



UCLL
HOGESCHOOL

Welcome to UCLL!

#MOVINGMINDS



Welcome to Leuven

Population: ~100 000 people, about
45 000 students

Location: in Flanders (Dutch-speaking
part of Belgium), 25km from Brussels


Clean and safe city

In **Top 50** best student cities in the
world for international students

[European Capital of Innovation 2020](#)








Leuven is also home for KU Leuven –
big international university with a lot of
international students → Leuven is a
true student city





TODAY: all you
need to know at
the current stage
of your journey



-  Visa
-  Housing
-  Campus location
and transportation
-  Cost of living
-  Timeline
-  Homework for the
summer
-  Welcome word from
our current students



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Visa (non-EEA nationals)*

It takes time to prepare the package of documents for your visa application (e.g., you may need to translate and apostile some documents) + it also takes time for the embassies to process your application during the busy summer period → in total the process may take several months → the right time to start preparations is **NOW!**

- 1) Check the location of [the closest Belgian embassy](#) or visa center (e.g., [VFS Global](#) or [TLS](#))
- 2) Check the list of documents you need to apply for a long-stay visa (type D, with multiple entries, at least for 180 days) on the website of the embassy or visa center
- 3) The documents you would need from UCLL to start your visa application: admissions letter and financial certificate (Blocked account or sponsorship), check our [student visa page](#) for more information

➔ **TIP:** Check also the [webpage](#) of KU Leuven, our partner university, to know more about entry documents



* EEA/Swiss nationals do not need a visa to enter Belgium



Housing

Residence Halls (20% of the housing market)

Admission requirements differ – check each of the 3 groups separately, more information [here](#)

More information about housing in Leuven [here](#) and [here](#)

Types of residence halls

Leuven

Managed by KU Leuven Central Services

50% of the rooms in these residence halls are reserved for international students.

[Read more](#)

Managed by KU Leuven Stuvo

KU Leuven Stuvo offers 3000 rooms, of which 600 are meant for international students, and 250 studios and apartments.

Are you looking to rent a room for a shorter period? Then, you can apply for a room through KU Leuven Stuvo.

[Read more](#)

In cooperation with KU Leuven

KU Leuven and the city of Leuven have established cooperation agreements with private investors who have built qualitative and durable student housing projects.

20% of the rooms are reserved for international students.

[Read more](#)

Questions? Doubts?

- Reach out to the [Housing Service](#)
- Reach out to the residence manager of the residence of your interest

Tip: *no available rooms at the moment? Check from residences directly from time to time since cancellations may occur.*



Housing

Private market offer (80% of the housing market)

Signing a contract from abroad

Where to find accommodation?

- Our trusted platform [Kotwijs](#) (verified accommodation, constantly updated, no scam)
- Real estate agencies
- Other sources (Facebook groups, google, etc.)

Important: be aware of a big number of scam offers on the Internet!

- Check how to recognize Internet fraud [here](#)
- If you find housing via other websites or social media (not via Kotwijs), please check with the KU Leuven [Housing Service](#) first to see whether there is a cooperation with this landlord to minimize the risk of internet fraud.

Tip: it is not possible to terminate the contract without financial sanctions. Inform yourself before signing a contract.

