



TRASIS

L'Entreprise de l'Année®



WAB

WAB MAGAZINE 49 | SPRING 2026

WALLONIA AND BRUSSELS

BIG PICTURE | Jean-Luc Morelle & Gauthier Philippart (Trasis)

FOCUS | Investing in Wallonia: strategic choices, sustainable successes

INSPIRE | Valère Burnon: the piano creates connections



L'Entreprise de l'Année® 2025

editorial



WALLONIA CARES. DEEPLY.



© Christophe Ketels

Everyone we speak to, wherever we meet them, describes our approach to business and work the same way: “They take things seriously, they really care”. This approach is what ensures the quality of our finished goods and ongoing services, while also boosting confidence, investing in the future, and inspiring people.

Boosting confidence. For Trasis, it means highlighting the combined strengths of an outstanding ecosystem for life sciences, engineering and energy supply, and an industrial infrastructure that can cater to its high-skill industrial activities. For Skechers, it means undertaking to meet the high standards set by its parent company in terms of labour, proximity and loyalty. Not to mention the invaluable logistics capacity provided by the airport!

Investing in the future. Specialised training for the upcoming generation and adaptations to changing standards at the global level both exemplify this approach as well. The biggest companies demonstrate this in our Dossier Invest: infrastructure, talent, stability and industrial vision are all converging to make Wallonia a strategic partner right at the heart of Europe. Wallonia is not only attracting investment; it is also building sustainable foundations.

Inspiring people. Pianist Valère Burnon, our favourite, charmed audiences at the 2025 Queen Elisabeth Competition, and is an inspiration to everyone!

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Discover the spring issue through
an interactive experience




Wallonia.be

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FABRICE BRION, CEO I-CARE, MANAGER OF THE YEAR 2025



“It’s crazy! It’s had a massive impact on our visibility! I added up the double wins, of course. There are eight of us who are both Company of the Year and Manager of the Year at the same time. It’s proof to me that without my team, the I-cariens, I am nothing, and that with them, I can do anything. I think my vision, or my strength, was to put my faith in digitalisation, well ahead of everyone else. Whether it’s a risk or a gamble, you have to go for it, and deliver!”

To be continued in our future issues



SARAH CHAÂRI CROWNED WORLD CHAMPION

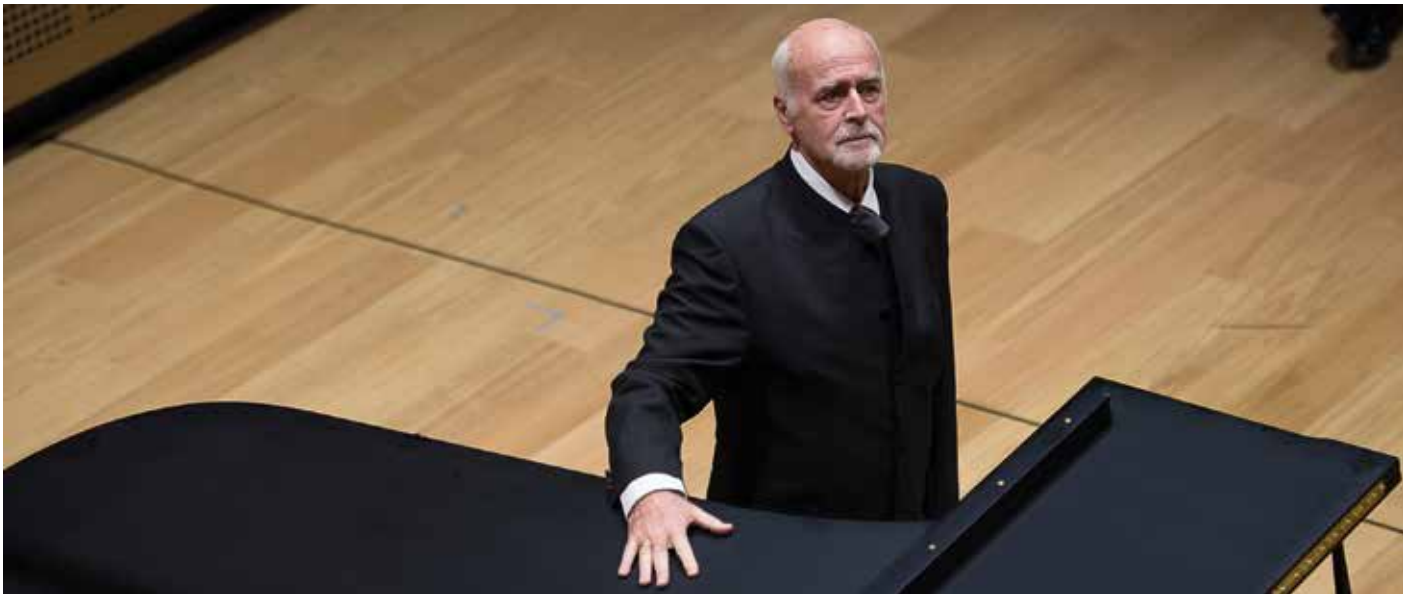
In October 2025, this young woman from Charleroi became World Taekwondo Champion (-73 kg) in Wuxi, China. Ranked number one in the world, she triumphed in the final against Kimi Laurène Ossin of Côte d’Ivoire. This second world title has confirmed Wallonia’s sporting excellence on the international stage.



