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WELCOME TO
THE CITY OF LEUVEN!

The City of Leuven and the institutions of higher education that call Leuven home are pleased to welcome you to this lovely city. We have joined forces to produce this guide to Leuven which is available on paper and online. Living in Leuven has been written especially for all international visitors of the institutions of higher education. It contains information about the institutions, Belgium, daily life in Leuven and can help you navigate the practical, social and cultural challenges you might face during your stay in Leuven. Living in Leuven will answer many, albeit not all, questions you may have and settling into your new home will feel much less overwhelming than you might think.

Leuven will be your city before you know it!

—

The Editorial Team

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els.vandaele@leuven.be
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USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

City Hall

Stad Leuven
Professor Van Overstraetenplein 1
3000 Leuven
T 016 27 20 00
www.leuven.be

Foreigners Office
T 016 27 21 94

Institutions of higher education

KU Leuven
Oude Markt 13/5005
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 40 10
www.kuleuven.be/english

UC Leuven-Limburg
International Office
Geldenaaksebaan 335
3001 Heverlee
T 016 375 700
www.ucll.be/international

LUCA School of Arts
campus Lemmens
Lemmensberg 3
3000 Leuven
T 016 23 39 67
www.luca-arts.be

USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

Fire 100

Ambulance 100

Police 101
Police Leuven: 016 21 06 10

Doctor after hours
070 25 70 25

Pharmacist
0900 10 500 – apotheek.be

European Emergency 112

Card Stop
070 344 344
FOR STUDENTS

Registrar’s Office

- KU Leuven: Naamsestraat 22
  sa@kuleuven.be
  T 016 32 40 40
- UC Leuven-Limburg: inschrijvingen.leuven@ucll.be
- LUCA School of Arts – campus Lemmens: onderwijsadmin.leuven@luca-arts.be - T 016 23 39 67

Student Services

Van Dale College
Naamsestraat 80
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 43 75
www.kuleuven.be/
studentservicesleuven

For all students:

Housing Service:
housingservice@kuleuven.be
T 016 32 44 00
Social Service:
socialservice@kuleuven.be
T 016 32 44 28
Legal Service:
juridischdienst@kuleuven.be
T 016 32 44 31
Student Employment Service:
jobdienst@kuleuven.be
T 016 32 44 34
Sustainability Unit:
duurzaamheid@kuleuven.be
T 016 32 93 01

Pangaea, Intercultural Meeting Centre*:
pangaea@kuleuven.be
T 016 32 33 96
*open to staff as well

Only for students KU Leuven and LUCA School of Arts – campus Lemmens:

Study Advice Service:
contact form on www.kuleuven.be/studyadvice

Student Health Centre:
gp@kuleuven.be
T 016 32 44 20

Disability Office:
disability@kuleuven.be
T 016 32 44 26

Contact Point for Religion and Philosophical Diversity:
reldiv@kuleuven.be
T 016 32 43 32

FOR STAFF

- KU Leuven: HR Department, Parijsstraat 72b
  hrdepartment@kuleuven.be
telephone number of your HR adviser can be found in your KULoket (see p. 53)
- UC Leuven-Limburg:
  international@ucll.be
- LUCA School of Arts – campus Lemmens:
  katrien.declerck@luca-arts.be

International admissions

- KU Leuven: International Admissions and Mobility Unit, Naamsestraat 63
  admissions@kuleuven.be
  T 016 37 98 84
- UC Leuven-Limburg: Admissions, Geldenaaksebaan 335, 3001 Heverlee
  international@ucll.be
  T 016 37 57 00
- LUCA School of Arts – campus Lemmens:
  admissions@luca-arts.be
1. Who are we – who is this guide for?

ID OF THE INSTITUTIONS
KU Leuven
UC Leuven-Limburg
LUCA School of Arts – Campus Lemmens Leuven
City of Leuven

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KU Leuven AGORA Learning Centre

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CLT Language Centre – Centrum voor Levende Talen
Mobyus
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Who are we – who is this guide for?

1.1 ID of the Institutions
1.2 Map of Leuven
1.3 Academic calendar
1.4 How to use this guide
ID OF THE INSTITUTIONS

KU Leuven

- Founded in 1425 and oldest university in the Low Countries.
- Start of courses in Dutch in 1911.
- 1970 split of the original alma mater into Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and Université Catholique de Louvain (moved to Louvain-la-Neuve).
- Its hospitality and academic excellence have attracted men and women from all corners of the world.
- High standards of education and research.
- International university with 15% of its student body coming from abroad.
- 16 faculties, subdivided into three groups (Humanities Group, Science, Engineering and Technology Group and the Biomedical Group).
- Extensive student services.
- Number of students (2016): 56 812: 41 679 students in Leuven and 15 133 students at its campuses in 11 Belgian cities, including Brussels, Ghent and Antwerp.
- Number of international students: 10 065.
- Academic Staff: 8 186.
- Administrative Staff: 3 714.
- University Hospital Staff: 9 000. [1]

UC Leuven-Limburg

- As of 1 January 2013, the former KHLeuven has merged with the former Group T–Leuven University College and the former KH-Lim, in Limburg province, to become University Colleges Leuven-Limburg (UC Leuven-Limburg).
- 3 Faculties: Management & Technology, Teacher Education, Health & Social Work, operating on 5 campuses in and around the city of Leuven, in addition to the Limburg campuses.
- Bachelor's degree courses in business management, office management, technology, industrial sciences,
teacher education, health care, and social and community work.

- Advanced bachelor’s programmes, postgraduate certificate programmes and other continuing education programmes.
- Number of students: 1,000.
- Number of staff: 1,700.
- Headquarters: Proximus campus, Geldenaaksebaan 335, 3001 Heverlee.
- Mission: UC Leuven-Limburg is a quality-minded institution offering higher education, research and community services and educates its students to become inspiring professionals, broad-minded world citizens and strong personalities who contribute to a sustainable and just society. [2]

LUCA School of Arts - Campus Lemmens Leuven

- Founded in 1879.
- Developed into a complete Conservatory which offers training in a wide range of disciplines:
  **Bachelor/Master in Music:** Composition, Conducting, Music Education, Music Therapy, Instrument/Voice, Jazz
  **Bachelor/Master in Drama**
  - After obtaining the master’s degree, students can opt to specialise in a particular discipline (ManaMa).
  - In 2012 the Lemmensinstituut became a member of LUCA School of Arts as campus Lemmens Leuven. LUCA School of Arts joins Art Faculties on different locations in Leuven, Ghent, Genk and Brussels: Music and Drama, Architecture & Construction, Arts, Interior Design, Design, Film & Photography
  - Number of students: 522.
  - International students: 103.
  - Staff: 199.
  - Situated in a large park area overlooking the Gasthuisberg university hospital.
  - The institute’s facilities include concert halls, theatres, ballet studios, multimedia rooms, a library and a number of rehearsal studios. The institute holds concerts, introductions to concerts, masterclasses, special projects which involve the preparation and performance of musical masterpieces, choirs and orchestras, specialised student ensembles for ancient and contemporary music, chamber orchestras and big band. [3]

City of Leuven

- First mentioned in 884 as Luvianum.
- Capital of the province Flemish Brabant.
- More than 98,000 inhabitants, named ‘Pietermannen’ after the oldest parish St- Peter’s.
- Its population has a high average level of education, due to the presence of the institutions of higher education.
- Employment is primarily in the tertiary and quaternary sectors.
- Large employers: University Hospital and Inbev (beer brewery).
- Mayor = Louis Tobback.
- Alderman responsible for student affairs since 2001.
- Sister towns: ’s Hertogenbosch (NL), Rennes (F), Lüdenscheid (D), Krakow (PL). [4]
STUDENT SERVICES
- Advisors: housing culture, environment and mobility
- Service for students with a disability - Religion & Philosophical Diversity
- Contact point - Housing service - Student Employment Service - Assisted Living accommodation - Student Health Centre
- Residence management - Social Service - Legal Service
- Study advice service
- Van Dalecollege, Naamsestraat 80, 3000 Leuven
- Residence management reception desk-Heverlee
- De Waag, Studentenwijk Arenberg 10, 3001 Heverlee
- Residence management reception desk-Leuven
- Van Dalecollege, Naamsestraat 80, 3000 Leuven
- Intercultural Meeting Centre Pangaena
- Vesaliusstraat 34, 3000 Leuven

RESIDENCES KU LEUVEN
- Amerikaans College
- Naamsestraat 100, 3000 Leuven
- Camillo Torres
- Brusselsstraat 165, 3000 Leuven
- Copal
- Tervuerenstraat 56, 3000 Leuven
- De Snoek
- Noornemannstraat 68, 3000 Leuven
- De Vesten
- Tervuerenvest 107, 3001 Heverlee
- De Viking
- Noornemannstraat 68, 3000 Leuven
- Don Bosco
- Van Ostaljienlaan 21, 3001 Heverlee
- Dondeynehuis
- Tervuerenstraat 56, 3000 Leuven
- Edith Stein
- Van Belstlaan 6, 3000 Leuven
- Father Damien Community
- Damiaanplein 9, 3000 Leuven
- Groot Begijnhof
- Groot Begijnhof 94-95, 3000 Leuven
- Heilig-Geestcollege
- Naamsestraat 40, 3000 Leuven
- Holleberg
- Schapenstraat 37, 3000 Leuven
- Home Vesalius
- Vesaliusstraat 34, 3000 Leuven
- Johannes XXIII
- Tervuerenvest 141, 3001 Heverlee
- Junior House
- Lipsiusstraat 58, 3000 Leuven
- Justus Lipsiuscollege
- Minderbroedersstraat 15, 3000 Leuven
- J.L. Vives International Residence
- Damiaanplein 10, 3000 Leuven
- Leo XIII-seminarie
- Tervuerenstraat 112, 3000 Leuven
- Loyola International Nachbahr Huis
- Schapenstraat 80, 3000 Leuven
- Mesjescentrum
- Vital Decosterstraat 47, 3000 Leuven
- Parkstraat 29, 3000 Leuven
- Paus Adriaan VI-college
- Hogeschoolplein 3, 3000 Leuven
- Pius X-college
- Tervuerenvest 103, 3001 Heverlee
- Residence de La Salle
- Mechelsestraat 6, 3000 Leuven
- Residence Herman Servotte
- Parkstraat 39-41, 3000 Leuven
- Residence Mgr. Cruysberghs
- Minderbroedersstraat 6, 3000 Leuven
- Residence Rega
- Sint-Maartenstraat 55d, 3000 Leuven
- Residence Wisteria
- Sint-Jansbergstraatweg 101, 3001 Heverlee
- Rijschoolstraat 6, 3000 Leuven
- Rijschoolstraat 17, 3000 Leuven
- Rijschoolstraat 25, 3000 Leuven
- Romero I
- Blijde Inkomstrasse 32, 3000 Leuven
- Romero II
- Tiensestraat 115, 3000 Leuven
- Sedes Parkstraat
- Parkstraat 23, 3000 Leuven
- Sedes Vlamingenstraat
- Vlamingenstraat 87, 3000 Leuven
- Sint-Catharina
- Sluisstraat 2, 3000 Leuven
- Studax
- Martelaerlaan 40, 3000 Leuven
- Studenthousen University Parish
- Tiensestraat 124, 3000 Leuven
- Studentresidence Groenveld
- Celestijnenlaan 76-80-82, 3001 Heverlee
- Studentenwijk Arenberg
- Studentenwijk Arenberg 2-25, 3001 Heverlee
- Zwartustersklooster
- Schapenstraat 80, 3000 Leuven

PRIVATE RESIDENCES
- #94
- Vaartstraat 94, 3000 Leuven
- Campus Artemis
- Groenstraat 264, 3001 Heverlee
- Goede Herder Leuven (GHL)
- Minderbroedersstraat 21, 3000 Leuven
- Home Thomas Morus
- Tervuerenvest 115-116-117, 3001 Heverlee
- La Marbrerie
- Naamsestraat 183, 3000 Leuven
- Regina Mundi Leuven (RML)
- Janseniusstraat 38, 3000 Leuven
- Residence Flamino
- Ravenstraat 28, 3000 Leuven
- Residence Thomae Morus
- Tervuerenvest 115-117-119, 3001 Heverlee
- Studenten Concentratie Keizersberg
- Mechelsestraat 202, 3000 Leuven
- Studentenhuis Lerkveold
- Vlaerstraat 220, 3001 Heverlee
- Studentenhuis Magnolia
- Blijde Inkomstrasse 28, 3000 Leuven
- Studentresidence De Koksstones
- Haveniersdreef 21, 3001 Heverlee
- Studentresidence Jan Pieter Minkelaers
- Sint-Lambertusstraat 2, 3001 Heverlee
- The Flint
- Vesaliusstraat 45c, 3000 Leuven
- The Village
- Blijde Inkomstrasse 81, 3000 Leuven
- Mathildegang 16, 3000 Leuven
- Burgemeesterstraat 82-46-50, 3000 Leuven

GUESTHOUSING
- De Viking
- Noornemannstraat 68, 3000 Leuven
- Youth Hostel De Blauwput
- Martelaerlaan 11A, 3010 Leuven
- Leuven City Hostel
- Ravenstraat 37, 3000 Leuven
- Residence Herman Servotte
- Parkstraat 39-41, 3000 Leuven
KU LEUVEN UNIVERSITY SERVICES

- University Administration and Central Services
  - Krakenstraat 3, 3000 Leuven
  - Rectoral offices
  - Naamsestraat 22, 3000 Leuven
- Central library
  - Ladeuzeplein 21, 3000 Leuven
- ICTS - The Central IT Office
  - de Croylaan 52b, 3001 Heverlee
- International Admissions and Mobility
  - Atriumcollege, Naamsestraat 63, 3000 Leuven
- Rectoraat
  - Naamsestraat 22, 3000 Leuven
- Student administration
  - Naamsestraat 22, 3000 Leuven

KU LEUVEN FACULTIES AND INSTITUTES

- Faculty of Canon Law
  - Sint-Michielssstraat 6, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Science (FaBeR)
  - Tervuursevest 101, 3001 Heverlee
- Faculty of Bioscience Engineering
  - Kasteelpark Arenberg 20, 3001 Heverlee
- Faculty of Business and Economics
  - Naamsestraat 69, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences
  - Onderwijs en Navorsing 2, Herestraat 49, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Medicine
  - Onderwijs en Navorsing 2, Herestraat 49, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Engineering Technology, Campus Group T
  - Andreas Vesaliusstraat 13, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Engineering Science
  - Kasteelpark Arenberg 1, 3001 Heverlee
- Faculty of Arts
  - Blijde Inkomstraat 21, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences
  - Tienestraat 102, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Law
  - Tienestraat 41, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Social Sciences
  - Parkstraat 45, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies
  - Sint-Michielssstraat 4, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty of Science
  - Geel Huis, Kasteelpark Arenberg 11, 3001 Heverlee
- Institute of Philosophy
  - Mercierplein 2, 3000 Leuven
- Leuven Language Institute
  - Dekenstraat 6, 3000 Leuven

UNIVERSITY RESTAURANTS

- Alma I
  - Tienestraat 115, 3000 Leuven
- Alma II
  - Van Evenstraat 2c, 3000 Leuven
- Alma III
  - Studentenwijk Arenberg 1, 3001 Heverlee
- De Moet
  - Colestijnlaan 200P, 3001 Heverlee
- De Spuye, kantine Universitair Sportcentrum
  - Tervuursevest 101, 3001 Heverlee
- De Valk
  - Tienestraat 41, 3000 Leuven
- Faculty Club
  - Groot Begijnhof 14, 3000 Leuven
- Gasthuisberg
  - Herestraat 49, 3000 Leuven
- Pauscollege
  - Hogeschoolplein 3, 3000 Leuven

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES IN LEUVEN

- UC Leuven-Limburg, Campus Comenius
  - Tienestraat 60, 3000 Leuven
- UC Leuven-Limburg, Department of Business Studies (ECHO)
  - Hertogstraat 178, 3001 Heverlee
- UC Leuven-Limburg, Department of Teacher Training (DLO)
  - Hertogstraat 178, 3001 Heverlee
- UC Leuven-Limburg, Department of Health and Technology (G&T)
  - Herestraat 49, 3000 Leuven
- UC Leuven-Limburg, Department of Social Work Heverlee (SSH)
  - Groeneweg 151, 3001 Heverlee
- LUCA School of Arts, campus Lemmens
  - Lemmensberg 3, 3000 Leuven
- Vlierick Bussiness School, Campus Leuven
  - Vlamingenstraat 83, 3000 Leuven

HOSPITALS

- Regional Hospital H. Hart Leuven
  - Naamsestraat 105, 3000 Leuven
- University Hospital Gasthuisberg
  - Herestraat 49, 3000 Leuven
- University Hospital Sint-Pieter
  - Brusselsestraat 69, 3000 Leuven
- University Hospital Sint-Rafael
  - Kapucijnenvoer 33, 3000 Leuven

PUBLIC SERVICES

- Fire Department
  - Terbankstraat 20, 3001 Heverlee
- Immigration and Visa Services (Stadskantoor)
  - Van Overstaetenplein 1, 3000 Leuven
- Fietspunt-Leuven station
  - Van Overstaetenplein 1/001, 3000 Leuven
- Leuven Police Department
  - Grote Markt 8, 3000 Leuven
- Local and Federal Police
  - Philipsite 4, 3001 Heverlee
- Town Hall
  - Grote Markt 9, 3000 Leuven
- Leuven Train Station
  - Leuven Station
- STUK Arts centre
  - Naamsestraat 96, 3000 Leuven
- VLEOS
  - Hollestraat 1, 3001 Heverlee
- CM Health Insurance
  - Leopold I-straat 34, 3000 Leuven

PARKING IN LEUVEN

KU Leuven parking is open to visitors for events and activities (such as information fairs) planned in the area. Please refer to the materials specific to each event or activity for more information about parking opportunities.

- Periphery parking (free)
  - Parking Bodart, Tervuursevest 165 pl.
  - Parking Sint-Rafael Martelarenplein 165 pl.
  - Parking Station Leuven, Martelarenplein 165 pl.

- Periphery parking (paid)
  - Parking Philipsite 1245 pl.
  - Parking Station Leuven, Martelarenplein 385 pl.

