxembourg Chambers of Commerce abroad act as economic ambassadors for both countries in the regions where they are established. They support Belgian and Luxembourgish companies in their international expansion and help promote the image of Belgium and Luxembourg abroad. During the annual BLCCA Academy, we offer these chambers the opportunity to update their knowledge about Belgium and Luxembourg, as well as to learn from one another.

A visit and presentations at the Port of Antwerp-Bruges, a workshop with Flanders Investment & Trade, meetings with colleagues from local Chambers, as well as working sessions aimed at further professionalizing their operations, were the key ingredients of a successful 2025 edition.

” Great organisation, great location, great celebration! This event gives an energy boost to all volunteers to continue their work for the Chamber.

Participant, anonymous



” You can't make it alone, you need to find people who inspire and challenge you.

Yarne De Munck
POLYSENSE



” I thought I was all alone but I was wrong.

Leila Hadjid
LYNY NATURE

” Rather than eliminating jobs, technology creates new opportunities.

Béatrice de Mahieu
BECODE



7^e European Parliament of Enterprises



Every two years, Eurochambres organizes the European Parliament of Enterprises (EPE). On this occasion, 750 entrepreneurs have the opportunity to sit in the European Parliament to debate and vote on policy resolutions, just like real Members of the European Parliament. Through this initiative, Eurochambres aims to bridge the gap between entrepreneurs and European institutions. The latter do not sufficiently take into account the needs of businesses in their decision-making process, while entrepreneurs are often not sufficiently familiar with how European institutions function and the impact of EU decisions on their activities. The central theme of this seventh edition of the EPE was competitiveness.

Among the 750 participants were 30 Belgian entrepreneurs, brought together by various chambers. During a breakfast session at the Permanent Representation of Belgium, they had already been briefed and fully prepared for the debates and votes in the European Parliament. They proved to be particularly active, intervening several times with questions and comments.



World Chambers Congress



In a tense global context marked by growing mistrust between trading partners, the Victorian Chamber of Commerce organized the 14th World Chambers Congress in Melbourne under the theme “Business, chambers, government – Partners for prosperity.” The Congress is, at each edition, an ideal place to discover new ideas, expand our network, and assert the Belgian presence. Belgian Chambers were well represented. Voka – KvK Mechelen-Kempen was a finalist in the World Chambers Competition thanks to its Vokaverse project in the “Best Out-of-the-Box Project” category, while the Federation’s expertise in certificates of origin was confirmed by our election to the presidency of the ICC World Chambers Federation International Certificate of Origin Council for a three-year term.



14WCC

Customs contact days



Belgian customs authorities have a network of five customs attachés abroad. These attachés not only maintain close contacts with the customs administrations of their host countries and participate in projects aimed at securing and facilitating trade, but they also support Belgian companies that have questions regarding customs regulations, import procedures, and more.

To enable companies to get more easily in touch with these customs attachés, we organize networking opportunities jointly with local Chambers. In this regard, learning networks or business clubs of customs experts set up by certain Chambers provide a particularly suitable channel.

Chambers Export Day



Thanks to their practical field knowledge and wide range of services, Belgian Chambers abroad are a valuable addition to the networks of FIT, AWEX and hub.brussels, and companies readily make use of them. A new online edition of the Chambers Export Day once again generated strong interest. The number of participants and meetings organized was lower than in previous years, but the feedback received was very positive: the level of participants was higher and the quality of the meetings better.

Chambers and students: entrepreneurship in the classroom



During an interactive evening, students in international business and legal practice at Karel de Grote University of Applied Sciences in Antwerp discovered what Chambers of Commerce can offer them: today during their studies and tomorrow as future entrepreneurs or employees of an international company. Together with Voka – KvK Antwerpen-Waasland, Eurochambres, ICC Belgium and seven Belgian Chambers abroad, we presented the various services and activities of the Chambers. Sustainability played a central role, as for students, doing business without taking into account the impact on the environment, people, and society has become unthinkable.





Collaboration with CIFAL Flanders



For Belgian Chambers of Commerce, CIFAL Flanders, the United Nations-affiliated center

of expertise for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is an essential partner in putting our sustainability commitment into practice. About ten years ago, a methodology was developed together with CIFAL to enable companies to draw up concrete action plans around the SDGs. Companies are supported by the Flemish Chambers through the VCDO (Voka charter duurzaam ondernemen) and the SDG program by the Walloon Chambers. If they maintain their efforts over several years and achieve certain objectives, they receive the SDG Pioneer, SDG Champion, and SDG Ambassador certificates awarded by UNITAR.

