



Trainees` Guide **2012** **Summer Stage**



Comité
des
Stagiaires





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INTRODUCTION

Dear Stagiaire,

You are reading the Trainees' guide, your guide to your stage and to Brussels.

This guide is the result of the work of many Stage and Liaison Committees and represents the combined experiences of thousands of people like you who came to spend five months working at the European Commission. In this guide, you will find useful tips on practical issues and ideas on how to make the most of your experience in Brussels (and Luxembourg!). We hope that you will find it helpful in both your work and social life and invite you to regularly visit our website for further information and to find out about the latest stagiaire events and activities: www.stagecommittee.org



Michael de Boer



Chris Mackin



Lina Stoeva

**Your Liaison Committee welcomes you to the
2012 Summer Stage!**

How to contact the Liaison Committee:

Internal: Tel 90994 Fax 90871
External: Tel 02-29-90994 Fax 02-29-90871

Internal Email: EAC COMITE DES STAGIAIRES
Email: stagecommittee@ec.europa.eu

Website: <http://www.stagecommittee.org>

Internal mail: MADDO 24/32

Our office is in Madou Tower, 24th floor, office number 32

We are open every weekday from 09:30 - 17:30
As from 1st April, your Stage Committee will be in the office every
weekday from 16:30 - 18:30

THE ASSOCIATION OF STAGIAIRES AND THE ACTION CARD

All the Commission Bluebook stagiaires together form an organisation called the Association of Stagiaires. It is run by the Stage Committee (SC) whose members you will elect at the beginning of your stage.

The SC organises all kinds of social events, such as parties, visits and trips. However, the SC relies on, and will support, the initiative of the stagiaires for most activities.

In this regard, a number of subcommittees will organise other activities ranging from sports to theatre and from conferences to movie screenings. Only your imagination can limit the scope of the different activities we can organise together!

One way of benefiting from your membership of the Association of Stagiaires is to purchase an **Action Card** which enables you to get discounts on all the activities organised by the Liaison and Stage Committees. It also entitles you to discounts in a number of bars, restaurants, shops and, gyms around the city. You will find further information on our website:

www.stagecommittee.org

Under the tab 'Sponsors and Action Card' you will find a list of all the current deals made available to the stagiaires of the 2012 Summer Stage.

An Action Card entitles you to discounts on all the activities organised by the Liaison and Stage Committees

You can purchase an Action Card during the Flagey Welcome Conference or at any time after that during the Liaison or Stage Committee office hours.

The income from the Action Card sales will be used to finance the social events at the beginning of your stage. They also cover part of the running costs of the Association (such as banking costs and insurance).

How can I get an Action Card?

An Action Card costs 20€. If you did not buy yours during the administrative welcome days at Madou or the Welcome Conference at Flagey, you can still do so by bringing a photo and 20€ to the Liaison Committee office (MADO 24/32) on any weekday between 09:30 and 17:30. Once the new Stage Committee takes over you can still purchase an Action Card during their office hours from 16:30 and 18:30.

Is it worth buying an Action Card?

Of course it is! The Action Card provides discounts on several activities such as: trips, parties, events, cheaper drinks in Kitty's, reduced prices on gyms, Euroball, subcommittees and all activities related to the Stage Committee

Plus, the action card entitles you to a number of discounts in places all over Brussels.

Election of the Stage Committee

The new Stage Committee (SC) and Court of Auditors (CoA) will be elected to run the Association, to represent member stagiaires and to audit the accounts of the Association. The elections will take place on Monday, 12 March 2012 at 18:30 in the Madou Auditorium.

Only stagiaires who were selected via the official Traineeship programme ('Blue Book' trainees) can stand for election and/or vote.

More information will be posted on the webpage www.stagecommittee.org and given during the Welcome Conference at Flagey.

We can promise you a lot of fulfilment from the hard work as well as the three F's: Friends, Fame and a lot of Fun!

Subcommittees

You can participate in a subcommittee throughout the duration of the stage. Together with your fellow stagiaires you will have the opportunity to organise different kinds of activities. Anything is possible: sports, theatre, conferences, solidarity, salsa, hip-hop, photography, movie screenings, wine tasting – your creativity is the limit!

An information meeting for those who are interested in running a subcommittee of any kind will be held on Wednesday 14 March from 18:30 until 19:30 in the Madou Auditorium. Come to the meeting to find out how you can get involved.

If you cannot make it to the meeting please contact the Liaison Committee so that we can find another way of giving you the information you need.

Porte-Paroles (Spokespersons)

The stagiaires of each DG must elect a Porte-Parole (Spokesperson) on their first day in the office. Porte-Paroles (PPs) represent the stagiaires of their DG and they also take the initiative to organise get-togethers, after-work drinks and other activities of a social nature. All this will involve some extra work, but the PP's will always know what is going on and they will get to know a lot of people within the DG and beyond.

The newly elected Porte-Paroles must participate in a general information meeting that will take place on Thursday 15 March from 18:30 until 19:30 in the Madou Auditorium. This will give us the opportunity to meet face-to-face and discuss your leadership duties further.

Language Teachers

Yet another way of getting involved during your stage is to teach your mother tongue to a group of other stagiaires. Traditionally, the language classes have been among the most popular stagiaire activities and we think it is worth keeping it up! If you want to become a language teacher come to the information meeting which will take place on Monday 19 March from 18:30 until 19:30 in the Madou Auditorium.

Ways of getting active

WHAT?	WHEN?	WHERE?
Porte-Parole Elections	Tuesday 6 March 2012	Your DG
Elections for SC and CoA	Monday 12 March 2012 (18:30)	Madou Auditorium
Subcommittee Coordinators Elections	Wednesday 14 March (18:30-19:30)	Madou Auditorium
Porte Paroles Info	Thursday 15 March (18:30-19:30)	Madou Auditorium
Solidarity Subcommittee Elections	Monday 16 March 2012 (18:30-19:30)	Madou Auditorium
Language Teachers Info	Monday 19 March (18:30-19:30)	Madou Auditorium

Timetable may be subject to change. Listen for announcements at the Welcome Conference and check the SC website and newsletters for the final schedule.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When will I be paid?

The grant for the first month of the stage is usually paid at the end of the first month. Subsequent grants will be paid on or around the 15th of each month. It is advisable to first open a bank account in Belgium (or Luxembourg, depending on where you are going to work). It is essential to hand in the form indicating your bank and account number; otherwise no payments can be made!

When will my travel expenses be paid?

The Traineeships Office hopes to pay travel expenses for the journey to and from Brussels during the fourth month. The payment will be a separate transfer from your grant. Payment will be made to the same account your monthly grant payments is paid into. If you leave the Commission before the end of July and have opened an account in Brussels or Luxembourg you should leave it open until the reimbursement of your travel expenses has arrived.

Some banks might ask you to present your carte de séjour from the Commune in order to open a bank account. If you are not registered with your Commune, you might want to try another bank, or go directly to the headquarters of Dexia, ING or Fortis, where they can easily open an account for you without all the hassle.

In order to receive your travel expenses grant, you need to hand in your supporting documents (including return tickets) within the first 10 days of your arrival.

When is the last working day of the stage?

The last day of your stage will be **Tuesday 31 July 2012**.

When will the Commission be closed for holidays?

During your stage, the Commission will be closed for holidays on the following days:

5, 6 and 9 April 2012

1, 9, 17, 18 and 28 May 2012

What are the usual working hours?

The Commission works a 37.5 hour week and a 7.5 hour day. Official working hours are 8:30 - 13:00 and 14:15 - 17:30 (8:45 on a Monday and 16:30 on a Friday). There is an element of flexibility in the hours you work depending to a large extent on the requirements of your unit and your advisor. Normally, you can expect to start a bit later (9:00 or even 9:30) but stay longer (until 18:00 or later), especially when there are deadlines to be met. It will depend on your unit and your workload so check with your advisor when you arrive.

Am I allowed to take any other holiday during my stage?

Yes, Article 5.2.1 of the Rules governing the official traineeships scheme of the European Commission states that:

Trainees are entitled to 2 days leave per month. This entitlement is acquired pro rata to the months worked counting from the first day of the month. Days of leave not taken are **not paid in lieu**. Days for trips and visits organised either by the Traineeships Office or by the Stage Committee and days taken for participation in any competition, exam or university work, etc. are to be deducted from this entitlement.

The Human Resource Unit of the Directorates General and Services concerned, or their equivalent, oversee that the above rules are respected. Leave requests should respect the needs of the Service. They must first be approved by your advisor and then checked and approved by the person responsible for holidays within the Directorate General or Service concerned.

Can I take part in a mission during my stage?

Yes (see Article 6.4.5 of the rules governing the stage).

In exceptional cases only, the Director General of the Directorate-General or Service in which a trainee has been placed may grant authorisation for a trainee to be sent on mission, on the condition that the mission is of a technical nature and not of a representative one.

The mission must be paid for by the Directorate-General concerned. The Traineeships Office does not have a budget to pay for stagiaires' missions!

Can I take part in the Commission's official language courses?

Unfortunately not – Commission courses are only available to its permanent staff. However, stagiaires usually organise language courses amongst themselves with the help of the Liaison/Stage Committee. Most Communes and the ULB also organise language courses which are either free or offered at very cheap prices.

How do I claim my medical expenses if I am insured via the Commission (Van Breda Insurance Company)?

Any claims should be submitted directly to Van Breda.

The claims process is as follows: firstly, you will need to pay the bill yourself. Then fill in the medical expenses claims form (Leave the Van Breda pers. Ref. no which is asked on the claim form empty; you will receive this number after the reimbursement of your first claim). Don't forget to attach the original invoices and proof of payment of the bill (e.g. bank transfer document). Always keep a copy of the form and the invoices.

Payments are made by the insurance company. It will take approximately 2 weeks to receive the reimbursement. Please do not contact the Traineeships Office about reimbursements as they cannot help you. Contact Van Breda directly.

For any queries regarding medical insurance, contact either the Van Breda Call Centre tel: 03 217 68 13 or your gestionnaire in the Traineeship office.

Can I extend this insurance cover after the end of the stage?

Trainees who have opted for the Van Breda Insurance during their traineeship can extend their cover for a maximum period of 6 months immediately after their stage (without interruption). This extension will help you to avoid a waiting period without reimbursements whilst you are registering with another insurance company. The costs and conditions of this extension differ from the insurance during the stage.

When submitting a claim, you will need to indicate the period of the extension of medical cover. This prolongation will only cover medical expenses resulting from illness or pregnancy and not costs from accidents. For further information, please contact your gestionnaire in the Traineeships Office.

How does the European Health Card work?

In order to benefit from the Health Card/E111/E128 that you obtained in your home country, you must first register with a "mutualité" (medical insurance company) in Belgium or with the "Caisse de Maladie des Ouvriers" in Luxembourg (Head Office 125 Route d'Esch, 1471 Luxembourg Ville; local offices are listed in the telephone directory).

The various Belgian "mutualités" are listed in the Yellow Pages (www.yellowpages.be). You need to take your Health Card/E111/E128 with you when registering (for those with the E111/E128 forms, remember to make a photocopy of it beforehand because they might need to keep the original). Afterwards, you can seek partial reimbursement for medical expenses directly from the mutualité.

