

Survival guide for foreigners



*The King knew that
being alert is the key to survival.*

KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT
LEUVEN

**Laboratory of Aquatic Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (LAE&EB),
Laboratory of Animal Diversity and Systematics (LADS)**

June 2010

<http://www.kuleuven.be/english/>

THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT, THEREFORE IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK THE VALIDITY OF YOUR DOCUMENTS AND TO VERIFY THE BUROCRATIC PROCEDURES IN BELGIUM.

This guide is meant to provide long term visitors/students with some help to start their life in Leuven and to integrate into the scientific and social community. However, short term visitors/students can equally benefit from this guide.

Location

The Laboratory of Aquatic Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (LAE&EB) and the Laboratory of Animal Diversity and Systematics (LADS) are sister labs located in the same building:

Laboratory of Aquatic Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

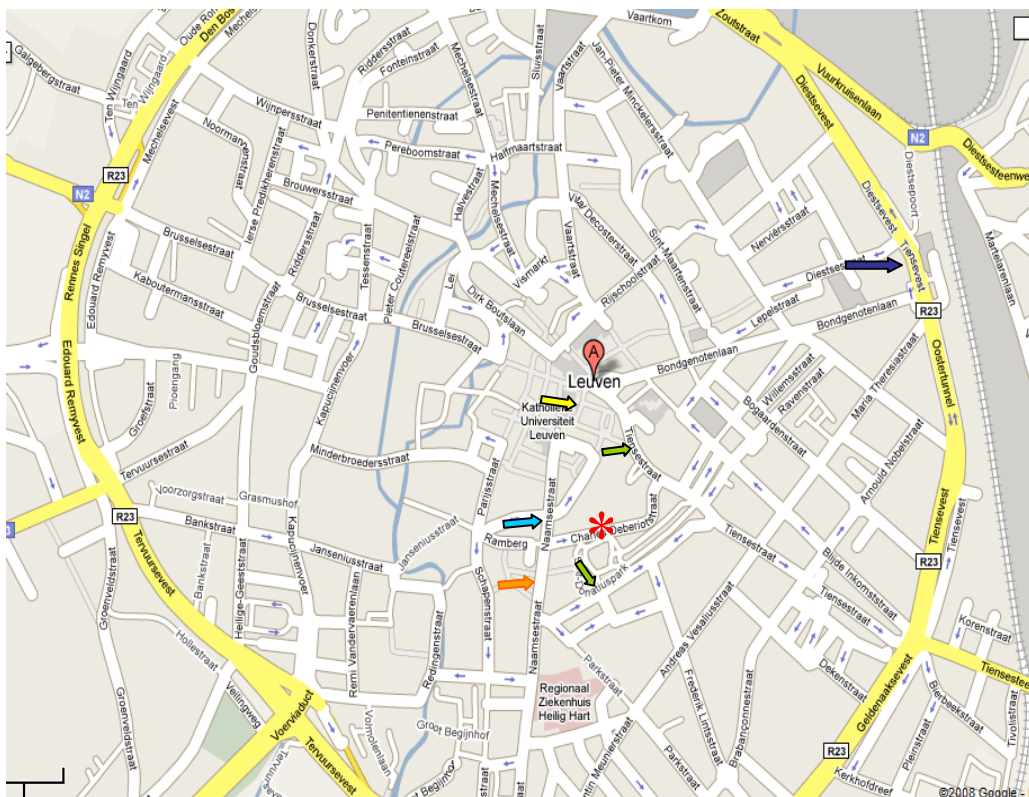
Laboratory of Animal Diversity and Systematics

Charles Deberiotstraat 32, box 2439

B-3000 Leuven

Belgium

In the map below both labs are marked (*) along with some key buildings in the city. For a higher resolution see the accompanying map.