After all these years, these programs have lost none of their importance. In 2025, 85 companies obtained a UNITAR certificate, including 57 new SDG Pioneers, 23 SDG Champions, and 5 SDG Ambassadors. The Federation itself obtained the SDG Pioneer certificate in 2024 and actively participates in CIFAL's Action Learning Network. Each year, we also organize, in collaboration with CIFAL, specific training sessions for sustainability coordinators of local Chambers, enabling them to deepen their knowledge and better support companies.

In 2025, we renewed our partnership with CIFAL Flanders for a new three-year period.



Export formalities

Certificates of origin

The Belgian Chambers of Commerce issue non-preferential certificates of origin on behalf of, and under the supervision of, the FPS Economy. These certificates can be requested by foreign customs authorities or stipulated in documentary credit arrangements. Rules of origin determine the 'nationality' of a product. The country where the product was wholly obtained or underwent its last substantial processing or working determines its origin.

100%



of COs were issued online via the DigiChambers application



349.318

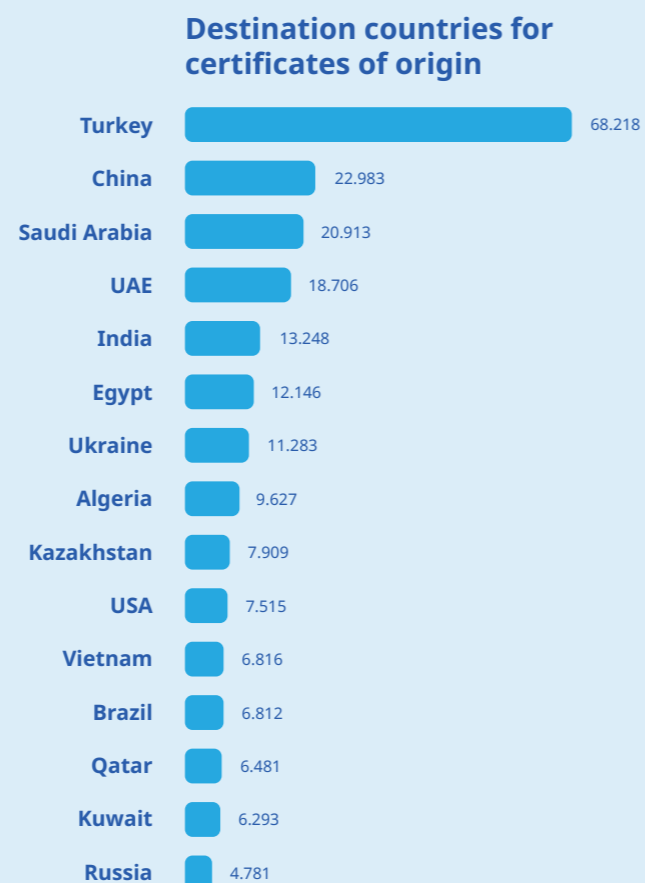


certificates of origin issued by the 13 Belgian Chambers of Commerce, a decrease of 3,9% compared to 2024.

Destination countries



The figures for 2025 confirm the downward trend observed since 2022. Measured over the past five years, the largest declines are seen for Russia, China and Qatar. The strongest increases are recorded for Algeria and Kazakhstan. When interpreting these figures, caution is required. The number of certificates of origin issued for a given country does not necessarily correspond to an increase or decrease in trade with that country. Other factors, such as the impact of trade policy measures or changes in customs regulations, also play a role, and in some cases an even more significant one. However, overall, we can state that the evolution of certificates of origin provides a good reflection of the performance of exporting Belgium.

