BIOECONOMY : context & opportunities

Tourcoing, 8 October 2026



Current economic climate

- Energy crisis
- Blocked supply chains
- Global market instability
- European regulations
- Decarbonization targets
- Climate disasters
- Etc.

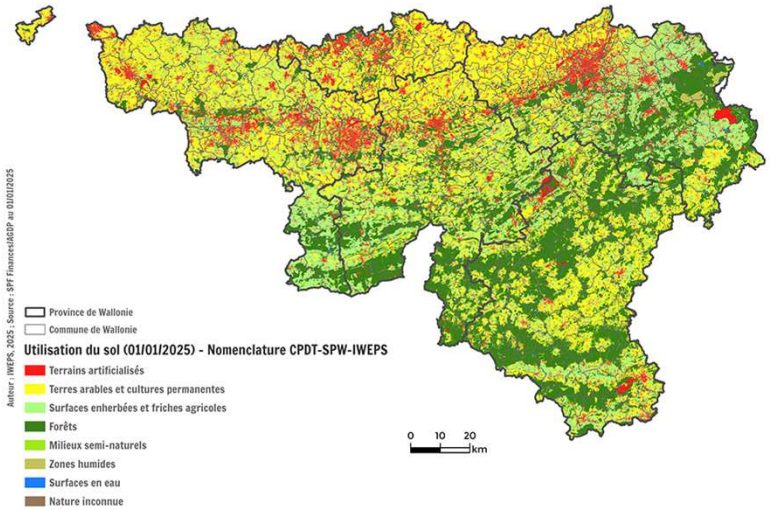
Companies must adapt to an insecure environment and anticipate the future.





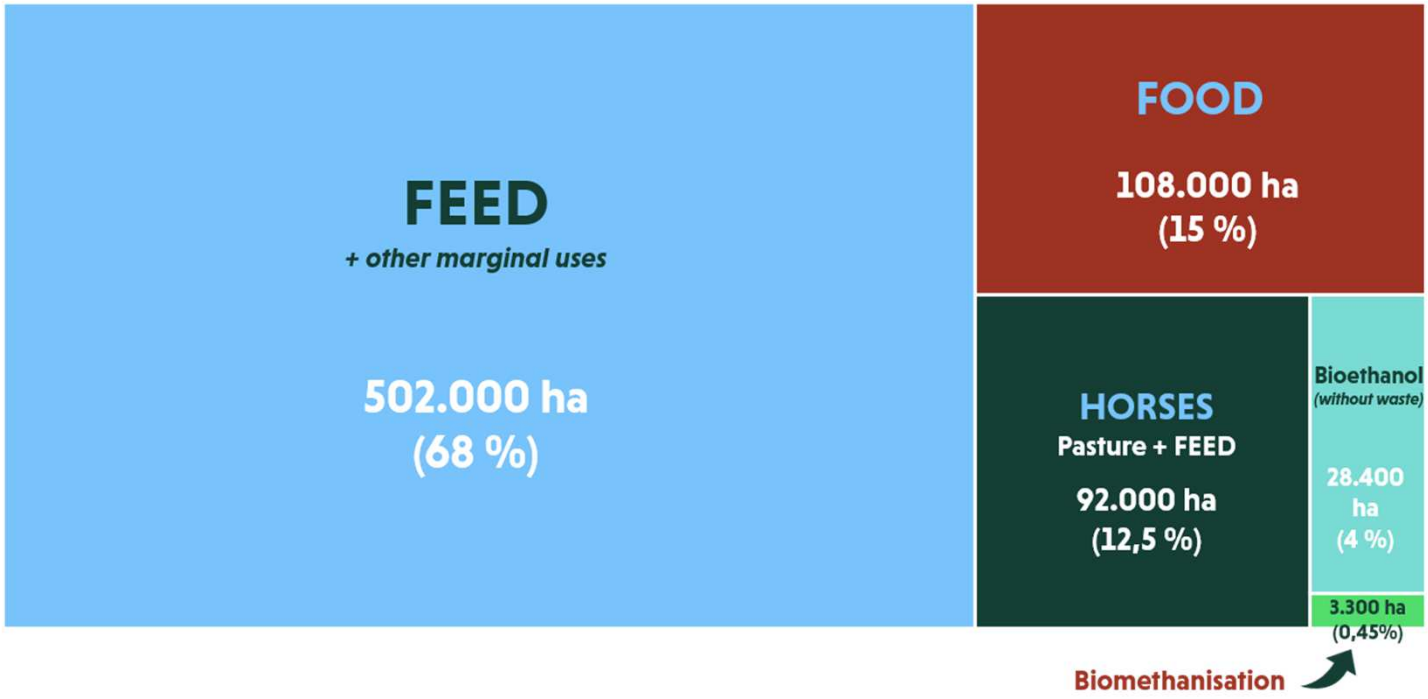
Biomass in the FWVL region

	Wallonia	Flanders	H-de-Fr
Total area (km^2)	16.900	13.520	57.400
Agricultural land	43 %	45 %	67 %
Forest	29 %	8 %	16 %



