



Brussels - City Business Guide

brought to you by SkyTeam

Overview

* Birthplace of French fries, comic book character Tintin, action star Jean-Claude Van Damme, as well as the art deco and art nouveau movements, Brussels is probably best known for being the capital of the European Union. The city center's cobblestone streets, which date from the Middle Ages, belie a vibrant, dynamic center of business, whose main industries are financial services, tourism and transport. The city's native French and Dutch languages today blend into a truly cosmopolitan linguistic panorama that includes English, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic and Turkish. The city's various immigrant and expatriate communities, along with its more than 2000 foreign companies and international banks, contribute to its reputation as an international financial hub.

* Known for its numerous cafés and buildings embodying the art nouveau or art deco styles, the city is also home to many inviting parks and gardens. The 19 distinct communes that make up Brussels also provide it with multiple "flavors" l'elles has a bohemian feel, while uptown Uccle is posh; the large area of Schaebeek owes much of its character to its concentration of Turkish immigrants while Watermael-Boitsfort is resolutely upper-crust.

Business Etiquette

* Conservative attire is the norm. Suit jackets should be left on throughout business meetings.

* Appointments should be made and kept punctually. Business meetings should not be scheduled during lunchtimes or after regular working hours.

* Handshakes, which should be done rapidly and without too much pressure, are customary at both the start and close of a meeting.

* Cards are usually exchanged with all participants at the beginning of a meeting.

* In professional contexts, address people by their titles (professional or academic) and last names.

* Follow any agreements that are in place as strictly as possible.

* Modesty is appreciated.

* Suggestions should not be made unless directly demanded; rather than making suggestions, formulate questions.

* Observe social and professional hierarchies that are in place.

* Use third-person introductions, if they are offered.

* If invited to someone's residence, bring a hostess gift such as flowers or wine.

Chamber of Commerce

EuroChambers

Avenue des Arts, 19D; Tel.: +32 2 282-0850

American Chamber of Commerce

Avenue des Arts 50, Box 5; Tel.: +32 2 513-6770

British Chamber of Commerce

Boulevard Saint-Michel 47, 1040 Bruxelles; Tel.: +32 2 540-9030

Chambre de commerce Belgique-Luxembourg-Pays arabes

: Rue Mignot Delstanche 60; Tel.: +32 2 344 51 95

Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce

Avenue Louise 287; Tel.: +32 2 644-1333

Brussels Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Avenue Louise 500; Tel.: +32 2 648-5002

French Chamber of Commerce & Industry

avenue des Arts 8; Tel.: +32 2 506-8811; <http://www.cfci.be>

Beldium-Luxembourg-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce

Chaussee de la Hulpe; Tel.: +32 2 679 74 20

Korea Trade Organization (KOTRA)

World Trade Center Building, Du Roi Albert II, 30, bte 14; Tel.: +32 2 203-2142

Embassies and Consulates

China

Avenue De Tervuren, 443-445; Tel.: +32 2 779 3309

Czech Republic

Avenue Avenue Adolphe Buyl 154; Tel.: +32 2 641-8930

France

65 rue Ducale; Tel.: +32 2 548-8711

Germany

190 Avenue de Tervuren; Tel.: +32 2 774-1911

Italy

28, Rue Emile Claus; Tel.: +32 2 643 38 50

Japan

58 Avenue des Arts; Tel.: +32 2 513-2340

Korea

(Republic of Korea) Chaussee de la Hulpe 173-175; Tel.: +32 2 662 23 03

Mexico

Avenue Franklin Roosevelt 94, Brussels; Tel.: +32 2 629-0777

Netherlands

Avenue Hermann-Debroux, 48, Brussel; Tel.: +32 2 679 17 11

The U.K.

85 Rue Arlon, 1040; Tel.: +32 2 287-6211

The U.S.

27 Boulevard du Régent; Tel.: +32 2 508-2111

Business Centers

Most large hotels also have business centers that offer many of the same services that independent centers provide.