Looking for a place while in Leuven

“kot” – local name for a student room



[kotlabel](#) = verified accommodation
te huur = for rent

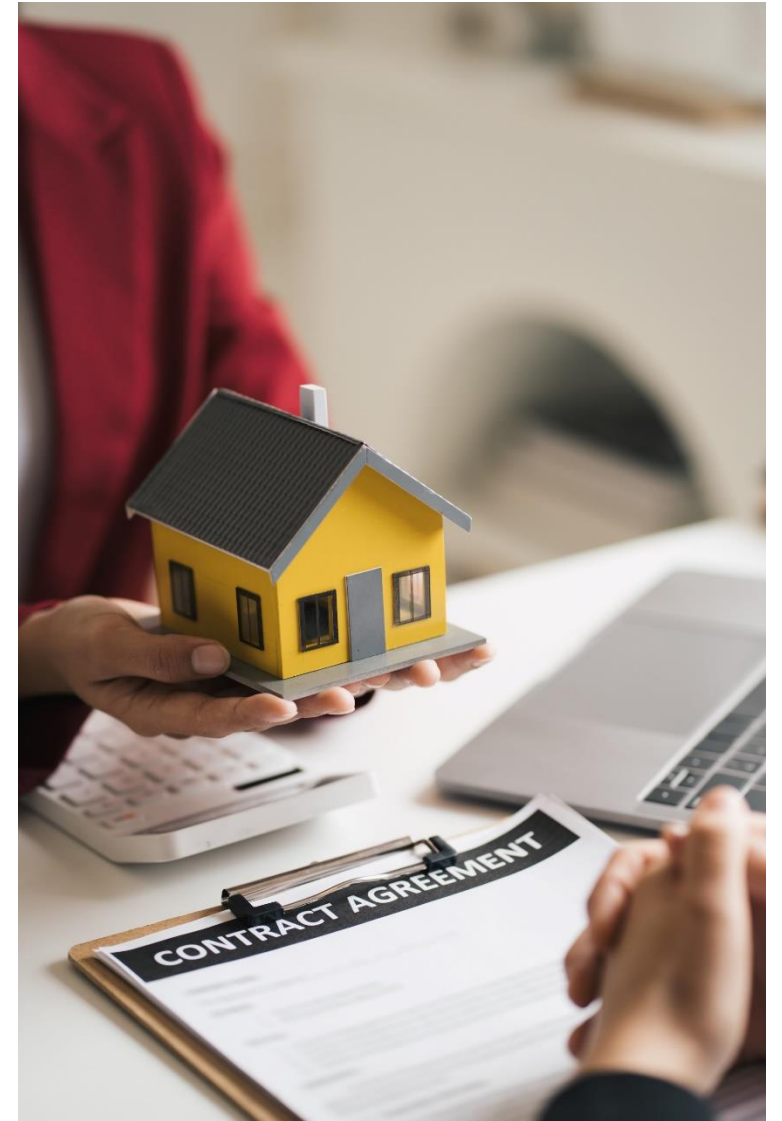
Important: there is a shortage of student housing in Leuven. We strongly recommend to secure accommodation before you arrive in Leuven!



Housing

What else do you need to consider?

- **Rental contracts** are mostly in Dutch, some landlords provide the English version for your information but you sign the Dutch copy.
- There is a **deposit** which usually equals 1-2 months rent price, the deposit cannot be used to pay for the last month of your stay.
- Pay attention to **what is included/not included** into the rental price (e.g., water & electricity can go on the top), also if your room is furnished or not ('gemeubileerd' in Dutch).
- Most contracts are for **12 months**. If you need a shorter option, negotiate with the landlord whether he is willing to shorten the rental period.