Always take your Health Card/E111/E128 with you when you consult a doctor/dentist or purchase prescribed medicines. Obtain a receipt for all medical treatment or expenses. You will need to submit original receipts when applying for reimbursements. In Belgium, around 75% of the cost of treatments and approved medicines will be refunded by your mutualité, 85% if you are insured via the Commission.

In Luxembourg you can obtain a refund, although not necessarily for the full amount, by applying to your local office of the Caisse de Maladie des Ouvriers.

Am I insured against theft?

No. You are responsible for your own possessions both inside and outside the Commission. The Commission is not responsible for loss, theft or damage to property or personal effects. Some landlords may have insurance – please verify with your landlord what insurance coverage, if any, may be included in your monthly rent charges. Your bank or an insurance company may be able to offer you home insurance or other options. Please speak to your banker when opening your account.

Will I have to do a report at the end of the stage?

Yes, there is an on-line questionnaire; the link will be sent to you along with information about the procedure towards the end of your stage. You will also receive a questionnaire around one month after the start of the stage. The link for this will also be sent to you by email.

Where can I take pictures for my Action Card?

You can find automatic machines at many metro and train stations, including Arts Loi, Gare Centrale and Mérode. There are also several photo shops in Brussels where your picture can be taken.

We will also accept photocopies of your Commission ID badge.



Still lost?

Please check the website of the Traineeships Office (Intranet) where you will find a lot of administrative information about your stage
www.cc.cec/stages/trainee/trainee_en.html



PART I: THE STAGE

I. THE STAGE LIFE

A. THE ASSOCIATION OF TRAINEES OF THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

This is YOUR organisation. The Association is self-financed and does not receive any funding from the European Commission. Activities are financed by the revenues from the Action Card sales and with income raised from social and other events, as well as through sponsorship. As stated previously, with the Action Card you can benefit from various discounts, reductions or special offers in bars, restaurants and fitness clubs, as well as a large range of activities organised by the Stage Committee. As a member you also benefit from the Association's insurance.

A.1. Bodies of the Association

The Stage Committee (SC) is formed by five Stagiaires. Each of the five fulfils different duties. The roles are: General Coordinator, PR Coordinator, Events Coordinator, Trips Coordinator and Treasurer.

Together their job is to provide a framework for social events, conferences, job fairs, trips, parties and other non-exclusive activities organised by the trainees for the trainees. The SC has an office in the Madou Tower building. The opening hours of the office are 16:30 - 18:30 every weekday which means that in addition to other meetings and activities each SC member works for at least two hours a week at the office.

The SC responsibilities will be presented in detail during the Administrative welcome in Tour Madou Auditorium on 1 and 2 March 2012, and its members will be elected on Monday 12 March 2012.

The Court of Auditors (CoA) is elected at the same time as the Stage Committee. It consists of three stagiaires and its function is to monitor all financial transactions made by the Stage Committee and to report on the financial situation to the members of the association at the end of the stage. The CoA also approves the budgets and supervises the financial activities of the subcommittees.

The Liaison Committee (LC) is a group of three or four stagiaires (usually members of the Stage Committee) whose contracts are extended at the end of the stage in order to welcome the next session of trainees. In Brussels, three members prepare the winter stage and four members prepare the summer stage each year. In Luxembourg, a Liaison Committee of one or two members is elected by the Luxembourg stagiaires.

The job of the LC is to meet the new stagiaires, to help the new SC and CoA get started and to organise activities during the first month of the new stage.

Members of the Liaison Committee are chosen by the Head of the Traineeships Office before the end of each stage (elected in the case of Luxembourg). If you want to stay in Brussels/Luxembourg and work full-time on the preparations for the arrival of the next generation of stagiaires, this is your chance! Members of the Stage Committee are usually treated with preference in the selection of the Brussels LC, as they have already gained a lot of experience on the job during the stage.

Don't want to be part of the SC but still
want to get involved?

Then the Subcommittees might be for you. With
so many possibilities available, you're bound to
find something you'll enjoy!

A.2. Subcommittees

This is your opportunity to get more involved in the stage life! Together with your fellow stagiaires you will be organising different events – anything is possible, the only limitation is your creativity. You are welcome to create a new subcommittee on any subject that interests you. More information on the practical things connected to running a subcommittee (venues, finances etc.) will be provided at the information meeting on the Wednesday 14 March at 18:30 in the Madou Auditorium.

EXAMPLES OF SUBCOMMITTEES

Conferences Subcommittee

Start a Conferences subcommittee and invite speakers from the Commission and beyond to debate the subjects that interest you! During the last stage sessions, the Conferences subcommittee organised several very successful conferences on topics like the financial crisis, the Europe 2020 Strategy, multiculturalism, inter-institutional relations and the battle for the EU budget, European foreign policy, and a book presentation by lecturer, academic and former Director in the Council Secretariat, Michael Tracy. For more information, visit the Conferences subcommittee section on the Stage Committee website: www.stagecommittee.org

Careers Subcommittee

Already thinking about your career after the Stage? The purpose of this subcommittee is to organise activities such as workshops, debates or conferences with the aim of enhancing the interns' career. This might include providing tips on how to write your CV, on how to prepare for an interview and on how to enhance your networking skills.

Additionally, you can invite speakers who could be potential employers to come and talk to the other stagiaires about the job opportunities they offer.

The culmination point of your work will be the much talked-about **Job Fair**, gathering participants from a broad selection of firms to suit everyone's ambitions! Want to make the most of the stage by practicing your networking skills and seizing every opportunity to find your dream job, while helping your colleagues in their own career search? Then join the Careers subcommittee!

Sports and Games Subcommittees

Feel like you need a little exercise? The range of sports depends on you: from football and volleyball to badminton, swimming, horse riding, playing frisbee or just jogging with others in the Parc du Cinquantaire. Come to the meeting and sign up for your favourite sport.

The stagiaire football tournament has become an EU institution in itself, with games once or twice a week throughout the stage and including cups, prizes and a grand finale that is always a particularly popular and loud event. The effort and dedication you put in is up to you!

Recent stagiaires have also been keen on organizing "social games" all around Brussels, such as a city-wide treasure hunts or a two-week interactive hide-and-seek game called "Assassin". If you would like to organise these kinds of games or if you have any new ideas how to spice up your stage life, please come to the meeting and share your thoughts!

Languages Subcommittee

With a European Union that aims to be "united in diversity," the stagiaires are generally very multilingual. The aim of the Languages Subcommittee is to support stagiaires to expand their linguistic knowledge, mainly through two activities: organizing language classes between stagiaires and organizing language tandems between stagiaires. Join the Languages Subcommittee if you believe that "united in diversity" is more than a motto!

Environment Subcommittee

The members of this Subcommittee are all driven by a common interest: to protect our environment. Mainly they want to contribute to raising environmental awareness within and outside the Commission.

Their work aims at improving the environmental performance of the Commission and raising awareness of environmental issues. They plan conferences, film screenings and events such as a bicycle tour of Brussels.

During the last stage the Environment Subcommittee organised a range of activities like tree planting, eco-cinema, monthly green drinks event, workshops on recycling and composting and provided "green tips" in the SC newsletter. Do you have any other ideas on how to improve our environment?

Solidarity Subcommittee

Solidarity Subcommittee, also known in the inner circles as the "Stagiaires who care", are dedicated to raising awareness on social and humanitarian issues offering stagiaires the opportunity to get involved in voluntary, locally-based projects.

In last period, the Solidarity Sub-committee organised pub quizzes, produced cookbooks, hosted a multicultural fair and much more besides.

During the 2011 Summer Stage this subcommittee organised a week-end cycle Brussels-Leuven-Antwerp and back to Brussels. During previous stage periods, the particularly active members of this subcommittee formed several teams and organised auctions, talent show,

Christmas market, fashion show, parties, pub quizzes, helped a soup kitchen in Brussels and created a mug and a cookbook amongst other activities.

The money raised goes to fund the NGO Europe Third World (ETW). This organisation was created in 1968 by European civil servants who wanted to help a good cause and make their professional experience available to developing countries.

The members of the Solidarity subcommittee can also participate in weekly meetings, in which members of ETW and the trainees evaluate together the viability of projects sent by organisations all over the world. During the traineeship period, the Solidarity subcommittee selects one project of Europe Third World's projects to receive the money collected during the activities organised by the following traineeships' session. More information is available on www.europethirdworld.eu

Are you a stagiaire who cares?

Communication Subcommittee

Did you need help to find an accommodation in Brussels BEFORE the stage?

Would you have liked to know about the Association's activities beforehand?

Do you want to be able to keep yourself updated about stagiaires' activities during the stage and after leaving the Commission?

If you have basic knowledge on how to **manage a website** or/and to create nice layout/graphics and/or to write content for everyone else to read, then you can really be of great help in keeping the Stage Committee webpage alive and active.

A team is needed for posting the housing ads, the upcoming events, photo gallery and updating the calendar. That doesn't mean you can't expand your horizons and be creative!

It's the technological age and there are so many possibilities open to you, such as hosting radio programmes, a blog, forums, uploading videos or whatever your technologic wisdom let you do.

The "**European Stage Journal**" is the official magazine of the stage made by stagiaires for stagiaires. This Stagiaires Journal includes articles on current European political affairs, social issues and notes from various stagiaire activities. It is a debate forum that reflects the multicultural dimension of our stage life! If you have something to say or if you are full of innovative ideas, this is your chance to have your voice heard. Interviewing a Commissioner might also add that extra bit of spice to your stage!

Want to keep in touch with all the stagiaires after the stage? Curious as to who are the best dancers?

Join the 'Who's Who' and be part of the team preparing the best souvenir of the whole stage: the Who's Who Yearbook CD. It comes complete with all the craziest statistics you can think of, contact details in home countries, famous for, favourite sayings, tons of photos and videos of the stagiaires, the events, the most interesting sights, the parties, the trips, the cafeterias, the cleaning ladies... In short: life during the stage. Get involved and make sure yours really is the best souvenir from the most special stage ever!

National Parties Subcommittee

During the stage, you'll have the opportunity to organise National Parties where you can show everybody the culture and traditions of your home country through music, food, drinks and whatever you can think of.

In order to do this, you need to start working now on finding a venue for the party (which is usually the most time-consuming part of the organisation) and getting sponsors. Some of the most successful parties are the ones for which stagiaires from different nationalities form a coalition and combine their efforts to put on the parties.

Combine the team effort, broaden sponsorship opportunities, distribute the work, gain practical experience of working in an international team and entertain your colleagues!

During the Winter 2011/2012 stage period, the National Parties Subcommittee worked with Solidarity to host the very successful 'Multi Kulti' event, with stands representing 27 countries and regions throughout the world accompanied by traditional dancing, food and drinks and followed by a party. This is one of many alternative options when considering how to make your national parties a success

Euroball Subcommittee

The "Euroball" is the traditional stagiaire ball which takes place at the end of the stage and it's a unique event! It's the last farewell, the most elegant and glamorous stagiaire party. It is usually accompanied by a formal dinner and a reception, live music, and – of course – more dressing up is a must. There is also the possibility to showcase performances from Subcommittee dance groups or to invite musicians and live bands, as well as to show lots of stage pictures. If you have experience in organising balls and proms, please join the subcommittee! If you do not have experience of organising events of this kind, now is the chance to gain some!

