International students

EU citizens, EEA nationals and Swiss nationals

First application, registration and extension of your stay 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.
Table of contents

Who is considered an international student? ................................................................. 3
Conditions to acquire the right of residence as a student .................................................. 3
What is considered as studies? ......................................................................................... 3
First application and extension of the residence document through the e-form .................. 3
Stay of maximum 6 months (short stay) ......................................................................... 4
How to apply for a Declaration of Presence (annex 3ter)? ............................................. 4
How to apply for the renewal of the Declaration of Presence (annex 3ter)? ..................... 5
Stay of more than 6 months (long stay) .......................................................................... 5
How to apply for the E card or annex 8? ......................................................................... 5
Validity period of the E card or annex 8 ......................................................................... 7
Specific residence procedure for students who have their primary residence in a neighbouring country – annex 33 ................................................................. 8
How to apply for the annex 33? ...................................................................................... 8
How to renew the annex 33? ........................................................................................... 9
Reporting a lost, stolen or destroyed residence document ............................................. 9
Reporting a permanent departure from Belgium .............................................................. 9
Who to contact? ........................................................................................................... 11

This text contains links to information pages and examples of residence documents, indicated by an Internet icon in the margin.
Who is considered an international student?
The Students’ Counter (Loket Studenten) is intended for foreign nationals who have their (primary) place of residence in Ghent and 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 financial means to support yourself (for long stay)
- Health insurance for all medical expenses (valid for long stay in Belgium)

What is considered as studies?
- Studies that result in a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree (at least 54 credits or min. 12h/week)
- International exchange programmes (e.g. 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 complementary one-year higher-education programmes (at least 27 credits)
  - 7th year of secondary education as a preparation for higher education
  - Language learning programmes (Dutch, French or German) for a maximum of one year in preparation for higher education in that language.

First application and extension of the residence document through the e-form
The student must start the application procedure for the first residence document online through the e-form as soon as possible after arriving in Ghent and after selecting one of the available residence options.

It is not possible to apply directly at the Students’ Counter.

An extension of the residence also has to be asked through the e-form.

The student will be contacted once the data entered in the e-form have been processed. Students who reside in the center of Ghent will be invited to go to the Students’ Counter in the Administrative Centre (Administratief Centrum, Gent-Zuid).
Students who reside in one of the submunicipalities will be invited to go to the local service centre (dienstencentrum) in Wondelgem, Sint-Amandsberg, Nieuw-Gent or Gentbrugge.

**Stay of maximum 6 months (short stay)**

EU citizens, EEA nationals and Swiss nationals who study and stay in Belgium for a **maximum of 6 months** starting from the day of their arrival in Belgium have to apply for a **Declaration of Presence (Annex 3ter)** (Melding van Aanwezigheid - bijlage 3ter).

This application does not result in a relocation of the primary place of residence to Belgium. Consequently, students cannot apply for a residents’ parking permit or take a driving test. As these students do not obtain a national registration number, they 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 through the employer at [www.sigedis.be](http://www.sigedis.be). This procedure does not apply to student employees. In that case the employer can file a Dimona declaration.

A student staying in Belgium for a period of over three months can always decide to register anyway ([see application annex 8 / E card](#)).

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

The student is required to submit the e-form within ten working days after arrival in Belgium. All steps of the form have to be followed in order to complete the application. The student will be asked to upload a scan of the ID card or passport. The student will receive an email to confirm that the application has been received.

At a later point in time, the student will receive an email invitation to go to the Students' Counter in the Administrative Centre or, depending on the address, to a service centre and bring the required original documents in order to collect the annex 3ter.

To collect the annex 3ter, the student brings:

- the ID card or passport
- correct and full address

*The annex 3ter is free of charge, a passport photo is not required.*

The annex 3ter is valid for a **maximum of three months** and can only be extended once. A new annex 3ter for another period of three months can only be issued once the previous annex 3ter is expired.