Regus Business Centers

Regus Stephanie Square, Avenue Louise 65, box 11; Tel.: +32 800 972 82 (Toll free);

<http://www.regus.be>

Contact Business Center

19-21 Capouillet Street; Tel.: +32 2 536-86-86; <http://www.contact-business.com>

Contact Business Center

Rue Capouillet 9-21, 1060 Bruxelles; Tel.: +32 2 536 88 88

NCI Business Center

Avenue Louise 149/24; Tel.: +32 02 535-7511

Servcorp

Levels 20 & 21, 5 Place du Champ de Mars; Tel.: +31 02 550 3500

Conference and Exhibition Centers

Brussels Expo

Parc des Expositions, Place de Belgique; Tel.: +32 2 474 82 63

Buro & Design Center

Heizel Esplanade Heysel box 1; Tel.: +32 2 400-7444

Management Centre Europe

rue de l'Aqueduc 118; Tel.: +32 2 543-2100

Palais des Congrès

Coudenberg 3; Tel.: +32 2 515-1311

World Trade Center Brussels

Boulevard du Roi Albert II 30; Tel.: +32 2 203-0400

Translation Offices

Accents

Tel.: +32 2 734 01 11

Adintra

Tel.: +32 2 218-0145/219-3301

Berlitz

Tel.: +32 02 513-9274

Translations Tardutec Belgium

6, rue Montoyer; Tel.: +32 2 503 08 81

Brussels Language Service

Tel.: +32 2 223 51 54

Alias Languages

101, boulevard Saint-Michel; Tel.: +32 2 735 55 95

Lingua Service

Rue Dautzenberg 57; Tel.: +32 2 215 38 24

Alphatrad

Boulevard Lambertmont 78; Tel.: +32 2 242 90 35

Data Translations

Avenue Houber de Stroger 292; Tel.: +32 2 478 29 85

Courier/Messenger Services

EMS Taxipost

Tel.: 078-153-343

Deal Courier

Tel.: +32 2 733-3636

Apollo express delivery

Tel.: +32 2 469 39 79

DHL

Tel.: +32 2 715-5050 (within Belgium)

FedEx

Tel.: +32 0800 135-55 (toll-free within Belgium)

UPS

Tel.: +32 0800 128-28 (toll-free within Belgium)

Internet Connection Place

All upper-range and most medium-priced hotels are equipped with dataports that allow guests to use laptop computers. Many hotels also offer business centers equipped with computers and Internet access. Outside hotels, cyber cafes are available including:

BXL Café

Tel.: +32 2 502 99 80

Cyber Phone

Tel.: +32 2 522 46 62

Cyber Zone

94, avenue Rogier; Tel.: +32 2 216 12 21

Visas & Customs

Citizens of Brazil, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Mexico, the U.K., and the U.S. do not need a visa for a stay up to 3 months.

Citizens of the People's Republic of China must apply for a visa.

Duty-free allowances are 200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos or 50 cigars or 250g of tobacco; 2 liter of alcoholic beverage; 50g of perfume and 250ml of eau de toilette; 500g of coffee or 100g of fee, and; other goods up to 64.45 euro. However, there are now no

limits imposed on tobaccos and alcohol from one EU country to another.

Phone Information

The country code for Belgium is 32. The area code for Brussels is 02. Drop the zero if

calling from outside of Belgium.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Medical emergency

100

Police and Fireservices

101

European emergency number

112

Tips and Rules for Use of Phone in Country

All telephone numbers within Belgium must be dialed with area code, whether calling locally or to another area code. When dialing internationally, you must dial 00 before your country code. Telephone numbers without area codes contain six to seven digits. Premium phone numbers begin with '900' and '800' is used for toll-free numbers. When calling from outside of Belgium, drop the zero in the beginning of the area code. Public phones are widely available, but most take only calling cards.

Tips and Rules for Use and Rental of Mobile Phones

Belgium's primary cellular standard is GSM, and the main mobile phone operators are Proximus and Mobistar. Proximus uses '075' and from '0475' to '0479' as the prefix to its telephone numbers; Mobistar uses '017'. If you choose to bring your cellular phone into Belgium, be sure to check with your home cellular service provider to establish compatibility of your phone with systems abroad. Rent a locally compatible cellular phone before you arrive to obtain reasonable rates and reliable service.

Money

Euro is the official currency. Euro notes are available in denominations of EUR5, EUR10, EUR20, EUR50, EUR100, EUR200, and EUR500, while coins are in 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cents, and EUR1 and EUR2. The euro is divided into 100 cents. Foreign currency can be exchanged at banks, post offices, hotels, train stations, airports, or at Bureaux de Change. ATMs are available throughout the country. Most businesses accept Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Diners Club.

Tipping

Throughout Belgium, tax and tip are always included in the bill, though you may tip a euro or two to porters or coatroom attendants who give exceptional service.

Time Difference

Brussels is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Brussels observes Daylight Savings Time, springing ahead one hour the last Sunday of March and falling back the last Sunday of October.

Include





Brussels - City Business Guide

brought to you by SkyTeam

VAT & Taxes

VAT (value-added tax) is 21% (books and some other items are 6%). The VAT is always included in the price.