CineClub

Every Tuesday at 18:30 the CineClub organises film screenings in the Madou Auditorium. They offer a wide selection of films from all over the world covering many different genres. In the past some CineClub groups have done themed viewings in support of other stagiaire activities, such as National Parties or Solidarity events. These are always very popular events among stagiaires. There will be 4 CineClub screenings in March 2012 to give you a taste!

Creative Arts

Creative Arts Subcommittees in the past have included: Painting, Drawing, Sculpting, Photography, Dancing, Music and Theatre

Art

In addition, art and photo exhibitions, concerts and dance performances have been presented by stagiaires. In some stage periods we also had a creative writing and a life drawing class with nude models. So if you draw, spray, handcraft, knit, and sculpture or if there's anything that you want to teach to others: join the Creative Arts Subcommittee!

Music

If you play an instrument and are looking to join a band, and if you want to get together to jam and perform at the National Parties: This is a great opportunity to work with others, have fun, and to gain a little fame! If you play a classical instrument and are looking for a rehearsal room in Brussels you can also participate. There are many possibilities to perform solo (e.g. at the Euroball or in the course of a conference) and the Commission has some rooms at its disposal.

Theatre

Amateurs are turned into professionals, and quiet colleagues have shown unknown sides of their characters. During previous stages, many different plays have been performed by the Theatre Group. Some examples include: The Importance of Being Earnest, All in the Timing, Lysistrata, Dangerous Liaisons, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Said and Meant and the stagiaire written Flirting with Europe, Square Ambiorix and European Spirit – come to the Stage Committee Office to get more information on past productions.

Wine / Beer Tasting Subcommittee

Are you a wine lover? Have you tried all 8,700 varieties of Belgian Beer? Why not join one of the most entertaining committees and try wines and beers from around the world?

The themes are left up to your imagination: a training session with a renowned sommelier, France vs. Italy, Belgium vs. Germany, New World vs. Old World, Australia vs. Cotes du Rhone, Eastern European wines, Spain vs. Portugal, tours to breweries and wineries etc, etc, etc. All you need to have is a bit of knowledge of wine/beer or the willingness to learn, lots of enthusiasm and a charming personality!!! Do you think you have all that? Then join us in this subcommittee. Reward is guaranteed.

Not your cup of tea?

Is there an activity you'd liked to be involved in that's not listed here? Do not despair! Just invent your own Subcommittee. Other sub-committees in the past have included:

- Chess
- EPSO
- LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-gender) Rights
- Human Rights
- Literature
- Poker
- Start-up
- Speed-dating

This is YOUR stage!!!

A.3. Trips and Events in March

Your Liaison Committee will provide you with things to do and suggestions on how to spend your spare time in March. A programme has been included in your welcome pack, as well as detailed information on prices, dates of activities, and information about when and where you can sign up.

After March, the social programme will be organised by the newly elected Stage Committee.

REMEMBER THAT YOU WILL ALWAYS GET A GOOD REDUCTION ON THE PRICE OF EVENTS AND TRIPS IF YOU HAVE AN ACTION CARD!

B. THE TRAINEESHIP OFFICE

The Traineeship Office (“Bureau des Stages”) deals with the administrative side of your stage. They are the link between stagiaires and people with whom you work. In addition, they organise official activities, such as visits to European institutions in Brussels and lunch debates on various topics.

A very useful website on the Traineeships Office and how it relates to stagiaires, with loads of important information that you will undoubtedly need during your stage is: http://www.acceptance.cc.cec/stages/trainee/trainee_en.html

Do not forget that your Gestionnaire is part of the Traineeships Office and should be your first point of contact in case you need any clarification that the Stage Committee cannot provide.

II. THE EC BUILDINGS (WHERE TO HAVE LUNCH)

A. THE COMMISSION BUILDINGS

You will receive a map indicating all the Commission’s buildings throughout Brussels in the initial documentation from the Traineeship Office. Do not worry, you will soon find your way around!

Always carry your badge with you or you will not be able to enter the Commission buildings.

Below you will find a list of the Commission’s restaurants (self-service) which are open from 12:00h - 14:15. There are also cafeterias (for tea, coffee, cold drinks, sandwiches, etc.) which are usually open from 8:30 - 16:30. In most Commission buildings, you will find vending machines for snacks and cold or hot drinks. For detailed information, please consult the IntraComm website:

http://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/hr_admin/en/catering_bxl/Pages/index.aspx

Upon presentation of your badge, you can get the day's special ("plat du jour" or "plat poisson du jour") at a reduced price of 3,61€. The soup is included in the price, as well as one piece of bread. Please be aware that there is no reduction on the vegetarian dish (plat végétarien).

There is a brasserie-type restaurant open for dinner: The Foyer (VM-2, rue Van Maerlant 2) which is open from 18:15 – 21:15. The Foyer provides a lounge space where you can watch your favourite television programme, play the piano or billiards, listen to music or simply relax and meet your colleagues. Reservations: extension 96910 or 02/299.69.10 from outside.

Another restaurant open for lunch is Restaurant 29 (r. de la Science 29, 1st floor) which is open from 12:15 - 15:00. It is recommended to book your table at extension 99929 or 02/299.99.29 from outside, from 08:30 to 16:30 or by fax 02/231.02.56. The restaurant accepts payment by Bancontact or credit card (Visa, Eurocard and American Express). The restaurant has ten rooms, including four of style and sound-proof, for groups of 8 up to 45 people.

COMMISSION SELF SERVICE RESTAURANTS
Beaulieu (Avenue de Beaulieu 5, 1st floor)
Berlaymont (r. de la Loi 200, ground floor)
Breydel (Av. d'Auderghem 45, 15th floor)
Borschette - CCAB (r. Froissart 36, 5th floor)
Charlemagne (ground floor)
Geneve 6-8 (Rue de Genève 12, 1140 Evere, ground floor)
CORT107 (Av. de Cortenberg 107, 7th floor)
Loi 41 (r. de la Loi, 41, 1st floor)
Loi 130 (entrée r. de la Loi 112 or 130)
Madou (Tour Madou, 1, ground floor)
Montoyer 34 (r. Montoyer 36, ground floor)
Overijse (Dennenboslaan, 54, 3090 Overijse)
Square de Meûs 8 (ground floor)

B. THE COUNCIL / THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

There are self-service restaurants at both the Council (rue de la Loi, 171) and the European Parliament (buildings Spaak and Spinelli, 1 Rue Wiertz) which are open to other officials as well. Please note that stagiaires' access to the Parliament cafeteria is limited until after 13:30 and there is no discount at all.

You should check at the Parliament's information desk before heading there for lunch. Remember that you must always show your badge to access the Council and the Parliament buildings.

III. IN THE OFFICE AND AT WORK

A. PROCEDURE

Roughly speaking, the administrative machinery of the Commission is divided into several services and Directorates-General ("DG" in Commission lingo). More information on the DGs and their activities is available on the Commission's intranet <http://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/> and the website <http://ec.europa.eu>. You will be assigned to a particular service or DG. The first contacts you normally make will be with the Stage Co-ordinator in your service or DG. The Stage Coordinator is responsible for all the stagiaires in your DG. If you have any problems at work, you should be able to speak with him or her.

Your advisor (conseiller) is the key person of your stage. You will be working with him/her and he/she is the one who will guide you throughout your stage.

He/she will have to complete a questionnaire about your job performance at the end of the 5 month period.

B. SOME TRICKS TO SAVE TIME

B.1. Office

Each one of you should have a desk in an office with either officials or stagiaires. Your advisor will tell you where your office is.

B.2. Telephone / Email

Each office should have a telephone and a computer which you can use and through which you can be contacted. From this telephone you can phone all the internal numbers directly. If you need to call outside the Commission buildings (but within Brussels), first dial 0 and wait for the tone (you also need to dial 02 for Brussels). For all details about telephones look at "repertoire téléphonique de la Commission" which is available on the internal server Europaplus. All internal telephone numbers are available in the address book of the Outlook email software. When access to your computer is granted and you can log in, then you are connected to this system (ask your stage coordinator, advisor, or the informatics

department in your DG). All stagiaires are listed with details of their DG, office and telephone number.

NB: A large amount of information is available on the internal server IntraComm (<http://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/EN/Pages/welcome.aspx>) and on the public server Europa. It is important that you make the most of this information, as this will save you an enormous amount of time and energy in searching elsewhere.

B.3. Office Supplies

Each DG has its own supplies service. Ask your advisor or the secretariat of your Unit where you can find this service. There you can obtain writing paper, pen, etc.

B.4. Internal Mail Service

This enables you to send mail to other offices and buildings of the Commission.

Several times a day your mail will be collected by the messenger ("huissier"). No-one is allowed to send personal mail outside the Commission via this service. As well as mail, you will regularly receive the Commission in-house paper "La Commission en Direct".

The Internal Mail Service enables you to send mail to other offices and buildings of the Commission.

Several times a day your mail will be collected by the messenger ("huissier"). No-one is allowed to send personal mail outside the Commission via this service. You will regularly receive the Commission in-house paper "La Commission en Direct".

NB: The mail service may be slow. An envelope, which is collected in the afternoon, may not actually leave the building until the following day. If something is urgent, then deliver it yourself! And remember: NEVER send money or valuables through the internal mail.

IV. EMERGENCY

A. MEDICAL SERVICE

Advice can be given by specialised doctors, only in the case of an emergency.

Medical Service Dispensary Breydel 06/411 52765

Medical Service Dispensary BU-9 2/154 55985

You can consult any doctor you want, and if you do not know who to contact, the following websites could be useful:

- Brussels – www.mgbbru.be
- Luxembourg - www.annuaire-medicaux.lu

On these websites you can search for addresses and phone numbers of doctors in Brussels and Luxembourg, most of whom speak English.

B. SECURITY

Emergency Numbers for the Commission's Security Directorate in Brussels:

Internal: 22222

External: 00-32-2-29-22222

Emergency Numbers for the Commission's Security Office in Luxembourg:

00352-4301-1

You can call 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year regarding any incident involving your personal safety or that of your belongings. (Read carefully the note on safety in your welcome pack). You should pass this number on to family or next of kin in case they are unable to contact you directly in the event of an emergency. This service is available to them 24/7/365 too.

For Medical Emergency Call 22222

24 hours a day, this number is the Commission's Internal Emergency Number for accidents etc and goes directly to the First Aid / Medical Help Centre.

Important Emergency Telephone Numbers for Emergencies outside the Commission:

In Case Of Emergency: 100

«100 » is the telephone exchange for answering emergencies such as accidents, fire, or for arranging transportation of persons injured in street accidents, home emergencies (illness or accident), or to arrange ambulance transportation.

