

Studying abroad in Brussels

General information for students

Brussels is a Flemish-French bilingual enclave in the Flemish-speaking area of [Belgium](#), set slightly north of the middle of the country and constitutes a big cultural and political centre of Europe. Brussels is also the capital of the two great regions that make up Belgium – Flanders and Wallonia. Brussels itself forms the third administrative region of Belgium – The Brussels-Capital Region. The main language spoken in the city is French.

Brussels has been given its character by the coexistence of French and Flemish culture, and it is nowadays home to nationalities around the world, adding a cosmopolitan flavor to its atmosphere. About 25 per cent of its inhabitants are said to be foreigners, mostly being part of the staff of the many organizations that have their headquarters in Brussels.

History of Brussels

Brussels was established in the 7th-10th centuries and has always constituted a significant cultural and political centre in the Lowlands region. The city, whose name originally meant "marshland" in Old Flemish, has survived Roman domination, rule by the Franks, Brabant dukes of French lineage, Burgundian and Hapsburg dynasties, and the Austrian Empire before becoming the capital of an independent Kingdom of Belgium in 1830. Different districts of the city bear signs of many of these periods.

The city has been an intellectual powerhouse for people like Baudelaire and Victor Hugo, and a showcase of characteristic architectural styles such as Brabants Gothic, Art Nouveau and postmodernism, visible throughout the city today. After being occupied by the Germans in the two World Wars, Brussels managed to rise to the forefront of Europe by becoming the headquarters of the [European Union and NATO](#), as well as the major business centre of the region.

Languages: Officially french and Flemish, but German, English, and Arabic are also among the languages most spoken.

(Courtesy of www.brussels.org)

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General contacts

UW staff on-site contacts:

Program coordinator cell phone number: 0498 21 5320

UW faculty cell phone number: 0499 37 2271

The Institute for European Studies (IEE) at the ULB:

Av. F.D. Roosevelt , 39 – 1050 Bruxelles

Tel: 02/650 40 52

Fax: 02/650 30 68

ULB La Plaine campus:

Université Libre de Bruxelles

Campus de la Plaine

Boulevard du Triomphe

B-1050 Bruxelles

Tel : 02 650 21 11

Campus map : <http://www.ulb.ac.be/docs/campus/plaplan.html>

ULB La Plaine campus dorms:

Universite Libre de Bruxelles

Logement Henri LaFontaine

Avenue Fraiteur, 30

B-1050 Brussels, Belgium

ULB Solbosch campus :

Université Libre de Bruxelles

Campus du Solbosch

Avenue Franklin D. Roosevelt 50

B-1050 Bruxelles

Tel : 02 650 21 11

Campus map: <http://www.ulb.ac.be/docs/campus/solplan.html>

US Embassy in Brussels:

27, Boulevard du Regent

1000 Brussels

Tel: 02/5082196

Brussels International Airport :

Located 8 miles (13 Km) northeast of the city center.

+32 2 753 77 53

Brussels Airport

BE-1930 Zaventem

<http://www.brusselsairport.be/en/>

Other useful telephone numbers:

Fire brigade and emergency medical care T 100
Federal Police T 101
European Emergency call T 112
Anti poison Center T 070 245245
Red Cross T 105
Information - national T 1307 and 1234 (automatic)
- international T 1304

Post/Mail

Postal information:

T (0)2 226 21 11

www.laposte.be

Business hours:

Usually from 9a.m.- 5 p.m. Some post offices stay open on Saturday mornings (De Brouckère, City 2, Central Station, Flagey, Porte de Namur, Louise...). However, certain operations may be carried out only at specific times

Postal rates:

Letters, letter-cards, postcards (max. 50 g): Belgium: prior: 0,52 €; within EU: prior: 0,70 €; other countries: prior: 0,80 €; registered letters: + 4,00 €

Visa requirements:

US and Canadian citizens need a valid passport. A visa is not required for stays of less than 90 days. Other nationalities should check with the Belgian Embassy or nearest Consulate Office for visa requirements.

Schengen visa requirements and application forms are available at www.diplobel.us. Application can be mail to the Consulate Office of your jurisdiction, provided that the signature on the application form is notarized and that a prepaid self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Processing generally takes 3 to 5 days.

How to get from the Airport to the ULB *La Plaine* campus:

First get to one of the four main train stations in Brussels:

The train station is located on the lower level of Brussels International Airport (1st floor). There is a train shuttle service from the airport to the North, South and Central stations of Brussels. The shuttle runs at least every 20 minutes and takes approximately 20 minutes. It operates between 5:30am - 12:20am from the airport and 4:45am - 11:10pm from the city. The cost is Euro 2,80 . Buy your ticket before getting on the train to avoid a surcharge fee.

From La Gare Centrale to La Plaine:

Take bus 71, destination Delta. Get off at Fraiteur. It is also possible to use the underground (line 1A, destination Herrmann-Debroux; getting off at Delta).

