CULTURE, TRADITION, DIETARY HABITS

Religious composition

Religion in Belgium is diversified, with Christianity, in particular the Catholic Church, representing the largest community, though it has experienced a significant decline since the 1980s (when it was the religion of over 70% of the population). However, according to the latest Eurobarometer poll carried out by the European Commission in December 2018, the number of Christians increased by 10% from 52.5% in 2009 to 62.8% in 9 years, with Roman Catholicism being the largest denomination at 57.1%. Protestants comprised 2.3% and Orthodox Christians comprised 0.6%. Non religious people comprised 29.3% of the population and were divided between those who primarily identified as atheists (9.1%) or as agnostics (20.2%). A further 6.8% of the population was Muslim and 1.1% were believers in other religions Belgium's policy separates the state from the churches, and freedom of religion of the citizens is guaranteed by the country's constitution.

Beliefs and practices

According to a 2010 Eurobarometer poll :

37% of Belgian citizens believe there is a God.

31% believe there is some sort of spirit or life force.

27% do not believe there is any sort of spirit, God, or life force.

5% declined to answer.

Some religious people dispute the precise figures, as it is unclear how many Belgians who say they believe in God are actually Christians and how many who call themselves Christians, but refuse the label "Catholic", have severed all links to the Catholic Church. Also in dispute are how many Catholic Belgians have become deists or have joined small Protestant churches.

Chronological statistics

Religious group	Population % 1981	Population % 2009	Population % 2015	Population % 2018
Christianity	74.5%	52.5%	60.7%	62.8%
Catholicism	72.0%	50.0%	52.9%	57.1%
Protestantism and other Christians	2.5%	2.5%	6.2%	5.1%
Orthodox Christianity			1.6%	0.6%
Islam	3.0%	5.0%	5.2%	6.8%
Judaism	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
Buddhism	-	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%
Other religions and unspecified	-	-	2.0%	0.5%

Atheism	2.5%	9.2%	14.9%	9.1%
Not religious	21.5%	32.6%	17.1%	20.2%

Government and religion

The Belgian constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the government generally respects this right in practice. However, government officials have the authority to research and monitor religious groups that are not officially recognized. There are a few reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious belief or practice, and some reports of discrimination against minority religious groups.

Belgian law officially recognizes many religions, including Catholicism, Protestantism, Anglicanism, Islam, Judaism, and Eastern Orthodoxy, as well as non-religious philosophical organizations (Dutch: vrijzinnige levensbeschouwelijke organisaties; French: organisations laïques). Buddhism is in the process of being recognized under the secular organization standard. Official recognition means that priests (called "counsellors" within the secular organizations) receive a state stipend. Also, parents can choose any recognized denomination to provide religious education to their children if they attend a state school. Adherents to religions that are not officially recognized are not denied the right to practice their religion, but do not receive state stipends.

After attaining autonomy from the federal government in religious matters, the Flemish Parliament passed a regional decree installing democratically elected church councils for all recognized religious denominations and making them subject to the same administrative rules as local government bodies, with important repercussions for financial accounting and open government. In 2006, however, Catholic bishops still appointed candidates to the Catholic Church councils because they had not decided on the criteria for eligibility; they were afraid that candidates might be merely baptized Catholics. By 2008, however, the bishops decided that candidates for the church councils had only to prove that they were over 18, a member of the parish church serving the town or village in which they lived, and baptized Catholic.

Catholic Church

Catholicism has traditionally been Belgium's majority religion, with particular strength in Flanders. However, by 2009, Sunday church attendance was 5.4% in Flanders, down from 12.7% in 1998. Nationwide, Sunday church attendance was 5% in 2009, down from 11.2% in 1998. As of 2015, 52.9% Belgian population claimed to belong to the Catholic Church. According to Ipsos, only 41% of the working-age, internet connected people declared to be Catholics.

Until 1998, the Catholic Church annually published key figures such as Sunday mass attendance and the number of baptized children. In 2006, it announced that mass attendance for the Christmas period was 11.5%, and weekly mass attendance (not only on Sundays) was 7%, for the Flanders region. Since 2000, Sunday church attendance in Flanders has dropped by an average of 0.5%–1% each year. In the years 2010 to 2016, 12,442 people in Flanders formally left the Catholic Church.