GOOD TO KNOW

All parts of the city within ‘the ring’ (the motorway that encircles the city) is a ‘blue zone’. In this zone, parking on the street is limited and regulated. The city centre is difficult to access by car due to circulation loops and one-way streets. Take care to select the correct route to your desired parking lot.
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is written for all international guests of the three institutions of higher education in Leuven and provides information on three levels:

- General information on different topics, applicable to everybody.
- Information on the level of an institution, applicable to members of this institution: KU Leuven, UC Leuven-Limburg or LUCA School of Arts – campus Lemmens.
- Information on the level of target groups. In the guide we distinguish two main target groups: students and staff.

**Student** = everybody with a student status at his/her institution

**Staff** = everybody else, all variations in staff related statuses

Some people have a double status, student as well as staff, e.g. certain doctoral students. If this applies to you, it means you can benefit from the information for both target groups. If you are not sure which status applies to you, you can check this at your institution.

Specific information per institution and/or target group is only given when relevant and/or existing. Otherwise it means that the general information is all you need. The guide gives you a general outline of need-to-know and nice-to-know topics. For detailed information you will be referred to a website and/or you will be given contact information of a specific service that can assist you further. You can search via the table of contents or the glossary in the back.

You will notice that the institutions work together for quite a lot of services. This is due to the KU Leuven Association. The KU Leuven Association is an open and dynamic network linking university colleges across Flanders and Brussels with the KU Leuven. Together, they hold a prominent and influential position in Flemish and European Higher Education. The Association members strengthen each other by exchanging expertise and pooling resources, which enables them to improve the quality of their teaching and research.

associatie.kuleuven.be/eng
2

First week to do’s

2.1 Accommodation
2.2 Insurances
2.3 Registration city hall
2.4 Money matters
1. Register at your institution

2. Start your affiliation with (health) insurance

3. Secure a permanent address

4. Register at City Hall

5. Police checks your address

6. Open a bank account
FOR STAFF

1. Register at your institution
2. Secure a permanent address
3. Register at City Hall
4. Police checks your address
5. Open a bank account
6. Affiliate yourself with (health) insurance
ACCOMMODATION

Housing market in Leuven

SITUATION
The Leuven housing market has a strong focus on the accommodation of individual students. This means there is a large offer of individual student rooms, often in converted family homes where the landlord is a private person who owns one or two student houses, or in purpose-built student housing managed by a private company. Different from institutions of higher education in other countries, the Leuven institutions only accommodate a small percentage of affiliated students and staff in university residence halls. The majority of students and staff will need to find housing on the private market. This means your search for housing in Leuven will be very much determined by your personal situation. Are you a student or a staff member? Will you be staying in Leuven alone or with your family? Below, you can find more information on how to organise your search accordingly.

PRICES
Depending on your situation and the comfort level, prices of accommodation are: see table. These prices do not cover all the costs, depending on the type of contract there might be supplementary expenses for heating, electricity, water, etc. (see p. 25).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation Type</th>
<th>Price Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>room</td>
<td>€250 - €450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>room with on suite facilities</td>
<td>€350 - €650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>double room (double occupancy)</td>
<td>€350 - €500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>studio (1 person)</td>
<td>€365 - €700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appartement</td>
<td>€600 - €800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house</td>
<td>€900 - €1300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looking for housing as a student

If you arrive in Leuven and haven’t found housing yet, you should go to the KU Leuven Housing Service immediately with your admission letter. This service assists all students enrolled in an institution of higher education in Leuven.

- A Housing Officer will provide you with the most up-to-date information on the student housing market and will guide you through the procedure to find permanent housing.
- A limited number of computers and telephones is available to search for housing and contact landlords.
- During the summer months a student employee is at hand to help you contact landlords (in Dutch).

Most students will find their new home in Leuven within a week. Leuven has seen a rise in student accommodation over the last years, so there will certainly be housing available for students throughout the year.

KOTWIJS: ONLINE DATABASE
We recommend you to look for housing via Kotwijs, the online housing database from the KU Leuven Housing Service. Kotwijs comprises a large offer of private rental accommodation for a full academic year and for a shorter period. Addresses listed in Kotwijs come from reliable landlords and the database is constantly updated. You can enter your requirements regarding type of accommodation, facilities, maximum rent, etc., and the system will show a selection of suitable addresses, together with the landlord’s data. After performing a search via Kotwijs, it is recommended that you view the rooms as quickly as possible. www.kotwijs.be

UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE HALLS
There are rooms, studios and apartments available for international students in KU Leuven residence halls. For more information on conditions and application procedure, contact KU Leuven Housing Service and/or check the website. www.kuleuven.be/residencehalls

STUDENTS WITH CHILDREN
The university does not provide guestroom facilities for families with children and the offer on the private housing market is limited. For this reason, you should always plan to arrive in Leuven alone at first and bring your families to Belgium later, after suitable permanent accommodation has been found.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>low</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>high</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>€ 250</td>
<td>€ 350</td>
<td>€ 550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 350</td>
<td>€ 450</td>
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<td>€ 350</td>
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<td>€ 600</td>
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<tr>
<td>€ 365</td>
<td>€ 480</td>
<td>€ 700</td>
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<tr>
<td>€ 600 - € 800</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 900 - € 1300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF PROBLEMS?

You can turn to the Housing Service for:

- Translation or interpretation of your rental contract or any other document related to your rental accommodation.
- Information about fire safety regulations in student housing.
- Mediation between you and your landlord in case of a conflict.
- Any housing question or problem. [1]

Looking for housing as a staff member

As a staff member, you are expected to find housing on your own, there is no housing service for staff members. Some basic information is available on the website of your institution.

If you will be staying in Leuven alone and for a short period of time, you can benefit from the student housing market to find a single room or studio with a student contract of maximum 12 months, with the possibility of renewal.

If you prefer more comfort, or if you will be staying for a few years and/or with your family, you will find yourself on the regular rental market looking for an apartment or a house, where rental contracts have a rental term of 3, 6 or 9 years. Where to look:

- Kotwijs database (see p. 23): limited offer of studios, apartments and houses, often student contracts
- Via real estate offices and websites: be careful for internet fraud!

KU Leuven
admin.kuleuven.be/personeel/english/international_staff/first_steps_upon_arrival#section-2

KU Leuven has some housing options for staff, under specific conditions:


Practical information on renting

www.kuleuven.be/accommodation

THE RENTAL CONTRACT

There are several types of contracts:

- A student contract with a term of 10, 11 or 12 months or a short term: It is advisable to use the KU Leuven modal rental contract, which is recognisable by the logo of KU Leuven. If the landlord insists on his own type of contract, please drop by the Housing Service before you sign it.
- A contract with a term of 3, 6 or 9 years, often used for apartments and houses.

Legally, a contract once signed, cannot be terminated before it expires, unless stated otherwise in the contract. It is advised to write down oral promises made by the landlord (e.g. painting the room, renovating the kitchen, etc.) in order to avoid misunderstanding in the future.

THE DEPOSIT

When you conclude a contract, the payment of a deposit is required.

- For rooms: a deposit of one or two months’ rent.
- For studios and apartments: deposits generally amount to two months’ rent.

The deposit can only be used to compensate for damage to the rented property caused by the tenant or by third parties to whom the tenant has granted access. The deposit or its balance will be reimbursed within one month after the end of the agreement, taking into account that the landlord should have the opportunity to
draw up the final bill for heating, electricity, etc. The landlord can charge an extra cost if the keys were not returned in time and/or the property has not been cleaned thoroughly.

Make sure that you:

• Ask for (and keep) the receipt when you pay the deposit in cash.
• Pay the rent until the last month, you cannot deduct the deposit from your rent that is still due.
• Don’t close your bank account when leaving Leuven indefinitely, before the deposit has been returned to your account.

SUPPLEMENTARY EXPENSES

If the cost of heating, electricity, water, etc. is not included in the rent, the contract should clearly state how these costs will be calculated. There are different possibilities:

• To pay a monthly advance for the costs, over and above the cost of the rent. At the end of the agreement, a settlement of the total costs is made, taking into account the advance payments. If each housing unit is equipped with an individual electricity and gas meter, the tenant and the landlord should make a note of the meter reading at the beginning and at the end of the rental term.
• To have an individual contract with the gas, electricity and water companies. In this case the tenant will receive and pay the invoices directly from and to the company. This usually applies for studio’s, apartments and houses.

FIRE INSURANCE

When you rent a property, you are responsible for damage caused by fire, water or an explosion, except in circumstances beyond your control (i.e. “force majeure”). Depending on the rental contract, you have to subscribe to an insurance policy to cover these risks.

CITY TAX

The city of Leuven levies a tax on the owner of every housing unit in Leuven used as second residence in certain situations. This tax amounts to € 756.50 per second residence per year for 2016. Most landlords stipulate in their contract that they will recover this sum from the tenant. What does this mean for students and staff members?

• You are staying for more than 90 days and you are registered in the municipal register (with annex 8, 15 or 33): No second-residence tax is due. On the request of the landlord you should hand over the annex as proof of registration.
• You are staying for more than 90 days and you are not registered in the municipal register: A reduced second-residence tax of € 91 is due, if you submit proof of enrolment at an educational institution offering full-time day courses.
damage both to the landlord’s property and to their personal belongings. An individual policy is obviously more expensive, depending on the coverage and the value of the property and furniture insured.

- When you rent a room from another student (subletting), you can sign in on a fire insurance policy offered by the KU Leuven that covers your liability towards the landlord and third parties, as well as your personal belongings. This fire insurance policy costs € 25 per year.

**INSURANCES**

There are different types of insurances for:

- Medical costs: Coverage by a health insurance policy is required by law. This is not taken care of by the institution. In most cases, you will have to affiliate with a public Belgian health insurance fund.
- Study/work accidents and damage to third parties during student/work activities: Through your registration, you are automatically covered for this by your institution.
- Damage to third parties during private life: This insurance covers the physical and material damage accidentally caused by you or members of your household to others in your private life.

Who can you contact with questions regarding insurances? [2]

- **All students:** Social Service (see p. 105)
- **Staff members:** Your local HR adviser or the Insurance Office KU Leuven
  - KU Leuven: hrdepartment@kuleuven.be
  - UC Leuven-Limburg: international@ucll.be
  - LUCA School of Arts, campus Lemmens: katrien.declerck@luca-arts.be

**Health Insurance**

All residents of Belgium, Belgian nationals or otherwise, are required by law to be covered by a health insurance policy. This is also in your own interest. Without insurance coverage, the costs of medical care can quickly spiral out of control. You have to arrange affiliation with health insurance on your own, this is not taken care of by your institution.

In most cases, you will have to affiliate yourself with a public Belgian health insurance fund. This fund reimburses an average of 75% of the official tariffs of (Belgian) medical expenses. See p. 68 for more information on reimbursement of medical costs.

**DO I NEED TO AFFILIATE MYSELF?**

These are general guidelines. The situation might be different depending on your status, in combination with the regulations in your home country. It is best to always check with the health insurance fund in your home country, as well as with the Belgian health insurance fund.

In a few cases, such as for certain scholarship students, for people coming in the framework of a particular programme, for people coming for a very short period, coverage is arranged by the institution or included in the programme. Check this with your institution during or prior to enrolment.

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[1] **HOUSING SERVICE KU LEUVEN**

Naamsestraat 80
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 44 00
housingservice@kuleuven.be
www.kuleuven.be/accommodation

Weekdays from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
From 1 June to 30 September:
Weekdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

[2] **INSURANCE OFFICE KU LEUVEN**

Krakenstraat 3/5515
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 40 99
verzekeringen@kuleuven.be
admin.kuleuven.be/sab/vz/en/insurance-office
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No (steady) Belgian income</th>
<th>Resident of an EEA country</th>
<th>You have an European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) -&gt; You don’t need to affiliate yourself. For a long stay: Your EHIC might not cover you for a long stay. Check the regulation in your home country.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No (steady) Belgian income</td>
<td>Resident of an non-EEA country</td>
<td>You don’t have an EHIC. -&gt; You need to affiliate with a Belgian health insurance or take out a private insurance for medical costs in Belgium. For a stay less than 3 months:- Check if you are covered by the health insurance in your country. If not, you need to take out a private insurance for medical costs in Belgium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A steady Belgian income (= a salary or a scholarship subject to social security)</td>
<td>You need to affiliate with a Belgian health insurance.</td>
<td>See below.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the EHIC, a Belgian health insurance fund will partially reimburse you for essential medical costs based on your receipts (doctor, pharmacist, etc.). E.g. non-urgent dental check-ups might not be included.

Your country has a bilateral agreement on medical costs with Belgium. [www.kruispuntmi.be](http://www.kruispuntmi.be), search ‘publieke ziekteverzekering bilateraal akkoord’) -> You don’t need to affiliate yourself, if your stay in Belgium does not exceed the period foreseen in the agreement. You keep your affiliation with a health insurance in your home country.

Your country does not have a bilateral agreement on medical costs with Belgium. -> You need to affiliate with a Belgian health insurance or take out a private insurance for medical costs in Belgium. For a stay less than 3 months: Check if you are covered by the health insurance in your country. If not, you need to take out a private insurance for medical costs in Belgium.

You need a special document from your health insurance company in your home country before you leave for Belgium. With this document, you can get (partial) reimbursement from a Belgian insurance fund for your costs based on your receipts (doctor, pharmacist, etc.).
2.2 INSURANCES

HOW CAN I AFFILIATE MYSELF?
You can affiliate yourself with the health insurance fund of your choice. For a list of health insurance funds in Leuven, see p.

- **As a student**: you should start your affiliation straight after enrolment.
- **As a staff member**: you have to finish the procedure at City Hall first before you can affiliate yourself.
- **With family**: your partner has to report to the health insurance company in person because she/he must sign the insurance documents personally. If a child is born during your stay in Belgium, you must report this to the health insurance company and submit the birth certificate, that you will obtain at the City Hall.

The documents you must submit at the health insurance are:

- Your passport.
- **For students**: the certificate of enrolment that you will obtain automatically upon enrolment at your institution in Leuven.
- **For staff**: Your Belgian identity card/residence permit or your temporary document (e.g. annex 15).
  
  If applicable: the contract of the employer who is paying your scholarship or salary. Your bank account number.
- **With family**: the certificate of your family composition (gezinssamenstelling), that you can obtain at City Hall.

### Affiliation Fee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student (not necessarily registered at City Hall)</strong></td>
<td>Min. € 18/quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No (steady) Belgian income &amp; registered at City Hall</strong></td>
<td>Min. € 18/quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A steady Belgian income (=salary/scholarship subject to social security e.g. from KU Leuven) &amp; registered at City Hall</strong></td>
<td>Min. € 18/quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income outside Belgium &amp; registered at City Hall</strong></td>
<td>Min. € 18/quarter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

People with an income outside of Belgium should consider private insurance, since the cost of Belgian health insurance is proportional to the income and could be higher.
**First week to do’s**

**For students:**
After finishing the procedure at City Hall, you will have to complete your file at the health insurance fund with:

- Your Belgian identity card/residence permit or your temporary document (e.g. annex 15), if applicable.
- Your bank account number.

Depending on your situation, you will pay a different fee: see table p. 28.

For information on the health care system and the reimbursement of medical costs, see chapter 7 ‘Health’. Students with a low income can apply for the status of ‘verhoogde tegemoetkoming’ with higher reimbursement. [3]

**Civil liability insurance: coverage by your institution during study/work related activities**
Through your enrolment as a student or staff member at your institution, you are insured by your institution for:

- Your own physical damage during study or work related activities and during the journey to and from these activities, in Belgium as well as abroad.
- Your civil liability (damage to third parties) during study or work related activities, in Belgium as well as abroad.

More information for all institutions: admin.kuleuven.be/sab/vz/en

**Third Party Liability Insurance**
Almost all Belgians have a third party liability insurance for private life. This policy compensates the physical and material damage that they, the members of their household or their pets accidentally cause to others in their private life and for which they are legally liable. E.g. when you accidentally knock the side mirror off a parked car while cycling or spill your coffee on the laptop of your friend. The insured party who has his/her normal residence in Belgium and family members (= legal partner and /or child) staying with the insured party at the same address in Belgium will be covered throughout the world. Past experience has shown that the costs associated with damage caused, even in a minor accident, can turn out to be very high. That is why you are strongly advised and in some cases obliged to take this policy.

**Non-EEA students** are obliged to join the institution’s third party liability policy upon registration and pay € 13.

**EEA students** are strongly recommended to take this policy upon registration as well.

- **Staff members:** Staff members can take out this insurance with a bank or private insurance company.

In case of an accident:

- **Students:** Report your accident to the Social Service as soon as possible (see p. 105). This office will file the claim with the relevant Insurance company on your behalf and help you to follow up your claim.
- **Staff members:** Please contact your insurance company immediately.

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- **Staff members:** Please contact your insurance company immediately.
REGISTRATION
CITY HALL

Foreigners Office

All international students and staff are required to register at the Foreigners Office (‘Dienst niet-Belgen’) of City Hall in Leuven. You cannot start this procedure before you are enrolled at your educational institution.

The procedure and necessary documents needed will vary upon your student or staff status, your nationality and length of stay. Detailed information on how to do this registration can be found online and will be provided to you upon enrolment: www.kuleuven.be/english/admissions/travelling/city-hall

With questions about this procedure, you can contact:

- KU Leuven:
  Students & visiting fellows: International Admissions and Mobility – admissions@kuleuven.be
  Staff members: hrdepartment@kuleuven.be
- UC Leuven-Limburg: International Office – international@ucll.be
- LUCA School of Arts - Campus Lemmens Leuven: international@luca-arts.be

Check by the police officer

After you have registered at the Foreigners Office at the city hall, your neighbourhood police officer will drop by your (Belgian) address to verify that you actually live there. Be sure to clearly put your name on your doorbell or mailbox.

Due to the large number of addresses that need to be checked, there can be a delay of several weeks. In very exceptional cases of a delay of more than 10 weeks, you can get in touch with the police via doelgroepenwerking@polieteleuven.be.

If you are not at home at the time of the officer’s visit, you will receive a letter inviting you to report to the police station in your district. Make sure you do this as soon as possible in order to avoid misunderstandings or future administrative problems.

If you live in a KU Leuven residence hall, the police will not drop by. They will check that you actually live there via the residence management of KU Leuven.

