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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/273/2021_2022__E9_AB_98_E7_BA_A7_E5_8F_A3_E8_c67_273961.htm Parliamentary elections begin in Belgium Belgians began casting their ballots on Sunday to choose members of the two houses of parliament. Polls opened at 8:00 a.m. (0600 GMT). All Belgians aged 18 and older have the right to vote. Voting will finish at 3:00 p.m. Exit poll results are expected around 8:00 p.m. Complete results are due to come out around midnight. No political party in Belgium fields candidates in both the two main regions -- the northern Dutch-speaking Flanders and the southern French-speaking Wallonia. Traditionally, the party winning the most votes in Flanders, where 60 percent of Belgians live, is the biggest party in parliament and gets the first try at forging a coalition. Its leader is the most likely candidate for federal prime minister. Latest opinion polls showed that Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt's Flemish Liberals (VLD) is unlikely to hang on to its job after eight years in office. The party ranked fourth among Flemish parties with 17.3 percent of Flemish votes, down from 25.9 percent they achieved in the federal elections in 2003. Yves Leterme, the 46-year-old leader of the Flemish region, appeared poised to become the next prime minister. His party, the centrist alliance between Flemish Christian Democrats and Flemish nationalists (CD&V/N-VA), has almost 30 percent support in Flanders, 3.6 percent higher than in 2003. Flemish Christian Democrats had been part of the Belgian government for most of the past 50 years. But in

1999, it lost to the Flemish Liberals and became opposition. The far-right Vlaams Belang, or Flemish Interests party, ranked second within Flemish parties with some 22 percent of support among Flemish voters. The party advocates a formal secession of Flanders from Belgium. In Wallonia, the francophone Socialists command about 30 percent of support and is likely to be the biggest winner, according to the latest opinion poll. Up to 10 parties or coalitions have a chance of participating in the next government. Another recent media poll in Flanders found that 41 percent of the respondents believe that Flemish regional leader Leterme should become the new federal prime minister, while Verhofstadt followed with 26 percent of support. The Belgian Parliament consists of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The House of Representatives has 150 directly elected members. The Senate has 71 members, which is a mixture of directly elected senior politicians and representatives of the different regions and linguistic communities. Members of the House of Representative are chosen by a proportional voting system. Elections take place every four years. Belgium is one of the few countries that has compulsory voting, which requires eligible citizens to attend a polling place or face punishment such as fines. Therefore voter turnout in Belgium has been one of the highest in the world. 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com