

ENTRY TO BELGIUM

Please find here below some information and links in case you need to know the procedure for obtaining a tourist visa to enter Belgium.

To verify if you are a citizen of a country from which you require a tourist visa to enter Belgium, see https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/FR/Documents/Annexe_1_manuel_des_visas.pdf

Or contact the Belgian embassy or Belgian consulate in your country:

http://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/services/embassies_and_consulates/belgian_embassies_and_consulates_abroad/

For general information see :

https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Application-guides/Pages/Short_stay_for_tourism_purposes.aspx#are_you_required_to_hold_a_visa_for_a_short_stay_not_exceeding_3_months

TOURIST VISAS.

While the school cannot give you any guarantee of success, if you apply for a tourist visa, with your application to the Belgian consulate, enclose :

*a completed and signed application form, that complies with the harmonised SCHENGEN visa application form. See

https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Documents/application_form.pdf

*a travel document (e.g. a passport), valid for at least 3 months from the date on which you intend to leave the SCHENGEN territory, or, in the case of multiple journeys, the date on which you intend to leave it for the last time. This document must also contain at least 2 blank pages and have been issued less than 10 years ago;

*suitable, valid travel health insurance. This should cover any costs of repatriation for medical reasons, emergency medical care and/or emergency hospital care or death during your stay/s on the SCHENGEN territory. This insurance must be valid for the whole of this territory and the whole of the stay. The minimum cover is 30,000 EUR. In principle, it is taken out in your own country. Ask the competent consulate about the insurance companies whose contracts are accepted;

*the student's registration invoice for a course of less than 3 months at the school together with proof of payment;

*The details in writing of the budget for your stay in Belgium:

a) A young, single person on a first trip to Brussels will need around 500 EUR to 650 EUR per month in addition to accommodation costs;

b) For accommodation: enclose a letter of confirmation from the owner of the defined address where you will stay in Belgium. It must state in writing the dates and total cost of your accommodation (see further down this text to find the approximate cost of different accommodation types);

c) In addition you should have an extra 500 EUR+ available in reserve for your trip, so you can also cover emergencies.

To prove you have enough funds, include :

- *a bank statement with a balance more than enough to cover the cost of your stay for up to 3 months;
- *a copy of a credit card (preferably 2 or 3 different cards) in the student's name drawn on this account and eventually other accounts;

Also provide :

- *proof of a return ticket or at least booking details of your flights;
- *a clearly documented, compelling reason to return home - for example, a letter stating that your employer expects you back or that you are registered at a university in your country from a given date;
- *a clear reason in writing why your personal decision to learn French at this time is important for your future work or study plans in your own country; including if possible
- *a letter of instruction from your local employer or university saying that you need to learn the language for a job or (under)graduate course;

From some countries you will also need a family member already resident in Belgium who is willing to sign official forms saying that they are responsible for you financially while you are in Belgium - and that you will leave **before** the period of your visa is over.

ACCOMMODATION

-For bed and breakfast / chambre d'hôte, see <http://www.bnb-brussels.be/en/index.html> ("Next to" = "CENTER")
For a stay of two or three weeks, you will find many offers between 40 EUR and 70 EUR per night. Also see <https://www.airbnb.com/s/Brussels> or <https://www.spotahome.com/brussels>

-If you will stay a month or more and want quality accommodation, search on Google for "short term apartments Brussels". Commercial prices vary - roughly between 1000 EUR and 2000+ EUR a month.

-However there are also many offers for rooms in private houses; quality varies but you can find some really nice ones. Google "colocation Bruxelles". For example, at www.appartager.be you will find very affordable monthly rates – generally between 300 EUR and 500 EUR per month. Usually, there are some offers too for less than a month.

To verify public transport or walking distance from your accommodation to the school, which is just by the Metro called "TRONE" in French (or "TROON" in Dutch), see the public transport route search page: www.stib.be or use Google [link](#)

FIRST STEP FOR A TOURIST VISA

In your own interest, to have any chance at all of a visa, it is essential to document fully ALL the defined points in your application to the Belgian consulate.