Anglicanism

Belgium had thirteen Anglican churches as of 2012, including the Pro-Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Brussels. They are part of the Church of England's Diocese in Europe.

Protestantism

In 1566, at the peak of Belgian Reformation, there were an estimated 300,000 Protestants, or 20% of the Belgian population. The Spanish reconquest of the Southern Netherlands in the Eighty Years' War prompted most of the Belgian Protestants to flee to the north or convert, causing the region to again be overwhelmingly Catholic. As of 2016, Protestantism represented 2.1% of the total population and 2% of the working-age, internet connected population. The Pew Research Center, an American think tank, proposes an even lower estimate at 1.4% of the total population.

The Administrative Council of Protestant and Evangelical Religion in Belgium is a coordinating group that mediates between many Protestant groups and the government. The largest Protestant denomination is the United Protestant Church in Belgium, with some 138 affiliated churches.

Orthodox Christianity

The region with the greatest proportion of Eastern Orthodox Christians was the Bruxelles-Capital Region, in which they formed 8.3% of the population. Ipsos' survey in 2016 found that Orthodox Christianity was the religion of about 1% of the working-age, internet connected Belgians.

Eastern Orthodoxy

The Eastern Orthodox Church in Belgium is subdivided into several canonical jurisdictions:

Diocese of Brussels and Belgium, of the Russian Orthodox Church;

Metropolis of Belgium, of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople;

Serbian Orthodox Eparchy of Western Europe;

Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of Western Europe;

Eparchy of Central and Western Europe, of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

Oriental Orthodoxy

There are significant Armenian communities that reside in Belgium, many of them are descendants of traders who settled during the 19th century. Most Armenian Belgians are adherents of the Armenian Apostolic Church, with a smaller numbers are adherents of the Armenian Catholic Church and Armenian Evangelical Church.

Islam

In 2015, according to the Eurobarometer survey made by the European Commission, 5.2% of the total Belgian population was Muslim. In a 2016 study Ipsos found that 3% of the working-age, internet connected Belgian population declaring to be believers in Islam.

As of 2015, it was estimated that 7% of the Belgians (781,887) were Muslims, including 329,749 in Flanders (forming 5.1% of the region's population), 174,136 in Wallonia (4.9%), and 277,867 in Brussels (23.6%).

Buddhism

Yeunten Ling in Huy, a countryside castle turned into a monastery of Tibetan Buddhism.

Eurobarometer 2015 found only 0.2% of the total Belgian population declaring to be Buddhist. Despite that, one year later Ipsos found that 2% of the working-age, internet connected Belgians were Buddhists.

Confucianism

According to Ipsos, 1% of the working-age, internet connected Belgians declared that they believed in Confucianism. This segment of the population may include many — if not all — the Chinese communities in Belgium.

DIETARY HABITS

Food culture in Belgium

Find out about traditional Belgian cuisine and dishes to be found throughout the country...

With so many influences among its current varied population, it is not surprising that the Belgians have a passion for food and cooking. Various invaders throughout history including the Romans, Vikings, Spanish, French and English have all left their mark on the national cuisine.

The much quoted saying is that the Belgians cook their food with the finesse of the French but serve it in generous German size portions!

Many of the more hearty stews and soups are recipes handed down from one generation to another. Belgian chocolates and beer are internationally renowned and are in themselves a lure for many tourists with festivals celebrating both products.

Street stands selling waffles and chips are found almost everywhere for those wanting something quick. Restaurants tend to approach things more seriously and meals are seldom hurried.

Vegetarians and those with food allergies may find their options limited in some parts of the country.

Many Belgians and non-Belgians consider their food to be Europe's second finest cuisine (behind the French). Flemish cuisine has a strong Dutch influence, as one might expect, whereas Wallonian cuisine is similar to French cooking, with lots of rich sauces.

There is a huge variety of places to eat out, from modest cafés to Michelin starred restaurants, throughout the country.

Most main dishes are meat or fish based – there is little vegetarian food on offer, except at specialist restaurants. Coastal areas tend to favour seafood dishes, and many dishes are livened up with herbs and spices. Medieval influences can often be found in dishes which combine sweet and sour tastes, such as Buttermilk Soup with Apples, or Braised Chicken with Grapes.

Desserts almost always involve pastries or chocolate.