© Nomi Baumgartl

JOSÉ VAN DAM, A GREAT BELGIAN VOICE FALLS SILENT

The bass-baritone passed away at the age of 85, as announced by the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel on 19 February 2026. Born in Ixelles, he enjoyed an international career on the world's greatest stages, from La Scala in Milan to the Metropolitan Opera, making him one of the greatest ambassadors of Belgian operatic art.



WALLONIA'S STRONG PRESENCE AT MIPIM

The real-estate trade show MIPIM (*Marché International des Professionnels de l'Immobilier*) took place from 10 to 13 March 2026 in Cannes. At the 'Real Belgium' pavilion, Wallonia Export and Investment Agency invited 14 co-exhibitors and presented 58 real estate projects, which highlighted sustainable and multimodal cities with the aim of attracting international investors and partners.



Trasis

A PARTNERSHIP BUILT ON COMPLEMENTARY SKILLS RESULTS IN A NUCLEAR MEDICINE SUCCESS STORY

Advances in nuclear medicine rely on a delicate balance between science, technology and clinical application. For over 20 years, Trasis has been meeting this challenge by providing concrete solutions for hospitals and radiopharmacies around the world. Behind this journey lies a solid partnership : **Jean-Luc Morelle and Gauthier Philippart.**



They began working together in the early 2000s, when a shared insight brought them together: they both believe that technology can simplify, safeguard and democratise procedures essential to patient care, in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

Their strength lies in their clear synergy. Jean-Luc Morelle embodies the company's technological soul: he visualises, designs and anticipates scientific developments. Gauthier Philippart, on the other hand, foresees user needs, lends structure to development, manages the company and creates the conditions for consistent and effective growth. "Our synergy, reinforced further by our experience and our age difference, has been decisive," says Jean-Luc Morelle. "We never make decisions alone. We challenge each other a lot, but always with the same goal in mind: to grow Trasis without losing sight of what matters."

A RESPONSIVE AND PRAGMATIC APPROACH

When entering the market "the most difficult part was to identify gaps that would address unmet needs. Our products were created based on the actual needs of radiopharmacists. We learnt by actively listening, observing and correcting," says Jean-Luc Morelle. This practical approach also became their signature style: to innovate, for sure, but by starting with the grassroots! "We aimed to understand current needs while anticipating future needs and obstacles, but also by keeping a steady course: turning complex issues into simple, trustworthy and scalable solutions that would prove beneficial for medical teams and, ultimately, for patients", says Gauthier Philippart.



COMPANY OF THE YEAR 2025!

“It is an extraordinary recognition for Trasis! It honours 20 years of perseverance and the day-to-day work of our teams. It is not a culmination of something, but rather a boost of energy for what lies ahead in the future.”

A future that is already starting to take shape: international expansion - including securing a crucial market in China by setting up a joint venture in Beijing - new products and significant investment into Ans, with wide-ranging ambitions: “we want to double our turnover, continue contributing to an effective nuclear medicine sector and expand without losing our identity.”