* Laboratories of LAE&EB and LADS

→ Town Hall (Grote Markt)

→ Restaurants: Alma 1, Alma 2

→ Train station

→ International student office (Naamsestraat 63)

→ International Housing office (Naamsestraat 80)

How to reach us

From Leuven railway station (on foot or by bus)

Main exit station - Martelarenplein - Bondgenotenlaan (1 km) till city hall (large gothic building) - immediately left after town hall Naamsestraat - fifth street left is Charles Deberiotstraat; the same route is followed by 'De Lijn' bus 1 (direction Boskant) or bus 2 (direction Heverlee Campus). Shortcut: Main exit station - Martelarenplein - Bondgenotenlaan (300 m) - left Justus Lipsiusstatue & Leopoldstraat - Ladeuzeplein (on your left you pass the university library) - straight to Hooverplein - at the end right Tiensestraat - first left is Charles Deberiotstraat

From Brussels and Liège (E40) (by car)

E40 highway; E314 direction Lummen/Maastricht; exit 5 - Leuven; direction Leuven centre - 2 km Boudewijnlaan - up to second traffic lights; ring Leuven (R23) up to overpass - turn right; Naamsepoort (traffic lights) - turn left direction Centrum; Naamsestraat - 500 m; you may park in the public parking at Naamsestraat 100; 500 m further on in the Naamsestraat is Charles Deberiotstraat just beyond the large tree at your right and just before the baroque Saint-Michelschurch at your right; the lab (Kolenmuseum 32 - large wooden porch) is at your left in the street opposite the city park. Parking: opposite H. Harthospital in the Naamsestraat (paying).

Before you arrive in Leuven have a look

at the University (<http://www.kuleuven.be/english/>), Laboratory of Aquatic Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (<http://bio.kuleuven.be/de/dea/index.php>), and Laboratory of Animal Diversity and Systematics (<http://bio.kuleuven.be/de/dev/index.php>) websites. Take special care in following the suggestion provided at the link `living and studying in Leuven` <http://www.kuleuven.be/english/living.html>

First steps to take upon arrival in Belgium

1. Accommodation

- ✓ Make sure you have arranged for your temporary accommodation before arriving in Belgium. For suggestions visit the following webpage <http://www.kuleuven.be/accommodation/>
- ✓ Find a place to live on a more permanent basis. For help contact the International Housing Service located in Naamsestraat 80, 3000 Leuven <http://www.kuleuven.be/accommodation/>
You could also consider living in Brussels www.immoweb.be
- ✓ . Its 30 minutes away from Leuven by train and connected with more than five trains per hour. In case you decide to live in Brussel, you can obtain discount for your train tickets and STIB (metro in Brussel). For information ask the students office in Naamsestraat, 22 (Leuven) or the Personnel office in Parijstraat, 72B (Leuven), depending on which category you belong

2. Personnel office (HR Department)

- ✓ Your payroll officer is assigned alphabetically (according to the first letter of your last name):
A-DELT: Mr Koen Meulemans, Koen.Meulemans@pers.kuleuven.be
DELV-JANS: Mrs. Lieselot Vantornhout, Lieselot.Vantornhout@pers.kuleuven.be
JANSA-PLES: Mr. Johan Vanhaegendoren, Johan.Vanhaegendoren@pers.kuleuven.be

- PLET-VANDERA: Mr. Jan Janssens, Jan.Janssens@pers.kuleuven.be
VANDERB-Z: Mr. Koen De Breuker, Koen.DeBreuker@pers.kuleuven.be
- ✓ When your resident card is issued (see below), don't forget to send or bring a copy to the HR Department
 - ✓ Send your bank account details to your payroll officer either if you receive a scholarship, a salary or a per diem allowance. Your monthly salary/scholarship will be transferred automatically to your bank account at the end of the month.
 - ✓ Once you find a permanent accommodation inform your payroll officer at the HR department if you are part of the K.U. Leuven staff or if you have a contract as a student.

3. Registration as a student at the KU Leuven

If you register for the first time as a Doctoral Student at the KU Leuven take the following steps. First, register at the KULEuven International Office and secondly at the KULEuven doctoral school (Arenberg School)

The registration at the KULEuven International Office is needed to check for the validity of your foreign diplomas. If everything is in order they will provide you with a letter that grants you permission to enter the doctoral school program. You can find the form for the KULEuven International Office at <http://www.kuleuven.be/applicationform/?js=1>. Follow the instructions at the provided website, as slight changes may apply every year.

The admission to the doctoral program of the Arenberg School is granted after filling the web form "Request for Admission". In order to be able to complete this form you need a topic and a supervisor. The form is at: <https://set.kuleuven.be/phd/form/doctorsopleiding/entry.php>.