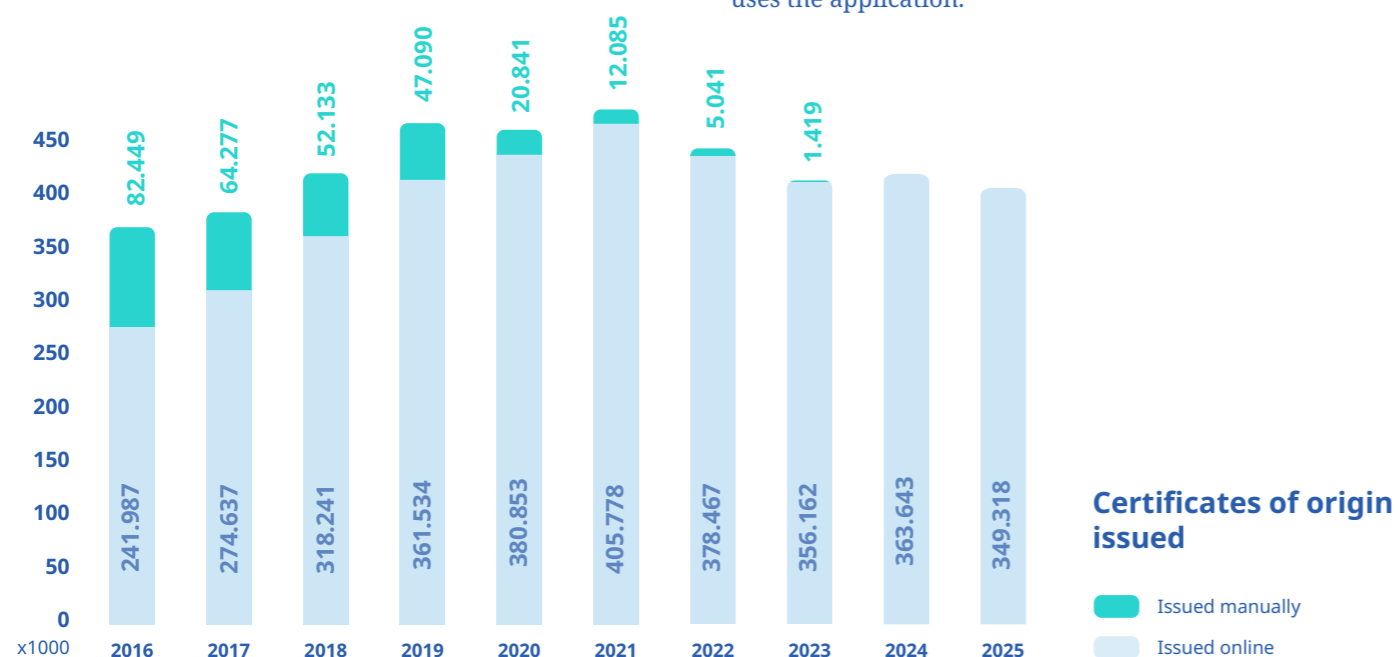


100 % digitisation



With DigiChambers, Belgian chambers have access to a high-performance online application for requesting and issuing non-preferential certificates of origin. The Federation manages DigiChambers and continuously invests in

improving the user-friendliness of the application, both for businesses and for the chambers. The use of the application is not mandatory, but since 2024, all certificates of origin have effectively been issued via DigiChambers. The Chamber of Commerce of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg also uses the application.



Partnership with the FPS Economy



Under the title “Strengthening the competitiveness of Belgian companies in the global economy: creating the conditions for a competitive, sustainable and balanced functioning of the market for goods and services in Belgium”, the Federation and the FPS Economy have been collaborating for 25 years in the interest of the international competitiveness of Belgian companies.

A key element of this cooperation is the continuous search for ways to facilitate the process of requesting and issuing certificates of origin for businesses. As a result, 179 companies benefit from administrative simplification, 167 of which through the submission of a file. For the FPS Economy, the chambers of commerce are also an important channel for informing companies about Belgian trade policy and for staying informed about trade barriers encountered by businesses. This is done in particular through consultation meetings with sector federations and information sessions organized by the chambers of commerce.



The role of the chambers

Determining origin may seem simple, but in a globalized world where production chains are spread across different countries, it is not always easy to determine the economic origin of a good. This is why not all chamber staff are authorized to issue certificates

of origin. A staff member receives an issuance mandate from the FPS Economy after completing training and passing an exam. This mandate is valid for five years. In addition, the Federation regularly organizes workshops and information sessions to keep chamber staff up to date with new developments. Finally, all chambers are audited annually by the FPS Economy and the

Federation to ensure that they issue certificates of origin in accordance with legal provisions. Through these trainings and audits, we aim to guarantee that certificates are issued in a consistent manner across all chambers.