Voltage

The voltage and currency is 220 AC/50 cycles. Electrical plugs consist of two round parallel prongs.

Local Transportation

Driving in Brussels is not recommended. Taxi in Brussels is more expensive than Paris, London, and even New York. While the service is often lacking, there are not enough taxis. Taxi stops are situated near most train stations and major hotels. Your hotel concierge will generally summon a taxi by phone. Brussels has an exemplary mass transit system called the STIB/MIVB. The only drawback is that the service stops at around midnight and starts up again at 6 a.m. Brussels National Airport is located in Zaventem, a 14-minute train ride from downtown Brussels. Efficient, clean, and inexpensive, the train is often quicker to get to and from the airport than taxis.

Health Info

No immunizations or health precautions are necessary for foreign travelers arriving from other countries in the developed world. Universal healthcare is considered a basic right in Belgium, thus every hospital has emergency services available to anyone, be they residents of Belgium or tourists.

Climate

Brussels enjoys warm summer weather, with temperatures averaging between 54 degrees Fahrenheit (13 C) and 72 degrees Fahrenheit (21 C), and mild winter weather, with temperatures averaging between 32 degrees Fahrenheit (0 C) to 43 degrees Fahrenheit (6 C). Rainfall is heavy, particularly in the autumn months through to spring.

Public Holidays

- * **New Year's Day** January 1
- * **Shrove Tuesday/Carnaval** varies in February or March
- * **Good Friday** Friday before Easter
- * **Easter Sunday** Sunday usually in mid-March or April
- * **Easter Monday** Monday after Easter
- * **Liberation Day** April 25
- * **Labor Day** May 1
- * **Corpus Christi** varies in May/June
- * **Whitsunday** Seventh Sunday after Easter
- * **Whitmonday** Monday after Whitsunday
- * **Portugal Day** June 10
- * **Independence Day/National Day** July 21
- * **Assumption** August 15
- * **Republic Day** October 5
- * **All Saints' Day** November 1
- * **Veterans' Day** November 11
- * **Youth Day** December 1
- * **Christmas Day** December 25

Where to Eat

Basque and South-western French cuisine can be tasted in one of Brussels' art deco interiors, **Le Fils de Jules**, a favourite for business lunches. At **La Tour D'y Voir**, guests are invited to choose a fish, meat or vegetarian theme from the menu, leaving it up to the chef to improvise. Decorated in Belle Époque style, **Comme Chez Soi** is a Brussels establishment with a world-wide reputation for excellence, while **La Truffe Noire** introduces clients to a range of truffle-enhanced cuisine. **Les Baguettes Impériales** is a Michelin-starred Vietnamese restaurant, whose specialities include stuffed pigeon and foie gras. Members of Brussels' elite dine on upscale, traditional European dishes at **Wittamer's**. **De Bijgaarden** is the territory of Chef Olivier Schlüssinger who's been awarded two Michelin stars.

Local Gift Ideas

Belgian chocolate is a popular gift, as are Brussels lace, Belgian biscuits and Belgian beer. The best places for Belgian chocolate are Wittamer, Neuhaus, Leonidas, and Godiva. F. Rubbrecht and Manufacture Belge de Dentelle are popular establishments for authentic Brussels lace. For Belgian biscuits, Dandoy and Leonidas (a chain) are good venues. Biere Artisanale is a famous establishment for Belgian beer. You can also buy international designer brand goods on Avenue Louise. For antiques, the Place du Grand Sablon features exquisite furniture, glassware, clocks, and other items.

Leisure Time

With its ornate guild houses, impressive Town Hall and buzzing atmosphere, the breathtaking Grand Place is perhaps the most beautiful square in the whole of Europe. Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert is the oldest covered shopping promenade in Europe, with three neoclassical galleries (Galerie de la Reine, Galerie du Roi, and Galerie du Prince) date back to 1847; upscale antique jewelry shops, bookstores, and coffee shops line the skylit corridors. As the fifth largest church in the world, the Basilique of Koekelberg boasts dazzling stained glass windows, beautiful artwork, and sterling craftsmanship. The Central Park of Brussels, Bois de la Cambre is 123 hectares of wooded areas, fields, ponds, and paths that cater to pedestrians, drivers, horse riders, cyclists, inline skaters, and more. In 1880 in honor of the 50th anniversary of Belgium's existence, Parc du Cinquantenaire is a 33-hectare park and one of Brussels' most splendid. Parc Paradisio is an hour's train trip out of Brussels, but this birds and nature reserve is well worth the journey.

Proud
Members
Include