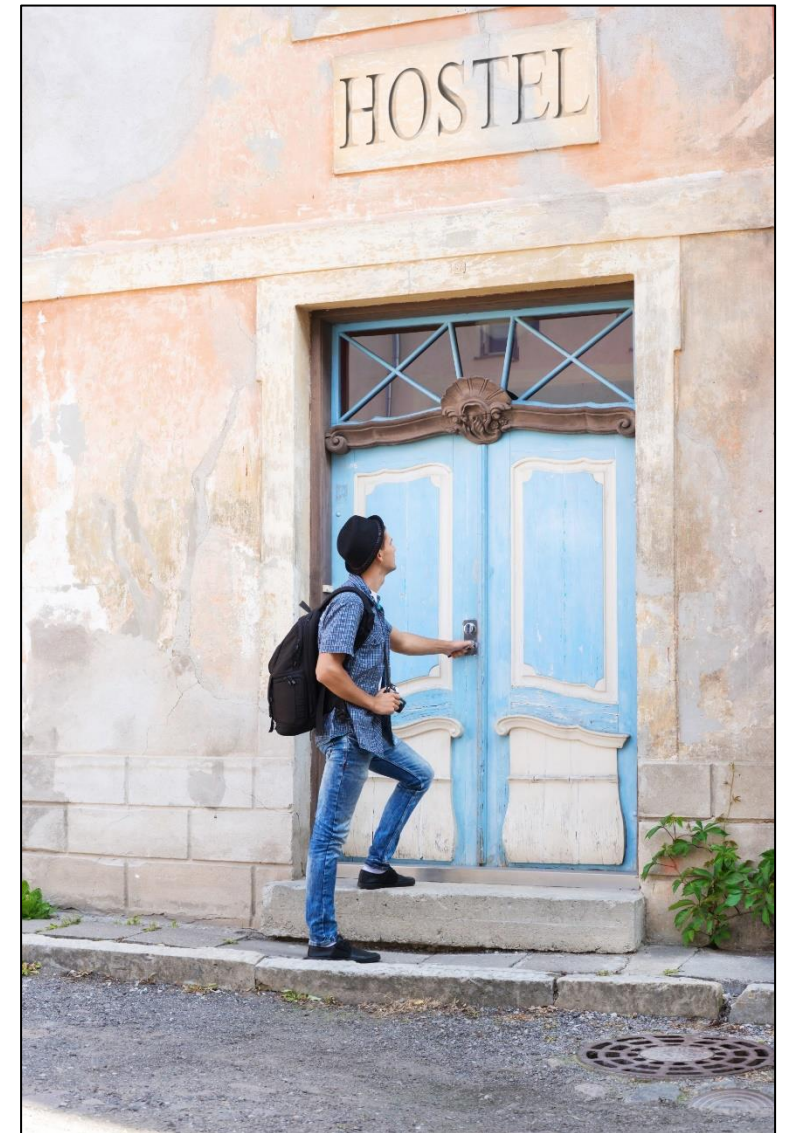




Housing

What else do you need to consider?

- Before signing a contract (if it is a private market offer), check if your accommodation has **domiciliation** (it means that you can register this address as your residence address in Belgium at the city hall). This is important for all non French, German, Dutch or Luxembourgish nationality, as **you are required to register your stay at the city hall upon arrival**. This is not a compulsory option for border students (those from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg), who can retain their current home address and right of residence in these countries while studying in Leuven.
- Most rental contracts start in the middle of September. However, students arrive earlier to attend Welcome Days and do administrative procedures. You may need **a short term stay** option. **There is a shortage of short-term stay options in Leuven! Please, make sure you book far in advance.** You can check short term stay options, for example, [here](#) or [here](#). Some current students offer their rooms for a short term stay via Facebook communities (beware of [scam!](#)).

