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Belgium

Belgium is a federal state divided by language and region. Flanders (north) is Dutch-speaking and operates mainly in Dutch, with its own regional government and institutions. Wallonia (south) is primarily French-speaking, with a small German-speaking community in the east, and functions largely in French. Brussels is officially bilingual (French and Dutch) and has a distinct, complex administrative structure combining regional and community competences. Linguistic rules strongly affect administration, education, employment, and public services, making language choice a practical as well as cultural issue across the country.

Links below are in EN/FR/NL (some DE) unless indicated.

What to do if someone dies

The Royal Federation of Belgian Notaries (Fednot) has general and comprehensive guidance in [French](#) and [Dutch](#). It explains the key administrative and legal steps to take after a death in Belgium. It guides families through immediate formalities, the role of the notary, handling bank accounts, inheritance procedures, and practical timelines, offering clear, neutral information for navigating succession and estate matters.

The [FPS \(Federal Public Service\) Finance “Death” page](#) explains tax-related procedures. It covers filing a declaration of estate, paying inheritance tax/estate duties, unblocking the deceased’s bank accounts, selling or donating inherited property, handling estates without heirs, and submitting the deceased person’s final tax return.

Burial and cremation are the only legally recognized forms of disposition in the country (see this [belgium.be page](#) and this [article \(in French\) on ecological funerals](#)).

Before you die

<https://mijnoudedag.be/> / <https://mesvieuxjours.be/> is an accessible and holistic overview to end-of-life planning, touching on many of the points below, including how to discuss the topic.

Fednot provides advice on preparing a will ([French](#) and [Dutch](#)).

The Federal Public Service elaborates patient rights ([French](#) and [Dutch](#)); this includes reference to the important step of designating a person of confidence who can make decisions on one’s behalf and consult medical records ([French](#) and [Dutch](#)). It is also possible to designate power of attorney ([Protection extrajudiciaire](#) / [Buitengerechtelijke bescherming](#)).