Once the International Office accept all your diplomas you will be invited to register as a student at the Registration office. Here you get your student card, your travel card (for free use of buses in Leuven) and your sports card (optional for 17€ a year), culture card (optional for 10€ a year) and liability insurance. The complete enrolment as doctoral student costs about 260€. The same approximate amount of money will cost your defence.

4. Registration at the City Hall

If you are a non-EU citizen visit the following webpage for information <http://www.diplomatie.be/en/travel/visa/default.asp>

All the other citizens follow the next steps.

Once you have an accommodation (temporary or permanent) register at the city hall where you live. You should try to register within 8 days of your arrival in Belgium. If you are a student you should register at a special KULEuven desk of the foreign affairs. Normally, the foreign affairs office sends you an invitation upon which you should react and go to register. To accelerate things you can present yourself at the foreign affairs office without invitation.

If you live in Leuven, Kessel-Lo, Heverlee, Wilsele or Wijgmaal you have to register at the Foreign Office located in Professor Van Overstraetenplein 1, 3000 Leuven (next to the railway station). The foreigners' office is indicated as dienst bevolking - afdeling buitenlanders. Opening hours are: from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and from 12:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Thursdays.

If you live in Brussels register at your local town hall. Check the municipality in which you live by using the ZIP code (postal code) in your address. Use as reference the following website: <http://www.brussels.be/artdet.cfm>.

✓ **For students**

Bring with you

- your **passport** (or identity card for EU citizens)
- 3 recent passport **photos** (5 for the EU citizens)
- a proof of **registration** and/or a contract from the K.U. Leuven (for PhD students that are non-EU citizens only)
- possibly an official proof of **health-insurance** valid in Belgium
- the authorization for Provisional Sojourn stamped on your passport before coming to Belgium (for non-EEA citizens only)
- possibly your apartment/room rental contract

✓ **For postdoctoral researchers and visiting professors**

Bring with you

- your **passport** (or identity card for EU citizens)
- a copy of your contract with K.U. Leuven (if you are employed by the K.U. Leuven and are a non-EU citizen only)
- a **work permit** (for self-supporting postdoctoral researchers who are non-EEA citizens only)
- 3 recent passport **photos** (5 for the EU citizens)

4. **Bank account**

- ✓ **To open a bank account you need to present your passport, your working contract/scholarship, your renting contract and a temporary residence permit that the town hall provides when you register (the residence permit is only necessary for non-EU citizens). If your home address is not written in English it is better to take your passport instead of your national ID if possible.**

- ✓ You need to open a bank account as soon as possible to receive your salary/scholarship. The following banks also offer the possibility to open an account while you are abroad:

Fortis: www.fortisbanking.be

ING: www.ing.be (the **ING Lion Account** is free of charge)

KBC: www.kbc.be

More banks in Leuven can be found at the following website: www.goldenpages.be

- ✓ Don't forget to communicate your change of address when you move from your temporary to your permanent accommodation.

5. **Liability insurance**

- ✓ The city of Leuven strongly encourages you to take a third party liability insurance, which covers any damage to third parties off the university property. All major banks and insurance companies offer such insurance.
- ✓ Doctoral scholars can sign up for the university policy at 13 EUR a year. You can ask for it when you get your student card at the registration office.

6. Health insurance

- ✓ If you receive a salary or a scholarship from the K.U. Leuven, social security coverage is included and the legal contributions are paid monthly. However, it is mandatory to affiliate to a Belgian health insurance fund. This will cover your medical costs. There are many insurance funds. Here is a list of the most common ones:
 - Christelijk Ziekenfonds: www.cm.be
 - Euromut: www.euromut.be
 - Liberale Mutualitet: www.libmutbrab.be
 - Partena-OZV: www.partena-expats.be
 - Socialistische Mutualitet: www.fsmb.be
 - Vlaams & Neutraal Ziekenfonds: www.vnz.be

When you go to open a health insurance, bring with you

- your passport
- your residence permit (for non EU members only)
- the certificate of “family composition” (which you can obtain at the Foreigners’ Office) if you have family members to be insured
- your bank account number
- the certificate of registration which you will obtain automatically upon registration at the K.U. Leuven Registrar’s Office (this is not the same as your student card) or a copy of your contract if you are a postdoctoral fellow/researcher.