- **Close to 450 employees around the world (90% of whom are based in the Liege region)**
- **4 sites: Ans (BE), Grenoble (FR), Atlanta (US) and Beijing (CN)**
- **40 professions**
- **1 in 3 radiopharmaceutical synthesisers is made by Trasis**
- **In 2025, 4.5 million patients benefitted from technology developed by Trasis**
- **50 targeted diseases (cancer and neurodegenerative diseases): Trasis products are involved in over 50 clinical indications (diagnostic as well as therapeutic).**





TRASIS

“

is proof that a Walloon company can translate complex science into tangible medical advances that are adopted worldwide.



intoPIX

WALLOON EXCELLENCE WINS BIG IN HOLLYWOOD

When Walloon technology took centre stage of the world's biggest movie productions, it was not a matter of luck. This is the story of intoPix, an academic spin-off from UCLouvain that went on to become the global benchmark for ultra-low latency video compression. intoPix recently won an Emmy in Hollywood for its role in developing the audiovisual standards used during the Olympics.





intoPix is the product of the intuitive vision of CEO Gaël Rouvroy, whose thesis explored a decoder's potential in the world of digital filmmaking. Developed in UCLouvain's labs, Rouvroy's vision proved to be right, to the extent that he defended his thesis on the same day as the official launch of digital cinema in Hollywood - an almost symbolic coincidence.

On the back of its initial success in cinema, the company decided to go even further a few years later, with the goal of developing its own compression algorithm and making it an international standard. This led to the birth of JPEG XS, a codec tailor-made for the most demanding settings: from broadcasting to cinema, from gaming to automobiles.

It took a decade of hard work and an impressive level of team growth for this technology to fundamentally transform the television industry. Today, intoPix has finally been honoured with the golden statue, in recognition of their major contribution to the broadcasting of the Olympic Games: the culmination of a decade of commitment and innovation.

"There is an overwhelming feeling of gratitude towards our entire team, who have invested tremendous energy in making this idea a reality," says Pascal Pellegrin, Senior Research Director.

Already adopted by major industry players like Nikon, the intoPix technology embodies a reality that is often overlooked: it is from Wallonia that expert teams are helping to shape global technological standards.

And what is their advice to young Walloon entrepreneurs? "Focus wholeheartedly on one value, rather than spreading yourself too thin."

Did you know?

The Emmy that intoPix just won is not the one that is given to actors and directors during the televised ceremony, but rather the Engineering, Science and Technology Emmy Award. This Emmy is awarded to companies whose innovations have materially transformed the production, transmission and reception of television. It is a much rarer distinction, which honours not artistic success, but technological innovations whose impact is felt across an entire industry.



Allegro

BUILDING
SCALABLE BIOTECH
MANUFACTURING
FOR EXPORT

Founded in 2021 in Antwerp (Flanders), Allegro relocated its R&D and production to Liège's LégiaPark in 2023. Three years later, following the inauguration of its production unit in January 2026, the move is delivering tangible results.

As Allegro expanded and outgrew its original lab, the opportunities offered by Wallonia influenced the decision to invest here. With the support of the Liège investment fund Noshag, Allegro secured a facility in line with its ambitions. “Infrastructure was very important and matched the company at a specific time,” explains CEO Lucas Decuyper.

Logistics rapidly became a competitive edge. “We ship a lot of products to the US. Being five minutes from Liege Airport and six hours later in the USA is a perfect match!” For a company active in the American market and preparing human clinical trials in 2026, speed and reliability matter.

