

HANSON SEARCH BRUSSELS SALARY AND BENEFITS GUIDE 2026

Your guide to the Brussels talent landscape



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The State of the Market

The Brussels talent landscape in 2026

As we head toward 2026, Brussels remains central to European policy and public affairs. 2025 was a year of recalibration, after much uncertainty, but we have seen confidence return, with organisations moving their focus back to longer-term planning rather than reacting to volatility.

Brussels continues to be a hub for advocacy and communications, but professionals' expectations have changed. Competitive pay is now a baseline; candidates increasingly prioritise flexibility, meaningful benefits and workplaces where inclusion is lived rather than advertised. The EU Pay Transparency Directive, due to take effect in summer 2026, is already pushing employers to translate equity commitments into tangible change.

In 2025, we were proud to help launch Brussels' first Women in Public Affairs (WiPA) network, uniting a dynamic group of women dedicated to strengthening representation across the sector. Over the past year, we've also seen a wave of organisations deepening their investment in Brussels, opening offices, setting up new teams, or expanding their European reach. This includes scale-ups seeking proximity to EU decision-makers as well as consultancies broadening their presence. The employers making the strongest impression are those cultivating inclusive leadership, recognising achievement and creating room for people to grow.

Roles are evolving too. Policy work and strategic communications are overlapping and there is a demand for people who can do both well. For employers, the message is clear: inclusion, flexibility and authenticity are no longer optional. In a city with so much competition for talent, the organisations that build these principles into their culture and hiring are the ones that people want to work for and stay with.

This Salary and Benefits Guide is designed to give a clear picture of the Brussels market. With competition for talent increasing, reliable benchmarking is key for organisations and professionals planning their next steps.

At Hanson Search, we specialise in helping organisations build leadership teams. Whether it's succession planning or global search mandates, we identify leaders who can make a lasting impact. If strengthening your leadership team or exploring your next career move is on the agenda for 2026, we'd be delighted to help.

Janie Emmerson,
Managing Partner - Belgium and Europe, Hanson Search

Brussels Remuneration Tables

Communications Agencies – Public Affairs: Generalist

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Account Executive	38 000	50 000
Account Manager	48 000	55 000
Senior Account Manager	60 000	75 000
Account Director	70 000	90 000
Associate Director	90 000	105 000
Director	120 000	200 000
Managing Director	180 000	250 000
Chief Executive Officer	200 000	300 000

Communications Agencies – Public Affairs: Financial Services

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Account Executive	42 000	52 000
Account Manager	50 000	72 000
Senior Account Manager	75 000	95 000
Account Director	90 000	110 000
Associate Director	100 000	140 000
Director	120 000	200 000
Managing Director	200 000	300 000

**Size of company, industry, and market (competition) account for the large range of salaries.*

Communications Agencies – Public Affairs: Healthcare

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Account Executive	40 000	52 000
Account Manager	50 000	70 000
Senior Account Manager	70 000	85 000
Account Director	95 000	110 000
Associate Director	120 000	140 000
Director	120 000	200 000
Managing Director	200 000	250 000

Trade Association - Public Affairs: Generalist

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Officer	36 000	50 000
Manager	48 000	60 000
Senior Manager	68 000	85 000
Director	100 000	150 000
Chief Executive Officer/ Board	150 000	200 000

Trade Association - Public Affairs: Financial Services

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Officer	38 000	52 000
Manager	55 000	78 000
Senior Manager	75 000	95 000
Director	120 000	150 000
Chief Executive Officer/Board	150 000	200 000

**Size of company, industry, and market (competition) account for the large range of salaries.*

Trade Association - Public Affairs: Healthcare

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Officer	38 000	52 000
Manager	48 000	65 000
Senior Manager	75 000	95 000
Director	100 000	150 000
Chief Executive Officer/Board	150 000	200 000

In-House Public Affairs - Energy / Utility

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Executive	36 000	48 000
Manager	45 000	65 000
Senior Manager	70 000	95 000
Head	95 000	150 000
Director	130 000	200 000
Regional Director	180 000	250 000+