Biomass production and material flow in Wallonia

- Productive forest areas : **468.000 ha** (PanoraBois, 2024)
  - 56 % broadleaved and 42 % coniferous trees
  - Main uses: pulp, construction, furniture, materials, and energy
- Utilized agricultural areas : **734.000 ha**



Bioeconomy : When needs meet local supply…



What is bioeconomy ?

“ The bioeconomy includes a wide range of activities that utilise renewable biological resources, from agriculture and forestry to biotechnology and bio-based industries, to produce food, materials, and energy, as well as related services.” (EC Knowledge Centre for Bioeconomy, 2025)

EU Bioeconomy Strategy **timeline**



- Bioeconomy **contributes to the European Green Deal** which enables sustainable and just transition pathways
- **Mainstreaming and up-scaling** of sustainable bioeconomy ever more important in view of the current food and energy price crisis

"On the opportunities of the bioeconomy in the light of current challenges with special emphasis on rural areas"
(AgriFish Council 25/4/2023)

- EMPHASISES the **central role of a sustainable and circular bioeconomy** for climate, environment + achieving the objectives of the EGD and its strategies.
- Calls on the EC to **better integrate bioeconomy in all EU policies**
- Calls on the EC to present before the next strategic period […] an **updated EU Bioeconomy Strategy and Action Plan**

Building the future with nature: Boosting Biotechnology and Biomanufacturing in the EU

Action 8. The Commission **will review the EU Bioeconomy Strategy by end 2025**. The review will take into account

- the current societal, demographic and environmental challenges,
- reinforcing the bioeconomy's industrial dimension
- its links to biotechnology and biomanufacturing to contribute to a stronger EU economy

EU bioeconomics

European bioeconomy in 2023 :

- 863 billion euros of added value
- 17 million direct jobs

Figure 1 – Value added from biomass producing and converting sectors (2023)