ATA Carnets



The ATA Carnet system was created to simplify

temporary imports at the international level. Carnets allow for flexible and fast temporary importation in the 79 member countries of the ATA system, without the payment of duties and taxes. Travelers without an ATA Carnet are required to go through the customs procedures specific to each country concerned.

An ATA Carnet is valid for a maximum of one year and can be used for multiple trips. Carnets can be used by companies traveling with professional equipment as part of a project abroad, by companies wishing to present commercial samples or prototypes to their clients, or by exporters participating in a fair, trade show, or exhibition.

2.538

Carnets delivered by the 13 Belgian Chambers of Commerce and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg(+8% compared to 2024).

€ 185 million

Value of goods covered by issued ATA Carnets (+16% compared to 2024).

€ 754.350

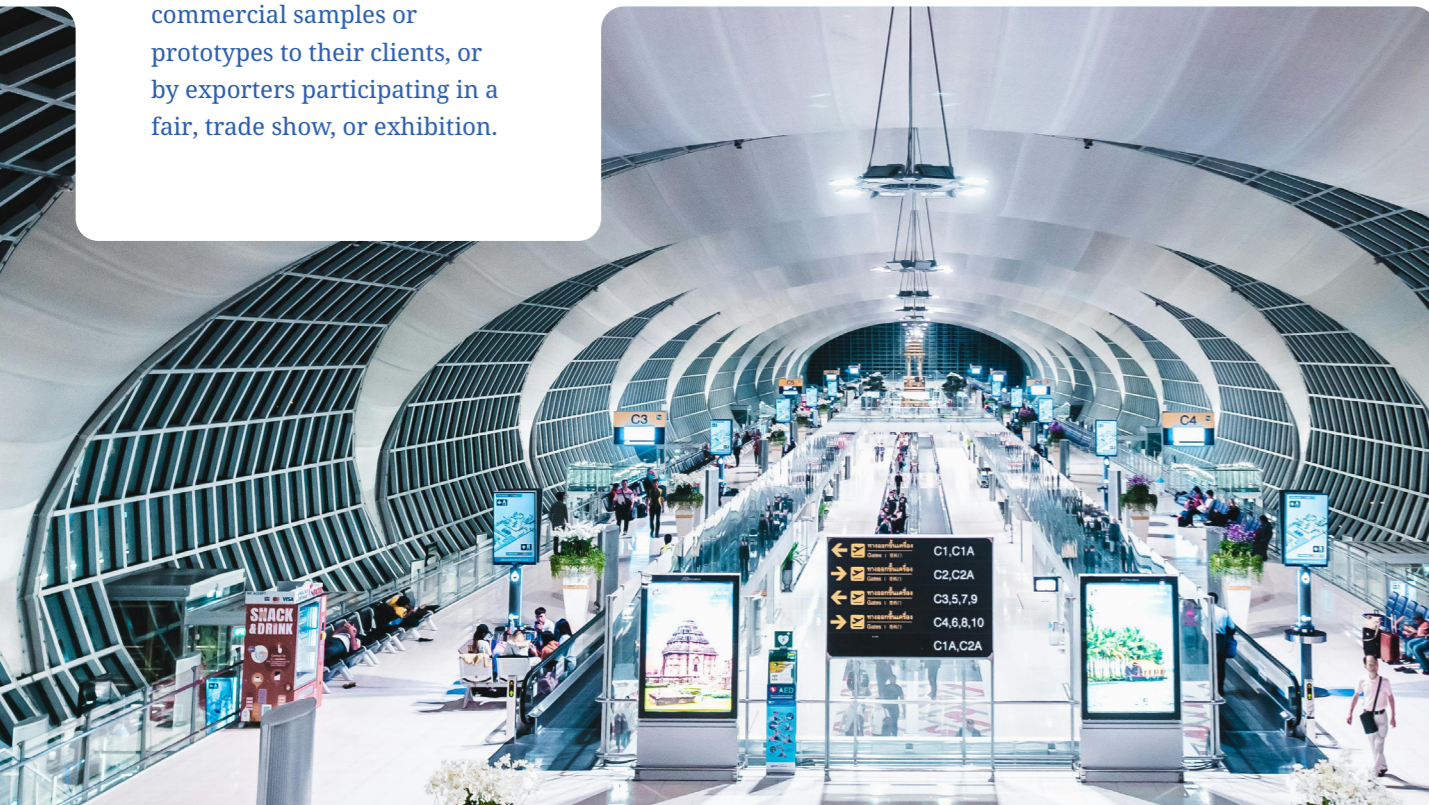
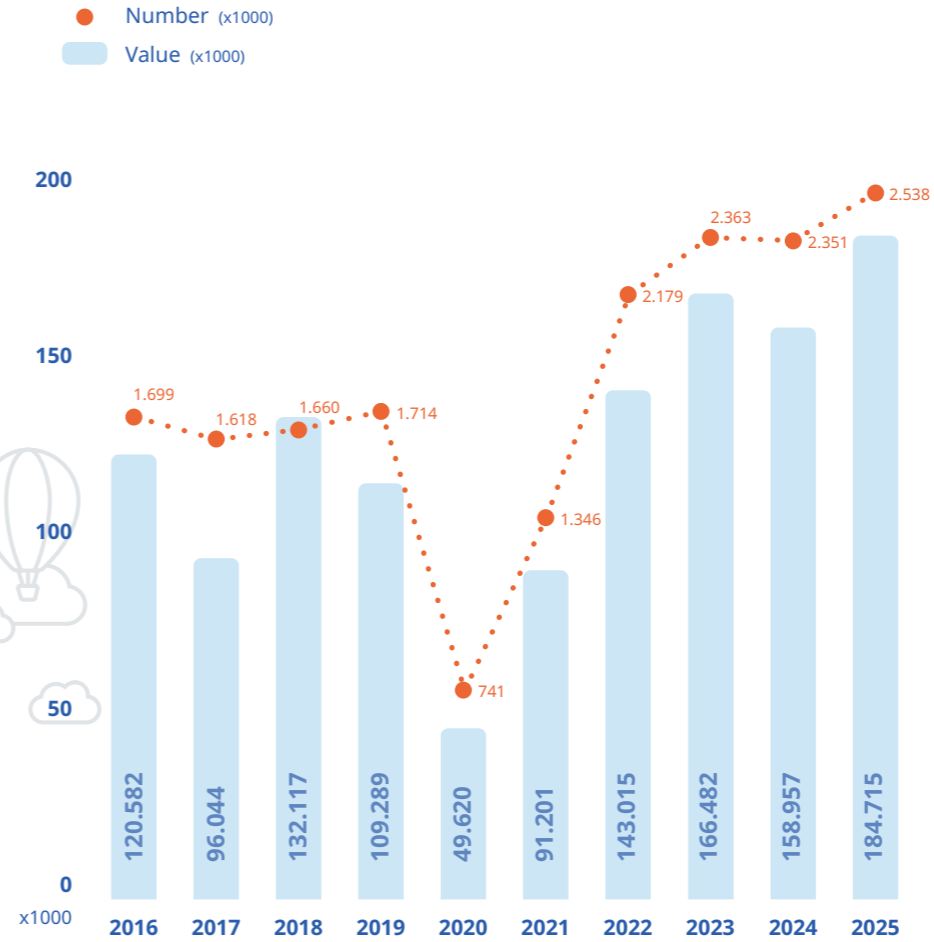
Import duties, VAT and fines paid by the Federation on ATA Carnets.