Belgian identity card/residence permit

The card you receive after registering at city hall is your official residence permit. It also functions as your identity card in Belgium. This is an extremely important document and you are required to carry it with you at all times. To extend the validity of your identity card/residence permit, you should go to the Foreigners Office.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Addresses for Health Insurance

Christelijke Mutualiteit Leuven (CM)
Leopold-I-straat 34
3000 Leuven
T 016 31 49 10
Register online: www.cmleuven.be

Neutraal Ziekenfonds Vlaanderen
Vaartstraat 56/1
3000 Leuven
T 016 30 16 43

Socialistische Mutualiteit
Mechelsestraat 70
3000 Leuven
T 016 22 57 04

Liberale Mutualiteit van Brabant
Vital Decosterstraat 84
3000 Leuven
T 016 20 61 12

Vlaams en Neutraal Ziekenfonds
Vital Decosterstraat 83
3000 Leuven
T 016 85 29 90

Securex
Vaartkom 38/2a
3000 Leuven
T 016 38 86 11

Partena Onafhankelijk Ziekenfonds
Mercatorpad 9
3000 Leuven
T 016 22 34 24

Hulpkas voor Ziekte- en Invaliditeitsverzekering
Brouwersstraat 1B/002
3000 Leuven
T 016 20 80 79

FOREIGNERS OFFICE

Professor Van Overstraetenplein 1
3000 Leuven
T 016 27 21 70
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Thursday from 12:00 noon to 7:00 p.m.
of your city hall in person before the expiry date of your identity card. **Non-EEA students** will have to present a new proof of enrolment, a copy of their transcript and a proof of solvency. **Non-EEA staff** members, depending on their staff status, will be asked to submit either a new hosting agreement or a new work permit.

If you lose your identity card/residence permit, you must report this in person at the local police station and sign an official declaration of loss. Bring along two passport photographs as well. After an investigation by the police, you will be given a duplicate of your identity card/residence permit.

### Change of address

Every time you change your address, you must report your new address within eight days to the city hall of your place of residence. If you are moving to another town or city in Belgium, you must report to the Foreigners Office of the city hall of your new place of residence. You are likewise required to inform your institution, the health insurance company and other relevant offices of your change of address.

### MONEY MATTERS

#### Opening a bank account

Branches of the principal Belgian and international banks can be found in all Belgian cities. Among the best known Belgian banks are ING, KBC, Belfius, BNP Paribas Fortis, Argenta and Citibank. A bank account can only be opened after arrival Belgium. The procedure on how to open a bank account can differ from bank to bank.

- After opening a bank account, you receive a debit card, which needs to be signed and activated by choosing and confirming a personal “PIN code”.
- You will have to pay a monthly fee that includes all the standard services. For a small fee to cover postage, your banks will send your transaction statements to your home address. The easiest way of obtaining account statements is to print them out at a “selfbanking” terminal, this is free.
- Withdrawals in dollars or traveller’s checks need to be ordered some days in advance.

Payment by bank transfer is a very common method of paying bills in Belgium. Most banks provide online Home-Banking options. It is advisable to arrange standing orders with the bank (‘ domiciliëring’) for recurring payments such as rent, gas, electricity, water or telephone bills. Since the payments are made automatically, you cannot forget, even if you are away for a period of time.

### Living Cost

Yearly study costs for students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Check the website of your institution.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuition fee</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buss Pass (optional)</td>
<td>€ 20 — € 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports card (optional)</td>
<td>€ 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture card (optional)</td>
<td>€ 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study materials</td>
<td>€ 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic activities</td>
<td>€ 350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2.4 MONEY MATTERS

#### Single With partner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rent deposit</th>
<th>€ 350</th>
<th>€ 700 (2-person apartment)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent for 1st month, utilities included</td>
<td>€ 350</td>
<td>€ 700 (2-person apartment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle rent at Velo</td>
<td>Students: € 70 (deposit) + € 68 (rent for 1 year)</td>
<td>A partner can rent a bicycle at staff rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff: € 70 (deposit) + € 204 (rent for 1 year)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health insurance</td>
<td>See p. 28 for fee depending on your situation.</td>
<td>Dependent partners do not pay additional charge, if your partner has an income he/she will have to affiliate as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Party Liability insurance</td>
<td>Students: € 13</td>
<td>Family members are covered as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff: rate of private insurance policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Monthly costs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>With partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly rent</td>
<td>€ 350</td>
<td>€ 700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly utilities costs</td>
<td>Included in rent</td>
<td>Included in rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly living costs</td>
<td>€ 400</td>
<td>€ 650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total monthly costs</td>
<td>€ 750</td>
<td>€ 1350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3

Living

3.1 Housekeeping
3.2 Shopping
3.3 Eating
3.4 Working as a student employee
3.5 Taxes and tax form
3.1 HOUSEKEEPING

www.kuleuven.be/housekeepingtips

Sorting waste

In Leuven, waste needs to be sorted in a system with 7 different fractions. The more waste you produce and the less you sort your fractions, the more expensive it will be. You can reduce your waste by buying products with less packaging, by using glass instead of plastic bottles etc.

Every fraction has a specific pick-up day and needs to be put in front of the house or residence between 6:00 and 7:00 am on collection mornings. The waste collection calendar, provided by the City of Leuven, shows the different pick-up days.

Wrongfully sorting or not respecting the pick-up days will be fined and can cost you up to € 250. Check the fractions and pick-up days on the waste calendar or use the recycle app. The official bags for waste collection can be bought in most supermarkets and in Leuven City Hall. [1]

www.leuven.be/leven/huisvuil-milieu/afval/ (Dutch)
www.kuleuven.be/wastecalendar (English)
www.ophaalkalender.be (app)

Glass

Glass should be taken to one of the glass containers located throughout the city. Light bulbs or flat glass (for instance from a window) are not allowed, they need to be brought to one of the recycling centres. Always rinse out glass bottles. Coloured glass usually goes in a separate container from clear glass.

Organic Waste – GFT (green bag)

Vegetables, fruit and garden waste belong in the green bag. Coffee filters, teabags and eggshells are also allowed. In a number of residence
halls and houses little green buckets are used instead of bags. The most environmentally friendly way to get rid of your green waste is to start composting.

Plastic bottles and flasks, Metal packaging and Drink cartons – PMD (blue bag)
It is very important that you know what belongs in the blue bag, since this bag will not be picked up if it contains the wrong materials. If you sorted the wrong way, your bag will be left on the pavement with a red sticker. You will then have to take the bag back in and sort correctly before putting it outside on the next pick-up day. If you leave the bag outside you will be fined.

**Always allowed:** empty and washed tetra packs, plastic bottles, metal cans, aluminium tins and trays (from lasagna for instance).

**Never allowed:** other plastics such as butter tubs, yoghurt cups, plastic shopping bags, plastic objects, aluminium foil, badly rinsed tetra packs.

Regular waste (brown bag)
All the household waste that doesn’t fit in the other fractions belongs in the brown bag. The brown bag is the most expensive one, which means that the more you sort in the other fractions, the more money you save.

Large domestic waste
Large objects such as furniture and electronic appliances should be brought to a recycling centre. They can also be picked up at your residence on demand for a fee starting at € 25 via the Sanitation Department. If the furniture or electronic appliance is still functional, you can contact Spit, the collection centre for recycling household items (see p. 37).

Small dangerous waste - KGA
Certain waste is dangerous if it is dumped or burned since it might pollute the air and soil. Used batteries can be deposited in special boxes provided in supermarkets. Expired or unused medication has to be taken to the pharmacist without the packaging. Other products like leftover cleaning products, used cooking oil, cosmetics, writing materials, etc. can be brought for free to one of the three recycling centres.

Recycling Centre
Every city has one or more recycling centres where inhabitants can bring their large domestic waste, small dangerous waste and other specific waste fractions such as construction debris, wood etc. In the Leuven area, there are three recycling centres, called EcoWerf. You can only access the recycling centre with your electronic ID-card or with a temporary access card (to be applied for at the Sanitation Department). Small dangerous waste and old electronic appliances can be brought in for free. For all other waste you will need to pay a fee depending on the kind of waste and the volume. [2]

www.ecowerf.be

Responsible energy use
We encourage everyone to consume energy and water in a sustainable way. Reducing your consumption, doesn’t need to reduce your comfort. What can you do?
• Turn off the lights when you are the last person to leave a room.
• Turn off the screen of your computer if you are not working on it for more than ten minutes.
• Put a lid on your pot or pan (60 to 70% less energy used), and turn off the heat a bit before you finish cooking.
• The ideal temperature for your refrigerator is 6°C. Try to avoid a layer of ice in the freezer.
• Do not wash your dishes under running water.
• Report leaking taps to the landlord.
• Copy and print on both sides of your printing paper.

Laundrettes, laundries and dry cleaning
For a manual and prices, see brochure ‘Housekeeping tips’ on the website.

- Strea Net
  Tervuursesteenweg 187
- Atomic De Blauwe Hoek
  Brusselsestraat 214/7
- De Lelie
  Maria Van Belstraat 7
- De Gouden Draad
  Tiensestraat 204
- Quick Shop
  Diestsestraat 224
- Tapolino
  Slachthuislaan 1/005
- Super Clean
  A. Vesaliusstraat 16
- De Washoek
  Schapenstraat 134
- Kesselse wasserij Prima
  Press - Platte Losstraat 278 - 3010 Kessel-Lo
- Leuvense Strijk- en Poetsdienst - Kapucijnenvoer 133/1
- Wassalon Primus
  Ridderstraat 75
- Nemo Wash - Tiensestraat 67 and Parijsstraat 43

Leuven going carbon neutral by 2030
Leuven commits to being carbon neutral by 2030. This means that the net amount of carbon dioxide we jointly emit every day will be reduced to zero. To make this ambitious plan work, the city, KU Leuven and at present already over 230 partners have joined hands for projects on energy-efficient renovating, sustainable mobility, renewable energy, local agriculture, nature etc. Anybody, individual or organisation, can join the non-profit association Leuven Klimaatneutraal 2030. As a member you’ll be kept informed about ongoing climate actions, projects, grants, activities, news and tips.

[1] KU LEUVEN SUSTAINABILITY UNIT
For advice on waste prevention and selection, responsible energy and water use, sustainable transportation
Zwartzustersstraat 2/5006
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 18 43
duurzaamheid@kuleuven.be

[2] ECOWERF LEUVEN (RECYCLING CENTRES)
Diestsesteenweg 504
3010 Kessel-Lo
Aarschotsesteenweg 210
3012 Wilsele
Grauwmeer
3001 Heverlee

[3] STADSREINIGING (SANITATION DEPARTMENT)
Aarschotsesteenweg 68
3012 Leuven
T 016 29 61 14
reinigingsdienst@leuven.be

Monday to Friday from 07:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

[4] SPIT
IJzermolenstraat 10-12
3001 Heverlee
T 016 65 29 57
info@spit.be
www.spit.be

Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
SHOPPING

Supermarkets and shops
Most supermarkets and shops are open every day except Sundays, usually from 9 or 10 a.m. until 6 or 8 p.m. Some shops will have a weekday closing. There are a few supermarkets that do open on Sundays. Bakeries are usually always open on Sundays and bank holidays. Leuven has a lot of Night Shops, they open after 6:00 p.m. until late at night and offer a limited selection of food items.

€: Aldi, Colruyt, Lidl
€€: Carrefour, Delhaize, Match, Spar
€€€: Night Shops

Leuven does not have shopping malls, but shops are scattered throughout the city. The most important shopping streets are the Bondgenotenlaan, Diestsestraat, Tiensestraat, Naamsestraat and Brusselsestraat.

Markets
The traditional local Belgian market is very popular among inhabitants as well as tourists. You can buy fresh products, such as meat, fish, fruit and vegetables, local delicacies as well as other household items.

• Wednesday afternoons from 3:00 p.m.: A. de Becker-Remyplein in Kessel-Lo (food and goods).
• Friday mornings: Mgr. Ladeuzeplein and H.Hooverplein (food and goods), Brusselsestraat (flowers).
• Saturdays: M. de Layensplein and Mechelsestraat (flee market), Brusselsestraat (vegetables, cheese, local delicacies).
• Sunday mornings: Heverlee station (food and goods).

Second hand shops

• SPIT (household items, furniture and clothing) - IJzermolenstraat 10-12
• Rawette (only clothing) - Den Tempst 13
• Vintage ’Hippo Royale’ - Parijsstraat 44
• Cyaankali (only clothing) - Diestsestraat 217
• Think Twice T2 (only clothing) - Mechelsestraat 255
• De Kapstok (cheap clothing) - Mechelsestraat 32
• Young Dolphins (children’s clothing and needs) - Dirk Boutslaan 8

SPIT second-hand shop
SPIT is a project of social economy that recycles and sells second-hand household items, furniture, electrical appliances and clothing at a low price. The stock is based on used goods that they collect, so every week you will find new items for sale. [3]
EATING

Alma University Restaurant
The university restaurants, better known as Alma, serve meals at subsidised low prices for

- All students enrolled in an institution of higher education in Leuven.
- KU Leuven staff.

The dishes are priced between €3.10 and €5.80, but you need to have your student or staff card with you to benefit from the low prices. Other visitors or students/staff without their card will pay more. Every weekday, Alma offers a wide choice of warm and cold dishes, at least one vegetarian meal, as well as a variety of sandwiches. You can check the daily menu online. [4]

Veggie Bag
If you like cooking yourself, you can order the Veggie Bag, a weekly surprise package of organic fruits and vegetables. The Veggie Bag is available for all students and staff. There are four formulas:

- An individual student package of vegetables and fruit for €6.
- A package of fruit for €6.
- A small package of vegetables for €6.
- A large package of vegetables for €12.

The Veggie Bag is locally produced by De Wikke, an organic farming project. You order, pay for, and collect your veggie bag(s) at the pick-up spot of your choice at a certain time.

www.kuleuven.be/veggiebag
Do you want to earn some extra money or gain work experience while you are staying in Belgium? Depending on your nationality, you will need specific documents in order to do so.

- **EEA students** must be registered at the City Hall in order to receive a national registration number that is needed to work in Belgium.

- **Non-EEA students** need to possess a valid residence permit. To work during the academic year, also a type C work permit is needed. The work permit is easily granted, but the procedure can take quite some time. During the academic year, you are allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours per week. During official school holidays, the work permit is not needed.

Through the Student Jobs Database of KU Leuven, all students can find job offers online. Here you can find job offers at companies, at KU Leuven and with private persons. The type of jobs range from babysitting to translating, IT-jobs etc. Most jobs require a very good knowledge of Dutch. Therefore, the list with job offers for non-Dutch speaking students is limited.

You can access the Student Jobs Database via [www.kuleuven.be/studentjobs](http://www.kuleuven.be/studentjobs).

The Student Employment Service can help you by appointment with:

- Information on labour legislation and legal aspects.
- Information on documents and legislation for non-EEA students.
- Your search for a suitable job.

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[5] **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT SERVICE**

Naamsestraat 80
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 44 34
jobdienst@kuleuven.be
www.kuleuven.be/studentemployment
TAXES AND TAX FORM

As a resident in Belgium, you will yearly receive a tax form in a brown envelope. The tax relates to the income of the previous year. You have to file the tax return, even if you have not earned any income in Belgium in that year.

If you were employed (as staff or as a student employee), you need to get the ‘281.10’ form from your employer to be able to fill in the tax form.

If you are expecting a tax rebate next year when you will have left Belgium already, it is advisable to keep your Belgian bank account or give the Tax Office authorisation to transfer the rebate to a foreign account number.

More information:
www.kuleuven.be/english/tax

If you need assistance in filling out your tax form:

• **For students:** the Social Service can assist you (see p. 105).

• **For staff:**
Contact the federal tax administration: T 0257 257 57 (every working day from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).
info.tax@minfin.fed.be
Transportation & travelling

4.1 Means of transportation
4.2 Traffic and safety
4.3 Travelling abroad during your stay
4.1 MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

In recent years, the city authorities have been trying to encourage cycling and the use of public transport as to reduce automobile traffic.

www.kuleuven.be/transportation

Bicycles
Cycling is healthy, inexpensive and good for the environment. Furthermore, in a city like Leuven it is the fastest way to get from one place to another.

BICYCLE RENTAL AND REPAIR FOR STUDENTS: VELO
You can rent a safe, fully equipped and registered second-hand bicycle with a solid lock at VELO. A rental contract will be drawn up (please bring your passport, student card and bank account number). You will need to pay a rental fee plus a deposit of €70. The rental fee for:

- KU Leuven: € 67/year.
- UC Leuven-Limburg: € 25/year.
- LUCA School of Arts, campus Lemmens: € 67/year.

You can always pass by at the bicycle repair shop to have your bicycle repaired for a nominal fee. Velo also has a programme for self-repair and organises bicycle repair lessons. [1]

BICYCLE RENTAL AND REPAIR FOR STAFF
Staff members can also rent a bicycle at Velo for a fee of € 204/year plus a deposit of € 70.

KU Leuven
KU Leuven staff members paid a salary or scholarship by KU Leuven can apply for a 2WD bicycle. This is a company bicycle provided free of charge for commuting to work and for work-related trips. It can also be used for personal transport. Repairs are included via the designated 2WD repair parking spots.

Conditions and application:
admin.kuleuven.be/sab/od/intranet/2wd/en/EN_index.html
Transportation & travelling

4.1 Means of Transportation

BICYCLE RENTAL AND REPAIR AT TRAIN STATION

All main train stations in Belgium provide the service of bicycle rental (Blue-bike) to get from the train station to your destination and back. A card costs €10 a year and a ride maximum €3 per 24 hours. [1]

www.blue-bike.be

Via Fietspunt located in 45 train stations in Flanders and Brussels, you can have your bicycle repaired on the spot according to the principle of ‘getting home safely’. This means that Fietspunt takes care of essential repairs necessary to get home safely with your bicycle (brakes, lights).


LEARN TO RIDE A BICYCLE

You don’t know how to ride a bicycle, you feel insecure riding a bicycle in the city centre or you want to refresh your knowledge on the traffic rules as a cyclist? The Leuven Cycling school is here to help you. One course of 16 lessons includes learning how to cycle, cycling in traffic, cycling in the city, bicycle repair and a few recreational cycling tours. A course costs €20. [2]

Buses

In Belgium there are three main bus companies:

- De Lijn in Flanders and to and from Brussels: www.delijn.be
- MIVB in Brussels (also trams and subway): www.mivb.be
- TEC in Wallonia and to and from Brussels: www.tec.be

The bus in Leuven has many lines, that all pass by the train station. For information about timetables, bus lines and tickets you can go to the ‘Lijnwinkel’ (in front of Leuven station) or consult the website. Online information on bus lines and tickets is only available in Dutch. You can find English information and links to specific timetables via www.kuleuven.be/transportation.