In-House Public Affairs - FMCG / Retail

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Executive	35 000	45 000
Manager	42 000	65 000
Senior Manager	65 000	90 000
Head of	90 000	120 000
Director	130 000	200 000
Global / Regional Director	200 000	250 000+

**Size of company, industry, and market (competition) account for the large range of salaries.*

In-House Public Affairs - Financial Services / Banking

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Executive	38 000	48 000
Manager	48 000	70 000
Senior Manager	75 000	100 000
Head of	110 000	140 000
Director	150 000	200 000
Global / Regional Director	220 000	300 000+

In-House Public Affairs - Healthcare / Pharmaceuticals

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Executive	38 000	48 000
Manager	48 000	70 000
Senior Manager	75 000	100 000
Head of	90 000	145 000
Director	150 000	200 000
Global / Regional Director	200 000	300 000

In-House Public Affairs - Technology / Telecom / Digital

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Executive	35 000	48 000
Manager	48 000	68 000
Senior Manager	65 000	95 000
Head	95 000	130 000
Director	150 000	200 000
Global / Regional Director	200 000	280 000+

**Size of company, industry, and market (competition) account for the large range of salaries.*

In-House Public Affairs - Transport / Logistics

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Executive	35 000	48 000
Manager	45 000	65 000
Senior Manager	65 000	95 000
Head	90 000	120 000
Director	150 000	200 000
Global / Regional Director	200 000	280 000

Not-For-Profit - Public Affairs

Job title	Minimum Salary (€)	Maximum Salary (€)
Executive	28 000	40 000
Manager	42 000	58 000
Senior Manager	60 000	70 000
Head	80 000	100 000
Director	90 000	140 000
Global / Regional Director	140 000	180 000+

**Size of company, industry, and market (competition) account for the large range of salaries.*



DEI in 2026: What You Need to Know

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) continue to shape the talent landscape, but the environment has changed. Economic uncertainty, policy shifts and social pressures have prompted some organisations to scale back their initiatives, while others are working to embed inclusion more firmly into their culture. What remains clear is that DEI is most effective when it is directly connected with business strategy, supported by psychological safety and grounded in genuine listening. Inclusion is evolving rather than disappearing and it remains a key factor in attracting and retaining top talent.

In our work and recent industry conversations, we continue to see that organisations linking DEI to performance, innovation and retention are better placed to sustain momentum, even in challenging periods. Employees increasingly expect workplaces where they feel supported, heard and able to contribute openly. Although measurement and external pressures still create hurdles, progress is evident. Many organisations are redefining what inclusion means for them and adapting as their workforces change.

At Hanson Search, we help organisations build leadership teams that can foster inclusive cultures and support long-term success. As the market becomes more employee-driven, the organisations that remain committed to inclusion will be best positioned to attract and retain high-calibre talent.

Amy Hayer
DEI Lead, Hanson Search



The Brussels Job Market

Evolving Expectations in Brussels Hiring

The Brussels job market looks very different today than it did even two years ago. Salaries still matter, but they are no longer the deciding factor for many candidates. Culture, flexibility, genuine development opportunities and a real commitment to inclusion now play a much larger role in how people assess a potential employer.

Multilingual talent continues to hold strong negotiating power, particularly those fluent in English, French and Dutch. Belgium's tax structure also means that benefits make up an important part of any offer. Meal vouchers, mobility allowances and enhanced pension schemes often weigh just as heavily as base salary when candidates compare roles.

Employers, meanwhile, are focusing on expertise in areas such as technology policy, sustainability, energy, healthcare regulation and financial services. The strongest hires bring a mix of technical insight, stakeholder management, strategic communication and commercial judgement. A combination that has become increasingly essential in Brussels's complex policy environment.

We support organisations across Belgium in understanding the market, securing the talent they need and building strong, future-ready teams.

Peter Ferguson
Managing Consultant, Hanson Search

A Guide to Benefit Packages in Belgium

When exploring a new role, salary is only one part of the overall offer. A strong benefits package can make a real difference in job satisfaction, work-life balance and long-term career development.

