



International students

EU citizens, EEA nationals and Swiss nationals

Application and registration as a student in the City of Ghent

The procedure depends on the student's nationality. This brochure concerns students who are EU citizens , EEA nationals or Swiss nationals.

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*This text contains links to information pages and examples of residence documents,
indicated by an internet pictogram in the left-hand margin.*

Who is considered an international student?

The Loket Studenten (Students' Counter) is intended for foreign nationals who have their (primary) place of residence in Ghent and who study in Belgium. An international student is a person who applies for a residence permit in order to study in Belgium.

Conditions to acquire the right of residence as a student

- Identity document (= passport or ID card) (for short and long stay)
- Enrolment as a student with an education institution in Belgium that is recognised, organised or subsidised by the Belgian government (for long stay)
- Studying must be your main occupation (for long stay)
- Sufficient resources for self-support (for long stay)
- Health insurance for all medical care (valid for long stay in Belgium)

What is considered as studies?

- Studies resulting in a Bachelor's or Master's degree (at least 54 credits or min. 12h/week)
- Foreign exchange programmes (Erasmus, AFS,...) (at least 54 credits or min. 12h/week)
- (Pre)doctoral studies
- (Higher) secondary education
- Internship as part of studies in Belgium (NOT as part of studies abroad)
- Preparatory or additional year programmes (at least 27 credits)
 - 7th year of secondary education as a preparation for higher education
 - One-year (at most) language programmes (Dutch, French or German) as a preparation for higher education in that language

Student at Universiteit Gent and residing in Gent

Once enrolled the Universiteit Gent will send the student's information to the city of Gent.

The Loket Studenten (the student's counter) or the competent Dienstencentrum (service centre) will process the file and invites the student to finish the residence procedure.

The student will be contacted if more than one residence procedure is possible.

Therefore, the procedures following in this brochure are not applicable to those students.

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This brochure is still useful to read through the conditions and documents necessary for the registration in Belgium. A few residence documents are depicted as well.

The exchange of information between Universiteit Gent and the city of Gent is **not applicable to exchange students** (Erasmus, AFS, ...)! This category of students has to follow the regular procedures described in this brochure.

Application for residence document

The student must start the application procedure for his first residence document online at the Students' Counter (Loket Studenten) as soon as possible after arriving in Ghent.

The Students' Counter will not accept applications for renewal of a residence document.

At a certain point in the procedure, students are invited to go to the Students' Counter (Loket Studenten). Students who reside in the centre of Ghent are invited to go to the Counter in the Administrative Centre Gent-Zuid (Administratief Centrum). Students who reside in one of the submunicipalities are invited to go to their local service centre (dienstencentrum) in Wondelgem, Sint-Amandsberg, Nieuw-Gent or Gentbrugge.

Stay of maximum 3 months (short stay)

EU citizens, EEA nationals and Swiss nationals who study and stay in Belgium **for maximum 3 months** starting on the day of arrival in Belgium, have to apply for a [Declaration of Presence](#), also called Annex 3ter (Melding van Aanwezigheid - bijlage 3ter).



This application cannot be used to move the primary place of residence to Belgium. Consequently, students cannot apply for a residents' parking permit or take a driving test. Since they do not obtain an identification number of the National Register, students have to apply for an e-creabis number in order to be legally employed. Students can apply for this number at the local municipality office or by the employer via www.sigedis.be. This procedure does not apply to internships, however. In that case the employer can file a DIMONA declaration.



How to apply for a Declaration of Presence (annex 3ter)?

The student sends an email to internationalstudent@stad.gent within 10 working days of arrival in Belgium, containing the following information:

- Subject line: 'annex 3ter + number of months of stay'

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- Surname and first name student
- Nationality student
- Correct and full postal address in Ghent
- Duration of the studies
- Date of arrival in Belgium

The student attaches a scanned entry document (passport or ID card) to the email.

The student will receive an email to confirm the application was received by the Students' Counter (Loket Studenten).

Afterwards, the student will receive an invitation email to go to the Students' Counter in Gent-Zuid or, depending on the address, a service centre (dienstencentrum) with the required original documents and collect the annex 3ter.

To collect the annex 3ter the student brings the following documents:

- ID card or passport
- Correct and full postal address

Annex 3ter is free of charge and a passport photo is not needed.

The annex 3ter is valid for a **maximum** of **three months** and can only be extended in exceptional cases. An application for a new annex 3ter for again three months is also possible 1 day after the expiry date of the previous annex 3ter.

