



Military Family Services (Europe) Handbook

Welcome to Brussels



Dear Newcomers,

We would like to welcome you to Brussels! We hope that the enclosed information helps you make a smooth transition to your life in Belgium.

Military Family Services Europe (MFS(E)) is committed to enhancing the quality of life of its community members. As a newcomer, you may at times be overwhelmed with new information and experiences as you adapt to a new lifestyle. If you find that some of your concerns or questions have not been addressed with the information you have received in your Welcome Package, please do not hesitate to contact us by email at mfse.brussels@cfmws.com.

We hope your stay in Belgium will be a rewarding one and that you will have the opportunity to make the most of your European experience. Finally, we encourage you to get involved in our activities and programs that we organize for our members, spouses and children. Perhaps you have a special talent that you can share with the community or perhaps you may be able to offer the youth the benefits of any particular sports, hobbies or other skills you have.

For assistance, please feel free to email MFS(E) Brussels to set up a Teams meeting: mfse.brussels@cfmws.com

Please come and see us at the MFS(E) Brussels center; it will be our pleasure to meet you. The center's hours are **Monday through Thursday from 9:00 to 15:00.**

We look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely yours,

MFS(E) Brussels Team

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DISCLAIMER: As rules and regulations frequently change, please ensure you do your own research and consult the resources provided for the most up-to-date information before making any assumptions or relying solely on information provided here. This document is a guide rather than your definitive source for the most up-to-date policies and procedures.

Chapter 1 - Greetings from Military Family Services Europe (MFS(E))

MFS(E)-Brussels is the heart of the Brussels DND and CAF community. It is here to provide relevant programs and services for CAF families in Brussels. The MFS(E)-Brussels has many useful resources to improve your quality of life and help make your stay in Belgium as enjoyable as possible.

MFS(E) is here to support your transition from one community to another. Some MFS(E) programs include, but are not limited to:

- Social Worker support
- Children's craft mailings
- Youth Employment Preparation (YEP) Program
- Family Separation & Reunion support
- Emergency and Respite Child Care support
- Host language training
- Virtual workshops via various platforms, including virtual travel forums and health and wellness subjects
- Home Alone course
- Babysitters course
- Friends on a Journey

Should you have any questions regarding the MFS(E) Brussels, our contact information is listed below:

Email: mfse.brussels@cfmws.com

Phone: 011-32-2-210-9297 (from Canada) 02/210-9297 (local)

Website: <https://cfmws.ca/europe/locations/belgium/brussels>

YouTube: [CFMWS Europe | SBMFC Europe - YouTube](#)

Family Information Line: 00 800 77 11 77 22 (Toll Free Europe)

The Family Information Line (FIL) is a toll-free bilingual telephone service for CAF members and their families, intended to provide timely and accurate information as well as reassurance, support and referrals to other resources needed. The FIL counsellors are experienced, caring professionals familiar with Canadian Forces policies and operating procedures. This line is open 24/7.

CAF Member Assistance Program: Military members and their families can also contact the CAF Member Assistance Program at +1 800 268 7708. This is a voluntary and confidential service that allows callers to speak with a professional counsellor and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Please note that Canadian toll-free numbers are not free when calling from another country, but the CAF Member Assistance Program will also accept collect calls at +1 613 941 5842.

Chapter 2 – General Information

Introduction

There is a lot of information available to support your move to Brussels. The information included in this guide is meant to provide you with answers for any initial questions you might have concerning your relocation to Belgium.

Organization

The Joint Delegation to NATO consists of a political section, led by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and a military section, led by the Canadian Military Representative (CANMILREP). The delegation represents Canada at the North Atlantic Council and other decision-making bodies of the Alliance.

For move administrative purposes the Deputy Military Representative (D/MILREP) is responsible for all Canadian Forces military assigned to NATO HQ in Brussels, including those in the Delegation, those working for the International Military Staff or other NATO agencies and any Belgian Staff College students.

For work purposes the chain of command, for those working for the International Military Staff (IMS) or NATO agencies report through the IMS Commanding Officer, while Delegation personnel report through the D/MILREP.

Your status: Please talk to your department head.

U.S. Privileges

CAF members are granted access to American resources and facilities in Belgium, including the PX and Commissary. The PX and Commissary are located in Chievres (near Mons) about an hour drive away. There are 2 USAG

detachments in the Brussels area, one has the gym, a drop-in daycare facility and a small store; the other houses the medical facilities. To access these facilities and resources, CAF members will be processed for a U.S. installation access pass and a U.S. Army in Europe privilege and identification card. These cards will be processed after you arrive in Belgium. Requests can be made through your admin section.

Working Languages

The official languages of Belgium are Dutch, French, and German. Brussels, however, is mainly French speaking. The working languages for NATO HQ are both French and English, although virtually all business is conducted in English. Within the Canadian Delegation itself, French and English are used interchangeably.

Personnel Support Program (PSP) in Europe

PSP supports the operational effectiveness of the Canadian Armed Forces in Europe. They contribute to morale and unit cohesion by ensuring that CAF members and their families have access to personnel support programs at levels consistent with military tradition and those normally available within Canadian communities. Brussels is supported by a PSP Coordinator located at the MFS(E)-Brussels. You can contact the PSP Coordinator at: +32 (0)210 9293 or psp.brussels@cfmws.com.

More information can be found at the following website:

<https://cfmws.ca/europe/locations/belgium/brussels/psp-services>

Information about Brussels

There is a large Expat community in Brussels and therefore numerous resources available online to access information. Listed are some websites that can provide additional information about life in Brussels:

www.brussels.be

www.brussellife.be

<http://www.linternaute.com/voyage/belgique/bruxelles>

Facebook: OUTCAN Spouses of Canadian Military Europe:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/373862572749400>

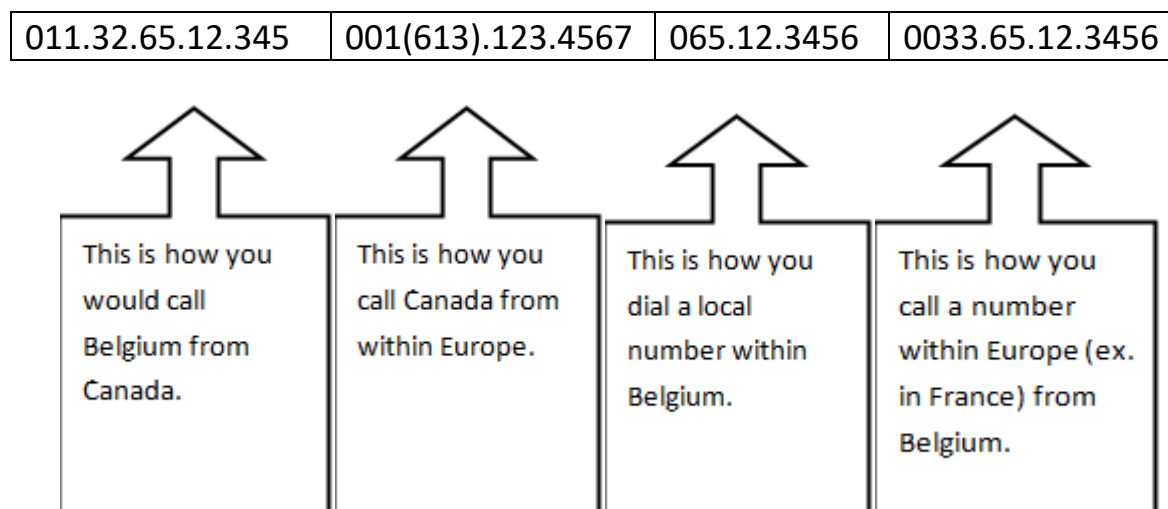
Chapter 3 – Emergency & Useful Telephone Numbers