Your first step should be to define the reason why you must leave Belgium, and return to your own or another country, before the 3 months period of the visa expires. There is a clear logic: that reason has to be obvious, compelling and with written proof before the Belgian officials will consider further your application.

As a general rule, the number and type of supporting documents should be tailored to the purpose and duration of the planned journey, as well as the local circumstances in your country. The Consulate may ask for additional documents. Note: the official texts inform that an incomplete application will be interpreted as a lack of interest on your part.

STUDENT VISAS

You can NOT obtain a student or other long term visa to enter Belgium for courses at a Belgian language school. (You should apply instead to stay up to 3 months as a tourist.)

For a long term student visa you would need to register for a university course from the following year - for example at the ULB (Université Libre de Bruxelles - a French speaking institution). Subject to having proof of enough money to live and all the other required documents, in some cases this could allow you obtain an early start student visa to come 6 to 10 months before the start of your university course in order to study French.

Belgian embassies in different countries do not apply the same rules in these cases, but 20 study hours/week seem to be required in most cases for such a visa. All the Amira daily intensive French courses are more than this if you count the course + necessary self study.

PROCEDURE

Once you have chosen a course format and suitable dates (see www.amira.be), you need to register definitely for this course. The easiest way to pay is by bank transfer.

Alternatively you may pay by credit card (we accept VISA and MASTERCARD) :

We need :

- the type of the card, its number, the expiry date and the security code (last 3 digits at the back);
- the name of the card holder (as shown on the card) and the billing address for the card.
- If the card holder's name is not the same as the student's name, please state the relationship between card holder and student.

After the whole registration, the school will provide you a registration certificate. Please take careful note that payments made in the context of a visa application will **NOT BE LATER REFUNDED** under any circumstances, for example if a visa or actual entry to Belgium is refused.

This information is for initial guidance only; Belgian consular officials decide who can enter the country. To repeat, the school is not able to make any guarantee whatsoever that you will receive a Belgian visa of any kind or be able to enter Belgium because you have registered at this institution and paid fees.

WHY WOULD A BELGIAN CONSULATE REFUSE TO GIVE ME A VISA ?

Here is an example of a refusal:

Legal references:

The visa is refused on the basis of Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a common code.

Reasons:

- The purpose and circumstances of the intended residence is insufficiently in evidence; the destination address is not clear.
- There is no convincing explanation as to her exact intentions because she enrolled for a course in Belgium on their own initiative and not at the insistence of her employer in her country.
- Moreover, the data showed that a person may stay longer than 90 days because the course for which they have registered to come to Belgium will take longer than 3 months.
- The person has not demonstrated sufficient means of subsistence available, both for the period of intended stay and for the return to the country of origin or residence, or for transit via third country where she is guaranteed admittance, or the ability to obtain such means by a lawfully available method.
- No, or insufficient, evidence of financial coverage for the stay. Lack of evidence that she has a credit card linked to her bank account making it clear her financial resources can be immediately used in Belgium.
- The person's commitment to leave the territory of the State before the expiry of the visa to leave could not be established.
- The person has insufficient guarantees of return, given that she has only a limited regular income in her country and is also young and unmarried.

MIGHT I BE REFUSED ENTRY TO BELGIUM EVEN IF I HAVE A VISA ?

Whatever your visa, when you land in Belgium, the Belgian officials might also ask you to produce proof of funds for the period of your stay - for example very recent bank and credit card statements as well as your credit card(s).

Failure to produce detailed proof could mean that you would be refused entry. It follows that you should arrive with at least a few hundred euros in cash and be able to use personally your credit card(s) in a cash machine at the airport, if you are asked to demonstrate that you have immediate access to funds.

Obviously, have in your hand luggage the letter confirming the dates, address and cost of your accommodation in Brussels - as well as copies of all the other documents used in your visa application.