Double ambition

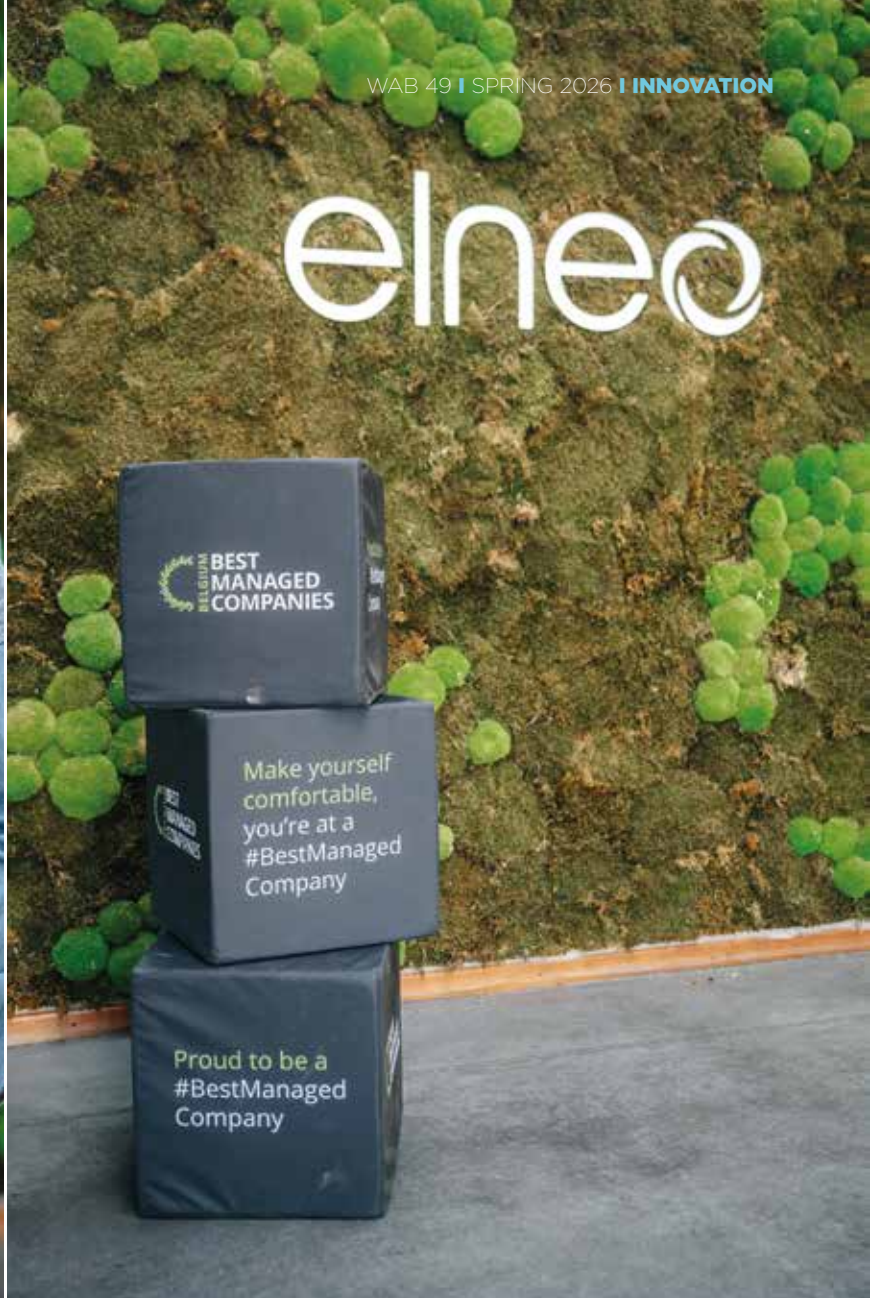
The ecosystem has also proved decisive. “Wallonia boasts very high-level talent and a dynamic life sciences environment, particularly in LégiaPark, an economic centre entirely dedicated to life sciences.” Lucas Decuyper also highlights the strategic partnership with Wallonia Export and Investment Agency to accelerate international positioning. Recruitment has followed, strengthening both R&D and manufacturing capabilities.

Allegro chose to internalise production rather than outsourcing it. “Producing our own product, mastering the full chain, is the best way to create value, as a company and as a regional ecosystem.” Their ambition is clear: “to build scalable and world-class biotech manufacturing in Belgium and project it globally from Liège.”

WHAT ALLEGRO DOES

Allegro develops nanotechnology-based biomedical treatments for chronic degenerative diseases, focusing on osteoarthritis. Its injectable hydrogel, designed to restore joint mechanics, is already available on the US equine healthcare market. First-in-human clinical trials are scheduled for 2026, targeting a global disease-modifying therapy.





Elneo

AN ENGINEERING COMPANY
WITH A COLLECTIVE VISION

For over 50 years, Elneo has been a breath of fresh air in the industry. Based in Awans, Liège and with 5 sites in Belgium, France and Canada, the company employs more than 100 people in three demanding fields: compressors, pneumatics and instruments.