Stay of more than 3 months (long stay)

EU citizens, EEA nationals or Swiss nationals who wish to study in Belgium for more than 3 months, have to apply for registration in the National Register. They don't need a visa. Students are issued an electronic residence document (E card) or annex 8 if all residence conditions are fulfilled. These students also obtain an identification number of the National Register.

How to apply for the E card or annex 8?

Within 3 months of their arrival in Belgium, students have to send an application mail to internationalstudent@stad.gent. This email should contain the following information:

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- Subject line: 'registration + number of months of stay'
- A digitally completed [arrival form](#)
- A scanned (valid) passport or ID card
- Scanned proof of enrolment with an education institution in Belgium
- Scanned proof of health insurance

Please mind the following when completing the arrival form:

- complete the form **digitally**
- state full official name and **all** first names
- give full postal address and, if applicable, room number
- email address and phone number in Belgium
- expected duration of the studies and, if possible, the date of departure

to visit the office in person until further notice.

The registration procedure will take some time and the E card cannot be issued immediately. That is why students should start the registration procedure as soon as possible. It is important to find adequate housing first. If the student doesn't have a residence address for at least 2 months, the registration procedure will be postponed. Putting a name on the doorbell and letter box allows a smooth residence check by the police officer.

Applicants are immediately registered in a temporary register (wachtregister). If they stay at a private address, a community police officer will pay a visit to perform a residence check. If the student applied online and stays in an officially recognised dorm, the inspection procedure is simplified, without a police visit.



The competent community police officer can be found on <http://www.lokalepolitie.be/5415/contact/je-wijk>

If the student is not at home at the time of the police officer's visits, he or she will drop a **residence check card** (woonstvaststellingskaart) in the letter box.

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Following a positive residence check, the student will be listed in the Foreigners Register.

If the residence check is negative, the registration application is denied and the student is removed from the registers. The student will receive an email.

As soon as the application file is processed, the Students' Counter or the competent service centre will send an invitation email to complete the registration and apply for a registration document.

Students applying for an E card bring the following documents:

- A Valid passport or ID card
- Proof of enrolment with an education institution in Belgium
- Proof of health insurance for all medical care (valid for long stay in Belgium)
- Declaration of sufficient financial means: you can make an on-the-spot statement on a standard form at the Students' Counter)
- Driving licence, if applicable
- if applicable, a certified translated birth certificate (if needed, legalised or with an apostille)
- The personal invitation email
- 24 euros (in cash or by debit card)
- 3 recent and identical passport photos that meet the legally required criteria (there is a photo booth in block A in the Administrative Centre Gent Zuid)
- If necessary, additional documents mentioned in the invitation email



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It takes 2 to 3 weeks to get the E card. If the student opts for the urgent procedure (95 or 148 EUR), delivery takes 1 or 2 working days. Meanwhile the student gets a printed version

of the registration document (annex 8).

As soon as the student receives the PIN/PUK codes by post, the E card can be collected at the office where the application started. At Loket Migratie (in the Administrative Centre Gent-Zuid) the E card can be collected at the express desk (without appointment on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9a.m. to 12:30 p.m and from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m, on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., closed on Thursdays, only by appointment on Saturdays).

The student brings the following to collect the E card:

- Printed version of the registration document (annex 8)
- PIN/PUK codes



The student can choose to apply for a free-of-charge printed version ([annex 8](#)) of the registration document instead of an E card.

Validity period of the E card or annex 8

The E card is valid for **5 years**, provided the student meets the residence conditions for students throughout the stay.

If the student has been staying in Belgium continuously and legally for 5 years, he or she can apply for permanent right of residence (E+ card or annex 8bis), after which an unconditional and permanent right of residence will be granted.

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The student reports any **change of address** to the competent municipal authorities without delay (**even if the residence document is still valid**). Otherwise the student will be removed from the Foreigners Register. Consequently, **the residence document** is no longer valid and the student may lose the right of residence.

Specific residence procedure for students who have their primary residence in a neighbouring country – annex 33



Students who want to keep their primary residence in **France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands or Germany** but study in Belgium, can opt for [annex 33](#).

Students who follow this procedure will not be registered in a Belgian municipality. These students do not obtain an identification number of the National Register.

Consequently, they cannot apply for a residents' parking permit.



They can only take a driving test when they have a titular holder number (titularisnummer), which they can apply for via the [Loket Rijden](#) (Drivers' Counter).