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS IN BELGIUM

| | |
|--|---|
| Police | 101 |
| Ambulance and Firefighters | 112 |
| Operator/General Assistance | 7111 |
| Poison Control | +32 (0)7 024 5245 |
| Canadian Delegation Duty Officer | +32 (0)4 765 85 877 |
| Emergency Veterinarian | +32 (0)2 644 2424 |
| Embassy of Canada to Belgium | +32 (0)2 741 0611 |
| MFS(E) Brussels | +32 (0)2 210 9292 |
| Local Mental Health Services | +32 (0)2 648 4014 (French: 107) |
| Social Worker | MFSsocialwork@cfmws.com |
| Padre Maj. George Helou (Belgium/France/Germany/Luxembourg/Netherlands/Spain) | +32 (0) 492 72 26 86 |
| Padre Lt(N) Warren Clapham Estonia/Latvia/Lithuania/Norway/Sweden/UK/Poland | +44 (0) 7870 641 587 |
| Padre Capt. Megan Jones Austria/Italy/Romania/Turkey | +39 (0) 335 158 0472 |
| Travel advisories | https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories |

Telephone numbers within Belgium are six or seven-digit numbers prefixed by a three-digit area code. If you want to call another country within Europe from Belgium, then a country code is added to the beginning of the number. To call back to North America from Belgium an international operating code gets placed before the country code.

Below is a quick example:



Chapter 4 - Holidays in Belgium:

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| January 1 | New Years Day |
| April (Varies) | Easter Monday |
| May 1 | Labour Day |
| May (Varies) | Ascension Thursday |
| June (Varies) | Whit Monday |
| July 21 | National Day of Belgium |
| August 15 | Assumption of Mary |
| November 1 | All Saints Day |
| November 11 | Armistice 1918 |
| December 25 | Christmas |

Chapter 5 – Housing

House Hunting Trip

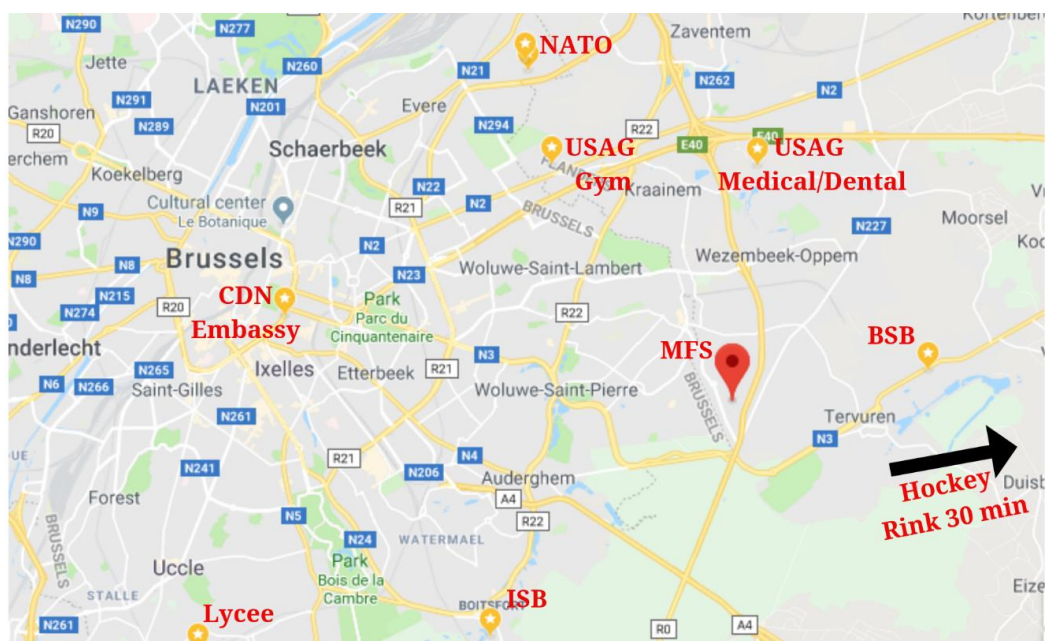
You will undertake a House Hunting Trip (HHT) to find suitable accommodation in the Brussels area (private lease, not furnished). The Canadian Delegation’s Admin Section is largely responsible for providing the support and coordination to make this possible. You will be guided by the Orderly Room (OR) and Embassy regarding the particulars of your HHT.

Brussels Housing Area

The Greater Brussels Region is approximately the size of Ottawa. It is helpful to understand that the city is broken into communes, each of which has its own postal code. The city has great metro/tram/bus coverage across the communes. Each commune has its own particularities, like different bags for trash disposal.

The following municipalities (communes) are a part of the Brussels housing area. The map shows the communes with their postal codes that fall within the designated area.

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1000 Brussels | 1030 Schaerbeek |
| 1040 Etterbeek | 1050 Ixelles |
| 1140 Evere | 1150 Woluwe-Saint-Pierre |
| 1160 Auderghem | 1170 Watermael-Boitsfort |
| 1180 Uccle | 1200 Woluwe-Saint-Lambert |
| 1210 Saint-Josse | 1800 Vilvoorde |
| 1820 Steenokkerzeel | 1830 Machelen |
| 1930 Zaventem | 1933 Sterrebeek |
| 1950 Kraainem | 1970 Wezembeek-Oppem |
| 3070 Kortenberg | 3080 Tervuren |



Tips/Suggestions

**If you live east of the Brussels/Flanders border, buses run on a separate system and require a secondary pass. <https://www.thebulletin.be/new-brupass-xl-ticket-cover-all-travel-brussels-and-suburbs>*

** Map out bike routes from prospective properties, often biking is faster than driving in Brussels.*

**Do not get overly set on specific communes, instead research metro, tram and bus locations.*

**If you plan on sending children on the school bus, call the school to find out approximate times from your address. Depending on school and where you live, bus times can be upwards of 45 – 60 minutes.*

Housing Rental Sites

Listed are some websites that can provide additional information about renting in Brussels:

IMMOWEB: <https://www.immoweb.be/en>

IMMOVLAN: <https://immo.vlan.be/>

CENTURY 21: <https://www.century21.be/fr>

Fixtures and Appliances

In Belgium, properties can be leased without lighting fixtures, curtains, kitchen appliances, washing machines, dryers or water softeners (water in Belgium is extremely hard). When viewing properties make sure you get a clear answer from the agent as to what is included.

** European appliances are often smaller than North American ones. It is recommended you measure your oven to ensure your pans, baking and casserole dishes will fit. Otherwise, you may wish to put these items in storage. Also, the cooking surfaces can vary (gas, induction, electric). If your house is provided with an induction cooking surface, make sure your pots and pans are compatible.*

Appliances

Additional household items and appliances may be required – some of these costs could be covered. To ensure you are eligible for reimbursement, forward any questions you have to the Admin Section **before** making any purchases.