A single ticket costs €3, a 10-trip ticket costs €14. [3]

BUS PASS

For students: the student bus pass — The student bus pass enables you to use the regular bus lines of De Lijn within the Leuven area (including Kessel-lo, Wijgmaal, Heverlee) and even in parts of Herent, Linden, Korbeek-Lo and Attenhoven. It is valid for an entire academic year and can be purchased upon your registration for a fee of:

- KU Leuven and LUCA School of Arts – campus Lemmens: €20.
- UC Leuven-Limburg: €25.

If you want to travel outside this area, you will need to buy a regular ticket. Make sure that you have your student card on you at all times because you need to be able to prove that you are the rightful owner of the pass. In order to prevent abuse, you have to write your first name and last name (exactly as mentioned on your official student card) on your student pass.

For staff

For commuting costs, salaried staff members can apply for a discounted bus pass. Check the conditions with your HR Department. >
### Trains

**LEUVEN RAILWAY STATION**
Leuven is an important hub in the Belgian railway network. From Leuven station, there are connections to every other major Belgian train station. You can find the best connection and itinerary using the b-rail online search engine. You can also buy tickets online. [4]

Examples travelling times from Leuven:

- Brussels Central: 30 min.
- Brussels Airport: 15 min.
- Gent: 60 min.
- Bruges: 90 min.
- Antwerp: 50 min.

**TRAIN TICKET**
Train tickets can be bought in the station at the ticket windows or at the ticket vending machines or online in advance. It is not allowed to board the train without a valid ticket. If you didn’t get the chance to buy a ticket, you should alert the train conductor before you board the train and he/she will sell you a ticket on board with an extra cost of €7. For prices: [4]

戈 Pass and Rail Pass
If you are under 26 years old, you can travel with a Go Pass. With this pass you can take 10 one-way trips in second class (price June 2016: € 51). You will get the best value for money if you travel between two stations that are far apart (e.g. Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent). For people over 26, the Rail Pass uses the same principle, but is more expensive (price June 2016: € 76).

**Weekend Ticket**
On Fridays after 7:00 p.m. and on weekends, you can travel with a Weekend Ticket: a return ticket at 50% discount of the normal rate.

**For staff**
For commuting costs, salaried staff members can apply for a discounted train pass. Check the conditions with your HR Department.

### Cars

**YOUR PERSONAL CAR**
One thing is clear: it is not easy to find a parking space in Leuven. No new parking spaces are being created. Moreover, parking fines are very high and in order to use the existing parking spaces in the best possible way, the city has introduced time limits by

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[1] **VELO**
Veilingsite
Hollestraat 1,
3001 Heverlee
T 016 29 87 40
info@velo.be – www.velo.be

Weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. — Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

[2] **LEUVEN CYCLING SCHOOL**
Vital Decosterstraat 67A
3000 Leuven
T 016 31 77 01
fietsschoolleuven@mobiel21.be


[3] **DE LIJN**
Martelarenplein 19b
3000 Leuven

Weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

General Information:
T 070 22 02 00

Province of Flemish-Brabant:
T 016 31 37 11
vlbrab@delijn.be
www.delijn.be

[4] **LEUVEN RAILWAY STATION**
Martelarenplein 16
3000 Leuven

Info for travellers: T 016 21 21 21

International Information & Eurostar, Thalys, HST:
T 02 528 28 28

Lost and Found: T 016 21 24 10
www.belgianrail.be
means of parking machines and blue-zone rules. Exceptions are only made for inhabitants of the neighbourhood and disabled persons. As an inhabitant you can apply for a parking card in your zone at the City Hall. For one year you will pay € 60. You can save a lot of money by using your bicycle, going on foot or taking the bus.

Parking for staff

TAXIS
In Leuven there are taxi stands in front of the station and in front of the Court House (Ferdinand Smoldersplein).

- Starting fee: € 2.40.
- Price per kilometre: € 2.50.
- At night, there is a small extra fee.
TRAFFIC AND SAFETY

Traffic rules
The traffic in Leuven is very crowded, with a lot of cyclists. It is important to know the traffic rules in order to prevent accidents and to avoid expensive fines, since the Leuven traffic police is very strict. The Belgian traffic rules may vary from the ones in your home country. Consult the Belgian Highway Code for cycling: [www.kuleuven.be/transportation/cycling-guide](http://www.kuleuven.be/transportation/cycling-guide)

COMMON TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS BY CYCLISTS
Every year the local police, together with the KU Leuven and the city services, campaign to increase bicycle safety in Leuven. Checks for bicycle ownership, brakes and lights are held on a regular basis. A police patrol can stop you anywhere at any time. Fines can go up to €400 for these traffic violations:

- Cycling in a one way street.
- Cycling in a pedestrian zone.
- Running a red light.
- Cycling without bicycle lights.
- Using the phone whilst cycling.
- Cycling under the influence of alcohol.
- Parking your bicycle outside a bicycle parking.
- Blocking the pavement with your parked bicycle.

Bicycle theft prevention
Bicycle theft is very common in Leuven. A good lock to secure your bicycle to a fixed object is very important. You can get your bicycle engraved with an ID number. This is no guarantee against theft, but it helps to prevent it. If your bicycle does get stolen, report the theft immediately. By reporting theft, you are supplying the police with the information they need to recover your bicycle and to locate you when they find your bicycle. The police can only return a non-engraved bicycle when the owner comes to pick it up at the Fietscentrale. Recovered bicycles are stored there for 3 months. Free engraving can be done at:

- The Fietscentrale of the local police on Wednesdays from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. and on Thursdays from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m.
- Fietspunt Leuven (see p. 43).
- Velo (see p. 42).
TRAVELLING ABROAD DURING YOUR STAY

Visa and Belgian ID

For travel outside Belgium for a short period, you need to check:

- Whether you need a visa for the country of destination.
- Whether your Belgian identity card/residence permit is still valid for your return-trip to Belgium, especially for trips outside the Schengen Area.

EEA students and staff can travel freely within Europe on the basis of their national ID. Non-EEA students and staff members with a valid Belgian residence permit are allowed to travel within the Schengen zone for a maximum of 90 days. They should always carry both their residence permit and their national passport/ID with them.

If you have to leave Belgium temporarily for a period longer than three months, you must contact the Foreigners Office at the City Hall to find out what administrative procedures to follow.

Health insurance

You are advised to inquire at their health insurance fund on if and how you are covered abroad. Whether or not you have coverage outside Belgium depends on a number of criteria.

Travel in the framework of your studies/work

If you plan to go abroad in the framework of your studies or work, be sure to check the procedures of your institution via KU Loket (see p. 53). More information:

- KU Leuven:
  Students: [www.kuleuven.be/internationaal/iam/studenten/application-procedure-study-abroad-period](http://www.kuleuven.be/internationaal/iam/studenten/application-procedure-study-abroad-period)
- UC Leuven-Limburg: Students can contact the international office on campus.
- LUCA School of Arts - Campus Lemmens: [international@luca-arts.be](mailto:international@luca-arts.be)

When you go abroad to a non-EEA country in the framework of your studies or work, you have to subscribe to a travel insurance. You can find information on [admin.kuleuven.be/sab/vz/en/travel-insurance](http://admin.kuleuven.be/sab/vz/en/travel-insurance)
4.3 Travelling abroad during your stay
5. Educational system
5.2 Regulations on education and examinations
5.3 Successful studying
5.4 Syllabuses and textbooks
5.5 Places to study, research or read
5.6 Language learning
5.1 EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The credit accumulation system

The Leuven institutions of higher education organise their programmes according to a credit accumulation system. Most programmes are composed of various educational stages, but deliberations are only held at the end of a degree programme, allowing for more flexible pathways through the programmes.

A number of measures are in place in order to monitor each student’s study progress and in order to limit the total period of study. Each academic year, bachelor’s students are able to choose which fail marks they don’t want to retake (within certain limits). In (advanced) master’s programmes, fail marks are generally not permitted: only if you obtain all the necessary credits or have at most one fail mark of 9/20 and your overall result is a distinction, you can pass the master’s.

The learning account or study voucher account

The Flemish Ministry of Education grants all initial bachelor’s or master’s students a “learning account,” which is based on the credits already used to compose their programmes of studies. If you are following an initial bachelor’s or master’s programme, you receive an initial learning account totalling 140 credits. At the beginning of the year, the number of credits for which you have registered is subtracted from your learning account. The number of credits you have passed by the end the academic year are added again to the learning account. This gives you your learning account for the next academic year. You can always consult your learning account at the ‘Studentenportaal’ website: studentenportaal.vlaanderen.be/dho-portaal/start.do

For examples: www.kuleuven.be/learningaccount/count.html
REGULATIONS ON EDUCATION AND EXAMINATIONS

The regulations on education and examinations include rules about:

- Which courses can be taken in which programmes.
- How many credits students may take in one academic year per programme.
- The deadlines by which definitive choices must be made by students about their individual programmes.
- General examination regulations. Important note: in addition to the general examination regulations, some faculties also have additional examination regulations which apply only to examinations in that faculty.

You are strongly advised to read these regulations carefully, so that you will be aware of your rights and responsibilities at exam time:

- KU Leuven: www.kuleuven.be/education/regulations
- UC Leuven-Limburg: www.ucll.be/international/about/academic-information/education-and-examination-regulations
- LUCA School of Arts, Campus Lemmens: www.luca-arts.be/onderwijs-en-examenreglement

Examination rules

GENERAL RULES
Exams are graded on a 20 point scale, or – in specific cases – on a pass/fail scale. A student with a score of at least 10/20 (or a passing result) obtains a credit for that course.

There are three examination periods:

- In January for course units or parts thereof taught in the first semester.
- In June for course units taught in the second semester and, in some cases, for course units taught in the first semester.
- In August to retake exams you did not pass in January or June. Retakes can only be done in August, which means there are only two exam attempts per subject per academic year.

For more detailed information:

- KU Leuven: www.kuleuven.be/education/ects/positioning

Ombudsperson
The ombudsperson is someone who has been appointed to mediate between students and lecturers in cases of dispute. The ombudsperson fulfils a very important role. He/she decides whether an examination can be postponed or not, and mediates in conflicts. If you have problems of any kind during the exams, you can go and talk to him/her. If you do not show up for an exam, without previously notifying the ombudsman, you will be considered illegally absent.
EXAMINATION IRREGULARITIES, SANCTIONS AND APPEALS

If you are suspected of having committed an irregularity during an examination (e.g. plagiarism or another kind of fraud), you have the right to continue that examination. It is up to the board of examiners to decide, afterwards, whether you have indeed committed a serious irregularity. Possible sanctions include failing the course or being denied the opportunity to take other examinations for the rest of that academic year.

If you believe that an examiner has committed a procedural irregularity (e.g. failure to indicate what is expected of students, rude behaviour during exams, etc.) it is important to notify the ombudsperson, who can contact the chair of the board of examiners. He will investigate your claim and undertake actions accordingly.

SUCCESSFUL STUDYING

Study Advice
KU Leuven and LUCA School of Arts — Campus Lemmens

The Study Advice Service of KU Leuven acts as the central information point on study-related matters for all students. You are welcome throughout your student career: before you enter the university, while you are studying at the university and after you have graduated. You can turn to this service for:

- Information about study programmes and advice on which study programme fits your particular wishes and goals.
- Information on postgraduate study programmes, either in Belgium or abroad.
- Study guidance.

You can be assisted through personal, individual guidance or by signing up for various sessions on topics such as:

- Effective Study Approach.
- Study Planning System.
- Writing Master Thesis.
- Presentation Techniques.
- Passing exams.

The Study Advice Service works in close cooperation with the different study advisors on faculty level. They are your first contact within your study programme. You can find the contact details of your study advisor on your faculty website. [1]

UC Leuven-Limburg

UC Leuven-Limburg provides on-campus academic coaching for all study-related matters. In addition, every campus has its own Student Office which provide a listening ear and a source of advice and support for all students.

www.ucll.be/international/student-services/student-support

Studying with special needs
KU Leuven and LUCA School of Arts – Campus Lemmens

Students with disabilities are welcome at KU Leuven and LUCA School of Arts. The Disability Office helps students with:

- A chronic illness, an auditory, visual, physical or mental disability.
- Dyslexia, dyscalculia, ASD, AD(H)D or other developmental disorder.

The Disability Office offers information and guidance, listens to your concerns, answers your questions and offers accommodations relating to instructional settings and exams.

You need to be recognised by this office in order to be eligible for...
Education & languages

5.3 SUCCESSFUL STUDYING

accommodations. This procedure takes time. It is advisable to make an appointment with one of the disability officers as early as possible. [2]

UC Leuven-Limburg
UC Leuven-Limburg gladly accepts students with a disability. Contact international@ucll.be prior to arrival to discuss how we can support you.

Combining Study and Religious Worship

KU Leuven and LUCA School of Arts – Campus Lemmens
Students can reschedule a modular or final exam, if the date clashes with a recognized religious holiday. There is a strict procedure that has to be followed and you must file your application ultimately by the deadline for completing the Individual Study Programme (ISP). Information on procedure and list of recognised religious holidays: www.kuleuven.be/religion/rescheduling. With questions, you can contact the Religion and Philosophical Diversity Contact Point (see p. 96).

Important tools for students

TOLEDO
Toledo is the central web-based e-learning environment for the institutions of higher education to support the implementation of guided independent learning. Through Toledo, students have access to a broad variety of online course materials, like texts, slides, links to useful websites, exercises, graphics, multimedia files, interactive applets, and many more. Toledo also offers several communication channels between students and staff members, e.g. announcements, email, discussion boards, chat rooms, workflows, etc. Toledo can be accessed via:

- KU Leuven: www.toledo.kuleuven.be/english
- UC Leuven-Limburg: intranet.ucll.be/en
- LUCA School of Arts, Campus Lemmens: toledo.luca-arts.be

KU LOKET
KU Loket is the administrative portal for all students of the KU Leuven Association. Here, you can access your ISP (Individual Study Programme), where you record your choices about your individual course choices. In this administrative system, you will also find the Study Progress File with information about your exam results and study progress in general. You can also change your personal data (e.g. home address) in this portal. KU Loket can be accessed via:

- KU Leuven: www.kuleuven.be/sapredir/kuloket
- UC Leuven-Limburg: intranet.ucll.be/en
- LUCA School of Arts, Campus Lemmens: studloket.luca-arts.be
SYLLABUSES AND TEXTBOOKS

The student union of your faculty organises a textbook service for certain syllabuses and textbooks required for the different study programmes (see p. 80).

The institutions of higher education also cooperate with ACCO (The ‘Academic Cooperative’), where you can find a lot of syllabuses and textbooks at reasonable prices.

Besides these syllabuses, ACCO’s bookshops offer a wide range of required and recommended reading material, dictionaries, scientific books, novels, office and computer supplies, stationery, etc.

If you are staying in Belgium for a while, you may find it worthwhile to buy a share in ACCO. It’s a one-time investment of €31 from which you will profit for the rest of your life: as a shareholder you are entitled to a 25% discount on ACCO syllabuses and 15% on office supplies and books published by ACCO. In addition members also benefit from special offers in our (web)shop as well as discounts on printing orders from our digital printing services. [3]
PLACES TO STUDY, RESEARCH OR READ

With your student or staff card you can enter any of the libraries of the institutions of higher education in Leuven.

In the online catalogue LIMO (limo.libis.be), you can find printed and electronic publications held in the KU Leuven and other libraries and have access to all scientific and scholarly databases and e-journal collections licensed by KU Leuven or freely available.

Campus and faculty libraries

Every campus and/or faculty has its own library where you can find subject-related books, magazines and catalogues as well as wireless internet access. Your student or staff card gives you automatic access to all libraries of your institution and their various services. For opening hours and other information:

- KU Leuven: bib.kuleuven.be/english/ub/about/libraries
- UC Leuven-Limburg: www.ucll.be/international/student-services/libraries-study-centres
- LUCA School of Arts: bib.kuleuven.be/luca/bibliotheeklemmens
- Campus Lemmens

During each study and exam period there are longer opening hours and extra study places in the libraries. For more information: www.blokkeninleuven.be.

KU Leuven AGORA Learning Centre

AGORA is an innovative learning centre, open 363 days per year with multiple learning spaces for over 500 users. The centre can only be used by students and staff of KU Leuven. In addition to a Silent Study Area, the learning centre has a Social Study Area including a coffee corner, and a Group Study Area with 20 bookable rooms that can be used for meetings and group work, presentations, video conference or video editing. AGORA further supports students’ learning by providing video cameras, audio recorders, projectors, speakers and web conference sets. It is also possible to borrow a laptop or iPad for use within the building. In short: AGORA is more than just a building. It forms a social hub where information, technology and services come together. [4]
CLT Language Centre – Centrum voor Levende Talen

The CLT Language Centre is an adult education centre recognised and funded by the Flemish government, specialised in language learning. It is open to everybody and it forms a natural and stimulating language learning community with more than 5 000 students and 100 nationalities. A wide range of language courses (with standard and intensive tracks) are on offer, each of which is composed of several levels from beginner (A1) to very advanced (C1): Arabic, Chinese, Danish, English, Finnish, French, German, Modern Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Romanian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish.

Students receive coaching in the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and all programs are founded on enhanced and up-to-date teaching methodologies. Communication in authentic contexts is central to CLT’s approach.

For certain languages, you can follow a blended language course that combines face-to-face instruction with 50% e-learning or an intensive summer course during the last two weeks of July. [6]

Mobyus

Mobyus organises language courses with a strong focus on
communication skills, in close cooperation with UC Leuven-Limburg. The lessons are taught in the target language only.

The Mobyus language courses are open to everyone, as of the age of 16 years. The group of approximately 1 800 participants is a mixture of students, employees, as well as pensioned people. The diversity of background and nationalities gives an extra dimension to the courses.

