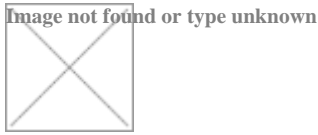


Press Release

1 February 2018

Google announces new investment in Belgium



Google announces today, in the presence of Prime Minister of Belgium Charles Michel, a new investment of approximately EUR 250 million to build another data centre on their current site in Saint-Ghislain. The construction brings the total investment in Belgium to EUR 1 billion. Google also unveiled a new solar plant on the land of the data center following a EUR 3 million investment. The new solar plant is the second largest solar plant in Wallonia and is already operational.

Charles Michel, Prime Minister of Belgium states: *"The digital world is constantly changing. I see that Belgium is a country which is becoming more and more attractive for big investors like Google for example. Last week in Davos, I noticed that big companies want to continue investing in our country. This new investment is excellent news for the Walloon region and Belgium in terms of job creation."*

Frédéric Descamps, Data Center Facilities Manager, adds: *"Google's data center presence in Belgium is a contributing factor to the country being a digital frontrunner in Europe, creating jobs, skills development and economic opportunities. This new data center and solar plant investment clearly demonstrates Google's commitment to the digital growth of Belgium. Every day the demand for Google services is growing and our infrastructure of data centers follows that rhythm steadily, which in turns benefits communities through job creation. We are most grateful to the local and national government, the local suppliers and community for their continued support."*

New solar facility - reaching 100% renewable energy for global operations

Following an investment of EUR 3 million, the new solar plant will generate 2.9 Gigawatt hour of clean and reliable renewable energy every year used in Google's Belgian data center. Construction works of the new energy installation started in March 2017, using a local company for the installation. The solar farm sits on 4 hectares of land in Google's data center.

Alexander De Croo, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Development Cooperation, Digital Agenda, Telecom and Postal Services said: *"Belgium has all it takes to become a digital frontrunner in Europe. To succeed, we need to stand firm and make the shift towards a digital economy. This investment is an important step in this endeavor and paves the way for innovative technology, growth and social prosperity."*

Marc Oman, EU Energy Lead, Global Infrastructure at Google, explains: *Google is a major investor in renewable energy projects around the world and we are excited to extend this commitment to Belgium. The photovoltaic installations features 10,665 solar panels and ultimately will contribute to a greener footprint on the campus, already one of the most energy-efficient sites globally.*

Google is deeply committed to sustainability and ensuring a positive impact on the environment. The company has been carbon-neutral since 2007 and reached the [target of 100% renewable energy for its global operations](#) in 2017, including data centers and offices. This means Google now is directly buying enough wind and solar electricity to account for every unit of electricity the company consumes. Google is the largest corporate purchaser of renewable energy worldwide and has the most efficient data centers in the world.

Editors Notes

- Google's first data center in Europe opened in 2009 in Saint-Ghislain in the presence of King Albert II.
- It was the first Google data center worldwide to run entirely without refrigeration, using instead an advanced evaporative cooling system that draws grey water from the nearby industrial canal reducing overall energy use.
- The site at Saint-Ghislain is an important part of Google's European infrastructure, powering Google products and services globally.
- The whole site currently employs around 350 people in full time and contractor roles - from computer technicians to electrical and mechanical engineers, to security, catering and facilities management.
- A [report by Copenhagen Economics](#) published in June 2015 outlined that Google invested EUR 775 million to build and operate the data center from 2007 till 2014.
- This 2007-2014 investment supported 1.500 jobs locally on average per year for the same period and supported economic impact activity worth EUR 900 million for Belgian GDP.

More information: <https://www.google.com/about/datacenters/inside/> + video [Inside a Google data center](#)

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