Although wine (mostly French) is popular, beer is still without doubt the national drink and often accompanies a meal.

Appetizers

Boterhammen : Slices of rustic bread and an uncovered spread, often pâté or soft cheese, served on a cutting board. A typical variety is a slice of bread with sliced radishes, typically accompanied by a glass of gueuze.

Jambon d'Ardenne : particularly smoked ham and pâté, often made of game such as wild boar. The forested Ardennes region in the south of Belgium is renowned for this type of food.

Salade liégeoise : a potato salad with green beans, bacon, onions and vinegar. It is usually associated with Liège.

Tomate aux crevettes: a Belgian culinary specialty, composed of a hollow, unhunted tomato stuffed with peeled grey shrimps and mixed with mayonnaise.

Savory dishes

Moules-frites: mussels cooked or steamed with onions and celery served with fries. The recipe has often been referred to as the country's national dish but is also popular in the neighboring Nord region of France.

Carbonade flamande: a Belgian beef stew, similar to the French Beef Bourguignon, but made with beer instead of red wine. Served with bread or fries and mustard. Usually accompanied by a beer. This is also considered one of the national dishes, along with moules-frites.

Waterzooi: a rich stew and soup of chicken or fish, vegetables, cream and eggs, usually associated with the town of Ghent.

Chicons au gratin / gegratineerd witloof: Belgian endives au gratin in béchamel sauce with cheese. Often the endives are wrapped with ham.

Kip met frieten en appelmoes: (chicken, fries, and apple sauce), which is very common around Brussels.

Konijn in geuze: rabbit in gueuze, which is a spontaneously fermented beer from the area around Brussels.

Filet américain: Very finely minced ground beef eaten raw and cold. It is spread on a sandwich or bread with and sometimes topped with a sauce, usually with Sauce Américaine, and served with fries. When served as a dinner, it is mixed with onions and capers like steak tartare, but it retains the name américain.

Paling in 't groen: Eel in a green sauce of mixed herbs (including chervil and parsley). Served with bread or fries. Usually accompanied by a beer or (sometimes) an Alsace wine.

Pêche au thon : halved canned or fresh peaches stuffed with a mix of tuna and mayonnaise, i.e. tuna salad.

Boudin: a type of sausage in which the meat, or blood, is mixed with fine breadcrumbs that is often eaten with potatoes and apple sauce, sometimes eaten raw or barbecued.

Stoemp: a potato that is mashed with vegetables (usually carrots or cabbages), often served with sausages.

Vol-au-vent: a small hollow case of puff pastry filled with chicken, mushrooms, small meatballs and a sauce, served with fries.

Boulets liégeois: two big meatballs into a sweet and sour sauce called "Sauce Lapin", served with Belgian Fries.

Sweet dishes and desserts

Waffles: sometimes eaten as a street snack and sold by ice-cream vans. Among the better-known styles are the Liège waffle, Brussels waffle, and the stroopwafel.

Speculoos: a shortcrust cinnamon biscuit, traditionally baked for consumption on or just before Sinterklaas in the Netherlands (December 5), Belgium (December 6), and around Christmas in Germany.

Croustillons: deep-fried balls of sweet dough, eaten at fairgrounds or on special occasions like the October fair.

Tarte au riz: a pie with a filling based on rice pudding, native to Verviers.

Sirop de Liège: a jam or jelly-like spread made of evaporated fruit juices.

Cuberdon: a cone-shaped purple candy made of gum arabic.

Lacquements: thin wafer, made from wheat, cut in two horizontally, filled and coated with sugar candy syrup flavoured with orange blossom. Generally eaten during the October fair in Liège and the Sinksenfoor in Antwerp.

Belgian fries

Fries, deep-fried chipped potatoes, are very popular in Belgium, where they are thought to have originated. The earliest evidence of the dish comes from a book entitled Curiosités de la table dans les Pays-Bas-Belgiques written in 1781, which described how inhabitants of Namur, Dinant and Andenne around the Meuse River had eaten fried potatoes since around 1680. Though they are usually known as "french fries" in the United States, it is argued that American soldiers during the First World War called them "french fries" because the Belgian soldiers who introduced them to the dish spoke French.