European Voltage

It is important to remember that electricity in Europe is generally 50 hertz and 220 volts. Some appliances, timers, and/or electric clocks may not operate correctly even when transformed. Do not bring a computer surge protector of 110v, as it may cause your electrical breaker to trip – you are better off buying a 220v power bar in Belgium. Any item with a rechargeable battery (i.e. cellphone) can be plugged into European power with an adaptor plug without the use of a transformer. In these cases, the power source is charging the battery and is not supplying power directly to the appliance.

Chapter 6 – Communes

For a description of each commune and a link to their website see Annex B.

Each area has a Maison Communale/Gemeentehuis (similar to a city hall) where you will obtain information specific to your commune, such as: recycling parks, waste management & pick up schedules, transportation including cycling and driving in Brussels.

Registration in your Commune

If you are arriving in Brussels on a Special Passport (Green), you must register with your commune. If you are arriving in Brussels on a Diplomatic Passport (Red), you are not required to register with the commune. *However, if you plan to take advantage of the local titres service (section below) you will need to visit your commune to obtain a national number.*

Titres Services/Dienstencheques (Cleaning Service Program)

Titres Services is an affordable cleaning service where you purchase vouchers for ten euros each per hour. One voucher = one hour of service. If you wish to

use this service, you must obtain a digital key, available through your commune.

Pluxee is the company responsible for issuing Flanders, Brussels and Wallonie service vouchers. Consult the service voucher website for your region (each commune belongs to one of these three regions) to find the right titre service distributor for you.

Brussels: <https://www.titre-service.brussels/>

Flanders: <https://titres-services.flandre.be/>

Wallonie: <https://titres-services.wallonie.be/>

Sundays & Holidays

Please be aware that most communes do not allow lawn mowing and general noise on a Sunday or a holiday; hanging laundry outside can also be forbidden. Ask your neighbours as each area is different.

Communication Services

Below is a list of a few Belgian service providers. It is recommended that you verify that your chosen provider does offer service in your commune.

PROXIMUS: <https://www.proximus.be/en/personal.html>

TELENET: <https://www2.telenet.be/en/>

ORANGE: <https://www.orange.be/fr>

VOO: <http://www.voo.be/en/>

SCARLET: <https://www.scarlet.be>

Waste Management

Each commune has specific guidelines that pertain to how & what to recycle. Waste management workers strictly enforce disposal guidelines and proper bag usage. You must purchase commune specific garbage, recycling, and compost bags. These bags can be purchased at grocery & convenience stores in your commune. There are several communes (Wezembeek-Oppem and Kraainem,

Tervuren) that require you to purchase more expensive garbage and recycling bags. These may be reimbursable, please confirm with the Admin Section.

To find more information about recycling, see below:

| | City of Brussels | Interza |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Areas covered: | All municipalities within the City of Brussels | Kraainem, Wezembeek-Oppem, Tervuren |
| More information: | https://www.brussels.be/waste https://www.arp-gan.be/en/sorting.html | https://www.incovo-interza.be/fr |
| Collected: | Garbage, recycling, compost Glass cannot be recycled through pick up services. It must be taken to bottle recycling containers (called “bulles”) scattered around your commune. To find drop off locations in your neighbourhood check here: https://www.arp-gan.be/en/bottle-banks-and-proxy-chimik | Garbage, recycling, compost, glass You must purchase an Interza black compost bin and annual sticker to have compost collected: https://www.incovo-interza.be/fr/commander-et-r%C3%A9server Special bags must be used for waste collection and can be purchased at stores in your commune by asking the cashier. |

Chapter 7 – Transportation

Driving in Belgium

Many of the basic rules of the road in Belgium are very similar to those across the rest of Europe. Road signs are either in Dutch or French.

The Highway Code describes the rights and obligations of road users on the public highway. [All road users are expected to know and apply this highway code.](#) A road user is any person who uses the public highway as a driver or

pedestrian. The driver of a rail vehicle must comply with the specific regulations of his transport company, **it always has priority**. A public highway is any road made available to road users. This also applies for private roads when these are used with the permission of the owner. **When driving you MUST give way to trams and passengers getting on and off**. Clear tramlines as soon as possible; be careful, especially when driving in Brussels, where there are many trams.

Find complete driving rules and regulations here:

mobilit.belgium.be/en/road/driving/traffic-regulations-offences-and-sanctions.

Traffic Signs

The traffic directions below are limited to the information deemed immediately necessary for driving. There is more information on transportation and driving in Brussels in the following.

Traffic rules: <https://rijbewijs-online.be/en/belgium>

Test your knowledge with a practice exam here: <https://www.drivinglicence-belgium.be/>



PRIORITY RIGHT: Warning for uncontrolled crossroads ahead, priority given to vehicles coming from the right. When in doubt, yield to streets from the right as stop signs in Brussels are uncommon. ** Please pay particular attention to this rule, as it is the most unnatural driving difference for Canadians.*



PRIORITY ROAD: You have the right-of-way.



GIVE WAY: Road narrowing, yield to give way to oncoming drivers.



ROUNDAABOUT: Give way to vehicles IN the roundabout.



“SHARK TEETH”: Indicates when/where vehicles must yield (give way). **If there are no signs indicating priority, you have to give priority to the drivers coming from your right but you have priority over drivers coming from your left.*

Parking



PARKING PERMITTED: Free parking.



PARKING PERMITTED WITH DISC: Your car rental should come equipped with a small blue parking disc. When parking in a spot where the disc is required you set the time on the disc to the closest **next** half hour; you then you have free parking for the duration of the indicated time. ** If you wish to park your car outside on your street, you might be required to register your car with your commune.*

Driving in Other European Countries

Be aware that driving rules in many European countries differ from those in Belgium. Do your research before driving through foreign cities and countries as you may be required to have additional documentation; such as:

- **Emissions sticker** (specifically for certain German cities), which can be purchased at all German TUV and DEKRA stations. If caught without the stickers, you will be fined.

- **Highway Vignette** – basically highway toll sticker. If caught without the stickers, you will be fined.

Ownership

When a member brings a vehicle from Canada, it must be registered in the member's name, not their spouse's. If the vehicle is not registered in the member's name, it *must* be changed prior to leaving Canada. If this is not done, the member won't be able to obtain registration, as Belgian law requires the member to be the owner of the vehicle, since they are the one employed with NATO/Embassy and receiving privileges.

Contrôle Technique (CT)

Any vehicle four years or older (Belgian bought or North American imported) must undergo a CT inspection. One of the most critical components of the inspection is a rust inspection. It is much less costly to have any rusted areas repaired in Canada and is suggested that you have a thorough vehicle inspection done before you leave Canada. The cost of a CT depends on the size and age of your vehicle. At the end of the CT, you will be given a "Certificat de visite", which contains the results of the inspection. More info here:

<https://www.controle-technique.be/>

Vehicle Requirements

If your vehicle is older than 4 years, you may be required to make modifications to your vehicle, such as the addition of a rear fog light. The USAG Auto Shop, Carrefour, CORA, Auto 5 or the PX Auto Shop have these items available.

While driving in Belgium, you are required by law to have the following items in your car at all times:

- Fire extinguisher
- Warning triangle (MFS(E) will provide this item upon arrival)
- Reflective safety vest (MFS(E) will provide this item upon arrival)
- First Aid kit (MFS(E) will provide this item upon arrival)

Vehicle Reception

Remember that your car's engine has been sitting largely unused throughout a land/sea voyage lasting a month or more. Before starting your car upon reception, make sure to check its fluid levels and have a tire gauge available to check tire pressure. Drive relatively slowly for the first 10km or so, and keep in mind that the disk brakes might initially feel uneven, as the parts of the disks not covered by the brake pads may have been affected by the salt air of the overseas leg of the journey.