You can study Dutch as a Foreign Language, Spanish, English, French, Italian, German, Chinese. You can choose between different levels, intensities and starting dates. [7]

**CVO Volt**

CVO Volt is an adult education centre recognised and funded by the Flemish government, that offers a wide range of courses, such as administration, IT, visual arts and language courses. CVO Volt has campuses in Leuven, Tienen and Landen and the courses are open to everybody.

The language courses are organised for Dutch as a foreign language, Arabic, German, English, French, Italian, Spanish and Polish. [8]

**Language practice at Pangaea**

In Pangaea Intercultural Meeting Centre you can practice your language skills in an informal setting.

- Students: join one of the conversation groups in English, Dutch, Spanish, German or French
- Everybody: look for a language partner in the language chain calendar. You can find the calendar on the wall in the lounge.

www.kuleuven.be/pangaea (see p. 79)

**Self-study packages**

**VANZELFSPREKEND & NIET VANZELFSPREKEND**

‘Vanzelfsprekend’ is a multimedia self-study course for adult learners of Dutch. ‘Vanzelfsprekend’ has been designed to lead the student to a lower intermediate level. The sequel to this course, ‘Niet Vanzelfsprekend’, is aimed at people with a basic knowledge of Dutch, and leads the student to an intermediate level.

The course packages contain a textbook, a workbook, a DVD and a CD and use a lot of authentic material, such as radio and television fragments, excerpts from newspapers and magazines. It can be ordered from Acco.

www.acco.be

**GO DUTCH! A LANGUAGE COURSE ON CD-ROM**

The Go Dutch! course focuses more on the grammar and vocabulary needed to learn to speak fluent Dutch in everyday situations quickly. This course is primarily intended for language learners who have completed higher education. The explanatory texts are all in English. Go Dutch! is available from most bookshops and online booksellers in Belgium and the Netherlands.

www.coutinho.nl (you can order the course from the website)
6 Communications

6.1 Computer, internet and email facilities
6.2 Postal services
6.3 Telephone services
6.4 Radio
6.5 Publications
COMPUTER, INTERNET AND EMAIL FACILITIES

Upon registration at your institution, you will receive a student or staff card with a user ID. By activating this ID, you will be able to use different services:

- Your e-mail account.
- Toledo and KU Loket.
- KotNet, internet access at home.
- eduroam, wireless internet access on campus.

How to activate your account

Your username is mentioned on the back of your student or staff card and starts with an ‘r’ for students, with a ‘u’ for staff. You will receive an activation code with your user ID. You need to activate your account via the registration page activate.kuleuven.be: logon with your username and activation code and set a password on your account. Beware to never share your password. You are held responsible for all activities associated with your account.

Email

At registration, you are automatically assigned an email address with the following format:

- **Students:**
  
  firstname.lastname@student.name-of-your-institution.be

- **Staff:**
  
  firstname.lastname@name-of-your-institution.be

All official correspondence from your institution will be emailed to this address, for example communication concerning courses, the e-newsletter, etc. You can access your email from within your browser at

- **KU Leuven:**
  
  webmail.kuleuven.be

- **UC Leuven-Limburg:**
  
  webmail.uccl.be

- **LUCA School of Arts, campus Lemmens:**
  
  students: mail.student.luca-arts.be & staff: owa.groupware.kuleuven.be
KotNet
The KU Leuven Association partners have a cooperation with Telenet (telecom provider), to provide KotNet that enables students and staff to access the Internet from home and/or from their student room. All you need is a computer with a network port, a cable and your institution’s username and password.

- Official KU Leuven residence halls are already connected to KotNet. Simply connect your computer to the wall jack in your room.
- Most private student housing in Leuven, Heverlee and Kessel-Lo is also already connected to KotNet. Check with your landlord whether a KotNet connection is already available. If so, ensure that you are aware of arrangements (Is KotNet included in the monthly rent? Should the subscription be paid separately?). If the subscription is paid by your landlord, you only need to configure your computer.
- If there is no connection available, you will need to arrange the connection and subscription yourself. Contact the ICTS Service Desk or visit www.telenet.be/kotnet.

Depending on your situation, the total cost will consist of a nominal fee charged by your institution for this service (e.g. €25 for UC Leuven-Limburg students) in combination with the monthly cost, often included in the rent. More info on costs, installation and configuration: www.kuleuven.be/kotnet

Wifi – eduroam
In addition to KotNet, wireless internet is also provided in most buildings on campus and in public areas such as libraries and the Alma restaurants.
For everyday use on your laptop, tablet or smartphone, we strongly recommend the use of the eduroam network. eduroam (education roaming) is the secure, world-wide roaming access service developed for the international research and education community.
To configure eduroam on your device, please follow the instructions on www.kuleuven.be/icts/english/wifi or use the configuration tool on cat.eduroam.org. If your home institution uses eduroam as well, you will also be able to connect via your home institution’s account.

PC-rooms, rental and purchase
Interesting purchase deals for all students and staff can be found at www.campusshop.be.

KU Leuven and UC Leuven-Limburg
Apart from PCs available in libraries (see p. 55), especially designated open access PC-rooms are also available:

- Dekenstraat 2, 3000 Leuven – Weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- Celestijnenlaan 6, 3001 Heverlee – Weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. (Friday till 6:00 p.m.), Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Celestijnenlaan 200c, 3001 Heverlee – Weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 7:45 p.m.
ICTS also operates a PC rental service. Consult the website for the rental prices of desktop PC’s and laptops or other promotions.

**ICT support**
For ICT-related questions and for KotNet support, you can contact your local IT service.

- **KU Leuven:**
  - **ICTS Service Desk** (Heverlee) - servicedesk@kuleuven.be
  - T 016 32 28 00 - Weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- **ICTS Walk-In Desk** at Agora (Leuven) – Weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.
- **UC Leuven-Limburg:**
  - support.leuven@ucll.be
  - T 016 37 50 75 - Weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- **LUCA School of Arts - Campus Lemmens:** [helpdesk@luca-arts.be](mailto:helpdesk@luca-arts.be)
  - T 02 300 86 86 - on weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## POSTAL SERVICES
B-post is Belgium’s leading postal operator for domestic mail and parcels. You can consult and order their services online, in the post offices or in the ‘postpunten’ in supermarkets and newsagents that provide a number of postal services. You can search online for the locations of post offices, ‘postpunten’ and red letterboxes in your neighbourhood.

You can place your mail in any red letterbox in Belgium or post it at a post office counter. Letters may be open or sealed. Standard delivery time for domestic mail is one working day.

- **Domestic mail:** postage standardised letter: € 0.79 per piece (booklet of 10 stamps: € 0.74 per piece).
- **International mail:** postage standardised letter for Europe: € 1.23 per piece, (booklet of 5 stamps: € 1.13 per piece), outside Europe: € 1.45 (booklet of 5 stamps: € 1.35 per piece).

For details on sending parcels: [www.bpost.be](http://www.bpost.be) – particulieren - pakketten [1]
TELEPHONE SERVICES

General information

- Country Code for Belgium is ‘32’.
- Area Code for Leuven is ‘(0)16’. Other examples of area codes: Brussels 02 - Antwerp 03 - Ghent 09 - Bruges 050 - Liège 043 - Louvain-la-Neuve 010 - Mons 065. When calling within Belgium, always dial the full area code. For international calls, skip (0): (0032 16…).
- For information on Belgian phone numbers: call 1207.
- For information on international numbers: call 1204.

Mobile telephones (cell phones)

Connection to the Belgian telephone and mobile networks often remains the most cost-effective solution. Mobile telephones are widely available in specialised shops and large retail outlets. Many specialised dealers are also official agents for one of the four major Belgian mobile operators:

- Proximus: www.proximus.be
- Orange: www.orange.be
- Base: www.base.be/en
- Telenet: www.telenet.be – King & Kong

These operators are authorised to open an account for you and have various payment formulas, including pre-paid cards and subscriptions. Please don’t sign any contract without fully understanding its terms and implications.

RADIO

Leuven radio projects

Radio Scorpio
www.radioscorpio.be
The local Radio Scorpio 106 FM broadcasts an eclectic programme mix and provides in-depth news coverage and community information. Radio Scorpio is the real thing: Leuven independent student radio since 1979.

STRAK.FM
www.strak.fm
STRAK.fm is Leuven’s internet radio made by and for students (supported by Veto and LOKO, see p.). Every week it posts new reports about student events and other newsworthy facts. A few times a year, it goes live on air.

Belgian radio channels
www.belgie.fm

- Radio 1 98.5 fm (Leuven)
- Studio Brussel 88 fm
- QMusic 103.1 fm, 95.8 fm
- MNM 94.8 fm (Leuven)
- Joe FM 99.7 fm
- Radio 2 (provincial) 88.7 fm
- Klara (classical) 89.5 fm
- Nostalgie 103.8 fm
- For French speaking channels, go to www.rtbf.be.
PUBLICATIONS

The Voice
www.thevoiceleuven.be
The Voice is an English-language international student magazine by and for the international student community in Leuven. For all its functions, it relies on volunteers. It is produced every two months and distributed free of charge throughout Leuven. The content of The Voice depends on the topics students want to write about. As it takes a lot more than just writers to keep this magazine going, The Voice is always looking for people who are interested in layout, photography and grammatical editing.

Veto
www.veto.be
Veto is an independent weekly newspaper in Dutch created by students. Veto reports on student life, university affairs and other topics students are concerned with.

KU Leuven Campuskrant
www.kuleuven.be/ck
The Campuskrant is a monthly magazine that provides news on research, education and policy matters in Dutch. The magazine is distributed throughout the campuses. A selection of articles can be consulted in English on news.kuleuven.be.
7.1 The health care system
7.2 The Flemish Care Insurance
7.3 Reimbursement of medical costs via health insurance
7.4 Vaccinations
7.5 Thermometers

Health
THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

There are three different levels of health care service in Belgium: general practitioners (GPs), specialists and specialists at a local or an academic hospital.

General practitioners (GPs) and specialists

If you have a health related problem, it is best to see a general practitioner first, rather than going to the hospital immediately. A GP can solve most medical problems. If the GP decides that you should consult a specialist, he/she will refer you to one who is best qualified to deal with your problem. You can usually reach a GP during office hours and in emergencies even at night. There are many advantages to consulting a GP first, before seeing a specialist. Also, for most specialists it is only possible to make an appointment after referral of a GP.

• GPs are easier to reach, there could be a long waiting list to consult a specialist.
• If you officially register with one GP – which is called ‘Globaal Medisch Dossier’ or GMD – the Belgian health insurance rewards you with a higher reimbursement. Ask your GP about this.
• A GP will keep your medical history on file. This is important since information from previous medical examinations may be relevant to your present condition.
• It also means that a GP does not need to repeat medical tests or examinations you may have already had. This can save you a lot of money, time and possible discomfort.
• With certain medical conditions, it is not always clear which specialist is best qualified. A GP can quickly diagnose your problem and refer you to the proper specialist.
**Hospital services**

If your condition is not immediately life threatening, you can save a considerable amount of money by consulting a GP first. If necessary, the GP will refer you to a specialist in a private practice, in a local hospital, or to the KU Leuven University Hospital UZ Gasthuisberg. Hospital emergency services are expensive and meant for life threatening situations. [1] Patients of UZ Leuven, Heilig Hart Leuven or MCH are strongly advised to use mynexuz. Mynexuz is a secure web application that provides tailor-made information based on your medical record. You can consult your personal patient record, find an invoice overview and via a secure message channel you can communicate with the hospitals e.g. about invoices and changes in your administrative data (family doctor, address, etc.). [2]

**Where to go when?**

**FOR STUDENTS AT KU LEUVEN AND CAMPUS LEMMENS: STUDENT HEALTH CENTRE**

**General practitioners**
The Student Health Care Centre is staffed by a team of doctors with extensive experience in student related health issues, such as concentration disorders, stress, contraception, etc. Consultations are by appointment only, house >

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Where</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During office hours</td>
<td>(Urgent) medical problem</td>
<td>GP Students KU Leuven and campus Lemmens and their family members: Student Health Centre (see below). All others: find a GP in your area via <a href="http://www.mediwacht.be">www.mediwacht.be</a> – ‘huisartsen’, look for your city in ‘zoek’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After office hours &amp; on weekends</td>
<td>(Urgent) medical problem</td>
<td>GP on call via 070 25 70 25 (24h). Walk-in-clinic at Justus Lipsiusstraat 36 (from Saturday 8:00 a.m. to Monday 8:00 a.m.): no appointment needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life threatening</td>
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<td>Go to the ER or call 112 for an ambulance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life threatening</td>
<td></td>
<td>Go to the ER or call 112 for an ambulance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
calls are possible on request, in case of serious illness.

Psychologists
Students dealing with personal or psychological problems can apply to the psychologists for professional help. A team of experienced psychotherapists and psychiatrists provides psychotherapy and counselling, medical treatment (diagnosis, medication), advice and information. English-speaking therapists are available. You have to make an appointment first. [3]

THE FLEMISH CARE INSURANCE

The Flemish Care Insurance is an insurance that covers the expenses for non-medical care to persons heavily reliant on care, e.g. people with a disability, elderly people, cancer patients, etc. This insurance is not the same as the health insurance, which refunds medical costs and is provided by the health insurance funds (see p. 26).

Anyone older than 25 living in Flanders is required to contribute to this care insurance, by paying an annual fee of € 50. This fee is mostly charged by your health insurance fund, they will send you a letter for the payment.

Students and their family members (residing with them) with a temporary residence permit are exempt from paying the annual fee. To get the exemption, once you have received the payment notice, you have to submit the certificate of registration as a student for the year concerned and a copy of your Belgian residence permit. For family members of non-EEA students (spouses, children): a copy of their residence permit and a declaration that they depend on the non-EEA student have to be submitted.

REIMBURSEMENT OF MEDICAL COSTS VIA HEALTH INSURANCE

In general, up to 75% of your medical expenses will be reimbursed by your health insurance company. When you subscribe to a Belgian health insurance (see p. 26), you will receive an information booklet and a number of stickers. You should take your ID card and stickers with you every time you go to the pharmacy, visit a doctor, go to a hospital or to the health insurance office. Medical professions and pharmacists will use your ID-card card to view the data on your health insurance.

- When you go to a doctor, you pay the bill and in...
return you get a receipt (a certificate of care) that you have to give to your health insurance fund to get (partial) reimbursement.

• For a consultation in a hospital, the bill with a certificate of care will usually be sent 4-8 weeks afterwards. Fees for convenient extras during hospitalisation (e.g. a private room, telephone costs) will never be reimbursed by your health insurance.

• If you require prescription medication, you will be issued a prescription from a doctor. When you are registered with a Belgian health insurance fund, you only pay your own share at the pharmacist, who settles the remaining amount directly with the health insurer. When you have a EHIC card or specific document (see p. 27), you will be required to pay the total amount of your medication at the pharmacy, but you can get (partial) reimbursement from a Belgian health insurance fund. You must ensure that the pharmacist stamps your prescription and gives you a receipt.

In Belgium, medication is only sold in pharmacies, to be recognised by the green cross. They are
open every day except Saturday afternoons, Sundays and holidays. When closed, all pharmacies will post a list of afterhours pharmacies (‘wachtdienst’) in their window. This information is also published at www.apotheek.be, enter your city in ‘zoek’.

For all students:
In cases of serious medical problems or hospitalisation, that threaten your financial situation, you may contact the Social Service. In some cases you might obtain partial or full reimbursement (see p. 105).

VACCINATIONS

Parents are required to vaccinate their babies and young children at regular intervals. In Belgium, this service is organised by ‘Kind en Gezin’ (see p. 91). Please contact them if you have children below 3 years of age.

THERMOMETERS

In Belgium we use Celsius thermometers. These are larger than the Fahrenheit ones, and are usually placed in the armpit. Readings from the armpit will be one degree lower than those taken orally. Always tell the doctor which method you have used. The average temperature of a healthy person is 37°C, fever starts at 38,5°C.
Socialising

8.1 Sports
8.2 Culture
8.3 Places to visit
8.4 People to meet
SPORTS

KU Leuven Sports Centre (Universitair Sportcentrum)

CAN I JOIN?
Everybody is welcome to enjoy the facilities after buying the sports card. This card is valid for one academic year.

- Student Association
  • KU Leuven: €23
  • Student other: €40
- Staff Association
  • KU Leuven: €40
- Alumni KU Leuven
  (paying member): €70
- Other: €100

WHERE CAN I GET THE SPORTS CARD?
As a student, you can purchase a sports card upon registration at your institution. It will be mentioned on the backside of your student card. Exchange students will receive this membership automatically and for free.

Otherwise, you can buy the sports card online or at the Sports Secretariat. If you don’t have a compatible card with your picture on it (student card association KU Leuven or staff card KU Leuven), you can visit the Sports Secretariat to get your card printed.

WHY DO I WANT THIS MEMBERSHIP?
With the sports card you can:

- Join more than 60 organised sports in 4 sports halls, 7 tennis fields, a swimming pool, 5 beach volleyball courts,
- Reserve this accommodation for free and have a sportive session with your friends. Just go to the reservation page on the website.
- Participate in some great annual activities like bike and run, survival of the student, table tennis competition, athletics competition, sports camps for kids, etc.
- a fitness hall (requires additional fee), outdoor and indoor athletics track, 2 dance halls, martial arts hall, 3 artificial soccer fields, rugby field, gymnastics hall, etc.
Socialising

• Access the UC Leuven-Limburg sports campus in Hertogstraat equipped for basketball, volleyball, tennis, gymnastics, dance and badminton. There is also a fitness room and a climbing wall. [1]

Student’s sports initiatives
If you love to do sports in a more student like atmosphere, you will certainly find what you want at LOKO Sport, an organisation for and by students. LOKO Sport organises interfaculty competitions, the famous Leuven 24-hour run, etc. All students are welcome to join. Your faculty union will have more information on this. For more information on LOKO and faculty unions, see p. [2]

City’s sports facilities
The City of Leuven accommodates a wide range of sports facilities and events. For an updated list of all indoor and outdoor sports facilities: [www.leuven.be/vrije-tijd/sport](http://www.leuven.be/vrije-tijd/sport)

Swimming Pools
• Stadionlaan 4, 3010 Kessel-Lo – T 016 25 34 80
• Aarschotsesteenweg 730, 3012 Wilsele-Putkapel T 016 44 33 88
• Sportoase Philipssite 6, 3001 Heverlee – T 016 74 07 40 – [www.sportoase.be](http://www.sportoase.be)

Sport clubs in Leuven
The Sports Office has a comprehensive list of sport clubs in the Leuven area. This list is constantly updated: [www.leuven.be/vrije-tijd/sport/sportclubs](http://www.leuven.be/vrije-tijd/sport/sportclubs).