In Belgium, fries are sold at fast food stands or in dedicated fast-food restaurants called friteries, frietkot, or frituur (loosely: fry shack). They are often served with a variety of sauces and eaten either on their own or in the company of other snacks. Traditionally, they are served in a "cornet de frites" (French) or "puntzak " (Flemish), a cone-shaped white piece of thick paper then wrapped in a piece of thin (and coloured) paper, with the sauce on the top. Larger portions are often served in cardboard trays for practicality's sake. Other street foods like frikandel, gehaktbal or kroket are sold alongside. In some cases, the fries are served in the form of a baguette sandwich along with their sauce and meat; this is known as a "mitraillette". In areas with immigration, the same combination is also available in a wrap called a dürüm instead of on a baguette.

The vast majority of Belgian households have a deep fryer, allowing them to make their own fries and other deep-fried foods at home. Supermarkets sell a range of liquid and solid animal- and plant-based fats for use in home deep fryers; beef fat is particularly prized.

In June 2017 the European Commission issued a recommendation to limit the chemical acrylamide – a natural result of frying some foods at high temperatures – from reaching consumers, due to its alleged carcinogenic properties. The document proposed a change in the preparation of Belgian fries to prevent the formation of acrylamide, by blanching them before frying, as opposed to the traditional method of double frying. This led to a wave of protests from several Belgian politicians, who viewed it as an assault on the country's culture and gastronomical tradition.

Sauces

Mayonnaise and ketchup are the sauces traditionally eaten with fries in Belgium. Friteries and other fast-food establishments tend to offer a number of different sauces for the fries and meats, including aïoli and Sauce Américaine but also much more elaborate varieties, including Béarnaise sauce. There are frequently over a dozen options, and most of them are mayonnaise-based, so the varieties include:

Aïoli / Looksaus (garlic mayonnaise).

Sauce andalouse – mayonnaise with tomato paste and peppers.

Sauce Americaine – mayonnaise with tomato, chervil, onions, capers, crustacean stock, and celery.

Bicky sauce – a commercial brand made from mayonnaise, white cabbage, tarragon, dough, cucumber, onion, mustard, and dextrose.

Brazilian sauce – mayonnaise with pureed pineapple, tomato, and spices.

Cocktail sauce - one of several types of cold or room temperature sauces often served as part of the dish(es) referred to as seafood cocktail or as a condiment with other seafood.

Curry ketchup - a spiced variant on ketchup and a common sauce in Belgium, Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands.

Curry mayonnaise - mayonnaise with either turmeric, cumin, ginger, and fresh or dried hot chili peppers.

Joppiesaus – a commercial brand made from mayonnaise, spices, onion, and curry powder.

Ketchup - a sweet and tangy sauce typically made from tomatoes, sweetener, and vinegar with assorted seasonings and spices.

Mammoet sauce – mayonnaise with tomato, onion, glucose, garlic, and soy sauce

Mayonnaise - a thick cold sauce or dressing usually used in sandwiches and composed salads.

Pepper sauce – mayonnaise or hot sauce with black pepper.

Relish – a cooked and pickled product made of chopped vegetables, fruits, or herbs, and is a food item typically used as a condiment, in particular to enhance a staple.

Sauce Lapin – A sauce made from Sirop de Liège, cooked with raisins, onions, prunes, and cloves, typically served with Boulets frites.

Sauce Riche – a pink, tartar based sauce.

Samurai sauce – mayonnaise with Tunisian chili, spices, tomatoes, and bell peppers.

Tartar sauce - a mayonnaise or aïoli-based sauce of French origin, and is typically of a rough consistency due to the addition of diced gherkins or other varieties of pickles.

Zigeuner sauce – A "gypsy" sauce of tomatoes, paprika, and chopped bell peppers, borrowed from Germany.

Beer

For a comparatively small country, Belgium produces a very large number of beers in a range of different styles – in fact; it has more distinct types of beer per capita than anywhere else in the world. In 2011, there were 1,132 different varieties of beer being produced in the country. The brewing tradition in Belgium can be traced back to the early Middle Ages and 6 Trappist Monasteries still produce beer, which was initially used to fund their upkeep.

On average, Belgians drink 157 litres of beer each year, down from around 260 each year in 1900. Most beers are bought or served in bottles, rather than cans, and almost every style of beer has its own particular, uniquely shaped glass or other drinking-vessel. Using the correct glass is considered to improve its flavour.