Police and Gendarmerie 101

Fire Brigade and Ambulance 100

International Mobile Emergency Number (SOS EU-countries) 112

SOS Lux: 12

Antipoison Centre 070.245 245

Burns Unit 02.268 62 00 or 0800.123.82

AIDS Helpline 02.511.45.29 or 078.15.15.15

Emergency Repairs:

Water 02.739 52 11;

Gas and Electricity (24 hour service): Electrabel 02.549 41 11 or Sibelgaz 02.274 31 11



**PART II:
BRUSSELS –
PRACTICAL
INFORMATION**

In this part of the booklet we try to give you an idea of what Brussels is like and to show you how to find your way around in the capital of Belgium. Think of it as a kind of distillation of the accumulated experience of previous generations of stagiaires! There are tips to prevent you from making the most common mistakes, addresses we think you will find useful (public transport, post offices, banks, laundrettes) information on food, after-work drinks, clubs, cinemas and information on cultural activities.

We hope that the following section will help you to enjoy the coming five months of your Traineeship to the full.

I. HEALTH CARE

A. DOCTORS, CLINICS AND HOSPITALS

The choice of a doctor or dentist is entirely up to you. A list of general practitioners, specialists, homeopathic doctors, chiropractors, osteopaths etc. can be found in the Yellow Pages under the heading « professions libérales/ vrije beroepen – docteurs en médecine/ doctors in de geneeskunde ».

The Community Help Service Helpline (02.648.40.14) can provide a list of English-speaking practitioners and the German helpline IBS has a list of doctors that speak German (02.768.21.21).

To look for a doctor in Brussels, check the website www.mgbru.be. There you will find, among other information:

- Addresses and phone numbers of GPs (General Practitioners) in Brussels (search via the map) – please note that most doctors speak English
- All of the Emergency Numbers
- Additionally, there's a 24h helpline for the Brussels area (02.479.18.18 in French or 02.242.43.44 in Dutch) that provides information on general practitioners currently on duty.

During weekends, the names of doctors on duty are listed on the front door/ windows of local chemists/ pharmacies. Some doctors who have signed up to certain official agreements (“conventionnés”) apply rates which are linked to the level of “mutuelle” refunds. [N.B: in Belgium, health insurance is mandatory and employees join “mutuelles” - mutual health insurance schemes that refund medical costs either partially or fully (depending on the type of service)]. Doctors are, however, free to charge their own fees, which in some cases are much higher.

It is better to ask about charges in advance!

If you have opted for the medical insurance offered by the Commission through the Van Breda insurance company, you will receive details of the cover provided from the Bureau des Stages. If you have decided to use the option of the European Health Insurance Card to cover your medical insurance and need to claim back medical expenses, you should register with a Belgian "mutualité". There is a range of different types of "mutualité": socialist, Christian, liberal and neutral. Some large insurance companies also have a "mutualité" department. They are listed under Mutualités/ Ziekenfondsen in the Yellow Pages.

If you have your own health insurance and you need to register with a "mutualité" to get your expenses reimbursed, check the website below:

www.inami.fgov.be/fr/contacts/index.htm

For both types of insurance cover, you will have to pay the bill and then claim reimbursement by providing proof of payment.

Those trainees who have opted for the medical insurance provided by Van Breda can choose to extend their medical coverage with them for a maximum of 6 months following their traineeship. This is done by filling in and submitting a Prolongation Form - available from

<https://www.vanbreda-international.com/VBI/MICROSITES/EU-Trainees/EN/INTRODUCTION/WELCOME.htm>

but please note that this must be arranged before the end of your traineeship and also that the cost of coverage is higher in the period following your traineeship.

All stagiaires are automatically subscribed to an Accident Insurance policy which is compulsory. You will receive your Accident Insurance card at the Administrative Welcome.

In case of emergency, please contact Van Breda (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) at 00 32 2 541 91 31. Please note that this insurance is provided by the same company as the Health Insurance. This is particularly relevant when making claims as the forms and the companies you have to send them to are different.

TYPE	COVERAGE	COMPANY
Health Insurance	General Medical Assistance	Van Breda

Further information can be found on:

http://www.cc.cec/stages/trainee/financial/accident_en.html

and

http://www.cc.cec/stages/trainee/financial/medical_en.html#Insurance.

For further inquiries, please contact your gestionnaire/ file manager.

List of the main Hospitals in Brussels with « Service-100 » linked Emergency Services:

Hôpital Universitaire Brugmann, place A. Van Gehuchtenplein 4, 1000 Brussels

☎ 02.477 21 11

Institut Médical Edith Cavell, rue Edith Cavell 32, 1180 Brussels

☎ 02.340 40 40

Centre Hospitalier Molière Longchamp, rue Marconi 142, 1180 Brussels

☎ 02348 51 11

Centre Hospitalier Joseph Bracops, rue Dr Huetstraat 79, 1070 Brussels

☎ 02566 12 12

Centre Hospitalier Etterbeek-Ixelles, rue J. Paquot 63, 1050 Brussels

☎ 02641 11 11

Centre Hospitalier New Paul Brien, rue du Foyer Schaerbeekois 36

☎ 02247 22 11

Cliniques Universitaires St-Luc (UCL), avenue Hippocrate 10, 1200 Brussels

☎ 02764 11 11

Hôpital Universitaire Erasme (ULB), route de Lennik 808, 1070 Brussels

☎ 02.555 31 11

Hôpital Universitaire St-Pierre, rue Haute 322, 1000 Brussels

☎ 02.535 31 11

Hôpital Univ. des Enfants Reine Fabiola, avenue J.J. Crocq 15, 1020 Brussels

☎ 02.477 31 00

Clinique St-Etienne, rue du Méridien 100, 1030 Brussels

☎ 02.225 91 11

Clinique Ste-Elisabeth, avenue de Fré 206, 1180 Brussels

☎ 02.373 16 11

Clinique du Parc Léopold: rue Froissart 38,1040 Brussels

☎ 02.287.51.11

B. DENTISTS

Dental care in Belgium is of a high standard. For a list of dentists call 02.426.10.26. The Community Help Service Helpline (02.648.40.14) can provide a list of English-speaking practitioners. A list of dentists can also be found in the yellow pages, an online version of which is available at www.yellowpages.be. The weekend dental clinic can be reached on 02/535.40.55.

C. CHEMISTS/PHARMACIES

Pharmacies are open from Monday to Friday from 9:00 – 18:00 or 19:00. Look out for an illuminated green cross. For emergency services in the evening and at weekends, chemists display a notice giving the name and address of the local chemist on duty outside of normal opening hours. Between 23:00 and 9:00 you can obtain a list of chemists working at night by calling 070.660.160 (free of charge).

II. PRACTICAL GUIDE

A. TRANSPORT

A1. Metro, Buses and Trams

Brussels has underground lines crossing the capital, which stop at about 60 stations. Included in the pack you received at your welcome meeting is a map of the public transport system. These can also be obtained free of charge at any metro station. Timetables for all bus, tram, and metro routes are featured on the STIB website www.stib.be.

Transport does not run 24 hours a day. The last metro from the city centre (place De Brouckère) leaves at about 00:30. The metro and most tram and bus lines start running again between 5:00 and 6:00. During the weekend (Friday and Saturday night) 14 night-bus lines called *Noctis* connect the city centre to all the communes of Brussels until 3:00 (ticket price: 2€, although you can now also take the *Noctis* at no extra charge if you have a monthly ticket).

STIB (Société des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles / MIVB: Maatschappij voor het Intercommunaal Vervoer te Brussel) is the Brussels City Transport Authority and is responsible for the capital's entire underground, bus, and tram network (15, Avenue de la Toison d'Or, 1060 Brussels, tel.: 02.515.20.00, www.stib.be). The main office is open 8:00 - 19:00 on weekdays and 8:00h-16:00h on Saturdays. For Flanders (de Lijn), telephone 02.526 2828, for Wallonia (le TEC), telephone: 010 480404. There is also a new information centre called "de Brouckère", 31 Rue de L'Evêque, 1000 Brussels which is open Mon-Sat 10:00 - 18:00, Tel: 02.515.30.32.

Tickets: Single ("one jump") tickets cost 1,80€ and can be bought from metro ticket offices or machines - or in the case of trams and buses, from drivers (the price in the vehicle is 2€ and exact change might be required). Tickets are valid for up to a maximum of one hour of travel on any combination of modes of transport, including trains within Brussels. Be sure to validate your ticket every time you travel. It works out cheaper to buy a five-journey ticket for 7,30€ or a ten-journey ticket for 12.50€. You can also buy a daily (4.50€) or three-day ticket (9.50€).

Bus line 12 - Airport Express runs from Place du Luxembourg through Schuman and along Rue de Genève. It costs 3€ (5€ if you buy a ticket in the bus) to get all the way to the airport and it is not covered by abonnement (see below). Up to date information on bus travel to Zaventem airport can be found on <http://www.mivb.be/airport-line.html?l=en>

For stagiaires at Rue de Genève, you can use this bus to get to your office by showing your monthly contract.

You can also get monthly passes ("abonnement") at a price which depends on whether you are under or over 25 years old. You can buy it at Agence de Brouckère, Porte de Namur/Naamsepoort, Roodebeek, Rogier or Midi metro stations (for the "carte client" you will need your ID, 2 passport photos and exact change). The monthly ticket, which goes with it, can be purchased in most newsagents and press shops or at the counter of major metro and train stations and it costs 45,50€ per month or 35,50€ if you are under 25. Please see <http://www.stib.be/abonnements.html?l=en> for further information regarding monthly passes.

Bus Lines 21 and 22

Bus lines 21 and 22 link most of the Commission buildings, except for those on the Beaulieu site. This service is free for officials and, of course, stagiaires, upon presentation of your service card. These buses run roughly every 15 minutes all week from 6:00 – 20:50. The timetables can be found on the notice boards in the lobby of your building, on IntraComm (Eurobus), at all relevant bus stops or can alternatively be obtained from the Brussels transport company (STIB – 02.515 20 00). The STIB website www.stib.be also contains up to date timetables of these lines.

Don't know how to reach your destination? The STIB website can also help you find the shortest route.

Also, please think twice if you are planning to travel here in Brussels without a ticket! Inspectors with dogs perform regular checks on all modes of public transport and will fine you over 80€ if you do not have a valid ticket. A second offence will cost you 180€ and a third 360€.

A2. Taxis

Taxi ranks can be found at Rond Point Schuman, near train stations, at central points in town as well as near important hotels, theatres, concert buildings and cinemas. Since 1975, tips are included in the fare. You should pay about 2,40€ minimum during the day and 4,40€ at night. From around Grand' Place to Schuman expect to pay about 10€.

Some useful telephone numbers (more can be found in the Yellow Pages):

Taxis Bleus 02.268.00.00

Taxis Verts 02.349.49.49

Taxis ATR 02.647.22.22

Taxis Tour 2000 02.537.10.10

Collecto is a taxi service available every day from 23:00 to 6:00 in the entire Brussels Capital region. It's very flexible: you board at any Collecto stop and you alight at any point in the region. Collecto's cost 6€ per person per journey and STIB users only pay 5€. See www.collecto.org for more info.

A3. Trains

Belgium has the highest density of railroads in the world.

There are five main stations in Brussels, three of which are international: GARE DU NORD/NOORDSTATION/North Station; GARE CENTRALE/CENTRAAL STATION/Central Station; GARE DU MIDI/ZUIDSTATION/South Station. All Intercity (IC) and Interregional (IR) lines pass through these stations. The Eurostar to London St Pancras International and the Thalys to Paris or Amsterdam leave from the Gare du Midi/Zuidstation (www.eurostar.com, www.thalys.com).