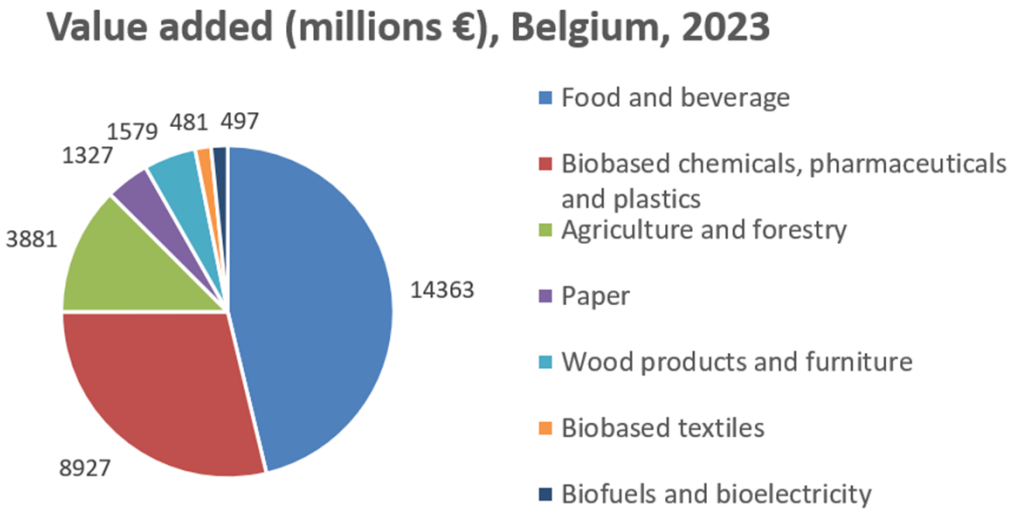
Source : JRC, 2025

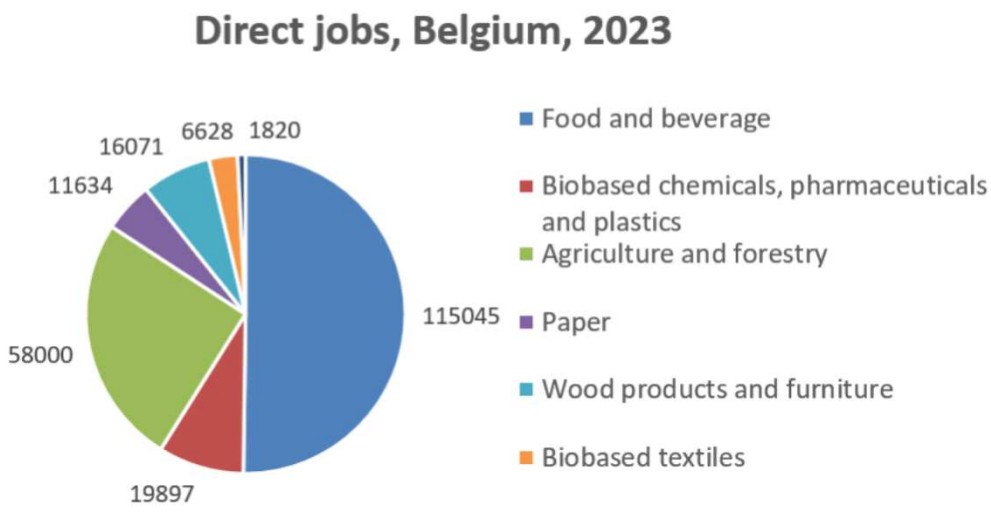
Belgium (EU Bioeconomy Knowledge Center)



Belgian bioeconomy in 2023 :