“Together, we are unstoppable!”



For Elneo, innovation does not mean disruption but rather the ability to integrate, optimise and improve the reliability of the critical installations of major clients such as John Cockerill, Walibi or GSK. “We focus on technical expertise and service. Our approach is comprehensive: advice, installation, maintenance and monitoring. That is the added-value we provide to our clients,” says Jonathan Bouhy, CEO and the third generation of the family to run the business. Elneo’s mission is to offer “solutions that are effective and, above all, sustainable.”

INNOVATING ACROSS THE BOARD

In the context of rising geopolitical tensions and reliance on distant supply chains, Bouhy states: “clients are looking for greater proximity, control and security in industrial partnerships.” Our mission is to help each of our clients develop and become autonomous and bring their tools into the world of tomorrow.”

Elneo’s model is equally innovative. With the launch of Elneo Partners in 2024, its employees were able to become shareholders. Around forty have done so already. “It’s my proudest professional achievement. Everyone is involved in Elneo’s vision. It’s a governance system that supports entrepreneurship and enables the launch of new departments based on employee initiatives.”

“TOGETHER, WE ARE UNSTOPPABLE!”

A quote which neatly sums up a Walloon SME which, with its employees and clients, is able to export its expertise, its capacity for integration and a responsible model of entrepreneurship. More proof that European industrial innovation has a home in Wallonia.



Investing in Wallonia

STRATEGIC CHOICES AND SUSTAINABLE SUCCESSES

Establishing a strategic business operation in an increasingly competitive environment between European regions is a decisive choice to make. Several international groups have decided to set up in Wallonia. Various sectors such as tech, biopharma, logistics and hospitality all came to the same conclusion: location, skills, stability, public funding and capacity for innovation create an environment that fosters long-term success. We will focus on stories from Google (USA), Skechers (USA), Takeda (Japan) and Van der Valk (Netherlands).



strategic infrastructure and digital sovereignty

Google’s total investment in Belgium, including the €5 billion announced in 2025, now stands at over €11 billion since the launch of its first data centre in Saint-Ghislain, back in 2007. The campus is now expanding, with the addition of a seventh building.

The initial choice was based on a combination of factors specific to this region: “energy availability, access to water for cooling, connectivity, land for potential expansion and the quality of the road network,” explains Frédéric Descamps, Head of Operations. Saint-Ghislain has established itself as a strategic link in the European cloud infrastructure, which consists of AI, critical digital services, storage and processing capacity.

The company’s innovation is not limited to digital technologies. “Saint-Ghislain is the first campus to have on-site solar power generation, thanks to a solar farm we inaugurated in 2017. Its capacity has since been increased. After completing a pilot project, we switched to water treatment using CO2 rather than acid, which has reduced our water consumption and use of hazardous chemicals. We have also installed electrical energy storage batteries.”

Local impact has been even greater: “We support local sponsorship initiatives and have helped develop a master’s degree course in Data Centre Engineering with the Haute École de Mons.” This has inspired the American group to develop further projects. Today, the site employs around 900 people and works with 80 Walloon suppliers.

Pictures © Google





SKECHERS

European logistics hub and job stability

For over 20 years, the American company Skechers has been sending sport and casual footwear throughout Europe from Wallonia. As one of Wallonia's largest employers, the site comprises over 1,200 staff.

Pictures © Gregory Halliday

"We had investment opportunities in other European countries, but we chose Wallonia due to its location and the availability of land," says Sophie Houtmeyers, Managing Director of Skechers EDC. "We also benefited from strong support and guidance from the authorities."

This convinced the parent company in the United States to go ahead with the venture in Wallonia. A construction project for new infrastructure at the Liège Airport site is currently underway. "Keeping jobs here was a decisive factor. Having stability for the teams is a key performance factor." This is especially true as the teams remain loyal to the company, sometimes spanning several generations. At the same time, multimodality, proximity to European transport routes and social stability also weighed heavily in the decision.

In the meantime, the Milmort site has become a European logistics hub for the group. It handles large volumes and operates 24/7. The site secures thousands of jobs that cannot be relocated, in a stable industrial environment, all while integrating both local partners and training providers.