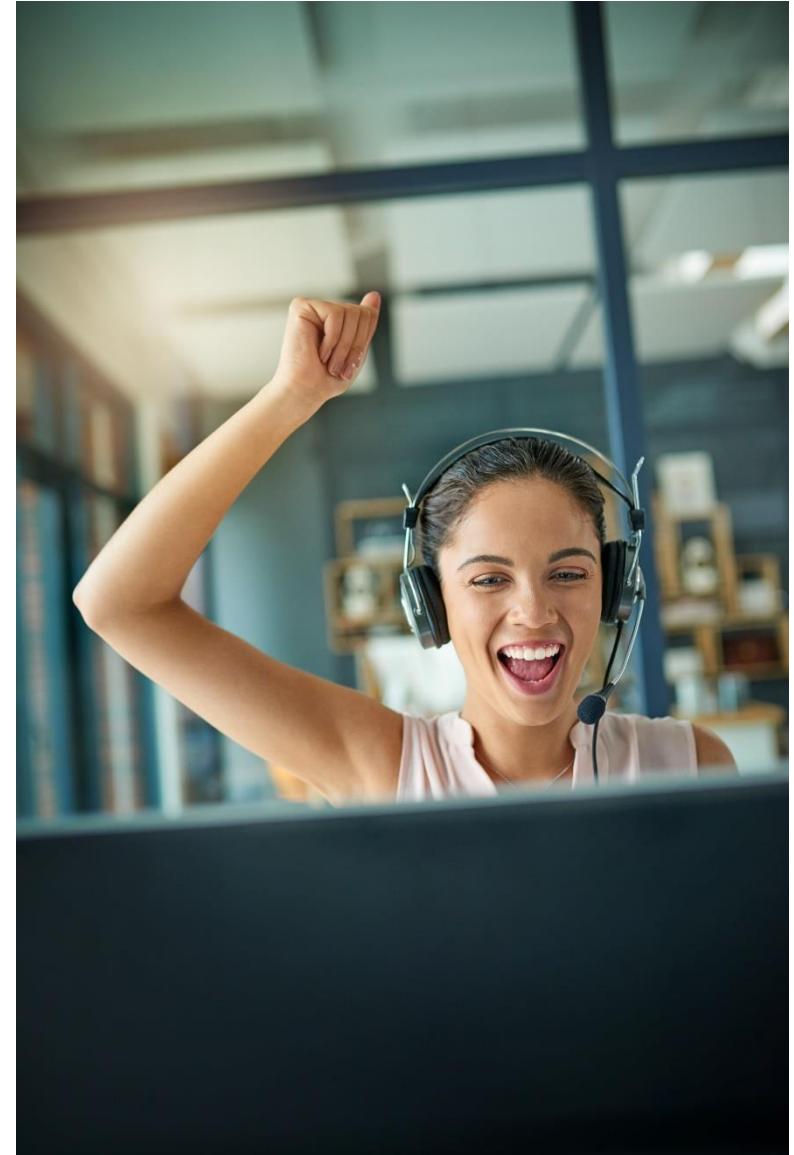




Housing

Need a helping hand?

- If you found a housing option not via [Kotwijs](#) or not in the [residence halls](#) you may need assistance:
 - to clarify something in your contract or have a connector between you and the landlord
 - to check if the property is a verified option in the university database (and it goes under the [kotlabel](#))
- Reach out to the [Housing Service](#)





Housing (tips from our students)