- 31 billion euros of added value
- 230.000 direct jobs



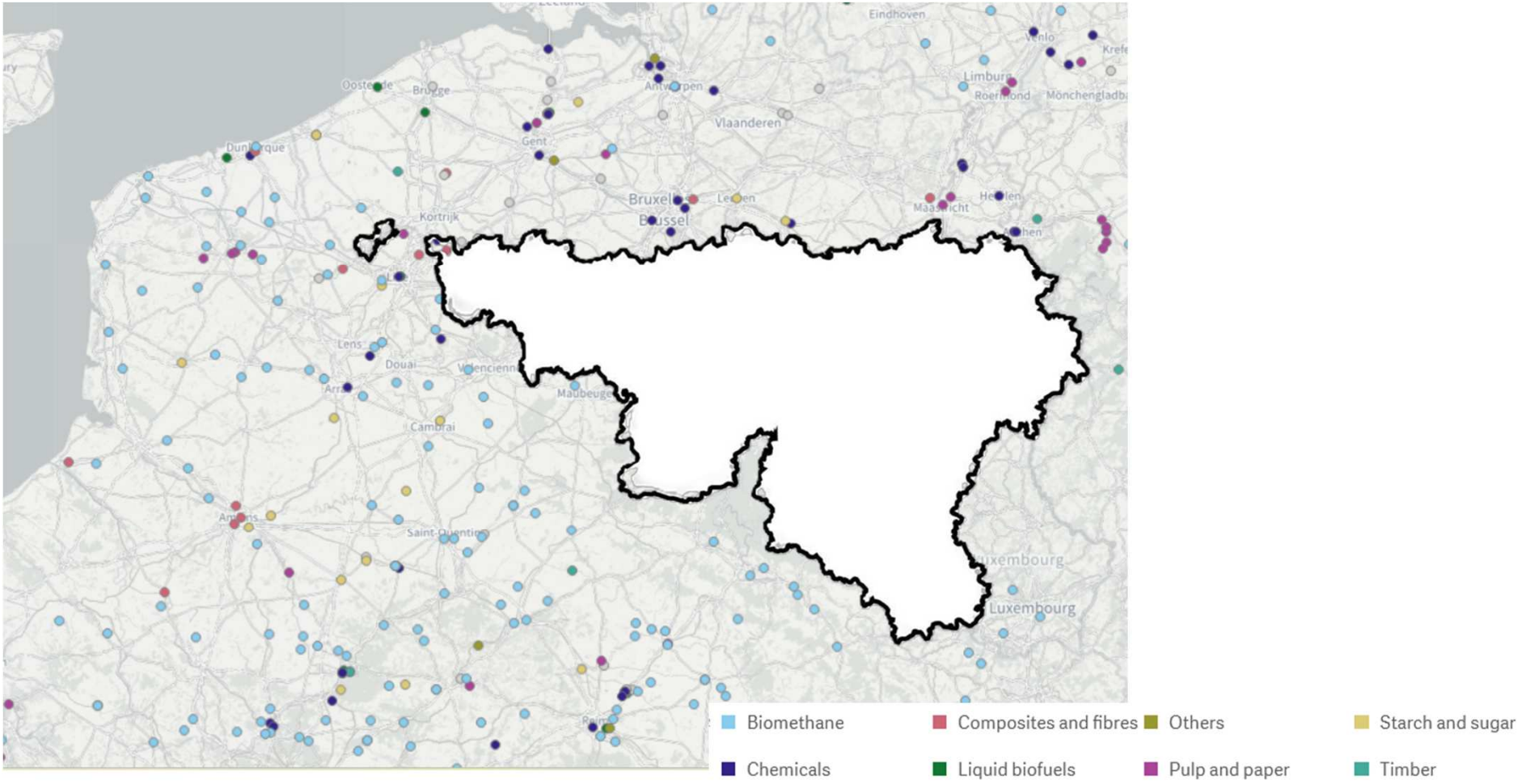


Bioeconomy pilot plants (Pilots4U, 2026)

Pilot plant = Multipurpose open access pilot and demo-infrastructures for the European bio-economy (Pilots4U)