---

Dit is de vertaling Engels van “20180723_PU_Studenten Eu” en bevat identiek dezelfde informatie als de Nederlandse tekst. Deze vertaling mag enkel verspreid worden met de originele brontekst “20180723_PU_Studenten Eu.”
How to apply for the renewal of the Declaration of Presence (annex 3ter)?
A renewal of the Declaration of Presence also has to be asked through the e-form.

Stay of more than 6 months (long stay)
EU citizens, EEA nationals or Swiss nationals who wish to study in Belgium for more than 6 months have to apply for a registration at the municipality. A visa is never required. The student will receive an electronic residence document (E card) or an annex 8 if all residence conditions are fulfilled. These students also obtain a national registration number.

How to apply for the E card or annex 8?

Corona: students and family members subject to quarantine measures upon entry in Belgium, are only allowed to register by using the e-form after the expiry of the quarantine period. This way the police check and visit to the counter can proceed safely.

Corona: indien u na aankomst in België quarantaineplichtig bent, vragen wij u dit strikt na te leven en de aanvraag tot inschrijving uit te stellen. Zo kan de woonstcontrole door de politie en het bezoek aan het loket zo veilig mogelijk verlopen.

The student is required to submit the e-form within 3 months of arrival in Belgium. All steps of the form have to be followed in order to complete the application. The student will be asked to upload a scan of the ID card or passport, proof of enrolment at the education institution and proof of health insurance. The student will receive an email to confirm that the application has been received.

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 two months, the registration procedure will be postponed. The student writes the name and first name on the doorbell and the letter box to make it easier for the police officer to perform the residence check.

Upon processing of the e-form, the student is 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 stays in an officially recognised dorm, the inspection procedure is simplified, without a police visit.
The competent community police officer can be found at:
https://www.politie.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.

A positive residence check is followed by an appointment for registration at the Students’ Counter. The student will then be registered in the foreigners register.

If the residence check is negative, the registration application is rejected and the student is removed from the registers. The student will be informed of this by email.

As soon as the application file has been processed, the Students’ Counter or the competent service centre will invite the student by email to complete the registration process and request a residence document. It is important to inform the Students’ Counter if the student is unable to attend the appointment.

**Students applying for an E card bring the following documents:**
- valid passport or ID card
- proof of enrolment with a Belgian education institution
- proof of health insurance for all medical costs (valid for long stay in Belgium)
- declaration of sufficient financial means (to be completed at the counter)
- driving licence, if applicable
- sworn translation of birth certificate, recommended not obligated (legalised or with an apostille if required)
- personal email invitation
- €24 (in cash or by debit card)
- one recent passport photo that meets the legal quality requirements (there is a photo booth in block A in Administrative Centre, Gent Zuid)
- any additional documents mentioned in the email invitation

Standard delivery time of the E card is 4 to 6 weeks. Express delivery (€110) takes 1 to 2 working days. Meanwhile the student gets a printed version of the residence document (annex 8).

As soon as the student has received the PIN/PUK codes by post, the E card can be collected at the office where the application was submitted. At the Migration Counter (in the Administrative Centre, Gent-Zuid) the E card can be collected at the express desk (without appointment on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9am to 12:30pm and from 2pm to 4 pm, on Tuesdays from 9am to 12:30pm and from 2 pm to 7 pm; closed on Thursdays and only by appointment on Saturdays).

To collect the E card, the student brings along the following:
- printed version of the residence document (annex 8)
- PIN/PUK codes

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

**Validity period of the E card or annex 8**
The E card is valid for **5 years**, provided that the student meets the residence conditions for students throughout the stay.

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

Dit is de vertaling Engels van “20180723_PU_Studenten Eu” en bevat identiek dezelfde informatie als de Nederlandse tekst. Deze vertaling mag enkel verspreid worden met de originele brontekst “20180723_PU_Studenten Eu.”
It is not possible to apply for an E+ card or annex 8bis through the e-form. The student makes an appointment with the Migration Counter or visits the competent service centre.