TAKEDA

industrial excellence and a global biopharma presence

The Lessines site is now the group's third-largest production site worldwide. Specialising in immunoglobulins, it supports patients in over 80 countries



After investing €118 million in a production line in 2021, in 2022 Takeda announced an investment of nearly €300 million for the construction of a new state-of-the-art production unit, which will be operational by early 2027. This investment came hand in hand with a new net-zero carbon warehouse in Lessines, which has been operational since 2024. Without wishing to disparage other European regions, Thierry Pestiaux, Site Head at Takeda Lessines, maintains that “Wallonia offers significant advantages: scientific expertise, a skilled workforce and close collaboration between industry, universities and public authorities.”

The site excels thanks to its industrial performance, scientific expertise and pioneering approach to sustainability. “Lessines is the world's first pharmaceutical production site to recycle 60% of its wastewater for reuse in drug manufacturing. This saves 1.2 million litres every day.”

With a round-the-clock staff of 1,200 people from 23 different countries, Lessines also illustrates the human focus of the Walloon model. “Belgium has a particularly strong ecosystem when it comes to life sciences. Our collective abilities can help to adapt and accelerate skill growth.” In this way, continuous professional development, partnerships with the education sector and upskilling initiatives turn into strategic drivers.



© Charlotte Princen



© Michael Radi



© Rob van der Voort



© Charlotte Princen

VAN DER VALK

generating systems of structure

The Dutch family-owned group has been present in Wallonia since 1977, with 19 hotels in the region. Now, they are expanding further, with major projects projected for Liege Airport and Charleroi.

Their strategy is based on setting up locations along major economic corridors: airports, urban centres, business hubs. “We seek a constant balance between travel for business and leisure, to ensure year-round activity,” explains François Breuer, CFO of Van der Valk. The hotel chain has generated 700 jobs in Wallonia.

But Van der Valk’s impact extends beyond the hospitality sector itself. It is what makes the brand unique: in addition to the hotel, they have a restaurant, wellness facilities and venues for events. “Each establishment functions as an economic microcosm, attracting visitors and businesses. Investing in the hotel acts as a catalyst for the local area. Business attracts business. Sometimes, local authorities contact us directly to establish a Van der Valk hotel in their area.”

They have great ambitions: “We are planning two new establishments in the centre of Charleroi and at Liege Airport within the next two years. At the same time, we are exploring the French market, where our experience in Wallonia will be a real asset.”



Infrastructure, a skilled workforce, stability and industrial vision are all key factors that make Wallonia a strategic partner in the heart of Europe. Wallonia does not merely attract investment; it builds lasting foundations.

Val Saint-Lambert marks its 200th anniversary

200 years - now that is something worth celebrating!
This major milestone for the historical site is also heralding
the beginning of a new era.



Founded in 1826, this Walloon manufacturer occupies a key place in our industrial, artistic and heritage history. It embodies the perfection of Belgian crystal and the global reach of its expertise.

Launched by the City of Seraing and supported by the Uhoda Group, this Bicentennial celebration is a part of a broader strategy to promote and redevelop the site, focusing on three key elements:

- A major exhibition dedicated to two centuries of creativity and know-how.
- Contemporary artistic reinterpretations
- Two unique immersive shows by Luc Petit

“Conceived and designed by Europa Expo, this exhibition will retrace the major milestones in the manufacturer’s industrial, artistic and social history, with a particular focus on heritage and innovation,” states the event’s PR Team.

The year-long celebration will also include a wide range of all-inclusive activities and an exhibition on *Art deco and Modernism at Val Saint-Lambert (1925-1939)* at the Charleroi Glass Museum.

www.vsl-bicentenaire.be

VISITWallonia.be



© Pictures: Maeoka.be

La Grappe d'Or

EXPERIENCE THE ART OF CHEESE

Driven by tradition and small producers, Wallonia's evolving gastronomy is in the spotlight thanks to its recent recognition by Gault&Millau.

In Arlon, Monia Aouini and Clément Petitjean, the winners of the prestigious restaurant guide's 2026 Cheese Experience of the Year award, maintain an increasingly rare tradition: the cheese trolley.