1.134

Disputes on ATA Carnets handled by the Federation (dont 939 nouveaux litiges).



Number of ATA Carnets issued



Destination countries



After a brief interruption in 2024, the increase in the issuance of ATA carnets continued in 2025. More than half of all carnets are requested for multiple destinations, or even for “all destinations” within the ATA chain. Among the carnets requested for a specific country, the United Kingdom accounts for 17%, followed by Switzerland with 12%. Morocco and the United States follow at a considerable distance.



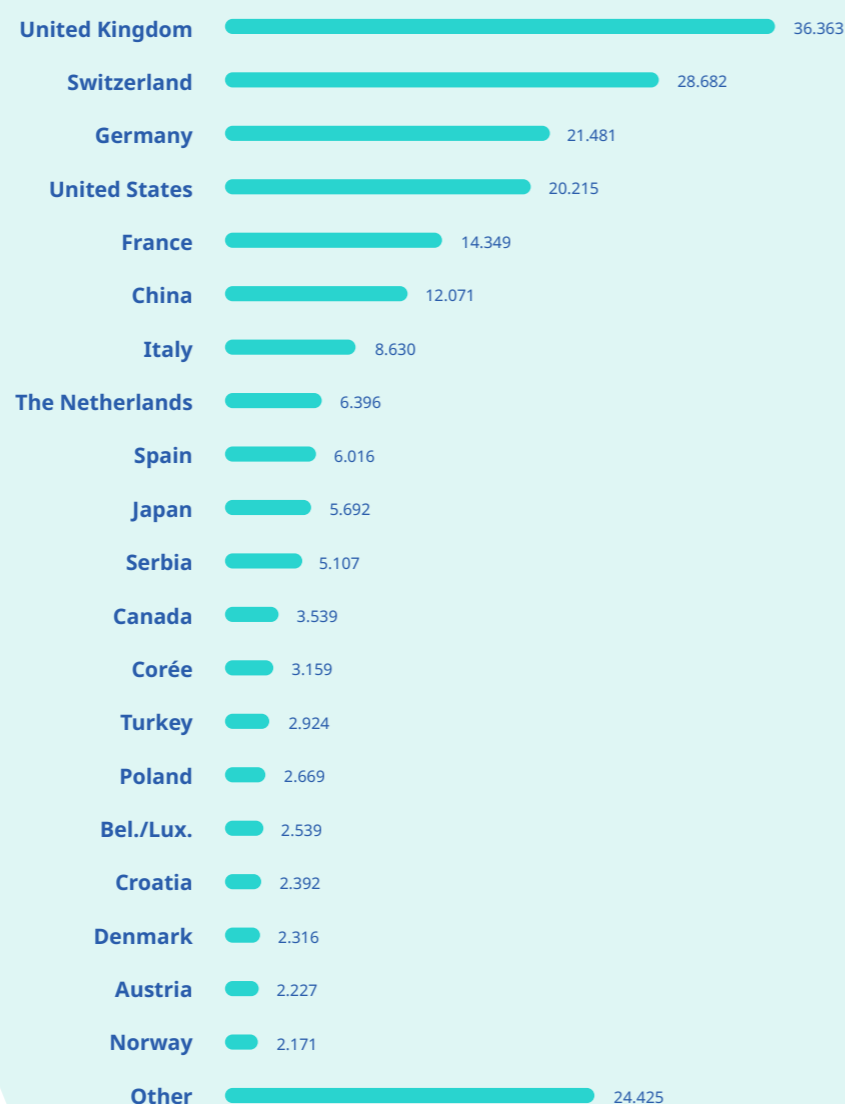
ATA Carnets around the world



At the global level, 213 399 carnets were issued in 2025, representing an increase of 4% compared to 2024. With an 8% increase, Belgium recorded a performance above the average. Within the European Union, only Denmark experienced a stronger growth. Thanks to this solid result, Belgium moves up one place in the global ranking, reaching 16th position.

Even over a longer period, Belgium shows excellent results. Compared to the pre-Covid year 2019, the number of carnets issued in Belgium was 48% higher in 2025. Only the United Kingdom and the Netherlands show better results. At the global level, growth over this period amounts to 12%.

Total number of ATA Carnets issued worldwide



Board of directors

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René Branders*

General Manager

Wouter Van Gulck*

Vice Presidents

Johann Leten, Gedelegeerd bestuurder Voka - KvK Limburg*
Bernard Dewit, Chairman Belgian-Chinese Chamber of Commerce

Administrators

BELGIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

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Fabien Bruyneel, Director AKT Projects
Kris Claes, Gedelegeerd bestuurder Voka - KvK Vlaams-Brabant
Francis De Molder, COO Beci Brussels Chamber of Commerce
Thierry Geerts, CEO Beci Brussels Chamber of Commerce
Christophe Hay, Directeur général AKT - CCI Luxembourg belge
Annick Hernot, Président Beci Brussels Chamber of Commerce
Volker Klinges, Directeur AVED-IHK Ostbelgien*
Tom Laveren, Gedelegeerd bestuurder Voka - KvK Mechelen-Kempen*
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Bert Mons, Gedelegeerd bestuurder Voka - KvK West-Vlaanderen
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Christophe Naa, Administrateur délégué AKT - CCI Liège-Verviers-Namur
Céline Squelart, Directrice AKT - CCI Brabant wallon
Nadia Werkers, Administratief directeur Voka - KvK Antwerpen-Waasland