How to apply for annex 33?

Students have to send an email to internationalstudent@stad.gent within 8 days after arrival in Belgium and provide the following information:

- Subject line: 'annex 33 (bijlage 33) + number of months of stay'
- Surname and first name student
- Nationality student
- Date of arrival in Belgium
- Correct and full postal address in Ghent
- Duration of the Belgian study programme

They attach a scan of:

- A valid passport or ID card
- The certificate of enrolment with an education institution in Belgium

Each document must be attached as a separate file.

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Students who follow this procedure, **cannot** use the arrival form to submit their application.

They will receive an email to confirm the application was received by the Students' Counter.

Afterwards They will receive another email inviting them to go to the Students' Counter in Gent-Zuid or the service centre with the required documents and collect an annex 33.

The student brings the following to collect annex 33:

- Valid passport or ID card
- Correct and full postal address
- Certificate of enrolment with an education institution in Belgium
- 2 recent and identical passport photos that meet the legally required [criteria](#) (there is a photo booth in block A in the Administrative Centre Gent Zuid)
- 13 euros (in cash or by debit card)



Annex 33 is valid throughout the school or academic year and must be renewed annually. With each renewal, the student has to present the same documents as the year before.

Reporting a lost, stolen or destroyed residence document

If the residence document is lost, stolen or destroyed, the student must notify the police immediately (not Loket Migratie or a service centre). The police will give a certificate (annex 12) to confirm that the loss, theft or destruction is reported.

In case of loss or theft of an E card, it is advisable to call Doc Stop (0800 2123 2123) to place a block on the card. This prevents abuse of the card by another person.

Finally, the student must as soon as possible apply for a duplicate of the residence document with the municipal authorities. A duplicate always has the same expiry date as the original document.

In case of repeated loss or theft the municipal authorities can only issue a new residence card after an investigation into the circumstances of that repeated loss or theft.

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Reporting a permanent departure from Belgium

Students who have an annex 8 or an E card leaving Belgium permanently have to notify the municipal authorities within 8 days before departure, except those who have an annex 3ter or annex 33. Handing over the E card to the municipal authorities, is mandatory.



They can report their permanent leave via the online form [Declaration of permanent departure](#).

They have to bring the completed and signed form and the residence document to Loket Migratie or the competent service center.

It is advisable to settle any practical matters (e.g. bank transactions) for which the residence document is needed before returning it.

Loket Migratie will give a certificate (model 8 – Certificate of deregistration due to permanent departure abroad) and an annex 37 (certificate of withdrawal of the residence document).

The student must bring a passport photo in order to receive the annex 37 and model 8. If the student chooses to send the declaration of departure by mail or by email, he or she will receive the model 8 form at the foreign postal address indicated on the departure form. The student will not receive an annex 37.

A model 8 document is required for certain formalities. For instance, students from the Netherlands cannot re-register in a Dutch municipality without a model 8.

Who to contact?

Loket Migratie (Migration Counter)

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays by appointment from 09:00 until 12:30 and from 14:00 until 16:00

Tuesdays by appointment from 09:00 until 12:30 pm and from 14:00 until 19:00

Saturdays by appointment from 09:00 until 12:30 (no fast service counter)

Closed on Thursdays!

burgerzaken.migratie@stad.gent or 09 266 71 50

Dienstencentra (Service Centres)

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 09:00 until 12:30 and from 14:00 until 16:00

Tuesday night opening hours: from 16:30 until 19:00 (by appointment)

Closed on Thursdays!

- Gentbrugge Service Centre**
dcgb@stad.gent or 09 268 23 80
- Wondelgem Service Centre**
dcwo@stad.gent or 09 266 85 60
- Nieuw Gent Service Centre**
dcng@stad.gent or 09 268 21 70
- Sint-Amandsberg Service Centre**
dcsa@stad.gent or 09 266 86 86

Infopunt Migratie (Infopoint Migration)

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 09:00 until 12:30

Wednesdays also from 14:00 until 16:00

Or by appointment

Closed on Thursdays!

infopuntmigratie@stad.gent or 09 266 71 40

Questions concerning **work permits or professional cards?**

Contact the **Dienst Economische Migratie** (Department of Economic Migration) in Gent:

Koningin Maria Hendrikaplein 70 bus 60

9000 Gent

Telephone: 09 276 18 50

Email: arbeidskaart.gent@vlaanderen.be

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