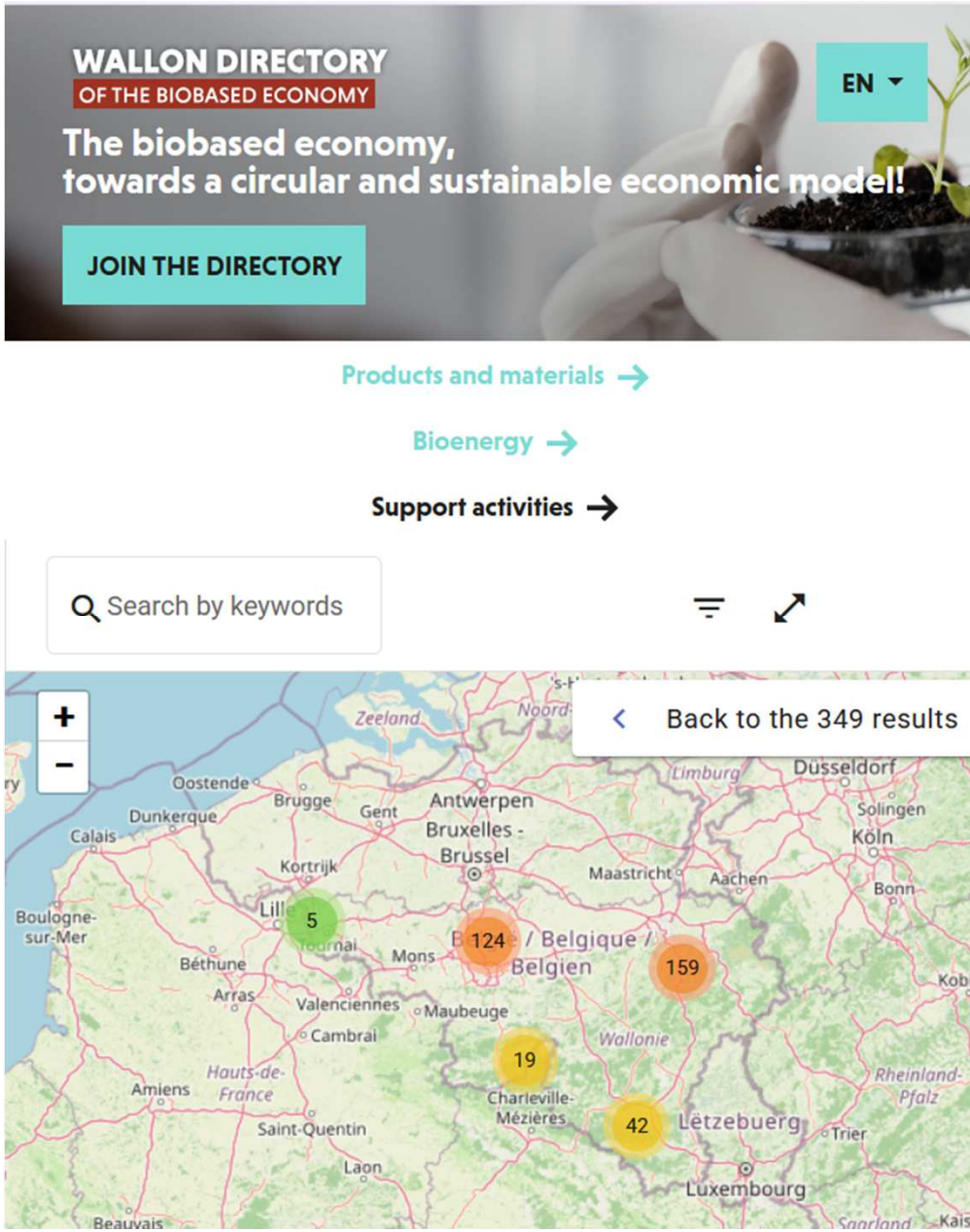


Bio-based industries and biorefineries (Knowledge4Policy)



Walloon Bioeconomy Directory

- Public directory : biobasedwallonia.be
- Collaborative inventory : Valbiom, Wallonie Entreprendre, AWEX, Filière Bois Wallonie, GreenWin, Cluster écoconstruction
- Voluntary registration : Partially or completely biobased
- Biomass processing and valorization companies and services (excluding producers).
- 473 registered organizations :
  - 350 « Products and Materials » companies
  - 53 « Bioenergies » companies
  - 70 « Support activities and services » organizations



valbiom

The **reference centre for bioeconomy in Wallonia,** serving public and private stakeholders since 2002,

FOCUSING ON LOCAL AND RENEWABLE RESOURCES

Bioeconomy encompasses all sectors that use renewable plant and animal resources to produce food, materials and bioenergy.

Valbiom focuses **on the non-food use of this biomass** : wood, wool, hemp, agricultural waste, etc.

In short: focusing on local and renewable resources **for a more resilient economy that respects our environment**.

VALBIOM'S MISSION

To develop, promote and sustain new economic activities in Wallonia, focused on the non-food use of biomass.



valbiom

is dedicated to a mission of **general interest**, thereby guaranteeing its **objectivity**

ESSENTIAL INTERMEDIARY

A **hub for encounters** between…

- Field actors and decision-makers
- Walloon and European actors
- Research and industry
- Academic sector and citizens
- …

KEYS NUMBERS

- **24** years of experience
- **15** employees, including 10 engineers
- **+150** members and partners
- **over 100** concrete projects supported

CORE COMPETENCES



Field experience



Scientific expertise



Implementation



Development and consolidation of sectors



Multi-stakeholder and cross-sector synergies



Dissemination and communication

Fields and areas of expertise

BIOBASED AND RAW MATERIALS

- Hemp (seed, textile…)
- Wool
- Grass
- Tree bark
- Silphium
- Energy from wood and agrofuels
- Agricultural and forestry by-products
- Agro-industrial waste
- …

VALORISATIONS AND PROCESSES

- Textiles (fashion and technical)
- Building and insulation materials
- Green chemistry, extraction
- Biocontrol products
- Biocomposites
- Biogas production
- Biomass heat
- …

Our European projects

CBE-JU

- **BioCordelia :** developing bio-based controlled-release fertilisers using lignocellulosic materials derived from underutilised sidestreams of European agricultural and forest industries.

INTERREG

- **C5** : turning carbon-rich biomass into fibres, insulation materials and biochar.
- **Flora** : extracting terpenes for biocontrol and bio-based plastic applications from local biomass (hemp, nettle and pin).
- **Valorant :** valorizing horticultural residues into high-value compounds, such as polyphenols, and implementing cascade valorisation pathways.
- **ExtraBark** : using extracts from different tree bark species in the plant protection and wood protection product sectors.
- **Hemp4Circularity :** implementing long hemp fibre as an innovative, local and bio-based ecological fibre in the textile value chain in North-West Europe, from growers to weavers/knitters, from field to fashion.
- **AgriWasteValue:** valorizing vineyard, apple and pear tree prunings for applications in various sectors: chemicals, energy, fertilisers, cosmetics and nutraceuticals.
- **Composens:** studying the development of high-performance polymer-wood or plant fibre composite materials with low environmental impact to produce lightweight and recyclable biocomposites.
- **Valbran**: studying the recovery of wheat bran into surface-active molecules.
- **New-C-Land**: studying the recovery of biomass on marginal sites.

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