The varied nature of Belgian beers makes it possible to match them against each course of a meal, for instance:

Wheat beer with seafood or fish.

Blonde or Tripel beers with eel, chicken or white meat

Dubbel or other dark beers with dark meat

Fruit Lambics with dessert

A number of traditional Belgian dishes use beer as an ingredient. One is carbonade, a stew of beef cooked in beer, similar to boeuf bourguignon. The beer used is typically the regional speciality: lambic in Brussels, De Koninck in Antwerp, so that the taste of the dish varies. Another is rabbit in gueuze. The Trappist monastery at Chimay also manufactures cheese that is "washed" with beer to enhance its flavour.

Chocolate

Belgium is famed for its high quality chocolate and over 2,000 chocolatiers, both small and large. Belgium's association with chocolate goes back as far as 1635 when the country was under Spanish occupation. By the mid-18th century, chocolate had become extremely popular in upper and middle class circles, particularly in the form of hot chocolate, including with Charles-Alexander of Lorraine, the Austrian governor of the territory. From the early 20th century, the country was able to import large quantities of cocoa from its African colony, the Belgian Congo. Both the chocolate bar and praline are inventions of the Belgian chocolate industry. Today, chocolate is very popular in Belgium, with 172,000 tonnes produced each year, and widely exported.

The composition of Belgian chocolate has been regulated by law since 1884. In order to prevent adulteration of the chocolate with low-quality fats from other sources, a minimum level of 35% pure cocoa was imposed. Adherence to traditional manufacturing techniques also serves to increase the quality of Belgian chocolate. In particular, vegetable-based fats are not used. Many firms produce chocolates by hand, which is laborious and explains the prevalence of small, independent chocolate outlets, which are popular with tourists. Famous chocolate companies, like Neuhaus and Guylian, strictly follow traditional (and sometimes secret) recipes for their products.

Seafood pralines (pralines shaped like sea shells or fish) are popular with tourists and are sold all over Belgium.

Famous Belgian chocolatiers are Côte d'or, Leonidas, Guylian, Neuhaus, ...

Folklore

Reflecting Belgians' love for food and drink and the good life, all manner of popular celebrations take place across the country throughout the year, including carnivals, religious processions and commemorative parades, as well as historical pageants. Every town and village keeps their local traditions alive by organising their own festivities. With families and organisations spending months preparing for these events, these are true celebrations of the people for the people.

Belgium's folklore and its respected and revered traditions have been religiously passed down from generation to generation, and in many cases (for instance, Aalst Carnival, the Gille figures at the Carnival of Binche, the processional giants, animals and dragons in Ath, Brussels, Dendermonde, Mechelen and Mons but also the Meyboom in Brussels, and the Holy Blood Procession in Bruges) have even been recognised by UNESCO as Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Here are some examples:

Masked, orange-pelting figures at Carnival de Binche

Instead of pulling out floats or throwing tons of beads on Mardi Gras, the small Walloon town of Binche celebrates by trotting out bizarre figures in colorful outfits wearing wax masks and weaving bundles of willow twigs. Folkloric as can be, the tradition has been around since the 14th century. Nobody knows where the strange creatures called 'Gilles' come from – or why they insist on pelting the crowd with oranges – but as far as entertainment and identity-building go (the whole town works together to put on a show), this is one for the books.



Binche's 'Gilles' © hedhoodphoto / Flickr

Saint Nicholas, a second Santa

Belgian and Dutch kids count their lucky stars for getting to greet Saint Nicholas or ‘Sinterklaas’ and his batch of presents every year before Christmas even arrives. A kind of second Santa, the good old man and his helper Black Pete visit every single house, in a single night, where kids have been good throughout the year. On the morning of December 6th, kids wake up to presents they’ve often asked for in a letter to ‘De Sint.’ While there has been some controversy brewing around the figure of Black Pete (whose face is black from all of the soot in the chimneys that he slides down to deliver presents) in the last couple of years, Sinterklaas remains a beloved Belgian tradition.