CULTURE

How to get cultural deals?

AS A STUDENT:
CULTURE CARD KU LEUVEN
[www.kuleuven.be/culture/culturecard](http://www.kuleuven.be/culture/culturecard)
As a student of the Leuven institutions of higher education, you can purchase the culture card during your enrolment. It only costs € 20 and is valid for an entire academic year.

The culture card provides numerous advantages:
• Free entry to UUR KULTUUR, the university's cultural programme.
• Free visit of Museum M.
• Exclusive access to the 30CC Cultural Centre’s Last Minute Deals: every day, all remaining tickets for the coming week are sold at a 50% discount.
• Significant discounts at the various large cultural centres in Leuven.
• Discounts for all performances of the 8 University Ensembles, Campus Theatre and the student association theatre companies during the Interfaculty Theatre Festival.
• Take part in competitions to win tickets to various productions.
You will be kept informed about all the advantages through an e-newsletter for culture card holders. [3]

**AS A CITIZEN: LEUVEN CULTURAL CENTRE 30CC**

30CC, Leuven’s cultural centre, is one of the main cultural players in the region. It offers an extensive and exciting selection of theatre and comedy, world music, dance, song and cabaret, classical music and opera, literary events, family entertainment and much more. There are different discount formulas: [4]

- When you buy tickets for multiple shows, you can get a discount up to 15%.
- All students get an additional discount of 10%.
- Holders of the KU Leuven Culture Card or European Youth Card have access to exclusive Last Minute Deals, where unsold tickets for the coming week are sold at a 50% discount.

### Performing arts

**UNIVERSITY THEATRE COMPANIES**

Janus International Theatre Group
Amateur theatre group that was founded by international students and supported by Pangaea. Everybody is welcome to join. Meetings every Sunday at 7:00 p.m. in Pangaea Meeting Centre (see p.). Facebook: Janus International Theatre.

**Campus Theatre (Campustoneel)**

Theatre in Dutch with and for KU Leuven students, staff and alumni. info@campustoneel.be – www.campustoneel.be

**Interfaculty Theatre Festival**
The Interfaculty Theatre Festival, mostly in Dutch, brings together the student faculty union theatre companies. www.iftf.be

### BAC ATELIER KU LEUVEN

Are you an artist looking for an atelier, a musician or dancer looking for a rehearsal space or a room in which you can develop new ideas? Then you might find Bac Atelier is exactly the place you have been looking for. KU Leuven provides artistic residences from 6 to 12 months in the beautiful building that once was the Bacteriological Institute. Both students and staff affiliated with the KU Leuven can apply. www.kuleuven.be/culture/bacatelier

### KU LEUVEN UNIVERSITY SPORTS CENTRE

Tervuursevest 101
3001 Heverlee
T 016 32 91 30
sport@kuleuven.be
www.kuleuven.be/sports

### SPORTHAL UC LEUVEN-LIMBURG

Hertogstraat 178
3001 Heverlee
016 375 780
www.ucil.be/sportdienstheverlee

### LOKO SPORT

Gebouw de Nayer
Tervuursevest 101
3000 Heverlee
T 016 32 91 34
sport@loko.be

### KU LEUVEN CULTURE OFFICE

(Dienst Cultuur KU Leuven)
Naamsestraat 96
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 03 40
cultuur@kuleuven.be
www.kuleuven.be/culture
Facebook: KU Leuven Culture

### 30 CC (INFO AND TICKETS)

Rijschoolstraat 4
3000 Leuven
30CC@leuven.be - www.30CC.be
www.facebook.com/30ccleuven

Monday and Wednesday from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m.
Tuesday and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Thursday from 12:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### STUK

Naamsestraat 96,
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 03 20
ticket@stuk.be – www.stuk.be
Socialising

**STUK**

STUK is an important venue in Leuven and one of the most important arts centres in Flanders. STUK is a house for dance, image and sound and its programme features dance, films, music, fine arts and new media. In STUK you can also find the work of innovative newcomers. Tickets are available online at very affordable prices. Cinema Zed (see p.) is incorporated into STUK and offers a wide range of films. Every Sunday evening you can enjoy a free jazz concert (‘Jazz on Sunday’).

The opening festival STUK START, at the beginning of the cultural season at the end of September, is a unique opportunity to get to know STUK. STUK also has an elegant grand café where you can drink or eat something, read a newspaper or surf the internet for free. [5]

**OPEK – OPENBAAR ENTREPOET VOOR DE KUNSTEN**

This multifunctional arts centre houses 7 cultural organisations which, in addition to their individual activities, also set up innovative collaborations. The café overlooking the canal is a true meeting place for art and culture fanatics. [6]

**Music**

**UNIVERSITY MUSIC ENSEMBLES**

Do you enjoy playing music in a pleasant atmosphere? If so, the
university ensembles may be the perfect place for you. KU Leuven students have priority, but others are welcome to join, if there are open spots.

Arenberg Orchestra – Arenbergorkest
This symphony orchestra, which has approximately 80 members, greatly enjoys working on its varied and surprising programme. Rehearsals every Thursday at 7:45 p.m. at STUK (Naamsestraat 96).

www.kuleuven.be/cultuur/arenberg
bestuur@arenbergorkest.be

Interfak Big Band (IBB)
Conducted by Bart Preneel, the band comprises about 30 musicians (students, staff and alumni) who are all wild about jazz, blues, bebop, fusion, etc. The group has a busy concert schedule and regularly travels abroad as well. Rehearsals every Monday at 7:30 p.m. at STUK (Naamsestraat 96).

www.kuleuven.be/cultuur/ibb – bart.preneel@esat.kuleuven.be

Leuven University Choir (LUK) – Leuvens Universitair Koor
The Leuven University Choir is a dynamic student choir with about 80 singers. Throughout its forty-year existence, the choir has carved a singular niche for itself in the Flemish choral scene. Concerts are performed at Christmas and in the spring. Rehearsals every Thursday at 7:45 p.m. at Damiaanplein 9.

www.kuleuven.be/cultuur/luk – luk@studentenweb.org

Pati Pati
The Pati Pati Solidarity Choir uses music to express solidarity. The choir consists of both national and international students and performs a repertoire of songs from across the world for good causes. Pati Pati aims to give a voice to those who are often forgotten.

Rehearsals every Monday at 8:15 p.m. at MSI (Erasmusplein 2).

www.kuleuven.be/cultuur/patipati – info@patipati.be

University Concert Band (UHO) – Universitair Harmonieorkest
With about 90 members, the UHO is KU Leuven’s largest cultural ambassador. The orchestra provides excellent quality with a daring twist. Its yearly concerts are always an enormous spectacle during which other art forms complement the music or famous soloists are invited to perform. Rehearsals every Tuesday at 8:00 p.m. at STUK (Naamsestraat 96).
University Symphony Orchestra (USO) – Universitair Symfonisch Orkest

The University Symphony Orchestra offers students a unique opportunity to perform great symphonic compositions. The orchestra is conducted with much passion and professionalism by the famous conductor Edmond Saveniers. For more than 50 years, the repertoire has combined monumental pieces with fresh, original ideas. Rehearsals every Wednesday at 7:45 p.m. at STUK (Naamsestraat 96).

www.kuleuven.be/cultuur/uso — info@usoleuven.be

Film

MOVIE THEATRES IN LEUVEN

Cinema Zed

Cinema Zed is a not-for-profit movie theatre, primarily screening films from the alternative circuit. ZED regularly runs films with English sub-titles and also shows a considerable number of European films in languages other than English or Dutch. You can also buy tickets online. Film screening hours: 5:00, 8:00 and 10:30 p.m. (and 3:00 p.m. on Sundays). [8]

Kinepolis Leuven

Kinepolis Leuven offers a wide range of box office movies. With 7 halls and 1 870 seats, this movie theater is very popular with teenagers and students. [9]

Municipal musea

M – Museum Leuven

M, the Museum of Leuven, houses a historical collection centred around late-gothic art of the 19th century. Additionally, M organises temporary exhibitions featuring contemporary artists or classic historical works. Student nights, a pop-up bar on the spectacular roof terrace during the summer, or the intimate festival M-idzomer, turn M into an exciting meeting place. [10]

M-Treasury of Saint Peter

The Treasury of Saint Peter is situated in the choir of Saint Peter’s Church, known as one of the most beautiful buildings of the 15th century Brabant gothic period. The impressive choir hosts a small museum. Here you find many sculptures, paintings and religious silverwork. The masterpiece is “The Last Supper” by Flemish primitive Dirk Bouts. [11]

Library

Leuven public library: De Bib

The public library of Leuven – named ‘The Bib’ – has extensive collections on loan: novels in Dutch, French, English, German, Spanish and Italian, also non-fiction works (books and DVDs) and a diverse collection of comic books and graphic novels. The library presents a large collection of newspapers, weeklies and other periodicals (in Dutch and other languages). To be able to borrow library materials, you need a library card. The annual fee for a card is € 6 (free for those younger than 18). The largest part of the materials in the library can be lent free of charge. A membership card for library consultation only is also free of charge.

In order to register as a library user and obtain your library card, you will need to show your ID card. Enrolment is easy if your ID mentions your address in...
Belgium or if you can show us a document ‘Bewijs van woonst’ (to be obtained at City Hall). If not, you can still get your library card, but then you will be asked to pay a refundable deposit of € 75. [12]

Academies

Municipal academy of fine arts
SLAC – Academie Beeldende Kunst
The academy offers a whole range of possibilities designed to exercise your creativity. You can study general visual arts education, drawing and painting, photography (also digital), advertising and sculpture, digital art, graphics, ceramics and textile arts, lace-making or cross-curricular projects. Several times a year exhibitions and lectures are organised in the academy and also ‘outdoors’. Courses are in Dutch.

Municipal conservatory for music, drama & dance
SLAC – Conservatorium Muziek, Woord & Dans
For music, dance and drama, the Music Conservatory caters to all your needs. If you possess musical talent, want to learn to play an instrument, take dance or acting lessons, feel free to apply. Own creations and productions are regularly produced on stage. [13]
**PLACES TO VISIT**

**University carillon**
The tower of the KU Leuven Central Library on the Ladeuzeplein houses one of Europe’s largest and best carillons. During the academic year until mid-May, the carillon is played twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:00 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.

You can enjoy unique tower visits and accompany the carillonneur up the tower with your friends, family or student association (max. 25 persons per tour). You need to register via forms.kuleuven.be/a0025. www.kuleuven.be/culture/carillon

**App Leuven Walk**
With the App Leuven Walk, you can visit the highlights of the city. The app will suggest a route through the city and a handy navigation shows you the way. For each location you will find a brief description, a photo or video and a challenge. The app is available in Dutch, French, English and German. You can download the free app from the Appstore (iOS) or the Google Play store (Android).

**Parks and green around Leuven**
In and round Leuven there are a lot of parks: large or small, for peace and quiet or for playing with children, etc. Among others: Park Abbey (Heverlee), Vlierbeek Abbey (Kessel-Lo), Arenberg Castle and Park (Heverlee), Provinciaal domein (Kessel-Lo), Meerdal Forest (Heverlee), Zoet Water (Oud-Heverlee). www.leuven.be/en/tourism/sightseeing/park-and-nature

Visit also: Old Market Place (pubs, the Kotmadam), Great Beguinage with Sint-Jan-De-Doper Church, Sint-Geertrui Church and Abbey, Sint-Michiels Church, Botanical Garden. [14]

**PEOPLE TO MEET**

**Pangaea Intercultural Meeting Centre**
In the spirit of hospitality and intercultural understanding, Pangaea aims to create a home-away-from-home for internationals and wants to support meeting and exchange within the Leuven university community. The name Pangaea refers to the name of the original single continent which made up the entire land surface of the earth some 175 million years ago.

What Pangaea has to offer you:

**Intercultural Meeting Centre and Bar**
This is a lively meeting place on the KU Leuven Social Sciences Campus where international and Belgian students and staff can get together in an informal setting. It has a lounge with a coffee bar, WIFI, a variety of board games and newspapers. There is also a recreational room with table tennis facilities.

Become a member and enjoy free coffee and tea during the whole academic year. The bar is partly run by volunteers. Student members can rent out our rooms for student activities and meetings.

Membership per academic year:

- All students: € 5
- All staff: € 15
Socio-cultural Activities
During the academic year Pangea organises a variety of trips, lectures, workshops, conversation groups, film, cultural evenings etc. Most activities are freely accessible, activities that require you to register (and pay if applicable) are only accessible for students. If you want to learn more about your host country, don’t miss the About Belgium lectures: www.kuleuven.be/aboutbelgium
For new incoming KU Leuven students and researchers, Pangea organises the Orientation Days and a Buddy Programme: www.kuleuven.be/welcome. [15]

Student faculty unions and student representation
In Belgium, the government includes students in all organs that determine policies concerning higher education. Often this representation is organised in a tiered structure with student faculty unions or councils at the base, representing students in and from their faculty, all coming together in an umbrella organisation, that represents students on the level of the institution. These umbrella’s at their turn are brought together in organisations at regional level to lobby with the regional government on educational policy.

STUDENT FACULTY UNIONS: ‘KRINGEN’

What can your faculty union do for you?

• Represent your needs at faculty level.
• Get you discounts and advantages when you become a registered member of the union.
• Organise the course text service at your faculty.
• Run a faculty bar.
• Host a range of socio-cultural activities to meet other students.

UMBRELLA ORGANISATION AT YOUR INSTITUTION

What can the umbrella student organisation do for you?

• Represent your needs via student representatives at the policy levels of your institution.
• Organise and facilitate activities/meetings that bring student representatives or all students from different faculties together.
• Subsidise faculty unions and other student associations to organise activities that bring students together.

KU LEUVEN

Within KU Leuven there are two main umbrella organisations responsible for student representation: The KU Leuven Student Council and LOKO.

[15] PANGEA

Vesaliusstraat 34
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 33 96
www.kuleuven.be/pangaea
pangaea@kuleuven.be

Lounge, bar and recreational rooms: Monday to Thursday from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m.. On Friday and Saturday from noon to midnight.

Office: Monday to Friday from 12:00 noon to 5:30 p.m.

[16] KU LEUVEN STUDENT COUNCIL

’s Meiersstraat 5
3000 Leuven
T 016 85 55 52
info@sturakuleuven.be
www.sturakuleuven.be

[17] LOKO

’s Meiersstraat 5
3000 Leuven
T 016 22 31 09
www.loko.be
loko@loko.be

LOKO INTERNATIONAL
Pangea Intercultural Meeting Centre
Andreas Vesaliusstraat 34
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 33 95
international@loko.be
www.thinkabroad.be

[18] SRL

’s Meiersstraat 5
3000 Leuven
Voorzitter.sr.leuven@ucll.be
www.facebook.com/studentenraadLeuven

[19] OKER

’s Meiersstraat 5
3000 Leuven
Oker@ucll.be
www.kringraad.be
www.facebook.com/kringraad
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<td></td>
<td>Sexuology</td>
<td>Eros</td>
<td>Revue Oude Markt 51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
<td>Dental Sciences</td>
<td>Apollonia</td>
<td><a href="http://www.apollonia.be">www.apollonia.be</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
<td>Farmaceutica</td>
<td><a href="http://www.farmaceutica.be">www.farmaceutica.be</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Socialising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Faculty Union</th>
<th>Faculty Bar or ‘Fakbar’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management &amp; Technology</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>De Kelten dekelten.be</td>
<td>Maxim’O Naamsestraat 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Social Work</td>
<td>Biomedical Lab Technology</td>
<td>Diana <a href="http://www.diana.be">www.diana.be</a></td>
<td>Maxim’O Naamsestraat 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nursing and Midwifery</td>
<td>STEIL steil-leuven.be</td>
<td>’t Archief Zeelstraat 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>Soca soca.ucll.be</td>
<td>Origins Oude Markt 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>Docentica <a href="http://www.facebook.com/docentica">www.facebook.com/docentica</a></td>
<td>’t Archief Zeelstraat 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KU Leuven Student Council
The Student Council acts as a representative of all students and faculty associations of the KU Leuven for what concerns policy matters on university level, applicable to all campuses in Flanders. These include all educational policies, as well as some international matters and social policies such as diversity. [16]

LOKO
LOKO on the other hand is responsible for representation of the students of the Leuven campus. In practice, this means LOKO is the representative for what local social policies and the impact on Leuven students is concerned (such as Alma, Acco, Student Services, etc.). LOKO organises a few large events for all students such as the 24-hour relay race, the Interfacul-tary Theatre festival, the world’s largest carillon cantus, etc.

For information on how to get involved in representation, on events and support for your association, you can contact LOKO International. The role of LOKO International within LOKO is to represent the growing share of international students in the student population, to support them in starting an association and/or in requesting subsidies for activities. [17]

UC LEUVEN-LIMBURG
Within UC Leuven–Limburg there are also two main umbrella organisations representing students: the Student Council Leuven and OKeR.

StudentenRaad Leuven (SRL) or Student Council Leuven
SRL (Student Council Leuven) is the UC Leuven-Limburg college student council comprising the different student councils at faculty or campus level that voice the students’ opinions on educational and social issues to the directors of the institution. The CSR (student council on campus - Campusstudentenraad) is mainly concerned with issues such as education, exams, diversity, student restaurant, equipment of the library and the computer rooms, etc. [18]

Overkoepelende Kringraad (OKeR)
The student clubs at faculty level organise various cultural and sporting activities, as well as the occasional party. These clubs
are coordinated by the umbrella student organisation OKeR. Activities are posted on the OKeR facebook page. [19]

LUCA SCHOOL OF ARTS – CAMPUS LEMMENS

Participatiecommissie
The “Participatiecommissie” includes the student representatives and the student council. The former represents the needs and questions of all our students in several boards and meetings, such as the Faculty Board, the Academic Board and Social Services. The latter organises parties, sporting activities, cultural affairs and many other creative events. [20]

International Student Associations
A lot of international students organise to participate in associations to give students from their country a warm welcome and a home-away-from-home, to share their culture and background with the Leuven community and to organise activities where students can meet.