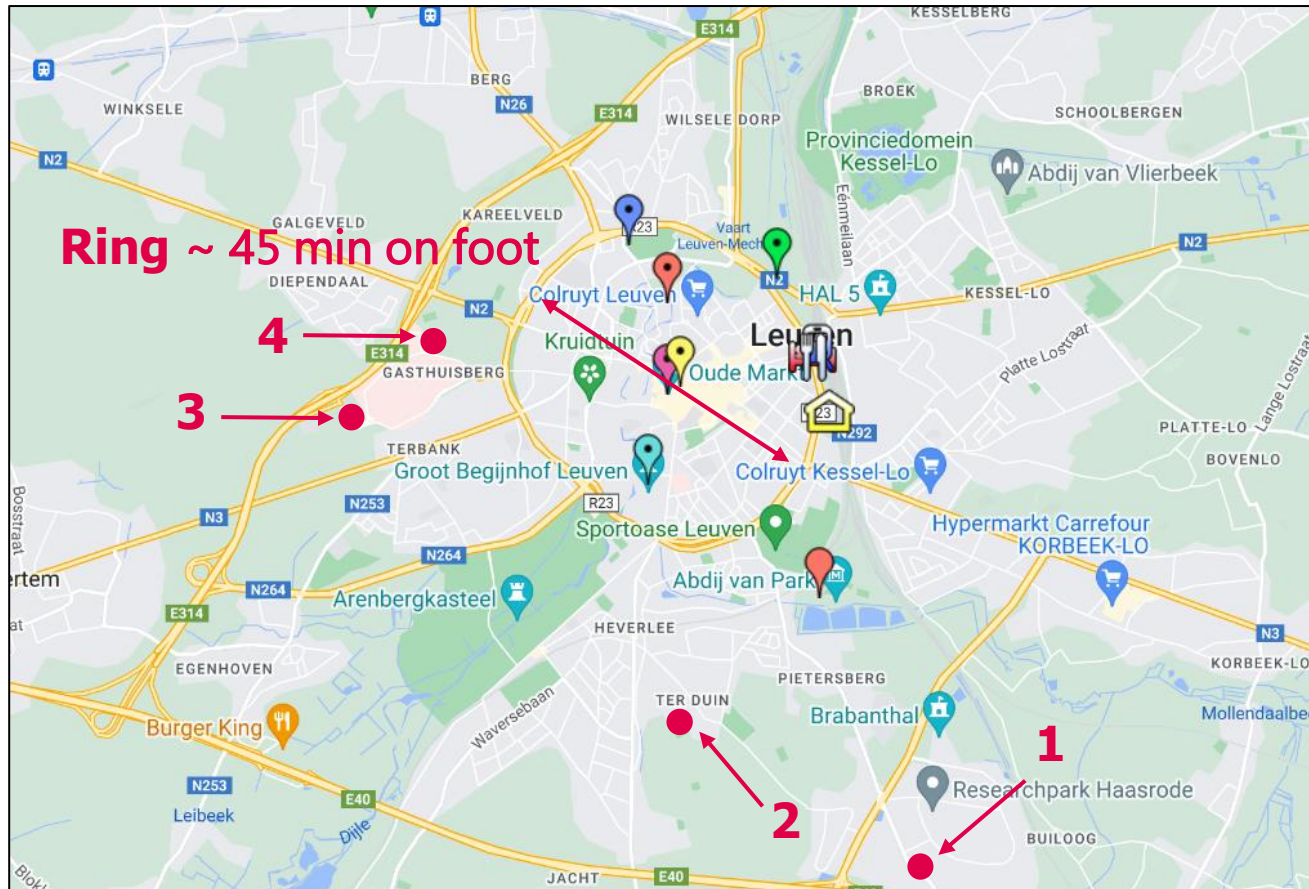
- start looking for housing early! monitor continuously! apply a lot!
- **be visible and active:** reach out to people as much as possible, indicate your need (not just scroll through the existing offers)
- via social media, try getting in **contact with the students** (of your nationality) who are currently in Leuven, ask for tips, ask for assistance (e.g., make a visit to the chosen room before signing a contract in case your room is not found via Kotwijs)
- don't be afraid to consider housing in the **neighbourhoods of Leuven** (e.g., Heverlee, Kessel-Lo, Wilsele, Wijgmaal), everything is quite close and accessible by bus/bike, [checking bus routes](#) between the campus and your accommodation in advance can be helpful (can be also checked via google)
- a **call to a landlord** would be more efficient than emailing (most of the landlords speak English)
- directly ask for a **video call** + tour with the person who is renting out
- check **student communities on social media:** student associations, groups of residence halls, groups of international students
- ask to read contracts in advance
- **don't be very picky** (there are not as many options as you may think)
- ask final-year students and make arrangement to take over when they leave
- educate yourself on [types of contracts](#) available
- check the frequency of buses to city center and your school from your nearest bus stop before finalizing your stay
- having as much as possible people aware of the fact that you're looking for a housing may help since they can refer you if anything comes up





Campus location and transportation

Good news: Leuven is small! Everything is close by! 🗺️



- 1. Campus Proximus (Geldenaaksebaan, 335)**
 - Bachelor International Business Management, Marketing (track in Belgium and track across Europe)
 - Bachelor Applied Computer Science
- 2. Campus Hertogstraat (Hertogstraat, 178)**
 - Postgraduate International Educating Class
 - Advanced Bachelor International Management (Design Thinking & Innovation and International Management tracks)
- 3. Campus Sociale School (Groeneweg, 151)**
 - Advanced Bachelor Global Citizenship & Development
- 4. Campus Gasthuisberg (Herestraat 49)**
 - Exchange students in health care

Exchange students: your campus location will depend on the chosen courses (it may be the case that you will attend classes on different campuses).