Tickets must be bought in advance from travel agencies, international counters in major train stations, by phone or via the web (0900/10 177 on weekdays between 7:00 and 21:00 and on Saturdays between 9:00 and 17:30). You can save a lot of money if you book well in advance (two weeks ahead or longer). For inquiries on arrival and departure times as well as

fares call 02.555.25.25 for national travel, or 02.528.28.28 for international travel, or go to the SNCB /NMBS internet site at www.b-rail.be.

The Belgian railways often have special deals for weekends away in Belgium. The tourist offices are unlikely to know much about these, so contact one of the main railway stations mentioned above, or ask a rail package travel agent for the excursions brochure or the railtour minitrips brochure.

SNCB/NMBS, Public Relations Department, Rue de France 85, 1070 Brussels, 02.203.36.40

The B-Tourrail, B-excursion, Train+Vélo, Billet Weekend, Go Pass, Rail Pass, etc.

Go Pass: If you are under 26 you can buy a 10-journey ticket which allows you to travel between any two stations within Belgium and costs only 50€ second class.

Rail Pass: This is the same concept as the Go Pass but for over 26s. The pass costs 74€ for journeys in second class, and 114€ for journeys in first class.

Weekend Ticket: If you commence your journey on a Friday after 8pm and return by late on Sunday evening you can save a substantial amount (more than 40%).

Airport Express: The Airport City Express connects Brussels with Brussels National Airport (Zaventem). The journey takes about 16 minutes (depending on exactly which station you leave from) and costs 5.20€ single (8.40€ return) for second class or 6.25€ single (10.75€ return) for first class. The price does not depend on one's age or whether or not one is a student. Trains run from Brussels South, Central and North Stations. During the week, the first train leaves Brussels South at 4h48 (4h50 at weekends) and thereafter there are three trains an hour. The last train leaves Brussels South at 23:12 (23:23 at weekends). The complete schedule of IC/IR trains and the Airport City Express is available in the brochure « IC/IR de poch/Treinwijs » at all stations.

A4. Flights

The Brussels National (Zaventem) airport internet site www.brusselsairport.be provides information about airport services and in particular about all flights leaving Brussels.

Information can be obtained by telephone on the following numbers:

- Information on flights and airport services: 0900/70000
- BIAC (Brussels International Airport Company): +32 2 753.42.00

There is a second airport in Charleroi, known as Brussels-South Airport. This is where Ryanair, Wizzair, and other low-cost flight companies operate from. It is located 46 kilometres from Brussels and is linked to the city by over 20 daily shuttles. The cost of a single ticket is around 15€ (around € 25 return) and you can buy it inside the bus. The bus drops you off at Gare du Midi in Brussels.

You can also order a “door-to-door” shuttle to get to and from any destination in Brussels, but it this is far more expensive. Brussels-South airport currently serves over 50 destinations. For more details check their website: www.charleroi-airport.com

A5. “Under 26 years” Fares

If you are under 26 years old, you are eligible for reduced price train tickets. For those over 26, ask for "billet touristique" (almost as cheap). These tickets can be obtained from:

- **CIT Travel Agency**, Boulevard de l'Impératrice 70, 1000 Bruxelles 02.509.45.11
- **TRANSCONTINENTAL**, Chaussée d'Ixelles 29, 1050 Ixelles 02.513.95.45
- **NOUVELLES FRONTIERES**, Boulevard Lemonier 2, 1000 Bruxelles 02.547.44.44
- **USIT CONNECTIONS**, Rue du Midi 19-21, 1000 Bruxelles 02.550.01.30
www.usitconnections.be (even better for cheap tickets) **USIT CONNECTIONS**, Rue du Midi 19-21, 1000 Bruxelles 02.550.01.30 www.usitconnections.be (even better for cheap tickets)

A6. Bicycles

Contrary to its northern neighbour, The Netherlands, Belgium is not a bike-friendly country. Be very careful when cycling in Brussels, as drivers have a tendency to be blissfully unaware of other road users.

You can buy a second hand bicycle at the Sunday morning market at Boulevard du Midi (beware of pickpockets). You can also hire one at the Gare de Groenendael for a ride through the Bois de la Cambre or to discover the Belgian countryside in the Ardennes. A bike costs about 10€ per day (plus deposit) from Cycles C.Y.D, 14 avenue E. Pirmez, 1040 Bruxelles. You can also try Maison des Cyclistes. Rue de Londres 15, Bruxelles. 02.502.73.55
www.provelo.org

You can also use Commission bicycles which you can usually find in the building's garage. Ask the security guards at reception to direct you to where they are stored. The Commission bikes are free of charge, but mainly intended for work-related travel. The use of service bikes is limited to the day-time and must be returned before 8pm (i.e. you may not take them home with you in the evenings or at the weekends).

You can also profit from the Villo self-service system and rent a bike in one of the Villo stations. You can buy a day ticket for 1,50€, a seven day ticket for 7€.

The first 1/2 hour is free. The second 1/2 hour costs 0,50€. Beyond: 2€ by 1/2 hour of overtime. These expenses are directly deducted from your bank card.

For more information, visit the villo webpage: www.villo.be

A7. Cars

Some stagiaires prefer to pool their financial resources and buy a car for the duration of the stage – an option to consider. To purchase a car, contact any Brussels car dealer or check in the Vlan (Newspaper), Le Soir (Newspaper) or on the IntraComm advertisement board: http://www.cc.cec/home/life/ads_fr.html.

Car Rentals

AVIS rue Américaine 145; Tel.: 02.537.12.80 and Chaussée de Louvain 1084; Tel.: 02.724.06.35

HERTZ boulevard Lemonier 8; Tel.: 02.706.41.11

EUROPCAR avenue Louise 235; Tel.: 02.640.94.00

Traffic Regulations

Remember: it is "priorité de droite", i.e. give way to vehicles coming from the right unless you are on a main road (a priority main road is indicated by a yellow triangle sign). All drivers must give way to trams. Buses also have priority on all roads and will pull out DIRECTLY in front of you even when you are in the process of overtaking them at a bus stop. Please be aware of these rules, many foreign drivers have accidents because they are not aware of them.

When driving you must always carry with you: your identity papers, driver's licence, insurance card (green), car registration card (red if registered in Belgium) and accident report form.

Maximum Speeds:

Motorways and 4 (or more) lane highways: 120km (75mph)

Out of town/secondary roads: 90km (55mph)

In town: 50km (37mph)

The driver and all passengers in all cars registered in Belgium must wear seat belts. Travellers in foreign registered cars must wear seat belts if the car is fitted with them. The only exceptions to this rule are for pregnant women or when there is a serious medical reason.

You should completely refrain from drinking if you plan to drive. Any driver who has a blood-alcohol level of 0.05% or higher is considered to be under the influence of alcohol and is consequently liable for prosecution. If the breath test is positive, the driver is not allowed to drive any further. Their driver's licence may also be taken away from them and a blood test may be taken. Legal action can be severe.

WARNING!

While travelling through Belgium, you will notice that road signs and maps do not always correspond. This is because of the different linguistic communities e.g. Antwerpen/Anvers, Bergen/Mons, Luik/Liège, Lille/Rijsel etc. It is very easy to get lost if you are not aware of these linguistic differences in place names.

Touring Secours: in case of a breakdown in the Brussels area or in the Wallonian Brabant region, phone 02.233.22.11 between 06h45 and 23h00. There are also permanent patrols on the highways. In case of breakdown on a highway call 02.233.22.11.

SOS Depannage (Royal Belgian Automobile Club): rue d'Arlon 53 – 1040 Bruxelles, Tel.: 02.287.09.00

B. ACCOMMODATION

Brussels is neither Paris nor London! Accommodation can be found, and if you are prepared to look for it and to compromise a little along the way, you will definitely find something worthwhile. Prices vary - close to the Commission/EU area prices tend to be higher and the standard a little less luxurious. However, as many of you will come to realise, there is a whirlwind of social activity in this area because there are so many stagiaires living close to each other. Nonetheless, the areas a little further away should not be overlooked, as they are often considerably cheaper and still well easily reachable by public transport.

You'll probably find yourself paying anything from around 350€ per month upwards, with most stagiaires paying on average between 350 - 550€. You should be prepared to pay one or two months' rent as a guarantee (deposit) and it is a good idea to enquire beforehand as to the exact conditions of being paid back the deposit when you leave as landlords sometimes try to take advantage of your imperfect French!!! Most landlords try to make you pay the deposit in cash. It is advisable, however, to instead open a joint blocked bank account in your and the landlord's name (this is common practice in Belgium).

Do not expect to receive your grant payment immediately.

The money you bring with you has to last for at least the first month!

(We seriously hope it is not too late to tell you this!!)

The Liaison Committee has been working on an electronic housing database that can be accessed by going to www.stagecommittee.org and then clicking on the Housing/ Jobs button at the bottom of the homepage and subsequently entering the password that you received by email. However, it is important to note that although the Liaison Committee does its utmost to ensure that only reliable ads are posted, it cannot vouch for individual properties or landlords - it only acts as a forum of information for the stagiaires.

OTHER SOURCES ARE:

- **The local press:** Le Soir, The Bulletin (an English language magazine, which tends to advertise fairly expensive accommodation) and Le Vlan (free newspaper distributed in francophone communes). The weekly paper Vlan, which mainly contains advertisements, can also be found on the web: <http://immo.vlan.be/en/Home>
 - There is also a smalls (petites annonces) section on **IntraComm** (the Commission's intranet site) which lists accommodation for rent – it tends to be expensive but you might get lucky and find something more affordable.
 - Keep your eyes open for **bright orange “à Louer/Te Huur” signs** as you walk around town because many people advertise in the windows of their properties.
 - Needless to say, you should also look on the **web**. Below we provide a list of some sites that may prove useful, but please note that the European Commission, the Traineeship Office and the Liaison Committee take no responsibility for the content of any of these sites.
1. Colocataires www.colocation.fr/homepage.php
 2. Expatriates.com www.expatriates.com/classifieds/belgium/hs/
 3. Ex-pats www.xpats.com
 4. Immoweb www.immoweb.be/FR/
 5. Residential Accommodation in Brussels www.languesvivantes.com/lviimmo/Intro.htm
 6. The Bulletin (weekly English Magazine about life in Brussel): www.thebulletin.be
 7. "Vlan" Newspaper (comes out every Sunday) <http://immo.vlan.be/en/HomeFlatshare>
 8. Apparager www.appartager.be
 9. Flat Share Website www.colocforum.net
 10. Flats to Rent, Flatshare www.quefaire.be
 11. Flats to Rent, Flatshare <http://bruxelles.annonz.com>
 12. Tous Types d'Annonces Immobilières (Français et Flamand) www.pap.be et www.entre-particuliers.be
 13. Youth Hostels / Auberges de Jeunesse www.logerjeune.be

For accommodation when you first arrive, here are some potentially useful contact details:

Hostel	How to get there	Prices in Euros (subject to change – please call to check)
<p>Jeugdherberg Bruegel – IYHF Heilige Geeststraat 2 B-1000 Brussels ☎ 02/511 04 36 Fax 02/512 07 11 E-mail: brussel@vjh.be http://www.vjh.be</p>	<p>Walking distance from Grand- Place Open 07h00-01h00 Disabled facilities Parking area for 2 wheelers</p>	<p>1/2/4 beds 26 / 20.50 / 17.30</p>
<p>Auberge de Jeunesse 'Generation Europe' 4 rue de l'Eléphant, 1080 ☎ 02/410 38 58 Fax 02/410 39 05 Email: brussels.europe@laj.be http://www.laj.be</p>	<p>Take the metro to Comte de Flandre Brussels Open 7h00-01h00, 24 hour access Disabled facilities Private car park</p>	<p>1/2/4/6-8 beds: 26 / 20.50 / 17.30 / 15.30</p>
<p>Gîte d'Etape – Auberge Jacques Brel Rue de la Sablonnière 30 B-1000 Brussels ☎ 02/218 01 87 Fax 02/217 20 05 E-mail: brussels.brel@laj.be www.laj.be or www.cbtj.be</p>	<p>Metro/tram to Botanique (or Madou) Open 7h00-01h00, 24h access 3 rooms with disabled access Parking facilities for 2 wheels</p>	<p>Single: 26 1/2/3-4/6-14 beds: 26 / 20.50 / 17.30 / 15.30</p>
<p>Sleepwell Rue du Damier 23, 1000 Brussels ☎ 02/218 50 50 Fax 02/218 13 13 E-mail: info@sleepwell.be http://www.sleepwell.be</p>	<p>Walking distance from North and Central Stations, Metro Rogier Open: all day Disabled facilities</p>	<p>Single: 27 1/2/3/4/6/8 beds: 27 / 24.35 / 21.85 / 19.85 18.35 /16.35</p>

<p>Centre Vincent van Gogh – CHAB 8 rue Traversière, B-1210 Brussels ☎ 02/217 01 58 Fax 02/219 79 95 E-mail: info@chab.be http://www.chab.be</p>	<p>Metro : Botanique Bus 65 or 66 from Central Station Open : 7h30-02h00, 24 hour access Some disabled access</p>	<p>Single: 26.50 1/2/4/6/8-10 beds: 26.50/20.00/15.50/14.00/12.00 +sheets 3.80</p>
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*Prices and information are subject to changes over time

Some people say that Molenbeek, St. Josse and parts of Schaarbeek, or anything in the Northwest of Brussels are not good neighbourhoods. It's up to you if you want to rent an apartment in these areas - quite a lot of stagiaires do. Residential areas like Woluwe Saint Pierre, Woluwe-Saint Lambert and Uccle are regarded as more affluent districts. Many stagiaires live in Ixelles and Etterbeek due to their close proximity to EC offices.

SERIOUS LEGAL ISSUES WITH YOUR LANDLORD?

Contact the Commission's Legal Advice team:

[http://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/HR_ADMIN/
EN/SOCIAL_BXL/LEGAL/Pages/index.aspx](http://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/HR_ADMIN/EN/SOCIAL_BXL/LEGAL/Pages/index.aspx)

C. DAILY LIFE

C1. Post offices

Post offices in Brussels are generally open Monday to Friday, from 9:00 to 17:00 or 18:00, but some close at midday. Outside these hours a special counter is open at the following post office:

Gare du Midi, Avenue Fonsny C 32.4: 19:00 till 20:00

The main post office in the Schuman area is Avenue de Cortenberg, 16. There is also a small post office in the European Parliament. More information is available on www.post.be

C2. Banks

Most banks and bureaux de change are open from Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 16:30.

You will need to make an appointment in order to open a bank account. Don't forget to take your passport and a copy of your apartment lease contract.

Some banks have service desks in the lobby that can help you with setting up this appointment. The banks get especially busy at the beginning of the stage period.

ATM cards are not always given to you on the spot when opening a bank account, so you may need to return to the bank at a later stage to pick these up in person.

In some cases, your ATM card will not automatically be programmed for use outside of Belgium and you may need to ask for this service to be activated. Also, the Maestro feature may not be automatically programmed onto the card, as there is a service fee for this added functionality.

Your ATM card will also have PROTON functionality. This allows you to withdraw “digital cash” from your bank account and load it onto the card. You can then use the PROTON feature to pay for purchases such as your lunch at the Commission cafeterias (who frequently only accept PROTON and no other forms of card payment). Look out for the PROTON loading stations around town and in the cafeterias.

Most Belgian banks offer free bank accounts to people under the age of 26. Monte Paschi www.montepaschi.be and Argenta www.argenta.be offer free bank accounts to any age group.

C3. Telephone

Landlines: Belgacom, the country's major communications provider, has a special toll-free number for expatriates (0800/32005). To get a fixed line (PSTN) either call this number or check out the list of Belgacom's Teleboutiques on www.belgacom.be. They also offer a broad choice of phones, mobile phones, answering machines, fax machines and pagers, either for sale or for rent. For general information, call these toll-free customer service lines 0800/55800 (English), 0800/33800 (French), 0800/44800 (German) and 0800/22800 (Dutch).

International Services: the following companies might be an alternative worth considering: Toledo (0800/40600, www.toledo.be), Netnet (02/711.03.33), Telli Telecom (02/644.03.65), or Opticall (02/705.52.12). Signing up with them is easy - simply call the company of your choice and request to be connected. Belgacom also offers some discount services - call 0800/55.123 (toll free, in English) for further info.

Mobiles (GSM): SIM cards can be obtained from mobile phone shops around the city. The major Belgian operators are:

- Proximus 0800/15212, www.proximus.be
- Mobistar 0800/95958, www.mobistar.be
- BASE www.base.be and 0486/19.19.99.

The supermarket Super GB also has its own mobile network.

When comparing offers for mobile phone rates and for general information on mobile phones in Belgium, check: www.comparatel.be, www.tariffinder.com, www.belgsm.com, www.speed.be, www.infotelecom.be, www.bestnet.be or www.b-gsm.com.

It might be a good idea to buy the same SIM card as friends who you phone particularly often, as there are often offers special deals related to this, e.g. free calls during the weekend.

Calling Cards: Can be used from every phone, be it a mobile, home or office one (for international calls). They are available from Belgacom Teleboutiques, newsagents, post offices, supermarkets and train stations. You can also call 0800/91720 for Belgacom's Calling Card or 0800/22147 for XL-Call.

C4. Internet

Although you will all have unlimited internet access in your office, you might also want to have internet access at home. Belgacom's Skynet (skynet.com, 02/706.113.11) is the leading provider of internet access in this country, but this is not to say that other providers (such as Telenet or Dommel) should be overlooked. Check out hotspots around town if you would like to use your laptop to surf the net or stay in touch with family and friends.

C5. Waste Disposal

In Brussels you have to sort your waste: there are blue bags for packaging, yellow bags for paper and white bags for everything you cannot recycle. Bags can be bought in the supermarket in different sizes. You should put glass in proper containers, although some supermarkets offer a take-back service by charging you a deposit ('vidange') on each bottle. Waste is collected twice a week on specific days (ask your neighbours or at the Commune), recycling bags are collected once a week. Used batteries can be disposed of in the containers at Commission buildings.

It is important that you play your part – Brussels needs your help! (You should also do this in your own country if you do not already). You can find more information (like the days and times you can put your waste out) at

<http://www.bruxelles-proprete.be/Content/html/dechets/index.asp> (FR and NL).

C6. Supermarkets and markets

Supermarkets (like GB, Colruyt, Aldi, and Delhaize) close at 19:00 or 20:00, depending on the branch. On Sundays there are (at least) two supermarkets open until 18:00, Delhaize on Boulevard Anspach and Rue Froissart and GB Express on Rue du Luxembourg. Many small retailers are also open on Sundays.

The best bargains are to be found at the outdoor markets near Gare du Midi (marché du midi, Sundays till 14:00) and Clemenceau (marché des abattoirs, Saturdays-Sundays till 14:00) and on Parvis de St. Gilles near Porte de Hal (daily). There is a wide choice of fruit,

vegetables and cheese available there. Asian food can be found in the St. Gery area, near the Bourse.

You can find just about anything in Brussels, if you know where to look!

See www.brussels.org/shopping for more information about shopping in Brussels.

C7. Night shops / food stores

There are lots of night shops located all over Brussels. Great for late night munchies or alcohol purchases! Most of them are open all night. For shopping on Sundays, check out the 'Alimentation General' shops, of which there are plenty in all neighbourhoods.

City Store Rue Grétry 55, 1000 Bruxelles

General Store Ch. de Boondael 276 - 1050 Bruxelles

C8. Laundrettes

To find the laundrettes nearest to you, consult the list in the Yellow Pages or in the Brussels telephone book. The most common one around town is called the Wash Club. In the Schuman area there is one on Place Jourdan. You will also find one on rue de Pavie and one at the end of rue Van Campenhout (next to Square Ambiorix).

C9. Libraries

Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België - Bibliothèque royale de Belgique

Boulevard de l'Empereur – Keizerslaan 4 tel: 02.519.53.51

This is the largest library in Brussels. It has 5 million works, more than 150 km of bookshelves and a particularly impressive collection of Western European public manuscripts.

Quateletfonds – Fond Quatelet

Rue de l'industrie – Nijverheidsstraat (corner Rue Montoyerstraat). This library of the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs has an international reputation for its wide and varied collection.

Library of the European Commission

Van Maerlant 18 – in the church. Ask for info on opening hours.

Brusselse Hoofdstedelijke Bibliotheek

This library, at the very heart of Brussels (next to the Théâtre royal de la Monnaie – Koninklijke Muntscouwburg) is the largest “non-scientific” library in the city centre.

Most or all municipalities in greater Brussels have a library.

C10. Lost property

If you lose something, first try to remember where you might have left it! If it is in:

- **Metro / Tram / Bus:** contact STIB, Av de la Toison d'Or 15, 1060 Bruxelles. Tel.: 02/515.20.00
- **Train:** particularly if you know the number and the destination of the train, the best thing to do is to call the next station along the line immediately. Tel.: 02/219.00.40
- **The Street:** go to the nearest Police Station

C11. How to tip in Brussels

Taxis	included in the fare
Hotels	service mostly included
Restaurants	included in the bill (any exceptions will be noted on the menu)
Public Toilets	0,25€ – 0,75€
Hairdresser	If not included, it's common to leave 1,50€

In theatres you are supposed to give something, usually 0,50€, when the usherette hands you your programme. You might be asked to tip (1,25€ or so) when leaving a club. This is obviously a Belgian particularity. Our advice is not to give these bouncers anything as they are already being paid by the club!