From La Gare du Midi to La Plaine:

Take the underground, line 2, destination Simonis. Get off at the station Porte de Namur, then take bus 71, destination Delta. Get off at Fraiteur. It is also possible to use the underground alone (instead of getting off at the station Porte de Namur, remain on the underground and change at Arts-Loi to line 1A, destination Herrmann-Debroux, to Delta).

From La Gare du Nord to La Plaine:

Take bus 61, destination Montgomery, to Mérode. From here, take the underground, line 1A, destination Herrmann-Debroux, to Delta.

From the Etterbeek train station:

On leaving the station, turn to the right along Boulevard Général Jacques, then take Boulevard de la Plaine to the right, and then carry on until you reach the entrance to the campus.

General transportation

Brussels trains stations:

Main Train stations:

- Gare Centrale: Carrefour de l'Europe, 2
- Gare du Midi : Rue de France, 2
- Gare du Nord : Rue du Progres, 85
- Gare du Luxembourg : pl du Luxembourg

To get to :

- Paris, London, Cologne: *Gare du Midi*
- Antwerp, Amsterdam: *Gare du Midi/Centrale/Nord*
- Gent, Bruges, Ostende: *Gare du Midi/Centrale/Nord*
- Namur, Dinant, Luxembourg: *Gare du Midi/Centrale*

General train info and reservations:

www.sncb.be

Tel: 02/258 2828

Brussels mass transit (Bus, Metro, Tram):

http://www.stib.be/index.htm?guest_user=guest_en

All tickets cost 1.5 euros if you buy them in the metro station. 2 euros if you buy them on the tram/bus. Most public transport in the Brussels-Capital Region is organized by the **STIB** (Société des Transports intercommunaux bruxellois). The network includes metro lines, which connect the eastern and western districts of the city. Pre-metro lines (trams in the tunnels) complete the metro service. A great many metro lines also have above ground bus and tram connections.

Timetables: 6 a.m. - midnight - consult the timetables shown at the stops.

Fares:

- free for +65 years old
- single ticket: 1,50 €
- card for 5 journeys: 6,70 €
- card for 10 journeys: 11,00 €
- 1-day card: 4,00 €
- airport line one way ticket: 3,00 €
- The “1-day card” may be used on STIB vehicles as much as you like and when you wish during the same day. Weekend and public holidays valid for 2 persons.
- 1-day groupcard (max. 5 pers.) 6,50 €, valid weekend, public holidays and during the week after 9 a.m.

Driving in Brussels:

A US driver's license is accepted if staying less than 90 days in the country.

Please note that unless you have experience in driving in a major European city, we discourage students from driving while studying in Europe. Public transport is affordable and convenient to get around the city and surrounding areas.

By bicycle:

Cycling in central Brussels is not for the faint-hearted: intolerant drivers, slippery cobblestones and tram tracks are all potential hazards. That said, there are some bike lanes (usually painted red and marked with white lines) and paths (separated from the traffic), but these tend to be on the outskirts of town where there's a bit more room.

(www.lonelyplanet.com).

Bike rentals:

Pro Velo

T (0)2 502 73 55

<http://www.provelo.org/>

Price: 3,00 €/h, 12,00 €/day

Cyclocity

Rent a bike at 23 points downtown

www.cyclocity.be

Brussels taxi companies:

The Main one is called Green Taxi 02 349 4949

You can get a taxi at a taxi stand or by calling, not by hailing like we do in the US.

Fares:

- the price per km (1,23 € or 2,46 € depending on whether the journey is inside or outside the 19 districts of Brussels);
- fixed charge: 2,40 € (4,40 € at night) ;
- the waiting time: 23,00 € per hour; certain companies charge reduced fares for journeys to the airport.

Other taxi companies:

- Autolux : Tel. (0)2 411 12 21
- Taxis Bleus : Tel. (0)2 268 00 00
- Taxis Orange : Tel. (0)2 349 43 43
- Taxis Verts : Tel. (0)2 349 49 49

General Tourism information

Brussels Tourist information:

www.brusselsdiscovery.com
www.brusselsinternational.com

Brussels Museums :

Les Musee Royaux des Beau-Arts (Ruede la Regence, 3)
www.fine-arts-museum.be

Le Musee des Instruments de Musique (rue Montagne de la Cour, 2)
www.mim.fgov.be

Le Centre Belge de la Bande Dessine' (rue des Sables, 20)
<http://www.fumetti.org/cbc>

Les Musees Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire (Parc du Cinquantenaire, 10)
www.kmkg-mrah.be

A full list of Brussels museums can be found at:

<http://www.brusselsinternational.be/wabxlint/en/visitor/discover/museums-attractions-monuments/10183/museum.act?affback=1>

Brussels 2008 Events calendar :

<http://www.visitbelgium.com/calendar.html>

Brussels monuments and other sites of interest:

Atomium:

BD du Centenaire 1020

www.atomium.be

Royal Palace:

Place des Palais 1000

www.monarchie.be

The royal Greenhouse (Laeken):

Avenue du Park Royal (Domaine Royal) 1020

www.monarchie.be

Live music venues:

BOZAR (Palais des Beaux-Arts)

rue Ravenstein 23 — 1000 Bxl

Tél.: +32 (0)2 507 82 00

<http://www.bozar.be/>

Botanique

rue Royale 236 – 1210 Bxl

Infos et Tickets Tél.: +32 (0)2 218 37 32

www.botanique.be

Flagey

place Sainte-Croix — 1050 Bxl

Tél.: +32 (0)2 641 10 20

<http://www.flagey.be/>

Halles de Schaerbeek

rue de la Constitution 20 – 1030 Bxl

Tél.: +32 (0)2 227 59 57

www.halles.be

A few words on safety:

Brussels is, generally speaking, a safe city compared to many other European cities. But please be aware that pickpockets are present (just like in any other big city) so you should pay attention while walking around. Be especially careful when asked for the time or for directions since most pickpockets use this technique to distract people. Also you might want to avoid metro and train stations at night. A good rule is to have other students with you when venturing out in a foreign city (especially at night).

EU Institutions

European Parliament:

rue Wiertz 43 • 1047

Tel : (0)2 284 34 57 / (0)2 284 35 82

Fax : (0)2 284 90 11

e-mail: sheinen@europarl.eu.int

www.europarl.eu.int

European Commission:

Berlaymont

rue de la Loi, 200

1040 - Bruxelles

http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm

Council of the EU :

Rue de la Loi, 175 B-1048 Bruxelles

Telephone (32-2) 281 61 11

Fax (32-2) 281 69 34

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/infopublic>

European Investment Bank :

100, boulevard Konrad Adenauer

L-2950 Luxembourg

Tel: (+352) 43 79 1

Fax: (+352) 43 77 04

info@eib.org

<http://www.eib.org/>

European Court of Justice:

T. More Building – 0209

L-2925 Luxembourg

Tel.: +352.43.03.37.02

Fax: +352.43.03.20.26

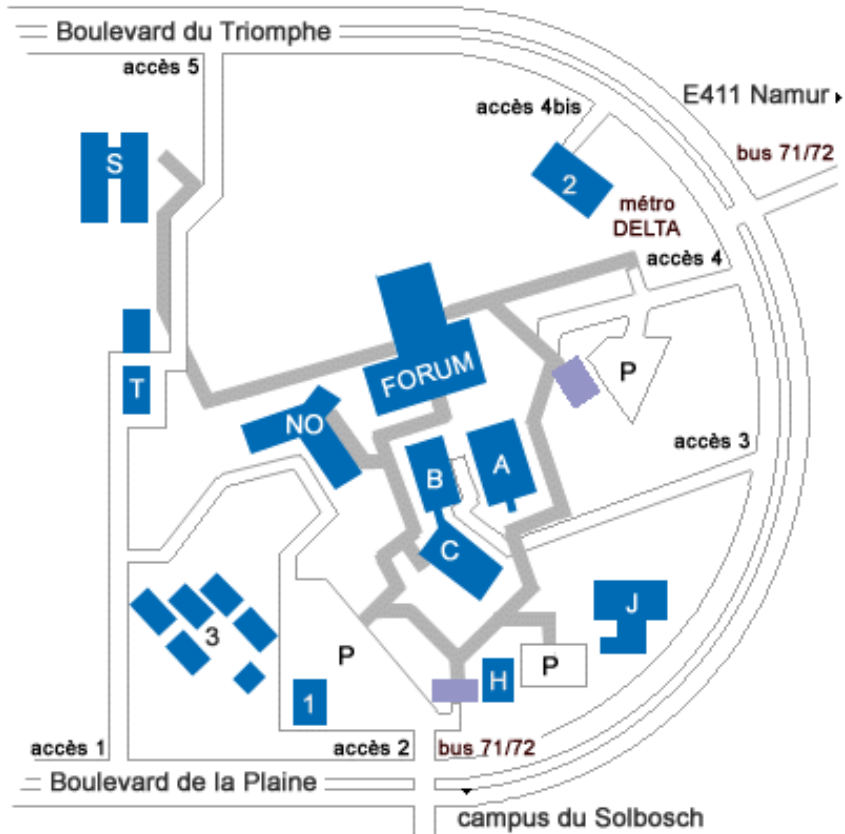
e-mail: serv.visites@curia.europa.eu

ULB “Solbosch” Campus:



The Institute for European Studies (IEE) is just across Avenue Franklin Roosevelt. If you follow “Avenue de L’Université” (at the top of the map) it will lead you straight to La Plaine campus. (see map on page 12).

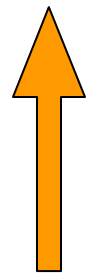
ULB “La Plaine” campus:



The ULB dorms are the cluster of buildings at the lower left of the map (#3). The dorm building name is “Logement Henry LaFontaine”

The “Delta” metro station will allow you to get downtown within 10 minutes.

ULB campuses “Solbosch” and “La Plaine”



North



Brussels' metro system map. The Delta station is on the 1A line (yellow).