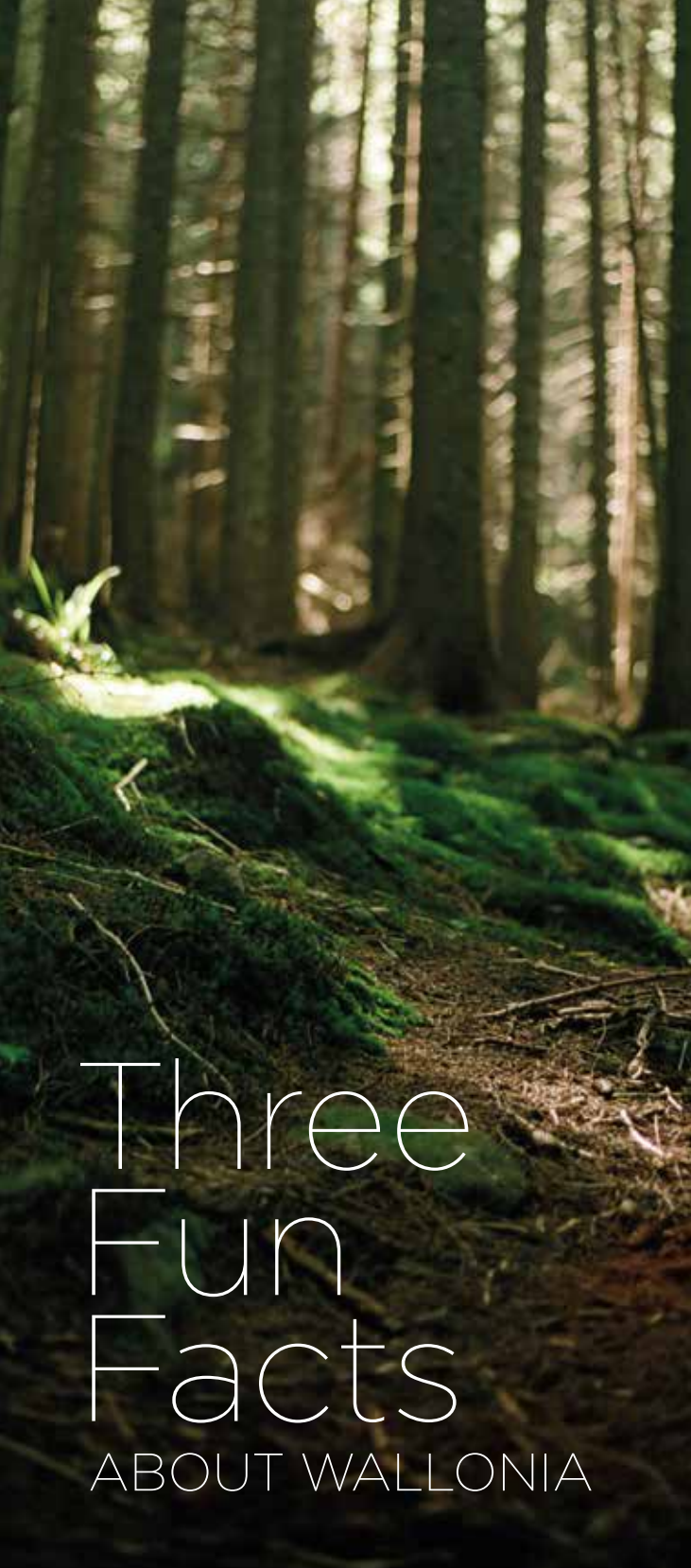
Their outlook is based on a collaborative vision of the profession. The cheese trolley provides "a living selection, that changes with the seasons," in close partnership with Fromagerie Antony (*affineur*), Pascal and Maud Fauville (master cheesemakers), and Peter and Barbara De Cock of la Bergerie d'Acremont (agricultural engineers and passionate master cheesemakers).

Every cheese has a story to tell. "The experience becomes an opportunity for dialogue, in which the team shares the origins of these products, their respect for nature and the richness of the *terroirs*."

This prestigious Gault&Millau award confirms that Wallonia's gastronomy blends innovation, quality and international appeal.

© Pictures: GRAPHISTERIE





Three Fun Facts

ABOUT WALLONIA



To highlight Wallonia in an engaging way, ambassadors of the Wallonia.be brand recently took part in a small contest, sharing surprising anecdotes about the region. Three entries were selected in a draw.