Campus location and transportation

Rent a bike

- € 30/academic year for a second hand bike
- € 60/academic year for a UCLL bike
- + deposit

Leuven Student Bus Pass

- € 30/academic year
- Valid only in the [Leuven region](#)

[More information about bus & bike](#)

[More information about travelling by train](#)





Commuting from the airport

Commuting to Leuven from International Airport Zaventem:

- Buy your train ticket [online](#) or in the vending machine at Zaventem train station
- Buy your bus ticket [online](#) or in the bus (bank card, no cash)
- Bus and train tickets can be also bought in the apps of DeLijn (bus company) and SNCB (train company)

Commuting to Leuven from International Airport Charleroi:

- Go to Brussels [by bus](#) and then to Leuven [by train](#)
- Go to Fleurus or Charleroi Central train station [by bus](#) and then take [the train](#) to Leuven

! *Please, note that there are no intercity services of lowcoster taxis (e.g., Uber, Bolt)*





Cost of living

Cost of living in Belgium depends on your lifestyle and the cost of your housing.

Our current students report their monthly costs to be between **700-1000 Euro.-** Please consider that the cost of living highly depends on your personal lifestyle.



More information about cost of living [in Belgium](#) and [in Leuven](#)



Timeline

1 The online registration at UCLL for AY 2024-2025 for EEA students is open. Non-EEA students must register on campus in person (you will get instructions via email around August 19 on how to make an appointment for it)

2 Arrival to Leuven

Students of **Business Management (Marketing)** and **Computer Science** who are coming to study for **3 years** in Belgium are expected to arrive for the **Preparatory Days** (as of September 12). All other international students are expected to arrive for the **Welcome Days** (as of September 16). More information can be found [here](#).



! Please, note that supermarkets and household goods shops in Belgium are closed on Sundays (it may be not the best day to arrive and start settling) **#MOVINGMINDS**



Timeline

Why is it important to arrive by the welcome activities?

- ◆ No hurry to settle down 🏠
- ◆ Socialization events (getting to know Leuven, UCLL, other international students) 🥳🥳🥳
- ◆ Important practicalities about living in Belgium and study environment !!!
- ◆ Late arrival = longer administrative procedures (due to the big number of students) → delay in issuing the residence permit 😬
- ◆ Late arrival = being overwhelmed with a lot of things at the same moment → unnecessary stress 😬

3 Start of the classes – **September 23, 2024**





Homework for the summer

Take your time to go through this information during the summer, it will help prepare your stay 😊

- ◆ make sure you check all links in this ppt
- ◆ [International Student Guide](#)
- ◆ **Health insurance** companies that work with international students: [CM](#) and [Helan](#). No need to start affiliation right now, you will do it upon arrival once you have the necessary document from the City Hall.

- ◆ For Non-EEA students: check **Belgian banks** to define where you would like to open an account upon arrival: ING, KBC, BNP Paribas Fortis, Argenta, etc. [This](#) can be interesting to read. KBC also offers the option of opening bank account from abroad (contact [the bank](#) for more information). [This information](#) can also be helpful.