Drivers Licenses

People who hold a Belgian diplomatic/consular IS card **can** drive on Belgian roads with a valid Canadian license. See chart below for license inclusions.

| | Inside Belgium | Outside Belgium |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Diplomatic Plates (Delegation Staff) | Valid Canadian License | International Driver's License |
| International Military Staff & Support Staff with license from: ON, QC, AB, NB | Valid Canadian License | International Driver's License |
| International Military Staff & Support Staff with license from: BC, SK, MB, PE, NS, NL, YT, NU, NT | International Driver's License | International Driver's License |

For more information, visit the following website:

<https://www.caa.ca/services/travel/international-driving-permit/>

**It is recommended that you maintain your Canadian license for the full duration of your tour. If you allow your license to expire, you may be required to retake the full driver's exam upon returning to Canada.*

Car Shares

Some Canadians have opted to utilize the extensive public transportation system in Brussels and leave their vehicle in Canada. Car share companies

provide an affordable and convenient service that compliments public transportation. Below are a few car share companies operating in the region:

Cambio Car: <https://www.cambio.be/cms/carsharing/en/>

Poppy: <https://poppy.be/en>

Zen Car: <https://www.zencar.eu/en/> (electric cars)

Zipcar: <http://www.zipcar.be/>

Work Commute (Bicycle, scooter, moped)

Many people in Brussels choose to cycle to work over driving or taking public transportation simply because it is faster. It is recommended that you consider how you plan to commute to work and to investigate potential routes from prospective properties.

** You may also want to consider how you plan to commute to work upon arrival, while you are staying in a hotel waiting for your sea shipment. If cycling is your preferred mode of transportation, you can bring your bicycle with you. However, allocated space for bicycles in the baggage hold is limited. Contact your airline regarding their specific shipping guidelines and to inquire about available space. Any incurred cost is not claimable.*

Cycling

See the following for useful information including rules of the road, routes, and safety when bicycling in Brussels and Belgium.

<https://www.expatica.com/be/living/transportation/cycling-in-brussels-102862/#rules>

<https://www.brussels.be/bicycle>

<https://bikeexperience.brussels/>

Public Transportation

You may wish to familiarize yourself with the public transportation options for prospective homes. See the following link for additional information for using public transportation in Brussels.

BXL Mobility: <https://www.brussels.be/public-transport>

Trains

Belgian Rail (NMBS/SNCB)

The Belgian rail company NMBS/SNCB runs throughout the country and into a few of the surrounding countries. The three main stations in Brussels are:

- Brussels North (Gare du Nord/Noordstation)
- Brussels Central (Gare Central/Centraalstation)
- Brussels South (Gare du Midi/Zuidstation)

For more information regarding various lines, passes, and fares, visit the following website: <https://www.belgianrail.be/en>

International Trains

There are three main train lines offering international high-speed service. They are:

Eurostar <https://www.eurostar.com/be-en>

ICE <https://int.bahn.de/en/trains/long-distance-trains>

TGV <https://www.sncf-connect.com/en-en/tgv>

**All international trains depart from Brussels South (Gare du Midi/Zuidstation). It is recommended to only use Brussels Midi station in this case due to safety concerns.*

Chapter 8 – Education

Introduction

Brussels offers many options for educating your children in a variety of languages. With different school categories (Communal, Catholic, Montessori and Private) and instruction in either French or Dutch, many Canadian families

are pleased with the quality of Belgian schools. A variety of international schools with curriculums in French or English also come highly recommended (additional languages available upon request).

It is your responsibility to register your children for school and to make the necessary arrangements for payments.

Please note that Children Education Management (CEM) division is responsible for everything related to education.

Children Education Management (CEM)

CEM EUROPE

CEM Europe's role is to manage the education-related compensation and benefits programs. CEM manages the payment of school tuition fees. CEM also facilitates access to education allowances such as (but not limited to) tutoring, family reunion travel, special education programs and the post-secondary shelter allowance.

For queries with CEM Europe, for assistance with your allowances and claims, or for an updated List of Compatible Schools for this posting location, please contact the team at P-SFK.76ECEM@forces.gc.ca.

CEM CANADA

CEM's Ottawa team offers guidance counselling services to all CAF families serving outside Canada. CEM's guidance counsellors can provide feedback regarding schooling at post, eLearning courses, high school graduation requirements and special education.

Understanding and applying Children's Education Management policies can be complex. Both CEM's Europe and Ottawa offices may be involved in supporting your children's education journey. To speak about your educational options with a guidance counsellor, please contact the team at CEMGEE@forces.gc.ca.

Please access CEM's website at:

Children's Education Management - Canada.ca

Curriculum

Belgian schools are fairly like Canadian ones with regards to their psychological approaches. Moreover, schools are divided similarly to those in Ontario, with

primary school lasting from ages 6-13, and secondary school from 14-18. The curriculum in Belgium, however, covers subjects that can vary from those in Canada, and the workload is heavier than that of Canadian students.

Depending on the commune you live in, classes will either be taught in Dutch or French. Starting from the third grade, Dutch or French is taught as a second language. However, children of NATO or Embassy personnel attending French schools can be exempt from studying Dutch.

For high school students, especially those in their final years, keep in mind Canadian university requirements when selecting a secondary school. Note that on Wednesdays, local schools and some international elementary schools end at 12h00, leaving children with a free afternoon.

** Commune schools can have waiting lists and there is no guarantee that if you live in the commune, you will have a place in the commune school. The schools have waiting lists that they manage. You are encouraged to contact any local schools early and have a phone conversation with them to determine their procedure for registration.*

English Language Schools

It is important when researching schools that you consult the [Children's Education Management Team](#) for assistance and guidance. Below, is a list of well-known school in the Brussels region.

The International School of Brussels

Admissions Office ISB
Kattenberg 19
1170 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +32 (0)2 661 4225
Email: admissions@isb.be
www.isb.be

The British School of Brussels

Leuvensesteenweg 19
1980 Tervuren
Belgium
Tel: +32 (0)2 766 0430
Email: admissions@britishschool.be
www.britishschool.be

*(50/50 Bilingual French/English program offered, see admissions for eligibility, and space)

** Only approved until grade 8 based on Curriculum.

Montgomery International School

Rue du Duc 133

1200 Brussels

Belgium

Tel: +32 (0) 2 733 63 23

Website <https://www.ecole-montgomery.be/>

French Language Schools

Lycee Jean Monet

Avenue du Lycee Français 9

1180 Bruxelles Belgium

Tel. +32 (0) 2 374 58 78

Email: <http://www.lyceefrancais-jmonnet.be/contact>

corinne.dethibault@lyceefrancais.be

<http://www.lyceefrancais-jmonnet.be/>

Nurseries/Day Care

Most nurseries take care of children ranging from 0-3 years of age. Lists of nurseries can be found at the:

- Maison Communale (your commune [municipal hall], has an online list of schools/nurseries)
- Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance (multiple locations, Google the nearest to you for contact info).

The USAG detachment has a drop in childcare facility that Canadians have access to as well. Call 02/717 96 51.

