



## Belgium



Belgium, despite its small size, holds a lot of sway in the European Union. As one of the founding countries, it has the advantage of a long history and much experience influencing EU policy. It is even more powerful when it works, as it usually does, with the other two “Benelux” countries of Luxembourg and the Netherlands (also founding members). Though it shouldn’t *really* make a difference, the fact that Brussels is the capital of the EU doesn’t hurt any. Nevertheless, Belgium is a small country. Fortunately for you, Belgium is densely populated which gives you more sway than other countries like Finland.

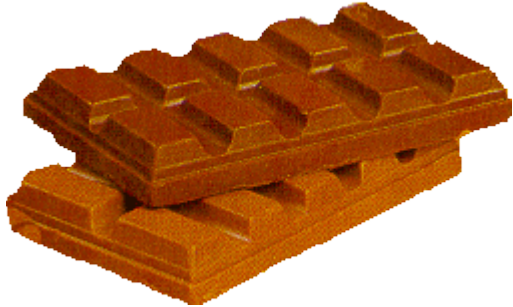
Belgium is a chocoholic country: it holds 1<sup>st</sup> place in the EU for both production and consumption per capita! It is also quite proud of its traditional “pure” rich chocolate. The official website of Belgium says it best:

Chocolate is practically part of Belgium's national identity. Most Belgians, for example, feel a real emotional bond with “Côte d’or” and its elephant, the name of the shop set up in Brussels by Charles Neuhaus in 1883 and which, for many years, has embodied the African reveries of whole generations sailing, in their dreams, to the Gold Coast (Côte d’Or, present-day Ghana). But those big firms such as Callebaut, who made Belgian chocolate so famous, have, since then, been incorporated into trans-national companies with their global recipes. However, many chocolate-makers (such as Galler, Guylian, Godiva, Leonidas, Marcolini, Corné and Jacques) have managed to maintain the exceptional standard of quality of Belgian chocolate and to let the whole world benefit from it. (Source: <http://www.belgium.be> )

Your role as minister for Belgium is to do your best to protect your country’s chocolate industry. As a small country, this major industry is extremely important. The law you will be creating in the simulation will allow less-expensive versions of “chocolate”, such as Cadbury’s, to be sold throughout the EU. Will European citizens quit buying the more expensive Belgian chocolate? Nobody knows for sure, but the Belgian chocolate industry doesn’t want to take any chances. The future of your job may well depend on how well you defend their interests, as well as the country’s pride. Thus you should do whatever you can to make it difficult for your adversaries in the simulation, once you discover who they are. However, you’ll also need at least one other friendly country with which to pool your votes if you are going to have any real affect on how the final version of the new law turns out.

The main question is whether to allow Denmark, Ireland, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom to sell their style of chocolate throughout the EU.

The European Union is all about free trade and open markets. For that reason the Commission - the executive branch – has proposed that a new law (called a “directive”) be made that would allow free trade of chocolate. Now it is up to you all to work out the details of the law. Under what conditions should the “less than pure” chocolate, like Cadbury’s, be sold?



The necessary ingredients in traditional *pure* chocolate bars:

- Cocoa powder (also sometimes called Cacao Liquor, Cacao Mass, Cacao Paste)
- Cocoa butter: More Cocoa Butter means a smoother, creamier, less bitter bar. Less Cocoa Butter means a sharper, dryer, more powdery, more flavorful bar.
- Sugar

The following are the major questions you will need to settle at the simulation. Before then, you’ll need to try to figure out how different countries feel about these issues. Try to find other countries that agree with you so you can work together. Also try to convince those who disagree to see your point of view. Of the voting bodies, Belgium’s vote has a weight of 2.78%. Use the space below each question to take notes as you learn more about where the other countries stand.

1. Consumers will want to know what kind of chocolate they are buying. Traditional Belgian-style chocolate should be called chocolate. But what should the Cadbury’s style of chocolate be called?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Can anything containing just a bit of cocoa powder be called chocolate? In the U.S., chocolate must have at least 10% cocoa powder. Cadbury’s has less than 10%, while much of the chocolate you sampled had 70%. What percentage of cocoa should the new law require?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Traditional chocolate is made with cocoa butter. Chocolate made in Denmark, Ireland, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom has vegetable fat added in place of the cocoa butter. Should there be a limit to how much vegetable fat is used? What percent of the total fat can be vegetable?

4. If chocolate contains vegetable fat it should say so on the label. But what should the label say? Is it enough just to list vegetable fat in the ingredients? Or should there be some sort of bold warning on the front?