*The student will report any change of address to the competent municipal authorities without delay* *(even if the residence document is still valid).* Any failure to do so will result in the student being removed from the Foreigners register. If this happens, the residence document will become invalid 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 maintain their primary place of residence in **France**, **Luxembourg**, the **Netherlands** or **Germany** but study in Belgium can opt for an **annex 33**. This residence procedure does not result in registration in a Belgian municipality. These students do not obtain a national registration number.

They cannot apply for a residents’ parking permit.

They can only take a driving test when they have a titular holder number, which they can apply for through the **Driving Counter** *(Loket Rijden)*.

**How to apply for the annex 33?**

The student is required to submit the **e-form** within eight working days after arrival in Belgium. All steps of the form have to be followed in order to complete the application.

The student will be asked to upload a scan of the passport or ID card and proof of enrolment at the education institution. An email will be sent to the student to confirm that the application has been received.

At a later point in time, the student will receive an email invitation from the Students’ Counter to go to the Students’ Counter in the Administrative Centre, Gent-Zuid or, depending on the address, to a service centre and bring the required original documents in order to collect the annex 33.

**To collect the annex 33, the student brings:**

- valid passport or ID card
- correct and full address
- proof of enrolment at the education institution
- 1 recent passport photo that meets the legal quality requirements *(there is a photo booth in block A in Administrative Centre, Gent Zuid)*
- € 13 *(in cash or by debit card)*
Annex 33 is valid for one academic year and must be renewed annually. With each renewal, the student has to present the same documents as the year before as well as the annex 33 of the previous academic year.

The annex 33 will be issued immediately.

How to renew the annex 33?
A renewal of the annex 33 also has to be asked through the e-form.

The renewal of the annex 33 is subject to the same terms and conditions as the first annex 33.

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

If it concerns an electronic residence document, it is advisable to call Doc Stop (0800 2123 2123) to put a block on the card to prevent abuse.

In addition, the student must 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 document after an investigation into the circumstances of that repeated loss or theft.

Reporting a permanent departure from Belgium
Students who have an annex 8 or an E card and intend to leave Belgium permanently have to notify the municipal authorities within 8 days before departure. The student also needs to return the E card. This does not apply to students who have an annex 3ter or an annex 33.

To do so, they have to complete and sign the Declaration of Permanent Departure from Belgium form.

The form has to be presented to the Migration Counter or a service centre together with the residence document.

It is advisable to settle any practical matters (e.g. bank transactions) for which the residence document is needed before returning it.
The Migration Counter will give a certificate (Model 8 – Certificate of Deregistration due to Permanent Departure from Belgium) 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, they will receive the model 8 form at the foreign postal address indicated in the departure form. The student will not receive an annex 37 in this case.

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 form.
Who to contact?

Infopunt Migratie (Migration Information Centre)

phone: 09 266 71 40
e-mail: infopuntmigratie@stad.gent
visit: by appointment
accessibility and opening hours:
https://stad.gent/nl/openingsuren-adressen/dienst-burgerzaken-infopunt-migratie
OR
www.stad.gent > zoeken > Infopunt Migratie

Loket Migratie (Migration Counter)

phone: 09 266 71 50
e-mail: loketmigratie@stad.gent
internationalstudent@stad.gent
visit: by appointment
accessibility and opening hours:
https://stad.gent/nl/openingsuren-adressen/dienst-burgerzaken-loket-migratie
OR
www.stad.gent > zoeken > Loket Migratie

Dienstencentra (Service Centres)

Gentbrugge: 09 268 23 80 of dgentbrugge@stad.gent
Wondelgem: 09 266 85 60 of dcwondelgem@stad.gent
Nieuw Gent: 09 268 21 70 of dcnieuwgang@stad.gent
Sint-Amandsberg: 09 266 86 86 of dcsintamandsberg@stad.gent
visit: by appointment
accessibility and opening hours:
https://stad.gent/nl/openingsuren-adressen/trefwoord/dienstencentra
OR
www.stad.gent > zoeken > Dienstencentra