**Most Belgian schools offer before and after school programs.*

Support our Troops Tutoring Reimbursement Program

[The Support Our Troops Tutoring Reimbursement Program](#) works to provide financial assistance to CAF families to ease curriculum challenges in the first, second, and/or third year in a new community for children with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, or illness. Learners with an Individual

Education Plan and those whose circumstances require tutoring support as recommended by their school are also eligible to apply. The program supports dependent children in CAF families, from kindergarten to grade 12. Families wishing to speak to someone about the program can email: supportourtroops@cfmws.com.

Chapter 9 – Spousal Employment

Employment and Training

Employment opportunities are available in Brussels, but they are limited and dependent on the member's posting status. Spousal employment should not be assumed or expected. There are employment preparation workshops and career counseling to get you ready for your future career opportunities back in Canada, youth employment preparation programs, and scholarship information for youths.

Contact our Employment, Education and Training Programs Coordinator for more information at MFSE.EmploymentEducationTraining@cfmws.com.

Security Clearance

If a dependent wishes to work for the Canadian delegation or Canadian mission in Brussels, it is recommended that you start the security clearance process with your current unit prior to deploying to Brussels.

Once at post, security clearances can only be acquired if actively applying for a position with the mission.

Work Permits

If you will be living in Belgium under a Red Diplomatic Passport or a Green Special Passport you **may** be eligible to work through a Work Permit. More information on work permits can be found here: <https://economy-employment.brussels/>

MFS(E) and PSP

MFS(E), either locally in Brussels or for Europe, may have employment opportunities for spouses. All positions will be posted here:

<https://cfmws.ca/about-us/cfmws-careers>.

Regional Civilian Personnel Office (RCPO)

Some locally staffed positions are available with the (RCPO). For more information and to apply to their inventory pool, see:

[https://cfmws.ca/europe/civilian-employment-in-europe/regional-civilian-personnel-office-\(rcpo\)](https://cfmws.ca/europe/civilian-employment-in-europe/regional-civilian-personnel-office-(rcpo)).

Volunteer Work

There are many different opportunities for getting involved with life in Brussels and a great deal of volunteer work that can be done, such as with the NATO International Club (NIC). If you have a particular skill set you wish to continue using, possibly in a volunteer capacity, please advise the MFS(E) – Brussels of your abilities.

There are also volunteer opportunities with the annual NATO Charity Bazaar. The Bazaar is typically run in the fall at NATO HQ. Each nation sets up a stand to sell a variety of goods from their native country with the aim of raising money for a variety of charities.

Host Language Training

The Employment, Education and Training Programs Coordinator can assist you in identifying second language training options available to you. Email mfse.employmenteducationtraining@cfmws.com for details.

Youth Employment Program

The intention of the Youth Employment Preparation (YEP) Program is to provide real-life workplace training and employment to the youth of the Canadian Forces members and Canadian Forces support personnel posted in Europe. For more information, please visit the MFS(E) website:

<https://cfmws.ca/europe/youth-employment-preparation-program>.

If you have further questions, email mfse.employmenteducationtraining@cfmws.com.

Chapter 10 – Pets

Transportation and Costs

Each airline company has its own policy regarding transportation of animals. Options for shipping your pet are in Cabin, in the Hold, in Cargo as freight. The options available to you will be outlined in the airline's pet policy. Additionally, many airlines do not ship animals during summer months, and airlines that will ship animals during summer months have limited capacity. It is recommended that you contact potential airline companies regarding their specific pet policy and space, as soon as you know your potential flight dates.

In the event there is no airline flying out of your local airport you may need to drive to an airport departing from a nearby city. For example: Air France services Montreal Airport (YUL) but does not service Ottawa Airport (YOW). Look into the moving policy for more information.

When transporting small pets as hand baggage, there is often a standard fee. Shipping larger pets, like dogs, can be an expensive venture, as you pay according to weight and volume.

Be aware that there may be a handling charge, depending on the airline used, and there may be a fee that to be paid to customs.

**If you have to ship a larger pet as freight, in a kennel, your pet will arrive on the cargo side of Zaventem (Brussels) airport, where you will have to pick them up in person.*

Documentation

When moving your pet overseas, you must have a Certificate of Health or Veterinary Certificate issued by Canada, which accompanies the pet while they are in transit. The [Canadian Food Inspection Agency \(CFIA\) website](#) has the necessary forms and accompanying directions required.

Vaccinations and check-ups have a strict schedule when it comes to

transporting your pet overseas. For the exact requirements and timings check the [CFIA website](#) for the necessary documentation.

*Be sure to begin looking into the process early, as the paperwork can take some time to obtain, and the vaccination schedule/validity of the certificate can be quite strict.

Quarantine

Belgium does not have a quarantine period for dogs or cats being brought into the country. They do, however, require proof of a rabies shot and up to date immunizations. It is important to be aware that the United Kingdom has strict regulations concerning the transport of pets, even if the destination is outside of the country. **Travelling through the UK could result in your pet being quarantined**, despite your final destination being Belgium.

Registration

In Belgium, all cats and dogs **must** be micro chipped. In addition to this, all dogs must be registered with the Belgian Association of Canine Identification and Registration, which allows missing dogs to be successfully reunited with their owner. This will be done through your veterinarian once you have received your Belgian ID and NIS. More information can be found at the following website: <https://www.dogid.be/fr>.

Pet lodging

Typically, hotels in Europe are more accepting of pets than hotels in North America and finding Airbnb's that accept pets is fairly easy. Contact MFS(E) for a list of local petsitters, and view the Community Resource List for additional petsitters and kennels: <https://cfmws.ca/europe/locations/belgium/brussels>.

Traveling with your Pet

Once you have arrived in Belgium, your new vet can help you create an EU Pet Passport for your cat, dog, or ferret with required vaccine information. You will

need this if you travel with your pet and when you return to Canada. More information can be found here: <https://www.dogid.be/en>

Veterinarians

Like most family physicians, you will find veterinarians often work out of an office space in their home, and a Google search for veterinarians in your neighbourhood will likely turn up various options. Veterinarian fees are less expensive in Belgium than in Canada, however it is common that you will be sent to the pharmacy for any required prescriptions. See the Community Resource list for recommended vets in your area.

On-Call Veterinarians: If your pet happens to get sick and your vet is unavailable, call +32 26 44 24 24 for emergencies.

Chapter 11 – Banking

Belgian Banking

There are many bank branches throughout Brussels, so be sure to choose the branch that is most convenient for you and your family (ING, BNP, KBC, Belfius). You will need a bank appointment during your HHT to arrange for the security deposit for your lease. Since you need an address to open an account it is recommended that your bank appointment is set up for the latter part of your HHT. It is advised that the member use the mailing address at the Canadian delegation in NATO or alternatively, they may use the MFS(E)-Brussels mailing address. Once you return to Brussels for your final move, you can pick up your bankcard.

When you visit your bank branch to open a bank account, you can also request a credit card. Most notably, banks will automatically withdraw money from your debit account once a month to pay the credit card bill.

Chapter 12 – Medical & Dental

Medical Facilities

The standard of care is quite high in Brussels and members and their families have several options. The Canadian medical team (doctor, dentist, optometrist) are based out of SHAPE but provide periodic services at the US NATO Health Clinic in Brussels according to a schedule.