- ◆ [Mobile operators](#) in Belgium
- ◆ [Working as a student](#) (you will be able to access the database once you get your student card)
- ◆ Language schools in Leuven: [CLT](#) and [ILT](#), [Dutch summer course](#) (best [NT-2](#) course in Leuven, in case you are here in summer)
- ◆ [Taxes](#) in Belgium
- ◆ [Studying with a recognized status](#)
- ◆ [Sports](#) and [culture](#)
- ◆ [International Student Associations](#) (please, note that some of them are specifically for KU Leuven students)



Answering some FAQs

- Future career opportunities in Belgium → check the [webpage of your programme](#) and [this webpage](#)
- How to pay housing while processing visa application? → We recommend not to pay any deposit before you have seen the room (in person or via a video call). In case you have paid a deposit and your visa is denied, you must end your contract. If the contract is ended within 3 months before the contract would enter into force, you will recover the deposit. Otherwise, please check the [Flemish rental decree](#) for the regulation.
- Can two people live together? → Check the description of the accommodation. If it says a room for 1 person, more people can't live in this room and use this address for registration at the City Hall. You can live with a student you know or find a co-housing buddy in student communities on social media (e.g., if you want to rent an apartment/house for several students → cheaper).
- I need to put address/point of contact in Belgium in my visa application, what do I need to write? → UC Leuven, Geldenaaksebaan 335, 3001 Heverlee (UCLL's address)
- [Application deadlines](#) for EEA and non-EEA students
- How to find affordable housing for 1 semester → Negotiate a shorter option with the landlord, ask for tips/help from current (exchange) students, contact [Housing Service](#) of KU Leuven for assistance.



? Answering some FAQs

- What shall I do if I can't be at UCLL by the beginning of the academic year because of my work contract? → Last day to arrive and to register at UCLL is October 1. However, we strongly recommend to arrive earlier (check slides 15-16 of this ppt).
- What is the deadline to submit the learning agreement (exchange students)? → Before arrival in Belgium but we strongly advise to do it before July 1.
- Can I divide the price for studies in smaller payments? → This option is not available for international students.
- I haven't received anything from student housing website. Should I be worried? → Students are responsible for looking for their accommodation themselves. [Student Housing Service](#) can answer the questions and assist in a particular situation, but they will not look for housing instead of a student. Please, note that it may take some time for them to answer your email due to a big number of international students' requests.
- Is it possible to switch between day/evening/part time schedule during the study? → Contact [the programme coordinator](#) to check the available options.
- Does UCLL provide any services for students that are helpful in our daily activities and travel? → check the webpage of [Student Services](#)
- How does it work with health insurance for students within EU? → check [this webpage](#), [the webpage](#) of KU Leuven (our partner university) and also have a look at slide 17 of this ppt.



Contact student communities

Step 1: Join a group 🤗

Step 2: Introduce yourself 😊

Step 3: Ask for a piece of advice 🌸

Whatsapp group of the students who started at UCLL in September 2023



Whatsapp group for **new** international students at UCLL (**AY 2024-2025**, all programmes). Meet each other, find flatmates for co-housing, etc.



Also:

Erasmus Student Network [ESN Leuven](#)

[LOKO](#)

Multiple Facebook communities

[Insignia](#) – student association @ UCLL

Amani – student association @ UCLL





Contact UCLL

Degree students

- Questions about visa/blocked account/admissions procedure-related documents/registration at UCLL: admissions office via chat box in [online application](#)
- Programme related questions (courses, schedules,...): [Faculty International Offices](#)

Exchange students

[Central International Office & Faculty International Offices](#)

Important: July 15 – August 11 is a closure period for UCLL. Please, make sure you send your questions **before July 8** (we need a bit of time to process them 😊).



To sum up

Now:

- Focus on visa application (non-EEA students)
- Secure housing, don't hesitate to contact [Housing Service](#) for questions

In the summer:

- Go through all links in this ppt → make yourself informationally prepared before arrival
- Don't hesitate to reach out to current students on social media to get some pre-arrival tips (bear in mind that students have exams in June and may not be very responsive during this period of time)

Upon arrival:

- You will get more information about your programme, administrative procedures, living in Belgium, educational system, etc. during [the Welcome Days](#).



Welcome to UCLL! See you in September!