* Member of the executive committee

BELGIAN-LUXEMBOURG CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE ABROAD

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Hans Broucke, Chairperson Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Türkiye
Ann Bruggeman, General manager Chilean Belgian Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce
Patricia De Backer, Directrice Chambre de Commerce Franco-Belgo-Luxembourgeoise
Alexis Halleman, Former President Deutsch-Belgisch-Luxemburgische Handelskammer
Alain Schodts, Executive director Belgian Luxembourg Romanian Moldovan Chamber of Commerce
Chantal Sohier, Board member Portuguese-Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce
Claudine Vandenabeele, General manager Belgian Chamber of Commerce in South Africa
Michel Vanhoonacker, Chairman Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain

Federation Team



René Branders
President



Wouter Van Gulck
General Manager



Christophe Coulie
Legal affairs manager



Lioubove Ankoudinova
Export formalities advisor



Cindy Peeters
Export formalities advisor



Veerle Geraerts
Project & international affairs manager



Theodora Mbiye Mulomba
Communications officer



Lieve Peeters
BLCCA Co-ordinator



Accredited Belgian Chambers of Commerce

- Beci Brussels Chamber of Commerce
- AKT - Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Brabant wallon
- AKT - Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Hainaut
- AKT - Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Liège-Verviers-Namur
- AKT - Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Luxembourg belge
- AKT - Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de la Wallonie picarde
- AVED - Industrie- und Handelskammer Ostbelgien
- Voka - Kamer van Koophandel Antwerpen-Waasland
- Voka - Kamer van Koophandel Limburg
- Voka - Kamer van Koophandel Mechelen-Kempen
- Voka - Kamer van Koophandel Oost-Vlaanderen
- Voka - Kamer van Koophandel Vlaams-Brabant
- Voka - Kamer van Koophandel West-Vlaanderen

Accredited Belgian-Luxembourg Chambers of Commerce abroad

- Arab-Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce
- Belgian-Azerbaijani Chamber of Commerce
- Belgian Business Chamber in Poland
- Belgian Canadian Business Chamber
- Belgian Chamber of Commerce in South Africa
- Belgian-Chilean Chamber of Commerce
- Belgian-Chinese Chamber of Commerce (BCECC)
- Belgian-Luxembourg-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce in Brazil (Belgalux)
- Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce for the Western US (Belwest)
- Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Russia (CCBLR)
- Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Barcelona
- Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain
- Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Ireland
- Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Japan
- Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Türkiye
- Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam
- Belgian-Luxembourg-Polish Chamber of Commerce
- Belgian Luxembourg Romanian Moldovan Chamber of Commerce
- Belgian Vietnamese Alliance
- Belgo-Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Benelux Chamber of Commerce in China (Bencham Shanghai)
- BeNeLux Chamber of Commerce in Kazakhstan
- Chamber of Commerce Canada-Belgium-Luxembourg
- Chamber of Commerce Europe-Central America
- Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture Belgium-Luxembourg-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific
- Chamber of Commerce of Belgium and Luxembourg in Spain
- Chambre de Commerce Belge et Luxembourgeoise de Côte d'Ivoire
- Chambre de Commerce Belgo-Congolaise-Luxembourgeoise
- Chambre de Commerce Franco-Belgo-Luxembourgeoise
- Chambre de Commerce Belgo-Luxembourgeoise au Maroc
- Chilean-Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce (Belgolux)
- Deutsch-Belgisch-Luxemburgische Handelskammer (debelux)
- Nederlandse Kamer van Koophandel voor België en Luxemburg / Belgisch-Luxemburgse Kamer van Koophandel in Nederland
- Pakistan-Belgium-Luxembourg Business Forum
- Portuguese-Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce

Associated Belgian-Luxembourg Chambers of Commerce abroad

- Belgian American Chamber of the South (BACoS)
- Belgian-Armenian Chamber of Commerce
- Belgian-Macedonian Business Club
- Belgo Peru Chamber of Commerce
- Benelux Indonesia Association



Belgian Chambers

Federation of Belgian Chambers of Commerce

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