There are several options available for medical, dental, and optometry needs in the economy. You will have to pay the amount for the consultations and for the care received and then you will be able to make the request for reimbursement in accordance with MSH guidelines. We have included guidelines below for processing your claim when outside of Canada.

All patients who require admission to hospital will be referred to Belgian health care facilities.

US NATO Health Clinic

John F. Kennedylaan 12
1933 Sterrebeek
Tel: +32 (0)2 686 1515

***Note that members *must* register and provide insurance information during their first visit to the U.S. NATO Health Clinic. This registration must be updated annually.**

SHAPE Health Facility

Building 401
Avenue de Berlin
7010 Mons, Belgium
Tel: +32 (0)6 544 5959

Emergencies

- Outside regular working hours call a local physician. If you do not know any, contact Medecin de Garde by dialing 1733. They will ask a doctor to visit your residence at any time of the day for a fee of approximately €50. For more information, visit the following website:
<https://www.health.belgium.be/en/health/need-call-doctor-call-1733>.
- SOS Médecins Bruxelles - 24/7, 365 days a year, a doctor can come to your home: www.sosmedecins.be
- If the emergency requires immediate attention, visit your nearest hospital emergency ward.

- If the emergency requires immediate on-site treatment, dial 112, which is the Belgian equivalent of 911.

Family Medical Expenses

- Advances may be issued to pay for health care or dental expenses that are eligible for reimbursement under the PSHCP or previous provincial medical plans. For more information, ask your OR.
- Family members remaining in Canada are required to retain provincial health insurance. For more information, ask your OR.

Prescriptions

It is recommended that you and your family bring at least three months' worth of any prescribed medications, so that there is time for you to settle and not worry about running out. Please note that there are some over-the-counter medications in Canada that require a prescription in Belgium.

When you receive a prescription from a Belgian doctor, you may use any of the local pharmacies to fill it. It may also sometimes be possible to have the Canadian doctor rewrite the prescription so that it can be obtained from the US NATO Health Clinic.

Pharmacies: Belgian pharmacies can be identified by the green crosses hung outside the locations. On weekends, holidays, and after hours there is always a duty pharmacy available for urgent needs. These pharmacies are known as Pharmacie de Garde, and can be found with the following information:

www.pharmacie.be

Tel: +32 (0)9 039 90 00

Helpful Information

Medical and Emergency Contact Information:

<https://cfmws.ca/CFMWS/media/OutcanEurope/Documents/Belgium/Medical-Contact-Info-EN.pdf>

US NATO Health Clinic Registration Form:

[https://cfmws.ca/CFMWS/media/OutcanEurope/Documents/Belgium/US-Civilian,-FOREIGN-SERVICE,-NATO,-Partner-Nations-VersionSep2023-\(2\).pdf](https://cfmws.ca/CFMWS/media/OutcanEurope/Documents/Belgium/US-Civilian,-FOREIGN-SERVICE,-NATO,-Partner-Nations-VersionSep2023-(2).pdf)

How to Submit a Claim to Canada Life:

<https://cfmws.ca/CFMWS/media/OutcanEurope/Documents/Belgium/MSHCanada-Life-Submission-EN.pdf>

Chapter 13 – Postal Service

NATO HQ Bpost

There is a Belgian post office (bpost) located in the NATO HQ building, which is open during the week from 09h00 to 17h00. You may send mail to and receive from Canada through bpost, although it can get expensive with various shipping costs and taxes. Customs charges may be incurred for international mail.

Military Mail Services

Canada Post

You can send and receive mail through Canada post using the post office box in Belleville. The postal clerk comes from SHAPE to the Canadian Delegation military mail room once every two weeks (Tuesdays) from 11h30 to 13h00. Your mail can be redirected from your previous residence to the below address. You will be assigned a personal mailbox number during your HHT.

Canadians ship through CFPO 5053 by using ship-in-a-click along with a customs declaration (available in packaging area). More information regarding ship-in-a-click and our services will be provided during the in-clearance process.

The Belleville address is:

Your name

NATO Staff Brussels

PO Box 5053, Stn Forces

Belleville, ON
K8N 5W6

Couriered Mail

If you have a delivery coming from Canada by courier services requiring a civic address and not a PO Box, the following address for the Canadian Forces Postal unit at CFB Trenton can be provided to the sender:

Your name
NATO Staff Brussels
PO Box 5053, Stn Forces
CFPU Building 348, 15 Westwin
CFB Trenton
Astra, ON
K0K 3W0

The Postal Unit in Trenton will accept the parcel and redirect it to the CFPO for Brussels. If you are able to do so, please specify that the delivery must be made during regular working hours.

*Please refer to instructions for mailing overseas at the following link:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/contact-us/write-troops/instructions-for-mailing-overseas.html>

Chapter 14 – Important Documentation Before You Move

Documents such as school, health, and dental records may be required at some point during your tour. Below is a list of important papers you should remember to bring with you:

- Passports, Vias, Military IDs
- Travel Orders
- Driving License & International Driving License

- Health cards
- Long form of Birth Certificates
- Marriage Certificates
- Power of Attorney
- Custody Documents
- Childrens' vaccination and Immunization records
- Last 2-3 years of school report cards
- Power adaptor/convertors
- Phones, tablets, laptops, chargers
- Medication (prescriptions)
- Extra cash in new currency (in case of issues with credit cards)
- Tax receipts for income tax purposes (as well as previous returns).
- Receipts (or form Y38 from Canada Customs) for expensive foreign-made items (eg. cameras) in order to prevent duty charges on re-importation into Canada.
- A detailed inventory of household goods. The more detailed it is, the easier it will be to settle any possible insurance claims.* *(it is a good idea to take photos, especially for your high value items.)*
- Measuring tape
- The width of your vehicle at the widest point with mirrors folded in (the width of the garage entrance may be an issue. Be mindful of this measurement, as streets and parking spaces in Europe are narrower than those in Canada).

*The inventory is absolutely necessary, as the one the movers do is not quite detailed enough and doesn't provide the value of your items. You need to have the prices in case something is damaged/stolen, as well as for customs.

The inventory should be complete but does not need to be overly detailed, for example you do not need to list each pair of clothing or each item of dishware. Rather, you can group items together (like six pairs of jeans = \$\$, five pairs of shoes = \$\$, 12 plates = \$\$, etc.). Additionally, anything worth more than \$500 - \$1000.00 needs to be listed individually (this includes clothing like coats, boots, bags, etc.).

[Chapter 15 – Exploring Brussels](#)

Welcome to Brussels! Your sea shipment can take up to six weeks to arrive, so this is the perfect time to get acquainted with your new city. Below are a few websites that provide information on events around town.

Visit Brussels: <https://visit.brussels/en>

La Ville / De Stad: <https://www.brussels.be/tourism>

Trip Advisor: <https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g188644-Activities-Brussels.html>

Brussels with Children: <https://be.brussels/en/leisure-events-sports/brussels-all/brussels-children>

Chapter 16 – Recreation & Leisure

NATO Facilities

All NATO civilian and military staff members qualify for membership at the NATO Staff Centre, as well as their dependents. Memberships are obtained at the NATO Staff Centre. There is an annual membership fee for the NATO Sport Centre, which is not reimbursable. Pictures are necessary for the creation of ID cards for those who wish to use the facilities.

Facilities available include a swimming pool, sports hall, squash courts, gym, tennis courts, football pitches. Swimming classes are available for children; see www.nato-marlins.com.