Are you active in an association and do you need subsidies or do you want to start an association?

- Go to LOKO International for advice.
- Check the regulations for subsidising student associations: www.loko.be/subsidies.

Contact data of the international student associations changes quite often. For the most recent contact information, you can contact LOKO International via mail (see p. 80). You will most likely find the associations on Facebook as well.

ASSOCIATIONS BY COUNTRY
- Bangladesh: Bangladeshi Student Association
- China: CSAL – csal.leuven@gmail.com
- Congo: Bana Leuven www.bana-leuven.com banaleuven@gmail.com
- Ethiopia: ESAL
- India: ISAL – www.isal.be leuvenisal@gmail.com
- Indonesia: PPI ppileuven@gmail.com
- Iran: ILCA – www.ilcaleuven.be – ilca.leuven@gmail.be
- Japan: Gakusei Forum victoria-bee.com/gakusei
- Lebanon: Lebanese Association
- Pakistan: PSA
- Taiwan: TSAL
- Vietnam: Vinakul

THEMATIC ASSOCIATIONS
- Academics for Development (AFD) - www.academicsfordevelopment.be
- Academics for Technology (AFT) - www.aftleuven.be
- AISEC Leuven – European youth exchanges - aiesecleuven.webs.com - info@aiesecleuven.be

[20] PARTICIPATIECOMMISSIE
LUCA School of Arts – Campus Lemmens
Lemmensberg 3
3000 Leuven
T 016 23 39 67
www.luca-arts.be/
studentenparticipatie

[21] PHD SOCIETY LEUVEN
phdsocietyleuven@gmail.com
www.phdsociety.be
Facebook: “PHD Society Leuven”
Meeting opportunities for KU Leuven doctoral students and staff

International Contact Club (ICC)
The International Contact Club provides opportunities for international members of the academic community to meet. ICC organises trips in Belgium and abroad (Amsterdam, Aachen, Paris, Lille, etc.) and guided evening visits in Leuven. As an international scholar, postgraduate, pre-doctoral, doctoral, post-doctoral student or staff member, you and your family can join any trip or participate in any of the activities. ICC is run by a group of volunteers who work together with Pangaea (see p. 79). You can register online for trips, but paying takes place at Pangaea Intercultural Meeting Centre a few days before the trip.

Info session for newly arrived international doctoral students and staff members
These info sessions are organised once every three months. Check the website for dates:

PhD Society Leuven
The PhD Society is an international interfaculty student organisation of doctoral students that aims to promote interaction among doctoral students, both international and Belgian. Activities organised by the PhD Society cover academic, social, and career aspects of a doctoral student’s life. Separate committees for each aspect are in place to organise relevant events on a regular basis such as guest lectures, corporate seminars, workshops and weekly drinks. The PhD Society is always on the lookout for enthusiastic doctoral students to join one of the committees and participate in events. [21]
8.4 People to Meet

© Toerisme Leuven
9 Family

9.1 Family reunification
9.2 Births, marriages and deaths
9.3 Schools
9.4 Child care
FAMILY REUNIFICATION

If you wish to bring along your family members, you will have to start the procedure for family reunification. This is a lengthy and comprehensive procedure. Detailed information on the legal framework and the required documents can be found here: www.kuleuven.be/english/admissions/travelling/bringing.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

Births
You are required to inform the Registry Office at the City Hall of the birth of your baby within 15 days. Forms concerning insurance companies, birth premiums and state child allowances can be obtained from the Social Service (for students) or the Human Resources Department (for staff members).

The declaration of birth can be done by one or both of the parents. You need to bring the identity cards or passports of both parents and your marriage booklet or marriage certificate. If the parents are not married, both parents need to come to declare the child, except when a recognition before birth has been done.

Civil marriages
The municipal authorities in Belgium only recognise civil marriages, not religious marriages. If you plan to have both a civil and a religious marriage ceremony, the civil ceremony must take place first. You do not need to have both on the same day. All information concerning marriage and the documents required, can be obtained at the City Hall.

[1] REGISTRY OFFICE CITY HALL – BURGERLIJKE STAND
Professor Van Overstraeten-plein 1
3000 Leuven
T 016 27 21 93
burgerlijke.stand@leuven.be
Death

The Registry Office at the City Hall must be informed of all deaths. This formality will be normally done by the undertaker, but has to be paid for. You can do this yourself, but then you need to inquire at the Registry Office. If death occurs outside a hospital, a doctor must be called first to certify the death and to determine the cause of death. After that, the Registry Office must be informed. It is advisable to ask for several copies of the death certificate, since they may be needed for insurance, banks, embassies, etc. [1]

**SCHOOLS**

**The educational system**

Education in Belgium (from nursery to secondary school) is mainly organised in a public school system, that consists of three types of education: state-organised schools (f.e. by the local government, the City Council or the Province), Catholic schools, and Method schools (Freinet, Steiner, etc.). All these schools get funding from the government and deliver equally high standards. Within this public system there are no tuition fees.

Children of international students and staff are welcome in this public school system. They can study either in Dutch or in French, depending on the language of the town or district in which the school is located.

The addresses of all schools in Leuven and surroundings can be obtained via [www.leuven.be/leven/onderwijs/lijstvanonderwijsinstellingen](http://www.leuven.be/leven/onderwijs/lijstvanonderwijsinstellingen).

**CLASSIFICATION OF SCHOOLS**

**DUTCH/FRENCH**

See below.

**SCHOOL FEES**

Except in private schools, no fees are paid for kindergarten, primary or secondary education, that is subsidised by the government. However, you will receive a monthly bill for various

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Type of school (English) – Type school (Dutch) – Niveau d’école (French)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,5–6</td>
<td>Nursery School – Kleuterschool – Jardin d’enfants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–12</td>
<td>Elementary School – Basisschool – Ecole Primaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12–18</td>
<td>Secondary School – Middelbare School – Ecole Moyenne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18–...</td>
<td>Higher Education – Hoger Onderwijs – Enseignement Supérieure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Academic Bachelor and Master at University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Professional Bachelor at University Colleges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
incidental expenses such as trips, swimming, school magazines, drinks, meals and day care after school hours. For higher education, you will need to pay a tuition fee. The amount of these fees depends on the programme of study.

**RECEPTION CLASSES FOR NON-DUTCH SPEAKING CHILDREN**

Schools in Flanders can organise special reception classes for children who don’t speak Dutch yet, called OKAN-classes, where a personalised study programme will mainstream them as soon as possible. For a list of primary schools that organise OKAN-classes in Leuven, contact Onthaalbureau of the city of Leuven. [2]

There are also secondary schools that organise such classes:

- Sint-Albertuscollege Haasrode
  Geldenaaksebaan 277
  3000 Leuven
  T 016 40 50 60
- Sint- Jozefinstituut Jozef Pierrestraat 56
  3010 Kessel- Lo
  T 016 25 22 51
  or 0490 64 51 69
  info@okan.ksleuven.be

**The school calendar**

All kindergartens, primary and secondary schools:

- Have a five-day school week, from Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 3:30/4:00 p.m..
  - Don’t have school on Wednesday afternoons, school ends around 12:00 noon.
  - Start on 1 September until 30 June.

**General school holidays:**

- One week in early November (Autumn Break around All Saint’s).
- Two weeks during Christmas.
- One week in February or early March (Spring Break around Carnival).
- Two weeks during Easter.
- Two months in the summer period (July and August).

**How to register**

Parents are encouraged to examine the curriculum and visit the schools, so that they can explain their interests as well as their child’s situation and ‘post-Belgium’ plans. The purpose of such a visit is to enable parents to decide which school offers them the most appropriate education for their child.

When your child has to start the first year of secondary school, it is important to register in time, since the places per school are limited.

**Private international school**

Since 2013-2014, Leuven also has a private international school. It offers international education in English for children of expatriates and foreign employees in Belgium. The school is founded and supported by KU Leuven, the city of Leuven, IMEC and VIB. The one-time application fee is € 800 and the annual fee is € 9 996. Children from staff members of the 4 founding partners get a 10% discount. [3]
CHILD CARE

Studying while pregnant/with children

There are a few services that assist pregnant mothers and new parents in preparing and caring for their baby and young child.

Maternity care – De Bakermat
De Bakermat provides home care services for new mothers, prenatal or postnatal house calls, information and helps with the rental or purchase of child care material.[4]

Child & Family – Kind & Gezin
Kind & Gezin offers a wide range of baby and child care services. Expecting parents, and parents of children up to 3, can get free medical assistance and advice on baby care and feeding. You can also make an appointment for a house call. When you deliver in a Belgian hospital, Kind & Gezin will automatically contact you. [5]

Day care services

DAY CARE FOR CHILDREN UP TO 2.5 YEARS OLD

Central day care system
There are a number of day care centres and registered childminders in the Leuven area. To apply for child care, you need to register online at www.kinderopvangleuven.be as all applications for child care in Leuven go through this webpage. Most day care centres have a long waiting list, in some cases longer than one year, so you are strongly advised to apply for a spot from the moment that you know you are pregnant. The waiting list for the childminders is normally shorter. On the webpage you can find a list of all day care centres. To apply for day care, first register yourself as a parent (‘subscribe’ and ‘no account yet’), then add your partner (if this applies to you). Thirdly, you can add your child(ren) and fill in the application per child by clicking on ‘new demand’.

Some day care centres and childminders offer day care for a subsidised price according to your income. The calculation of the subsidised day price has to be done by yourself, with your e-ID and pin code and a card reader via the website of Kind & Gezin. [6]

KU Leuven Day Care Centres
The KU Leuven Day Care Centres offer day care for a subsidised price. For these day care centres you also need to register through the web page www.kinderopvangleuven.be. They are open to everyone, but priority is given to children of KU Leuven staff and KU Leuven students. Make sure to mention this in your application.
admin.kuleuven.be/personeel/english/day_care_centres

The KU Leuven day-care centres are:

Open from 7.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.:
• Peutertuin: De Croylaan 8, 3001 Heverlee T 016 32 24 52
• Babyhome: Herestraat 49, 3000 Leuven T 016 33 08 60
• De Villa: Tervuursevest 105, 3001 Heverlee T 016 23 32 58
• Boomhut (Grootpark): Weligerveld 4 3212 Pellenberg T 016 46 31 12
• Wollewei (Grootpark): Weligerveld 3 3212 Pellenberg T 016 46 31 12

Open from 6.15 a.m. to 8.15 p.m.:
• Kabouterberg: Herestraat 49, 3000 Leuven T 016 33 08 60

DAY CARE FOR CHILDREN FROM 2.5 TO 12 YEARS OLD (OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS)

Several organisations provide extra-curricular day care. A list of all these day care centres is also available at www.kinderopvangleuven.be. Select ‘age 2.5 to 12 years old’ in your search to get the correct search results.

DAY CARE FOR SICK CHILDREN
Day care at home for sick children is provided by several
LIVING IN LEUVEN 2016—2017

9.4 CHILD CARE

organisations. A qualified childminder will come to your house, so you can rest assured that your child will be taken care of while you go to work.

Your child has to have been examined by a doctor and you will need to fill out the necessary documents. Some initiatives will charge you a fee based on your income.

A list of services and detailed information is available at www.kinderopvangleuven.be, ‘care ill child’.

Playground activities during school holidays

YOUTH DEPARTMENT – CITY OF LEUVEN

Volunteering adolescents supervise and entertain the children during school breaks in different settings.

Playgrounds:

- Easter holidays and summer holidays.
- In Leuven, Heverlee, Kessel-Lo and Wilsele.
- For children aged 3 to 15, in age groups.
- For half a day or a full day.
- No reservation is needed.

Thematic weeks ‘Vleugelweken’

- Carnival and Autumn holidays.
- A week from Monday to Friday within a central theme.
- For children aged 4 to 13, in age groups.
- Full days from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- You need to make reservations beforehand.

The child needs to obtain a youth pass first for € 5 at Jeugdcentrum Vleugel F. You can also register online: leuven.kwandoo.com. [7]

For pricings, see table above.

DON BOSCO PLAYGROUND

During the summer holidays, the children of KU Leuven international students can join the activities at Don Bosco in Oud-Heverlee and Groene Zone in Heverlee. For more information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prices Youth Department - City of Leuven</th>
<th>Basic price</th>
<th>Families with more than 3 children</th>
<th>Low income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full day</td>
<td>€ 6</td>
<td>€ 5</td>
<td>€ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half a day</td>
<td>€ 3</td>
<td>€ 2,5</td>
<td>€ 1,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[2] ONTHAALBUREAU INBURGERING LEUVEN
Ladeuzeplein 17
3000 Leuven
T 016 47 43 11
onthaalbureau.leuven@vlaams-brabant.be

[3] INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LEUVEN (ISL)
Proximus Campus
Geldenaaksebaan 335
3001 Heverlee
www.isleuven.org

[4] DE BAKERMAT
Diestsesteenweg 49
3010 Leuven
T 016 20 77 40
debakermat@bakermat.be
www.debakermat.be

Diestsepoort 6 P.O. Box 56
3000 Leuven
T 016 21 05 11
secr.vlaamsbrabantenbrussel@kindengezin.be
www.kindengezin.be
about organisation, costs and any reductions, you can contact the Social Service (see p.105).

**SPORT CAMPS UNIVERSITY SPORT CENTRE**

University Sports Centre of KU Leuven organises sports activities for all children from 8 to 16 years old during two weeks in July and August at the price of € 60 or € 70 per week. In order to participate you need to purchase a sports card. (see p. 72)

www.kuleuven.be/sport (click sports offer – sports camps for kids)

**Babysitting services**

**Babysitting Services of the “Gezinsbond”**

Parents interested in making use of this service can consult the Gezinsbond’s database for a list of names of babysitters, as well as the number of hours that they are willing to work. The babysitters have been screened beforehand and they are insured. The prices are fixed per hour. In addition, you pay a small annual fee to the Gezinsbond. You have to be a member of the Gezinsbond to use this service. If your child is born in Leuven, you automatically become a member for one year free of charge. If this is not the case, your family can join for € 40 and enjoy all the benefits. [8]

www.gezinsbond.be/

kinderoppasdienst
9.4 Child Care

[6] CENTRUM KINDEROPVANG LEUVEN
Professor Van
Overstraetenplein 1
3000 Leuven
T 016 27 26 43
info@kinderopvangleuven.be

[7] JEUGDCENTRUM VLEUGEL F
Brusselsestraat 61a
3000 Leuven
T 016 27 27 50
www.vleugelf.be

[8] GEZINSBOND LEUVEN
Carla Dubuquoit
0493 72 70 32 (between 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.)
kodkessello@gmail.com

© Layla Aerts
Religion

10.1 On campus
10.2 Worship communities
ON CAMPUS

KU LEUVEN
Religion and Philosophical Diversity Contact Point

KU Leuven has set up a specific contact point to answer any questions about religion or philosophical diversity either on campus or in Leuven. You can get in touch with the contact point for:

- More information about KU Leuven’s religion and philosophical diversity policy.
- Any questions relating to study and/or daily life (accommodation, prayer and contemplation rooms etc.).
- For students: advice about whether a partial or final exam may be rescheduled because of a religious holiday (see p. 53).

University Parish

The KU Leuven houses a Roman Catholic University Parish. It offers a wide range of activities touching upon matters of faith and interreligious encounters, community building, spiritual life, theological and ethical reflection, solidarity and volunteering (iCare). These activities are open to all KU Leuven students and staff regardless of their cultural, religious or political backgrounds.

[1] RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHICAL DIVERSITY
Contact Point
Naamsestraat 80
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 43 32
www.kuleuven.be/religion
reldiv@dsv.kuleuven.be

[2] UNIVERSITY PARISH
KU LEUVEN
Tiensestraat 124
3000 Leuven
T 016 32 55 85
www.upinternational.be
up@upar.kuleuven.be
**WORSHIP COMMUNITIES**

**Roman-Catholic**

**UNIVERSITY PARISH KU LEUVEN**

**Dutch-speaking Community**

- Where: St. John the Baptist Church (Sint-Jan de Doperkerk) at Groot Begijnhof
- When: Sundays at 11:00 a.m., Saturday evenings at 6:15 p.m.
- Contact: Jacques Haers – Jacques.Haers@upar.kuleuven.be – T 016 32 38 03

**English-speaking community (EUP)**

- Where: Chapel of Leo XIII Seminary at Tiensestraat 124 (entrance via Vesaliusstraat 2)
- When: Sundays and Holidays of Obligation at 10:00 am
- Contact: Valerian Mendonca – vally39@gmail.com – T 0498 88 35 02

**French-speaking African community – Communauté Francoophone Africaine**

- Where: Chapel of Leo XIII Seminary, Tiensestraat 124 (entrance via Vesaliusstraat 2)
- When: Sundays at 11:00 a.m.
- Contact: Jacques Haers, Jacques.Haers@upar.kuleuven.be, T 016 32 38 03

**OTHER CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES IN LEUVEN-HEVERLEE**

**Dutch speaking community: Pastoral Unit Leuven (P.E.L.)**
- Where: Chapel of Leo XIII Seminary at Tiensestraat 124 (entrance via Vesaliusstraat 2)
- When: Sundays at 11:00 a.m.
- Contact: Jacques Haers, Jacques.Haers@upar.kuleuven.be, T 016 32 38 03

**English speaking community: St. Kwinten’s**

- Where: St. Kwinten’s Church at Naamsestraat 160
- When: Monday-Fridays 6:00 p.m., Sundays 9:00 am – Adoration: Tuesdays 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
- Contact: sintkwintenleuvenenglish.wordpress.com

**English speaking community: Holy Spirit College**

- Where: Holy Spirit College at Naamsestraat 40
- When: Sundays 11:30 a.m.
- Contact: www.kuleuven.be/hgc

**Spanish and Dutch-speaking community: Saint Michael’s**

- Where: Saint Michael’s Church at Naamsestraat 57a
- When: Sundays at 12:00 noon, 1st Sunday of the month at 11:15 a.m.
10.2 WORSHIP COMMUNITIES

LIVING IN LEUVEN 2016—2017

Contact: Juan Carlos Tinjacá – juankatin@gmail.com

Polish-speaking community: Polska Misja Katolicka w Brukseli

Where: Jourdanstraat 80, 1060 Brussel
Contact: O. Władysław Walaszczyk – T 02 538 30 87

Ukrainian Catholic Church of Byzantine rite (Greek Catholic Church)

Where: Halfmaartstraat 15
When: Sundays at 10 a.m.
Contact: Mykola Paliuh – paliuh@yahoo.com

Anglican

English speaking community: St. Martha & Mary’s

Where: Chapel of the Justus Lipsius College at Minderbroederstraat 15
When: Sundays at 6:30 p.m.
Contact person: Jack McDonald – chaplain@anglicanchurchleuven.be – www.anglicanchurchleuven.be

Protestant

Dutch-speaking community: Jesuit Church

Where: Jesuit Church, Waversebaan 220, Heverlee
When: Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Christian Evangelical Mission International (CEMI)

Where: Brouwerstraat 1
Contact: M.C. (Mix) Chan – mixchan42@gmail.com – T 0484 14 86 82 – www.emsionline.org/emsiweb/emsi/intro

Christ Centered Church

Contact: Seth Sakyi-Gyinae – sethbel@hotmail.com – T 0496 105495

Orthodox

Russian Orthodox Church

Where: Tervuursestraat 56
Contact: Alexander Yavarouski – orthodoxleuven@yahoo.co.uk – T 0498 834556

Ethiopian Orthodox Church

Contact: Fassil Eshetu Teferra – fassil.teffera@student.kuleuven.be

Jewish

Leuven Havurah

An independent, non-denominational, egalitarian havurah.
A Jewish space for Jews and their Jewish/non-Jewish partners and friends.
A Jewish home for...
Jewish students, researchers, professors.