C12. Embassies of EU Member and Candidate Countries

AUSTRIA	Rue Abbaye 47, 1050 Bruxelles	02/649.91.70
BULGARIA	Avenue Hamoir 58, 1180 Bruxelles	02/374.59.63 02/374.08.66 02/375.70.81
CYPRUS	Square Ambriorix 2, 1000 Bruxelles	02/735.90.15
CZECH REPUBLIC	Rue Caroly 15, 1050 Bruxelles	02/213.01.11
DENMARK	Avenue Louise 221, 1050 Bruxelles	02/626.07.70
ESTONIA	Rue Marie-Thérèse 1-3, 1000 Bruxelles	02/227.39.10
FINLAND	Avenue des Arts 58, 1040 Bruxelles	02/287.12.12
FRANCE	Rue Ducale 65, 1000 Bruxelles	02/548.87.11
GERMANY	Avenue de Tervuren 190, 1150 Bruxelles	02/774.19.11
GREECE (Consul)	Avenue Louise 430, 1050 Bruxelles	02/646.55.35
HUNGARY	Avenue du vert chasseur 44, 1180 Uccle	02/379.09.00
IRELAND	Rue Froissart 89, 1040 Bruxelles	02/230.53.37
ITALY (Consul)	Rue de Livourne 38, 1000 Bruxelles	02/537.19.34
LATVIA	Rue d'Arlon 39-41, 1000 Bruxelles	02/282.03.60

LITHUANIA	Rue Belliard 6, 1040 Bruxelles	02/771.01.40
LUXEMBOURG	Rue du Noyer 211, 1040 Bruxelles	02/733.99.77
MALTA	Rue Belliard 65, 1040 Bruxelles	02/349.58.40
NETHERLANDS	Av. Hermann-Debroux 48, 1040 Bruxelles	02/679.17.11
POLAND	Av. de Tervueren 282-284, 1150 Bruxelles	02/777.72.00
PORTUGAL	Avenue Toison d'Or 55, 1060 Bruxelles	02/539.38.50
ROMANIA	Rue Gabrielle 105, 1180 Bruxelles	02/345.26.80 02/343.69.35
SLOVAKIA	Avenue Cortenbergh 791000 Bruxelles	02/743.68.11
SLOVENIA	Rue Marnix 30, 1000 Bruxelles	02/512.44.66
SPAIN (Consul)	Boulevard du Régent 52, 1000 Bruxelles	02/509.87.70
SWEDEN	Rue de Luxembourg 3, 1050 Bruxelles	02/289.57.60
UNITED KINGDOM	Rue d'Arlon 28, 1040 Bruxelles	02/287.62.11
TURKEY	Rue de Monteyer 4, 1000 Bruxelles	02/513.40.95
CROATIA	Avenue Louise 425, 1050 Bruxelles	02/639.20.36
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA	Avenue Louise 209A, 1050 Bruxelles	02/734.56.87

The addresses and telephone numbers of all embassies are listed in the Brussels phone book under "Ambassades". For a list of Missions accredited to the EU please see:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/corps/index.cfm?go=search.search&missions=1

More info on the Belgian press, television, radio, bookstores and places of worship in Brussels are available on our website. Go to www.stagecommittee.org and then click on "life as a stagiaire" and then on "daily life".

III. DISCOVER BRUSSELS

A. PLACES OF INTEREST IN BRUSSELS

Tourist information

Bruxelles International – Bureau d'Informations Touristiques (02/513.89.40)

Hôtel de Ville de Bruxelles, Grand'Place www.brusselsdiscovery.com

A.1. The different Districts

Le Sablon

Sablon is the area comprising place du Grand Sablon, the church of Notre Dame du Sablon and Place du Petit Sablon. Grand Sablon has bars, numerous antique shops, and a flea market in the mornings at weekends. An antiquity and book market is held every Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 to 18:00.

Les Marolles

This area around rue Haute, rue Blaes, rue Monserrat is a working class district, which has retained an authentic dynamism among its inhabitants who speak an original language consisting of French, Flemish, and Spanish. It is very colourful and crammed with interesting bars and shops. The flea market is held every morning on *Place du Jeu de Balle* and is worth a visit.

The Beguinage District

Quai aux Briques, rue du Peuplier, place de Beguinage, place du Grand Hospice. This is a quiet area around Beguinage.

The Saint-Géry District

This district is the birthplace of 10th century Brussels. Get there early to immerse yourself in the atmosphere of the fruit and vegetable markets. It is a nice area to go during night, as there are a lot of bars and pubs all around.

The Boulevard du Midi

On Sunday mornings, Brussels' most unsightly area is swamped by the Midi Market. It has everything: fruit, vegetables, spices, plants, cosmetics, clothes, etc. There is a tremendous air of activity which is more Mediterranean than Belgian.

A.2. Parks

Parc du Cinquenaire

A popular spot for many stagiaires' picnics, close to the Schuman area.

Parc de Bruxelles

In front of the Royal Palace. Shady and sunny areas to sunbath, trails along the gates to jog, fountains, and a small café with chairs and tables to sit.

Le Bois de la Cambre

Brussels' most popular park. When the weather is fine, it is possible to hire a boat, bike, or rollerblades! Nearby is the entry to the Abbaye de la Cambre.

Les Etangs d'Ixelles

Two ponds "Les Etangs d'Ixelles" near Place Flagey.

Botanique/Kruidtuin

At the end of Avenue Royale, metro Botanique. A large city garden with plants and fountains. Gates closes at 20:00 every night.

Parc de Woluwe et des Etangs Mellaerts

This park borders the avenue de Tervuren, close to the intersection with the boulevard du Souverain.

Parc Musée Royal d'Afrique Centrale/Koninklijk Musuem van Midden-Afrika

(See also under "Museums") You can reach this huge park in Tervuren from the tram 4 terminus.

La Forêt de Soignes

Take the metro to Montgomery, and then tram 44. It consists of 11,000 acres of beech trees encircling Brussels from Tervuren to Genesisus-Rode.

Jardin Royal Botanique

Another park worth mentioning. It has lovely houses. Go (by car) direction Anvers (Antwerpen) on the motorway and take the exit "Meise", or take tram 92. The 'Serres Royales' (Royal Greenhouses) are open to the public once a year for two-three weeks at a time (usually towards the end of April and beginning of May).

A.3. Monuments

The Grand Place

The city's first market place, the Grand Place dates back to the 12th century. It was destroyed in 1695 by the order of Louis XIV, and rebuilt by the inhabitants less than four years later.

The Town Hall

The symbol of the municipality's independence and an example of 15th century architecture. It was begun in 1402 and completed around 1480, the tower being the work of Jean Van Ruysbroek (architect to Philip the Good) in 1449.

La Maison du Roi

It was rebuilt in the 19th Century, but dates from the 13th Century. It is now the municipal museum.

The Guildhouses

These complete the grandeur of the Grand Place. The harmony of the baroque façades results from the solidarity of the guilds who from 1697 to 1698 rebuilt the houses, which had been destroyed by the French.

The Manneken Pis

It personifies Brussels ribaldry in a 17th Century bronze statuette by the sculptor Duquesnoy.

La Bourse

The building dates from 1873 and is the centre of financial activity in Brussels. Some of its statues are by the French sculptor Rodin, who used to live in Brussels.

Le Petit Sablon

This park is surrounded by 48 bronze statuettes representing the medieval guilds of Brussels. In the centre is the statue of the counts of Egmont and Hoorne, executed by the order of Philip II of Spain in 1568.

L'Eglise de Notre Dame de la Chapelle

Since the Middle Ages, the focal point of a working class district known as "Les Marolles".

Le Palais de Justice

The architect Poelaert designed the building in Greco-Roman style in the 19th Century.

The Royal Palace

This was completed in Louis XVI style during the reign of Leopold II. It occupies the site of the former "Cour de Bruxelles", residence of Philip the Good and Charles V.

Le Palais de la Nation

This Palace houses the Parliament buildings, where the Chamber of Representatives and the Senate meet. It was formerly the seat of the Supreme Council of the Duchy. The classical façade was designed by Guimard.

La Cathédrale Saint-Michel

This Cathedral brings together various Gothic styles encountered in Brussels. Most of its stained glass windows were made from drawings by Bernard Van Orley and donated by Charles V and his relatives.

Théâtre de la Monnaie

This theatre was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1855 by Poelaert.

L'Arcade du Cinquantenaire

This dominates the Royal Museum of Art and History as well as the army buildings and is a triumphant arch built to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Belgium's independence.

L'Atomium

The Atomium was the symbol of the 1958 World Exhibition. It represents the molecule of a crystal of iron magnified two hundred million times. Next to the Atomium is the exhibition ground where the Brussels International Fair is held. Apart from being a monument to commemorate the centenary of Belgium's independence, it also forms a vast group of exhibition halls.

Basilique Nationale du Sacré Coeur, Koekelberg

The Basilica is a national monument in memory of all those who gave their lives for their country. It was completed in 1935 and the church was consecrated in 1951. It has magnificent stained-glass windows and statues.

The Chinese Pavilion and the Japanese Tower (Tour Japonaise et Pavillon Chinois)

The Chinese Pavilion was bought by Leopold II from the organisers of the 1900 Paris World Exhibition and was reconstructed in 1904 at Laeken not far from the Japanese tower. It now houses the museum of Chinese porcelain. The Japanese Tower is, in itself, worth seeing. It hosts an impressive exhibition of Japanese armours and weapons! Both places are worth visiting!

Bruxelles Parc

Océade (indoors waterpark, with numerous saunas, jacuzzis, slides and a wave pool), Mini Europe (all main European places of interest scaled down), and Kinepolis (the largest cinema complex in the world). Various events, trade fairs, and Commission concours are often held in this area within the palaces that were built for the World Exhibition of 1935.

A.4. Shopping Areas or 'What to take home from Brussels: its specialities'

Brussels is a wonderful place for those with a sweet tooth, with its chocolates (claimed to be even better than Swiss chocolates), "pralines", and "speculoos" (brown sugar and cinnamon biscuits). The most famous and probably the least expensive chain of good chocolates shops is Leonidas. They have stores throughout Brussels, but for the true connoisseur (if you are not now, you will be after five months in Brussels), go towards Place Sablon to visit Pierre Marcolini and Wittamer, or towards Square Ambiorix to visit "Corné". There are also several Godiva, Galler, and Neuhaus shops around town, as well as artisanal chocolateries.

But shopping in Brussels need not be limited to chocolate. Who could leave the Grand Place without a piece of real lace even if only for a handkerchief? Other famous souvenirs include crystal, pewterware, and of course Belgian beer.

The liveliest areas recommended for shopping in town are **rue Neuve**, **Boulevard Adolphe Max** and **rue du Marché aux Herbes**. Avenue Louise is very chic; avenue de la **Toison d'Or**, **Chaussée d'Ixelles** and **Boulevard de Waterloo** are also worth a visit, as are the "Galleries" in the area. There is also a large selection of shops in the shopping arcade "City 2" at the end of rue Neuve, close to "Rogier" metro. Nearer to the Commission, on the other side of Cinquante Park, is the **rue de Tongres**. Finally, on the outskirts of town, there are two shopping centres: the Woluwé Shopping Centre at Woluwé Saint-Lambert, and the Westland shopping centre situated in Anderlecht.

Department stores are open all day from 9:00 to 18:00. They are closed on Sundays and public holidays. Other small shops are often closed between 12:00 and 14:00.

Afterwork shopping: an initiative by Brussels shopkeepers will allow you to shop every Thursday until 20:00.

Info: www.afterworkshopping.be

A.5. Markets

Midi Market (Gare du Midi): offers an array of products and clothing from all over the world. It is also a great place for cheap bicycles. Open Sunday mornings from 5h to 13h.