The Staff Centre also houses a bar, reasonably priced restaurant with a children's play area near the restaurant, and a child care facility called the Colonies. The reception desk at the staff centre can supply all the necessary information. You can contact them at:

Tel: +32 (0)2 707 4604

Email: info@hq.nato.int

U.S. Facilities

The U.S. Military authorities allow DND/CAF personnel posted in Brussels access to some of their facilities in Belgium. This is a privilege, and as such it is asked that you do not abuse the privileges granted to us and respect the conditions set by the U.S. facilities.

Chièvres: There is a U.S. Forces Exchange and Commissary located at the Chièvres Air Base. In addition to the Commissary, there is a retail store, liquor store, a bank, and more.

USAG Chièvres

Chaussee de Mons
7940 Brugelette
Belgium

Brussels Sports Association

The Brussels Sports Association is a non-profit group organized by parents and interested adults. Volunteer coaches, referees, umpires, and more are always needed. More information can be found at the following:

Brussels Sports Association
Ave Napoléon 16
1180 Uccle
Belgium
Tel: +32 (0)2 375 2722
<http://www.bsasports.org>

Chapter 17 – Personal Security

Absences and break-ins

When leaving your home for any length of time (whether it be a few days or a few weeks), make sure all doors and windows are locked (especially patio doors), and that, if you have them, your shutters are closed. You should also let your landlord know when you will be away, in the event that something does happen.

Car theft

Never leave your car unlocked, even in your own driveway. Police also advise not to leave valuables or visible packages in a parked vehicle. Do not drive with purses or briefcases on the passenger or rear seats. These items should be placed on the floor or in the trunk.

Pickpocketing

When out in public, keep in mind the threat of pickpockets. Busy areas such as public transportation and markets are common targets. Keep all bags closed when out in public, and do not carry valuables in your coat pockets.

Police

If there is a break-in or other crime-related emergency, call the police number **101**.

Fire

In the event of a fire, **112**. If the nature of the emergency leaves you unable to articulate your location, leave the phone off the hook so that they find your location and send emergency services.

Belgian ID Cards

Every family member over the age of 12 must carry some form of ID at all times. Members working in the delegation and their families will obtain a Belgian ID card through the Delegation or Embassy. International Military Staff (IMS) and their families will obtain their cards through the Privileges and Immunities (P&I) Office. Once issued, all staff members must carry their Belgian identity card with them and use it with their passport when traveling, especially when returning to Belgium.

NATO ID Cards

Those working at NATO HQ will receive a standard NATO ID (a car pass will also be issued for those who need one). The pass is used to let you and/or your car into HQ, where you must always wear the badge visibly.

Your spouse will receive a family ID card, which allows them and the car through the main gate but limits them to non-secure areas (such as the cafeteria/banking/shopping area and the Staff Centre). Spouses will need to be signed in and escorted through the secure area, as NATO HQ has an access/security system that relies on specially programmed cards and readers at certain doors throughout the building.

CAF personnel and their families under the Standard of Forces Agreement (SOFA) will receive a SHAPE ID card by applying to their Privileges & Immunities (P&I) Office.

Chapter 18 – Miscellaneous

Tipping in Belgium

In Belgium, it is not customary to add a gratuity or tip on top of the charge for item or service. It is common to round up to the nearest Euro. Of course, if the service is exceptional and you would like to leave a gratuity, it is recommended not to exceed 10%.

Customs Receipts

You will need receipts for your major purchases when returning to Canada for customs, inventory of your belongings, and insurance. Start a receipt folder upon your arrival in Belgium for an easier return to Canada.

Tax Returns

The Income Tax form used by CAF personnel outside Canada is different from the regular one. For more information, please visit the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency website and additional resources:

www.cra-arc.gc.ca

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/international-non-residents/individuals-leaving-entering-canada-non-residents/government-employees-outside-canada.html>

<https://cfmws.ca/europe/resources/filing-taxes-while-outcan>

<https://cfmws.ca/CFMWS/media/OutcanEurope/Documents/Resources/Taxes-OUTCAN-2025-EN.pdf>

The information and guidance provided has been sourced directly from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), and SISIP to assist you with your income tax matters while OUTCAN. Many of the answers to the most common/general questions should be addressed in these resources. For further details, visit the CRA's [website](#).

Please note, we are not tax experts. As tax filings are unique to everyone, we strongly recommend contacting the CRA directly at 1-800-959-8281 (Canada and US) and 1-613-940-8495 (* outside Canada and the US) with any specific questions regarding your personal tax returns. * Please note: the CRA only accepts collect calls made through a telephone operator. After your call is accepted by an automated response, you may hear a beep and notice a normal connection delay.

Tax-free Purchases (Belgium and EU).

Personnel under the Standard of Forces Agreement (SOFA) may shop tax-free at the general base store at SHAPE. All personnel are eligible for VAT rebates on certain purchases in accordance with the requirements set by the Belgian Government. Similar privileges and conditions may apply to other EU countries. Details for VAT reimbursement will be provided by the Canadian Embassy or the Privileges & Immunities (P&I) Office for International Military Staff (IMS) members.

Appendix A - Useful Addresses

NATO

Avenue Leopold III,
1110 Bruxelles, Belgium

Canadian Embassy

Avenue des Arts 57,
1000 Bruxelles, Belgium

British School Brussels (BSB)

Pater Dupierreuxlaan 1
3080, Tervuren, Belgium

International School of Brussels (ISB)

Kattenberg 19
1170, Watermael-Boitsfort, Belgium

United States Army Garrison (USAG) (drop off childcare and gym facilities)

Eurolaan 54
1932, St Stevens, Belgium

United States Army Garrison (USAG) (medical and dental services)

JF Keenedylaan 12
1933 Sterrebeek, Belgium

United States Army Garrison (USAG) - Chievres - American PX and Commissary

Chaussee de Mons
7940 Brugelette, Belgium

*you must use the road of rue du Septieme Wing, to access the base.

Brussels Airport - Zaventem

Leopoldlaan, 1930 Zaventem

ANNEX B – Communes

1. Woluwe-Saint-Pierre (Postal code 1150)

This commune is quite large (<http://goo.gl/maps/YPrrr>). It starts near the Montgomery circle and includes the Quartier Chant d'Oiseau (North of Tervuren) and goes up to Stockel (a more suburban area). This is one of the greenest areas of Brussels with the magnificent Parc de la Woluwe. It is an upper-class residential area very well connected to the centre of Brussels, by car or by public transportation. It is often a preferred location for those employed in the European institutions for its proximity to work and for affordable housing. Residents of this Commune can obtain a resident parking permit to park on the streets. For more information on this commune, please check: www.woluwe1150.be

2. Woluwe-Saint-Lambert (Postal code 1200)

This is a family-oriented neighbourhood (<http://goo.gl/maps/60cRu>) where we find the very dynamic Wolubis Cultural and Leisure Center along with some pleasant parks (such as Parc Georges Henri). The large University hospital (Clinique universitaire St-Luc) is located in this area as well as the modern Woluwe Shopping Center. It is very well connected to the Centre of Brussels with easy access to transportation. Commune Website: www.woluwe1200.be