At Hanson Search, we work with organisations and senior talent across Europe, the UK, the Middle East and USA. Speaking daily with employers and candidates gives us a clear view of how benefits are evolving, what has become standard in the market and what people value most. Drawing on this insight, we've created this guide to outline the core benefits employers commonly offer, the elements that strengthen a package and the features that genuinely set an organisation apart in a competitive market.

Standard Benefits

(What Employees Expect as a Minimum)

Most Belgian employers provide these as part of their standard package:

- **Pension Contributions** – Employers contribute to the statutory pension system, and many offer additional supplementary pension plans.
- **Hybrid Working** – A balance of office and remote work is increasingly common, especially in corporate sectors.
- **Paid Holiday** – The legal minimum is four weeks of paid leave, but many employers offer additional days, particularly for senior roles.
- **Parental Leave** – Generous statutory parental leave, with some employers offering enhanced pay for the first few months.
- **Meal Vouchers (Tickets-Restaurant)** – Most employers offer subsidised meal vouchers, which can be used in restaurants or for groceries.
- **Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs)** – Mental health services, counselling, and well-being initiatives are becoming more prevalent.

Nice-to-Have Benefits

(What Makes an Employer More Competitive)

These perks show that an employer is prioritising employee well-being and development:

- **Private Health Insurance (Mutuelle)** – Employers must provide complementary health insurance, but some offer more comprehensive coverage, including hospitalisation, dental and optical care; and coverage for family members.
- **Mobility Benefits** – Public transport subsidies, bike allowances, and in some cases, company car allowances.
- **Well-being Allowance** – Gym memberships, wellness stipends, and mental health support.



- **Learning and Development Budgets** – Professional training programmes, certifications, and language courses.
- **Flexible Working Hours** – Options for flexible hours or compressed work-weeks to support work-life balance.
- **Remote Work Policies** – Some companies allow employees to work from other EU countries for short periods (usually a minimum of three weeks annually).
- **13th Salary** – A 13th salary may apply depending on the Joint Labor Committee. For those employers who pay a 13th-month bonus, it is typically paid at the end of the year. In addition, some employers also add half of a 14th month's pay.

Exceptional Perks (What Really Stands Out)

These are rarer but highly valued benefits that make an employer a stand out choice:

- **Four-Day Work-week** – Some employers are testing the four-day work-week model to improve productivity and work-life balance.
- **Volunteering Days** – Paid leave to engage in social or sustainability initiatives.
- **Extra Paid Leave** – Some companies offer additional holidays beyond the statutory minimum.
- **Equity/Stock Options** – Common in start-ups, high-growth companies and listed companies as part of their long-term incentives.
- **Home Office Stipend** – A budget for remote employees to set up a functional and ergonomic workspace.
- **Sabbatical** – Some companies may choose to provide various leave options that offer financial support during extended periods away from work.
- **Childcare Support** – Some companies provide childcare vouchers or specific arrangements that can help working parents with costs.
- **Bonus schemes** – In Belgium, bonus schemes are structured to provide additional financial incentives to employees, often through specific programs that offer favourable tax and social security treatments.



About Hanson Search

Hanson Search is a globally recognised, award-winning headhunting and talent advisory consultancy. We specialise in helping organisations appoint world-class leaders for business-critical roles across revenue, reputation and risk.

For more than two decades, we have supported consultancies, global brands, government entities, start-ups and scale-ups in building high-performing leadership teams. Our work spans communications, sustainability, public affairs and policy, digital marketing, corporate affairs and commercial leadership.

Throughout this time, we have appointed C-suite executives, shaped boards and built teams that drive meaningful growth and transformation.

In 2026, our footprint continues to expand. With consultants and researchers based across the UK, Europe, the US and the UAE, we operate globally and deliver consistently strong market insight. Our reach is international and our experience reflects the increasingly cross-border nature of today's talent landscape.

If you are looking to hire or making a career enquiry, please get in touch and a member of our team will be happy to help.



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