Food and clothes: on Parvis de St. Gilles, open from 5:00 - 13:00, Tuesdays to Sundays (Metro Porte de Hal)

Flea markets: open from 9:00 – 13:00 everyday in the Place du Jeu de Balle, Quartier Marolles. Every first Sunday of the month a flea market is held in the Place Woluwe St. Lambert.

Antique market and books: on Place du Grand Sablon on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings.

Flower market: every Sunday morning on the Grand Place and near the Gare du Midi.

Open air market for paintings: Quartier Breughel, place Notre Dame de Grâce, rue Haute Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Fruit and vegetable market: a great choice of fruit and vegetables is displayed every day in winter until 16h and in the summer until 18h in the Place St. Catherine. You may also want to visit Place Jourdan, Clémenceau, Boitsfort or Stockel's markets.

B. CULTURAL LIFE IN BRUSSELS

B.1. Museums in Brussels (see also "Monuments")

Please note that most museums in Belgium are closed on Mondays.

Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique / Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten van België

Regentschapsstraat / Rue de la Régence, 3, 1000 Brussels, tel: 02/508.32.11,

mail: info@fine-arts-museum.be

Opening Hours: From 10:00 - 17:00 – tickets available until 16:00 (closed on Mondays)

Admission: 8€ per person, 13€ combi Musee Magritte

Reductions for students (-26) and seniors: 5€

5€ per person for groups of min. 15 persons (reservation is compulsory), 9€ combi Magritte

Hosts a collection of 20.000 masterpieces, including a large Rubens collection.

Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire / Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis

10 Parc du Cinquantenaire - Jubelpark 10 tel: 02/741.72.11

Opening hours: From 9:30 - 17:00 / 10:00 - 17:00 on weekends (closed on Mondays)

Tickets available until 16h

Admission: 5€ / 4€ for students or groups (min 10 persons)

Free every first Wednesday of every month after 13:00

It is the largest museum in Brussels. There are sections for prehistoric, Greek, Roman, Persian and Pre-Columbian exhibitions, and examples of European art industries, from pre-historic times to the 19th Century.

Palais des Beaux-Arts de Belgique / Paleis voor Schone Kunsten België

Rue Ravensteinstraat 23, tel: 02/507.82.00

<http://www.bozar.be>

Musée royal de l'armée et d'histoire militaire / Koninklijk Museum van het Leger en van de Krijgsgeschiedenis

Parc du Cinquantenaire - Jubelpark 3 tel: 02/737.78.33

Opening hours: From 9:00 - 12:00 and from 13:00 - 16:45 (closed on Mondays)

Admission: Free

Military mementoes from the end of the 18th Century and the First World War.

Musée Constantin Meunier Museum

Rue de l'Abbaye - Abdijstraat 59, tel: 02/648.44.49

Open Tuesday to Friday, 10:00 – 12:00 and 13:00 – 17:00/ Weekend appointment only for groups

Admission: free of charge.

Musée Wiertz / Wiertzmuseum

Rue Vautierstraat 62 tel: 02/648.17.18

Open Tuesday to Friday, 10:00 – 12:00 and 13:00 – 17:00/ Weekend appointment only for groups

Paintings from 19th Century and sculptures by Wiertz.

Admission: free of charge.

Musée des Instruments de Musique / Instrumentenmuseum

“Old England”, rue Montagne de la Cour 2, tel: 02/545.01.30

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday 9:30 - 17:00, weekend 10:00 - 17:00,

Mondays closed.

Admission: 5€, reduction for students (or -26): 4€

1, 5€ per person for group of young people (min 15 persons)

Free entrance first Wednesday of the month after 13:00.

Porte de Hal / Hallepoort

Different exhibits. Boulevard du Midi – Zuidlaan, tel 02/534.15.18

Musée Bellevue / Bellevuemuseum

Place des Palais - Paleizenplein 7

Musée Horta / Hortamuseum

Rue Américaine - Amerikaanse Straat 25, tel 02/543.04.90

Victor Horta, one of the great Art Nouveau architects.

Opening hours: 14:00 – 17:30, Monday closed. Open to tour groups in the mornings.

Admission: 7€, reduction for students: 3,50€ with valid card

Maison du Roi / Broodhuis (Municipal museum of the city of Brussels)

Grote Markt / Grand'Place - 1000 Brussels, tel 02/279.43.50 musea@brucity.be

Opening Hours: Tuesday-Sunday 10:00 – 17:00

Admission: 3€ (multiple reductions)

Documents and other exhibits concerning archaeology and the history of the city. Wide representation of crafts in Brussels: tapestries, altar pieces, china and pottery, lace, goldsmith and silversmith work, the wardrobe of Mannekin Pis etc.

Musée René Magritte

Rue Essegheem – Essegheemstraat 135 – 1090 Jette, tel 02/428.26.26, www.magrittemuseum.be

Opening hours: Wednesday to Sunday, 10:00 - 18:00

Admission: 7€ Adults, reduction for youths (23 years and younger): 6€

Musée d'Ixelles / Museum van Elsene

Rue Van Volsemstraat 7 – 1050 Ixelles, tel 02/64.21.22, www.musee-ixelles.be

Musée de la Brasserie / Brouwerijmuseum

Grand Place - Grote Markt 10, tel 02.511.49.87

Guildhall of the brewers, where a complete collection of the equipment once used for brewing is held. You can also taste the beer!

Maison d'Erasmus / Erasmushuis

Rue du Chapitre/Kapittelstraat 31 — 1070 Bruxelles, tel 02/251.13.80

www.erasmushouse.museum/

Opening hours: Tuesday to Sunday, 10:00 to 17:00

Admission: 1,25€

Filmmuseum

Rue Baron Horta/ Hortastraat 9, tel 02/507.83.70

Films are shown daily, sometimes presented around a theme (e.g. Chaplin).

Get information on schedules at the Palais des Beaux Arts.

Museum des Sciences Naturelles

Rue Vautier 29, telephone 02.627.42.38

Opening hours: Tuesday-Friday: 9:30 – 16:45, week-end: 10:00 - 18:00, Monday closed.

Admission: 7€ Free entrance every first Wednesday of the month from 13h.

Planetarium

Avenue de Bouchoud 10, tel 474.70.50 <http://www.planetarium.be>

For opening hours and spectacles: consult the website

Autoworld

Parc du Cinquantaire, 11 tel: 02.736.41.65 <http://www.autoworld.be/>

Opening hours: October - March 10:00 - 17:00

April-September: 10:00 - 18:00

Admission: 6€ per person, 4,70€ (also for groups of minimum 8 persons).

Centre Belge de la Bande Dessinée

Zandstraat / Rue des Sables, 20 tel 02.219.19.80 <http://www.cbbd.be>

In an old warehouse in art nouveau style, designed by Horta.

Admission: 8€; group (min 15 pers.): 6€ per pers.

B.2. Cinemas

Some cinemas grant reductions to stagiaires on presentation of a stagiaire card (just say you are a student), except on weekends and public holidays.

Programmes change on Wednesdays. You can find what is on in the newspapers and in "The Bulletin" or at www.cinebel.be/fr www.cineguide.be

Tickets are approx. 7€ but in some cinemas you might pay more.

If you really like movies then the Carte 7 (7 tickets for 27,25€) and Carte 5 (5 tickets for 25,90€) might be a good option. They are valid for 60 days and can be used by more than one person.

Here are the addresses of some cinemas. You can find more information at www.ugc.be

Centre

Actor's Studio Petit rue du Boucher 16 tel: 0900/27.854

Aventure Galerie du Centre 57 tel: 02/219.92.02

Arenberg Galeries Galerie de la Reine 26 tel: 02/512.801.63

UGC de Brouckère Place de Brouckère 38 tel: 0900/10.440

Movy Club Rue des Moines 21 tel: 02/537.69.54

Musée du Cinéma Palais des Beaux-Arts: 02/507.83.70

Nova Rue d'Arenberg 3 tel: 02/511.27.74

Haut de la Ville

UGC Toison d'or Galeries et avenue de la Toison d'Or 17 tel: 0900/10.440

Styx Rue de Arbre Benit 72 tel: 0512/21.02

Vendôme Chaussée de Wavre 18 tel: 02/502.37.00

Outside of the City Centre

Kinepolis/IMAX Bruparck, 20 avenue du Centenaire (metro Heysel) tel: 02/474.26.00

Stockel, 17 avenue de Hinnisdael (metro Stockel)

tel: 02/779.10.79

C. SPORT FACILITIES

Ice-skating

"Poseidon" avenue des Vaillants 4 – 1200 Woluwé St-Lambert - Tel. 02/762.16.33.

"Patinoire de Forest National" avenue du Globe 36 - Tel. 02/345.16.11

Swimming

"Poseidon": Avenue des Vaillants 4 - see above – tel 02/771.66.55

"École Militaire": Rue Hobbema 8 (Parc du Cinquantenaire) – 1000 Bruxelles

Tel. 02/737.62.11

Bains Communaux d'Ixelles: Rue de la Natation 10 – 1050 Ixelles

Tel. 02/515.69.31

Bains de la ville de Bruxelles: Rue du Chevreuil 28 – 1000 Bruxelles

Tel. 02/511.24.68

"Espadon": Rue des Champs 69 – 1040 Etterbeek – Tel. 02/640.38.38

Bassin de natation de St-Josse: Rue St-François 23-27 – 1210 St-Josse

Tel. 02/217.39.41

Piscine Victor Boin: Rue de la Perche 38 – 1060 St-Gilles – Tel. 02/539.06.15

Squash and Badminton

"Centre Sportif de Woluwé St-Pierre" avenue Salomé 2 - Tel. 02.773.18.20

"Winners" rue Bonneels 13 - Tel. 280.02.70 Fax : 02.230.24.48 (also Badminton)

Tennis

"Centre Sportif de Woluwé St-Pierre" avenue Salomé 2 – Tel. 02.773.18.20

"Centre interinstitutionnel Européen" Dennenboslaan 54 - Overijse Tel. 02.687.24.34

Indoors : "Euro Tennis Club St Josse" Avenue des Communautés, 12 1200 Bruxelles Tel : 02.705.10.15

Fitness & Aerobics

"Winners" rue Bonneels 13 - Tel. 02.280.02.70. Special discounts for stagiaires

"Aspria Club" Nijverheidsstraat 26-38 Rue de L'Industrie -02.508 0800 info@aspria.be

"World Class" Rue du Parnasse 19 – 02 551 59 90, info@worldclass.be

"Just Fit" Avenue de Cortenbergh 29, 1000 Bruxelles schuman@justfit.be Tel. 02 792 08 30

Football

"Centre Sportif Ixellois", Rue Volta, 18 - Tel. 02.515.69.11 (full pitch and 7-a-side)

"Centre Sportif Forêt de Soignes" Chaussée de Wavre 2057 1160 Auderghem Tel. 02.672.22.60 (foot-salle and natural grass) www.csfds.be

Horse riding

Trainees get a discount on subscription fees, insurance and lessons/ walks.

Check the website <http://www.ceue.eu/>

**We hope this guide was useful to
you.**

For more information visit
www.stagecommittee.org or email
stagecommittee@ec.europa.eu