3. Etterbeek (Postal code 1040)

This area is best known for the area near Parc du Cinquantenaire (<http://goo.gl/maps/WPzSt>). Etterbeek is filled with attractive streets with early 20th Century townhouses. It is a central, dynamic, mostly residential area,

home to many of the European institutions, and has good public transport facilities. For more information on this Commune, please check:

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

4. Kraainem (Postal code 1950)

Kraainem is a favourite location for the NATO community due to its easy access to NATO's compound, as well as for those looking for the advantages of suburban living (houses, gardens, tranquillity, supermarkets and stores etc.) (<http://goo.gl/maps/90MMH>). Although there is only one Metro station (Kraainem), the bus system is enough developed to facilitate mobility if you are willing to walk a bit more than in other neighbourhoods. For more information on this commune, please check: <http://www.kraainem.be/>

5. Auderghem (Postal code 1160)

It is a very green area located between Woluwe-Saint-Pierre and Watermael-Boitsfort (<https://goo.gl/maps/ns4rcBPQDanUWNqF9>). Audgerhem is at the end of one of the Metro lines (Hermann-Debroux). It is a nice and quiet residential area which is very popular with families whose children attend the International School of Brussels. For more information on this commune, please check: <http://www.auderghem.be/>

6. Ixelles (Postal code 1050)

This central municipality includes Porte de Namur and has a lot of character and style (<http://goo.gl/maps/fZewB>). It is a very popular neighbourhood for many expatriates. The distinct areas are: the trendy Place du Châtelain with its café culture, the leafy ponds, and an abbey area, leading down to Bois de la

Cambre; the busy Chaussée d'Ixelles with the African quarter Matongé; and the area around the Cemetery with bars and student life. Avenue Louise runs through this area with its upscale shops and restaurants. Housing is townhouse style with interesting features, for which the rent may be higher. In terms of public transportation, there is no Metro station, but the tram system makes it easy to travel. For security and comfort reasons, we recommend that you avoid renting an accommodation in the Matongé area. Although it is quite nice to walk and shop on its busy streets during the day, petty theft is prevalent. It is also quite noisy during the day. For more information on this commune, please check: <http://www.elsene.irisnet.be/>

7. Tervuren (Postal code 3080)

It is a commune located in the province of Flemish Brabant (<http://goo.gl/maps/sWTCo>). The official language of Tervuren is Dutch. It has a diverse mix of nationalities because of the large number of expats. The British School of Brussels is located in this area. The Royal Museum for Central Africa is surrounded by a beautiful park and is definitely worth visiting. It is located close to the "Forêt de Soignes". The tram 44 runs between Tervuren and Brussels (Montgomery neighbourhood) and is the most scenic tram ride of the entire city. This tram connects to Metro line 1 at Montgomery (a 25 min tram ride). The British School is a 10-minute walk from the tram 44 terminal at Tervuren. Local buses are available within Tervuren but they may not be as frequent as those in Brussels. There is, however, a park and ride area at the tram 44 terminal. Tervuren is about 14 km from the centre of Brussels.

Commune Website: www.tervuren.be

8. Wezembeek-Oppem (Postal code 1970)

Wezembeek-Oppem is a commune in the province of Flemish Brabant, about 10 km east of the centre of Brussels (<http://goo.gl/maps/9Y8Yq>). Many expats live in this commune. There are several ways to travel to Brussels by public transportation - tram and bus being the common modes. For more information on this commune, please check: <https://www.wezembeek-oppem.be/>

9. Watermael-Boitsfort (Postal code 1170)

This is a green commune with a series of village-like squares (<http://goo.gl/maps/HVllP>) and is home to the International School of Brussels (ISB). Homes are mostly comfortably suburban, with plenty of 1950's housing punctuated with 19th century villas. There are good transportation links (trains and tram 94, no Metro). For more information on this commune, please check: <http://www.watermael-boitsfort.be/>

10. Uccle (Postal code 1180)

Uccle is a beautiful and calm commune with huge houses and upscale apartment blocks (<http://goo.gl/maps/3Q7F4>). As a popular area for expat families, it is well located for shops, the French Lycée, and the European School. It is probably Brussels' greenest commune with the Forest of Soignes and the beautiful villas surrounded by large gardens and trees along the streets.

There is no easy access to public transportation. By train, one can reach the Embassy/Mission to the EU (in less than 15 minutes) and the NATO compound

(in less than 30 minutes by train plus a 15 minutes' walk). For more information on this commune, please check: <http://www.uccle.be/>

11. **Saint-Gilles (Postal code 1060)**

This is a favourite neighbourhood among expats who like to live as locals (<http://goo.gl/maps/sNcGV>). From the top end, with its “art nouveau” houses, down to the earthly Gare du Midi, it’s packed with quirky restaurants, shops, and a buzzing nightlife. It is one of Brussels’ most dynamic areas. The heart of Saint-Gilles lies in its central area around the Parvis de Saint-Gilles, where artists, intellectuals, and enthusiasts of all kinds meet. It is a culturally active neighbourhood.

You should be aware though that petty theft is common in the areas of Parvis de Saint-Gilles and **Gare du Midi**. Traffic jams can be also quite intense in that part of the city. For more information on this commune, please check:

<http://www.stgilles.irisnet.be/fr/>

12. **City of Brussels (Postal code 1000)**

The City of Brussels commune is located in the center of Brussels and includes multiple districts (<http://goo.gl/maps/Thzdq>). For more information on all these territories, please check the websites:

https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ville_de_Bruxelles and

<https://www.brussels.be/brucity>

The Pentagon (by shape) is the area surrounding the historic city centre. If living in the thick of it all is irresistible, this is the place for you. In recent years, previously run-down parts have become attractive to young professionals, with major renovations and industrial spaces coming up for rent or for sale. The

much sought-after areas are St. Géry, Ste Catherine, and the areas around la rue Antoine Dansaert leading to the canal. The Sablon and the Louise are luxurious residential areas. The streets around the main boulevard leading down to Gare du Midi/Zuid are upcoming, with many old townhouses ripe for development and still well-priced. Renting an accommodation with a parking spot may be an issue.

Please note that le **Quartier Européen** (Schuman Metro station) is often affected by traffic and occasional demonstrations near the EU buildings. **Tour & Taxis**, in the heart of Brussels, should also be avoided. This area is still developing with several new housing projects and has a higher rate of petty crimes. Commune Website: <https://www.brussels.be/brucity>

13. Sterrebeek and Zaventem (Postal code 1933)

Sterrebeek and Zaventem are communes on the east-northeast side of Brussels (<https://maps.app.goo.gl/Jv1tELhDeRrLv9cs8>). The official language is Dutch. It is closely situated to the Ring around Brussels. Public transport to Brussels is through the bus system DE LIJN. Please note that these buses do not run as frequently as buses in the centre of Brussels. The Hippodrome, a former horse race venue, is now used for golf training. Near the old Hippodrome, you will still find small pony/horse clubs. You will also find a tennis club called Het Zeen. Commune Website: <http://www.zaventem.be/>

Other Neighbourhoods (Not Recommended)

As in most cities, Brussels has neighbourhoods which we would not recommend mainly for safety reasons. These neighbourhoods or parts thereof are:

- Schaerbeek (Postal code 1030). Situated close to the European institutions and NATO headquarters.
- Molenbeek (Postal code 1080).
- Anderlecht (Postal code 1070).
- Tour & Taxi (Postal code 1000).
- Gare du Midi (Postal code 1060)
- Matongé (Postal code 1050)