Sinterklaas and Zwarte Piet © Michell Zappa/WikiCommons

Songs and candy on Old Year's Day

Though it's hard for most non-natives to wrap their heads around, Flemish kids in the regions of the Kempen and the Hageland (and a few small regions in the Netherlands) actually go trick-or-treating on Old Year's Day. There are no ghosts or vampires involved like with American Halloween, but candy-givers do get treated to short songs wishing them a happy new year. One of the cuter (and rhyming) songs features a pig with four feet and a tail, its charm sadly lost in translation. Most kids keep at it until noon, occasionally passing home to unload some of the sweet treats and warm up with hot cocoa.

Fish wine at the Krakelingen Festival

Geraardsbergen (or Grammont), known for its hearty 'mattentaart' pastries, has also drawn attention for its ancient Krakelingen Festival and subsequent Tonnekes Fire. Recognized by UNESCO as Intangible World Heritage since 2010, the folkloric bread and fire feasts celebrate the end of winter by throwing 10,000 'krakelingen' or 'mastellen' (donut-shaped pastries) into the masses from atop of the Oudenberg hill and lighting a huge fire on the summit. Before the dean, the mayor, and the city council members get to shower people with these doughy treats, however, they have to take part in a centuries-old ritual: drinking red wine out of a silver 16th-century goblet and swallowing the fish swimming in it. Animal rights activists have tried in vain to get them to switch to fishes made of marzipan, but so far, the town's powers that be aren't budging: they've sworn to uphold the slippery tradition for as long as they can.



Krakelingen from Geraardsbergen © Jan Coppens/Wikimedia Commons

A giant omelet and clucking mascots

The Wallonian village of Malmédy is just as proud of its Giant Omelet Festival. Every August, the members of the town's Omelet Brotherhood don towering chefs hats, break 10,000 eggs and start frying their pride and joy in a skillet four meters in diameter. A marching band and clucking chicken mascots entertain people while they watch the cooks stir with their giant wooden spoons and wait for an omelet piece to come their way.

Roaming giants at the Ducasse of Ath

The slumbering Walloon town of Ath turns into a veritable ‘City of Giants‘ each year during the fourth weekend in August. For centuries, Goliath and his fresh-faced bride, the long-haired Samson, the mythical horse Bayard, and other oversized dolls have been taking over, drawing thousands of folklore lovers as they get married, get into biblical brawls, and generally parade around like they own the place.



Mr and Mrs Goliath © Daniel Leclercq/WikiCommons

Catching the dragon’s tail at the Ducasse of Mons

‘La Doudou’ is what Mons locals lovingly call their most famous festival. It still celebrates that time in the 14th century when a desperate procession of the remains of miracle worker St. Waudru magically worked in getting rid of the plague. To this day, the relic is paraded around on the Cart d’Or, an ornate, horse-pulled buggy, on Trinity Sunday, and the crowd has to jump in and help the animals get the gilded thing up a serious slope; if they don’t succeed, legend has it that the city could suffer terrible consequences. Once on the main square, the ‘Lumeçon’ can commence. During this fierce fight between St. George and his horse versus a large wickerwork dragon, members from the audience jump forward to grab one of the horse hairs attached to the creature’s tail. The battle is a boisterous affair, and participating audience members often operate on a little liquid courage.



Mons' wicker dragon being carried to the fight © David Taquin/Flickr

The meyboom vendetta between Brussels and Leuven

Every single August 9th, a ‘tree of joy’ or ‘meyboom’ must be planted in Brussels before the clock strikes 5pm. If not, it would be a surrender to the people of Leuven, a shame too great to bear – at least according to the Brusselaars. The ritual of the maypole stretches back all the way to the early 13th century when the people of Brussels claim that they were celebrating a wedding when they fought off an attack from the Leuvenaars and planted a beautiful young beech to celebrate. The Leuvenaars, on the other hand, remember quite acutely that they stole the true maypole from Brussels in 1974, so it was never up by 5pm that year. They too have been planting their ‘one and only true maypole’ with a big folk feast ever since.

Public holidays

New Year’s Day - January 1st

Easter and Easter Monday

Labour Day - May 1st

Ascension Day (6th Thursday after Easter)

Pentecost and Whit Monday (7th Sunday and Monday after Easter)

Belgian National Holiday - July 21st

Assumption Day - August 15th

All Saints’ Day - November 1st

Armistice Day - November 11th

Christmas - December 25th

Federal public services are also closed on November 15th as it is King’s Day.