- Monthly Kabbalat Shabbat & Dinner / Shabbat/Havdalah Dinners – havurah style, with kiddush, candle lighting, alternative tefilah and bentching / Festivals / Limmud.
- Contact: ohelyachdav@gmail.com – T 0476 52 32 81

Muslim

International Muslim Students Association of Leuven (IMSAL)

- Where: Students’ Mosque at Rijschoolstraat 23 & Campus prayer room (00.10) at Celestijnenlaan 200L in Heverlee
- When: Friday prayer is always held in two languages (Arabic and either mostly English or Dutch) at 1:00 p.m. (or 2:00 p.m. during summer time)
- Contact: admin@imsal.be – www.imsal.be
- Various sports, religious, social and cultural activities are organised throughout the year, including public lectures and seminars.

Al-Fateh Mosque
- Where: Penitentienstraat 33

Al-Ihsaan Mosque
- Where: Kolonel Begaultlaan 45
- Contact: www.alihsaan.be

Buddhists
- Contact: www.boeddhistische-unie.be

Hindu
- Contact: Markus Fobelets – markusfobelets@hotmail.com - T 0472 88 83 79 – www.hinduforum.be

Mormon Community
- Contact: Koen Van Kerckhoven – kovankerckhoven@gmail.com – T 0471 66 54 96 – www.mormon.be

BAHÁ’Í Community
- Contact: Magda Van Opstal magda.van.opstal@gmail.com & Toos Verhagen isa.leuven@yahoo.com – T 0473 61 37 77 – www.bahai.org

Humanist Movement
- Where: Huis Van De Mens at Tiensevest 40
- Contact: Patrick Bruggeman – patrick.bruggeman@demens.nu – T 016 83 56 35 – www.demens.nu
10.2 Worship Communities
Safety – What if things go wrong?

11.1 Police and safety
11.2 Safety and security on campus
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POLICE AND SAFETY

The police department is in charge of maintaining law and order. Police officers are there for your safety whenever you need them. You are encouraged to report incidents to the police, for example if your bicycle has been stolen, if you are involved in a traffic accident, etc. You can also alert one of the city guards in the street, you can recognise them by their purple jacket with the print ‘gemeenschapswacht’. You can contact the Police Headquarters 24/7. [1]

Student Police Officers
The Student Police Officers, Rik De Langhe and Stephanie Homans, are there to facilitate contact between the institutions of higher education and the police department, they coordinate and mediate if necessary. You may contact them to report problems, to request information on regulations, to inform about your registration at the Foreigners Office, etc. [2]
You can find Rik at:

- LOKO, ’s Meiersstraat 5: Tuesdays from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. (or by appointment).
- De Moete, Celestijnenlaan 200p, 3001 Heverlee: Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. (or by appointment).

You can find Stephanie at:

- Pangaea Lounge, Vesanliusstraat 34: Every two weeks on Tuesdays from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. (or by appointment).

Some tips for your personal safety
Going out? Watch your belongings!

- Take special care of your passport and travel documents and keep them in a safe place. Make sure to have a photocopy of all these documents.
- We strongly advise against carrying large amounts of cash with you. It is safer to pay electronically.
• When you go out or when you are in crowded places, look after your purse, mobile phone, coat and keys. Keep them in a tightly closed handbag, purse or inside pocket. Carry your handbag between arm and body and never on your back. Keep the bag securely closed, with the clasp on the inside.
• If you have a car, always lock the doors and don’t leave any valuables inside.

Careful with alcohol!

• Leuven is rightly famous for its beers, but don’t forget you can get a fine for public drunkenness. Belgian beers are often stronger than the ones you might be used to, so be moderate and drink a sufficient amount of water or non-alcoholic beverages in between.
• Drinking alcohol in the street and in public places is not allowed between midnight and 8:00 a.m., but of course this does not mean you cannot have a drink on a café’s terrace.
• Drinking and driving (also with a bicycle) do not mix: having more than 0.5 per mille alcohol in the blood is a punishable offence.
• Take good care of your friends and do not abandon each other, especially in case of excessive alcohol consumption.

Be considerate of the neighbourhood.

• Respect the inhabitants’ right to a quiet night’s rest at all times. In order to prevent public nuisance there is a police regulation. Keep things quiet and clean as you go out at night, so you won’t risk a fine.
• If you have a problem with your neighbours, discuss it with them first. You can also get free assistance from a neighbour’s mediator.

How to prevent robbery?

• Lock all outside doors (with a key) and deadlock windows when you are not at home.
• Don’t leave the front door open for friends who will arrive later.
• Make sure your television, electronical equipment, notebook and other valuables can’t be seen through a window and never leave cash or credit cards lying around.
• Take valuable goods with you when you leave for the weekend or put them away in a safe place.
• Give your room/house a lived-in appearance while away.
• Do not hide your keys in those typical ‘secret’ places such as under a doormat, in a flower pot, etc.
• Marking of valuable goods makes it much easier to identify stolen goods afterwards. It is recommended to keep an inventory of serial numbers of appliances, IMEI number of your cell phone and MAC code of your laptop. For that purpose you may use the...
registration card to be found on the website of the Leuven police.

- If, in spite of all precautions, you become the victim of robbery, file a declaration with the police as soon as possible!

SAFETY AND SECURITY ON CAMPUS

KU Leuven and UC Leuven-Limburg

In cases of an emergency or an accident on campus, you must call the 24-hour KU Leuven emergency number for a fast and efficient aid of the right auxiliary services (police, fire department, medical assistance). You can use the emergency phones available in every building on campus to dial 2222. You can also mail them. [3]

LUCA School of Arts - Campus Lemmens

During office hours you can contact the front desk in case of emergency: T 016 23 39 67. After hours, you should call the emergency services directly.
Safety – What if things go wrong?

SOCIAL AND LEGAL AID

For all students
The Social Service strives to ensure that every student can study ‘care-free’. The Social Service is a ‘steppingstone’ where you can ask any question of a practical, legal or financial nature related to your stay as a student in Leuven and where you can find a sympathetic ear in case of personal or emotional troubles. The consultation is free of charge and confidential. You don’t need to make an appointment. [4]

The Legal Service provides information and assistance on legal matters in civil and criminal law. You need to make an appointment first. [5]

For staff
Staff members are expected to request assistance of existing public services in these matters. You can always contact your HR department for more information. Relevant public services:

Justitiehuis
Justitiehuis offers low threshold legal advice. [6]

CAW Leuven
CAW is an organisation where you can ask any question of a practical, legal or financial nature and where you can turn to in crisis situations. [7]

HARASSMENT

If you become the victim of unwanted behavior (bullying, violence, sexual harassment) within the university community, you can turn to a designated staff member who will listen to you and assist you in the utmost confidence.

KU Leuven
- Students: Harassment prevention counselor at the Student Health Centre: kathleen.vleugels@kuleuven.be T 016/32 43 43
- Staff: list via intranet, search ‘network of local confidants’

UC Leuven-Limburg
- Students: Student Office on campus www.ucll.be/international/student-services/student-support/personal-support
- Staff: designated co-worker on campus, list via the intranet after login

LUCA School of Arts – Campus Lemmens
- Students can turn to the Ombudsperson (see p. 51)
- Staff can contact the institution’s confidant walter.mommaerts@luca-arts.be
DISCRIMINATION

Belgium has a coordinated network of anti-discrimination centres that work to prevent and remedy all forms of discrimination based on sexual preference, disability, age and ethnicity in housing, employment, education, and public services. If you are the victim of discrimination in Leuven, you can contact the local Leuven centre: Meldpunt Discriminatie. [8]

KU Leuven
Students and staff can report complaints and suggestions related to gender and diversity through a website form. Incoming messages will be listed and treated anonymously.
www.kuleuven.be/diversiteit/meldpunt

UC Leuven-Limburg
UC Leuven-Limburg staff members are referred to a designated confidant on campus, whereas students must contact the student office at their campus. (See p. 105).

LUCA School of Arts – Campus Lemmens
(See p. 105).
Leaving Leuven
LEAVING LEUVEN – BELGIUM

Before leaving Belgium permanently, you will need to take care of some administrative formalities and practical issues.

1. Unsubscribe at City Hall.
Please don’t forget to de-register at the city hall of your place of residence in Belgium. This is very important. If you neglect to properly close your file upon departure, this can have a negative impact, e.g. on any future visa applications for the Schengen countries. Non-EAA nationals, who have to make stopovers in the Schengen territory during their trip back home, have to contact their institution. More information:
www.kuleuven.be/english/admissions/travelling/idcard
2. For staff members:
Please inform your HR department, so that they can inform you on other matters (e.g. immigration formalities, social security, taxes, transfer of retirement and/or unemployment rights to other EEA-countries, etc.)

3. Reclaim the deposit of your room/apartment/house.
See p. 24.

4. Stop your insurances.
Contact your health insurance fund/insurance company for more information, as procedures may differ.

5. Forward your mail.
You can use the B-Post service ‘Do My Move’. Mail that arrives at your old Leuven address can be sent to your new address abroad during a certain period. [www.bpost.be/nl/domymove](http://www.bpost.be/nl/domymove)

6. Return your (rented) bicycle.
To Velo or to your institution (e.g. in case of 2WD for staff members). See p. 42.

7. Bring furniture to spit and large domestic waste to a recycling centre.
See p. 35 and 37.

8. Ship your goods back home.
Check [www.goudengids.be](http://www.goudengids.be) for shipping companies.

Contact your bank for more information, as procedures may differ.
LEAVING LEUVEN – BELGIUM

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Belgium for Dummies
BELGIUM FOR DUMMIES

By Prof. Emmanuel Gerard

Beautiful historical cities, belfries and cathedrals, all bear witness to a rich past. Belgium is a young country with an old history and, for many today, an uncertain future. It came into being in 1830, within borders that went back to the 16th century. Belgium and the Netherlands, a coastal region also called the Low Countries, are situated at the mouth of the Scheldt, the Meuse and the Rhine. For centuries this region was contested between the German emperor and the French king and for that reason it became the “battlefield of Europe”. In the 15th century the Dukes of Burgundy united different medieval principalities and created a third player between the two great powers which was subsequently taken over by the Habsburg dynasty. The Seventeen Provinces as they were called were then torn apart in the 16th century by the wars of religion. The Revolt against Spanish rule resulted in the rupture of the Low Countries: in the North the Dutch Republic came into being, dominantly Calvinist, today the Netherlands; the South remained Catholic under Spanish Habsburg rule and became later Belgium. After the fall of Napoleon in 1815 there was a short-lived reunion of Belgium and the Netherlands, but solidarity was lacking. Catholics and liberals in the South revolted against the Dutch King William I and so Belgium came about. The national motto “L’Union fait la force” is reminiscent of that founding coalition. Belgium was given a most liberal constitution, a model in its time, and the Catholic Church regained freedom of action. The new state became a monarchy and with Leopold I a new dynasty appeared on the European stage. From the start the young nation faced some divisions that undermined its cohesion. A language border runs across the country. In the northern part of Belgium, today called Flanders, the vernacular language has always been Flemish or Dutch; a language that Flanders has in common with the Netherlands. In the southern part of the country, today known as Wallonia, French is the official language. This linguistic duality created tensions. In the 19th century language use in Belgium was free, but public life was dominated by French, even in Flanders, for French was a European language of culture and the Flemish elite also spoke the language of Molière. The discrimination of the Flemish speakers gave rise to the creation of the Flemish movement. Legislation gradually regulated the public use of language and in the first half of the 20th century Dutch became the official language in Flanders. Today, Belgium has four language regions. Brussels capital is bilingual, Flanders is unilingual Dutch, Wallonia unilingual French, with the exception of a small German speaking territory in the east. In the course of this process the national political parties split in two. However, Belgium not only faced a division along language lines but also an economic divide. From the early 19th century the Liege region and Hainaut province were caught up in a process of industrialization, thanks to the presence of coal and iron. The Walloon provinces developed as an industrial stronghold on the continent and made pre-war Belgium one of the most important industrial nations in the world. The Flemish provinces, on the contrary, stayed rural and agricultural for many years and wealth grew at a slower pace. In the second half of the 20th century, when the old industrial regions declined, the roles were inverted. Thanks to its position near the sea and due to huge investments of multinationals, Flanders could work its way up to become one
of the wealthiest regions on the continent. Antwerp is one of the most important ports in the world. Since cultural and economic factors combined to accentuate their different characters, Flanders and Wallonia grew apart. This evolution has led, since the seventies, to a series of state reforms that have eventually made Belgium a federal state. As a result and due to the fragmentation of the political parties, the formation of a federal government has become a work of acrobatics. This evolution also had important consequences for the University of Leuven. Being the oldest university of the Low Countries, its origins going back to 1425, it once counted famous humanists such as Desiderius Erasmus and Andreas Vesalius among its professors. After Belgian independence the university was first a francophone institution, then a bilingual one, and finally, in 1968, it split into two parts: the KU Leuven in the Flemish city of Leuven, the francophone Université Catholique de Louvain moved to Louvain-la-Neuve, a new town on the other side of the language border. Despite the split the KU Leuven remained a prominent university in Europe. Belgium was an important theatre in the First World War. In 1914, the Belgian army was pushed back by the German aggressor behind the river IJzer. Commanded by King Albert I, it was able to stand its ground for four years with French and British support. Flanders Fields is a strong image for the British people, even an almost sacred place, where many hundred thousand soldiers from the Commonwealth fell in the Ypres Salient. The war graves of the Commonwealth are silent places of remembrance and worth a visit. The Menin Gate in Ypres has the names of more than 50,000 missing soldiers inscribed on its walls. Ever since 1928 the Last Post has been sounded in the evening as a moving tribute to the many war victims. It was not only the “Westhoek” that was severely hit by the war, but also many historical cities in the interior did not remain unscathed. Large parts of Leuven went up in flames in the summer of 1914. The Saint-Peter Church and the late-Gothic city hall were saved as if by miracle, but the university library, in the medieval cloth makers’ hall, was completely destroyed. With American funding a new library was built after the war on the Ladeuzeplein. The Old Market Place looks old, but is no more than a replica built after 1918.

Belgium is a small country with a surface of only 30,500 km², but from the end of the 19th century up to 1962, it played a remarkable role in the European colonial expansion. Leopold II created the Congo Free State, which he governed as an autocrat for more than 20 years. Today he is first and foremost remembered for the atrocities the Free State committed in that part of Africa. In 1908, the Congo became a Belgian colony, 80 times larger than the metropole. When the Belgian Congo gained independence in 1960, without much preparation, the new republic sank almost immediately into a deep crisis, which attracted global attention and competition in a period of Cold War. Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of the Congo and an icon for the emancipation struggle of Afro-Asian countries, was murdered in January 1961 and Belgium has recently admitted partial responsibility. Until 1962 Belgium was also UN-trustee for Rwanda and Burundi, which explains why it has been closely involved in the dramatic events of the African Great Lakes Region. A good 10% of Belgium’s inhabitants have a foreign nationality, the number of people with Sub-Saharan origin being rather limited despite the country’s colonial past. Other ethnic groups are better represented, such as the Italians, Turks and Moroccans. The immigration of these fellow countrymen goes back to the economic situation in the decades after the Second World War, between 1945 and 1975. In that period there was a strong demand for labour, first in the coalmines, later in other economic sectors. The province of
Limburg for instance has a most diverse ethnic composition as the result of its mining activities in the past and in Beringen you will find the largest mosque in Flanders. Today, Brussels and Antwerp are cosmopolitan cities. Since the seventies Belgium has admitted foreign workers only in limited numbers, but it has hosted many refugees.

Brussels is the seat of numerous international institutions and for that reason is well known abroad. Belgium stood at the cradle of the European integration. Together with the Netherlands and Luxemburg, France, Italy and West Germany, it was one of the founding countries of the European Community for Coal and Steel. Out of this Community grew the Common Market and later the European Union. Belgium reasoned that small countries could only win through cooperation and for that reason it has always advanced further steps in the integration process, although currently Belgian public opinion is experiencing a wave of Euro-critical thinking. Brussels became the capital of the key European institutions, seat of the European Commission and the European Parliament (which moves to Strasbourg in France for some of its activities). The first permanent president of the European Council was a Belgian politician, Herman Van Rompuy. In the sixties the seat of NATO was also transferred to Brussels. As an international centre the capital hosts many international summits but also finds itself centre stage for many demonstrations.

Today, in widening circles, there is growing concern about the future of this country. The process of state reform has created a complex federal structure, which is considered less efficient. North and South are increasingly heading in different directions. The political instability that is emerging throughout Europe is adding to this uncertainty. However, Belgians are also known for their muddling through. They think: we shall see. And what may seem illogical to the outsider, is actually just right for the Belgians. After all, one of the most important representatives of surrealism is the Belgian painter René Magritte.
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Discover Leuven by bus

Google Maps visualizes your bus route. Choose your start and end point and have a look at our stops with Google Street View.

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