Shaded Olivia van Esch reminds us that roller skates were invented by a Walloon. Jean-Joseph Merlin, born in Huy (Liege) in the 18th century, is credited with creating the first prototype, an invention that still resonates around the world today.

Guerbali Abderrahim highlights a curious story from Liege. In the 1970s, tunnels were dug for a metro system that was never completed due to lack of funding. Parts of this infrastructure still exist underground today.

Finally, David Chauvier points to Wallonia's deep connection to nature. The vast Sonian Forest and areas such as the Entre-Sambre-et-Meuse National Park remain iconic landscapes where many residents regularly walk and reconnect with nature.

Read full stories : <https://www.wallonia.be/en/news/do-you-know-wallonia-three-fun-facts>



ADDENDDA

STRIKES GOLD

The Malmedy (Liege) based design furniture company won an award at the prestigious Grands Prix du Design international competition in Montreal in November 2025.

This competition celebrates the excellence and the talent of designers distinguished by their exemplary work. And it is ADDENDDA's shelf, Joseph, that was awarded the Grand Winner Gold Certification for its versatility and concept precision, the authenticity of its solid wood composition, and for its poetic elegance.

THE RECOGNITION OF EXPERIENCE

This award also shines a spotlight on the talent and 20 years' worth of experience of Jean-François Crahay and Guy Jammaigne, the founders of ADDENDDA, for whom furniture is more than just a practical product: "We believe in the excellence of Belgian know-how. ADDENDDA is meeting the needs of its time by embodying an innovative art of living and designing refined furniture using noble materials, while at the same time guaranteeing the aesthetics and durability of its pieces."

Truly a moment to celebrate the global recognition that values sleek, functional and sustainable Belgian-made design.

Pictures © Caroline Dethier





Mons train station

has been named as one of the 7 most beautiful in the world by the Prix Versailles 2025. Designed by Santiago Calatrava as a monumental bridge connecting northern Mons to the historic city centre, the station features a stunning airy design, with a steel and glass canopy, a 165-metre-long gallery and skylights. This recognition has put Mons, the province of Hainaut and Wallonia on the international architectural and tourist map.





Le Timbre des Objets

© Daniel Fouss

© Daniel Fouss

Le timbre des Objets : Listening to the Invisible

In the hushed silence of our everyday actions, largely dominated by the digital revolution - a finger swiping across a screen, or a card tapping a card reader - there are some objects that are starting to fall quiet. For Laurence Humier, a Walloon designer with a multi-disciplinary background, "the timbre is a unique acoustic signature that we can attribute to a specific voice, gesture or object."

Le Timbre des Objets (The Timbre of Objects), supported by the Irène Heidebroek and Eliane van Duyse Fund and managed by the King Baudouin Foundation, focuses on the sound of objects that are starting to disappear, and are recognised as part of intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.

This project highlights a uniquely Walloon approach, which is "human-centric and resolutely oriented towards the future of cultural institutions, both physical and virtual."

The project has been organised in collaboration with the Musical Instruments Museum along with the Belgian Comic Art-Museum, both based in Brussels. It involves inclusive workshops bringing together sighted and visually impaired audiences, musicians and illustrators. Together, they explore the ergonomics of the invisible and its prominence in museum design.



Valère Burnon

SPACE AND INGENUITY



©QEMC-©MF

Valère Burnon is skilful at creating an organic space, in which music permeates the stage and the auditorium, transcends the screen and touches the heart. “I still remember Rachmaninoff’s first movement from the final round of the Queen Elizabeth Competition 2025, with the rhythm and the energy that I wanted to convey. Then came a profound, poetic silence, followed by an explosion of cheers and applause. I will always treasure that moment.”

Years of preparation, sight reading, listening and learning with the masters have given Burnon a virtuosity “that does not seek to impress, but to create connections.” Awarded third place at the Competition, the pianist is now looking forward to the things to come, spurred further by the audience’s enthusiasm. Be it Carnegie Hall or Concertgebouw, this is just the beginning.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDiOZdLYclI>

Wallonia, your gateway to Europe



“

“Together, we are
unstoppable!”

”

Jonathan Bouhy, CEO of Elneo



Contact us to explore
opportunities in Wallonia
contact_wallonia.be@awex.be



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