If you don’t receive a scholarship or salary from the K.U. Leuven, make sure you are covered by a personal health insurance.

7. Child allowance

If you have children, fill out an application form to verify if you are entitled to child allowances in Belgium. Ask for this form at the HR Department. Contact person: Mrs. Renilde Ketelbuters, Renilde.Ketelbuters@pers.kuleuven.be

8. Transports

- ✓ Cycling is the quickest way to get around town in Leuven. You can rent a bike at Velo: www.kuleuven.be/velo/_eng/index.htm
- ✓ Information on public transport is available at <http://reisinfo.apps.delijn.be/reisinformatie/routeplanner/index.htm?init=true> (only in Dutch). You can buy the bus tickets either on the bus or in some convenience stores (cheaper). Doctoral students get a free card for travelling on the bus in Leuven.
- ✓ Trains in Belgium: <http://www.b-rail.be/main/E/>

9. Language courses

- ✓ Leuven has an international flavour with many exchange students, so you can easily get along with English or French. However, if you are interested in learning Dutch, here you can find the right course: http://www.kuleuven.be/admissions/language/dutch_courses.html and <http://www.clt.be/home/indexen.htm>.

10. Medical assistance

✓ Emergency phone numbers:

- Ambulance, Police and Fire department: 112
- Leuven police office is at the Grote Markt, next to the city hall

✓ Student and K.U. Leuven personnel medical center:

- http://www.kuleuven.be/studentservices/health/medical_centre.html
- Consultations (by appointment): Weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Contact: - Tel. 016 32 44 20 Fax: 016 32 44 14
- Mail: mcs@dsv.kuleuven.be
- House calls on request
- Night and weekend emergency service: 016 32 44 20

✓ General health care:

- <http://www.leuven.be/showpage.asp?ipageid=1437>: night and weekend emergency service rotation for family doctors (geneesheren), dentists (tandartsen), pharmacies (apothekers) and nurses (verpleegsters).
 - Family doctor:
 - The choice of a family doctor is free. For a list of doctors in Leuven visit: <http://www.huisarts.be/lijsten/huisartsen.gemeente.php?gemeente=Leuven&postnummer=3000> or consult the phone book: http://www.goldenpages.be/search/leuven/physician_.html
 - Hospitals:
 - Heilig Hart Ziekenhuis: Naamsestraat 105, tel.: 016 20 92 11, website: <http://www.hhleuven.be> (regional hospital).
 - UZ Gasthuisberg: Herestraat 49, tel.: 016 33 22 11, email: info@uzleuven.be, website: <http://www.uzleuven.be> (academic hospital)
- Main Hospitals in Brussel:
- Cliniques Universitaires Saint-Luc → <http://www.saintluc.be/>
 - Universitair Ziekenhuis Brussel → <http://www.uzbrussel.be/u/view>

11. Tourism

The tourist office is located in Naamsestraat 1. You can find general tourist information also at www.leuven.be.

12. Leaving Belgium

When your contract/grant/appointment/PhD ends, do not forget to inform all the offices listed from point 2 to 10. You will be deleted from the Belgian system in the same way you have been registered.

Social activities in Leuven and practical information

Meeting point for students ‘Pangaea’

Pangaea is a lively meeting place where international and Belgian students can meet in an informal setting. It has a lounge with a coffee bar and a large assortment of international newspapers, a recreational room with table-tennis facilities, a TV room with a VCR, three computers and much more!

Location: Vesaliusstraat 34, B-3000 Leuven

Tel. 016 32 33 96 Fax: 016 32 33 90

Pangaea@dsv.kuleuven.be
www.kuleuven.be/pangaea

Office hours: Monday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Coffee Lounge: Monday to Thursday from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday from noon to midnight.

Open markets

Friday morning: Mgr. Ladeuzeplein (food and other items), H. Hooverplein (food), Brusselsestraat (flowers, food, other)

Wednesday afternoon from 3:00 p.m.: A. de Becker-Remyplein (Kessel-Lo)

Sunday morning: Heverlee station (between Naamsesteenweg and Waversebaan)

Saturday: Flee-market (M. de Layensplein, Mechelsestraat), food, including regional specialties (Brusselsestraat).

Supermarkets

ALDI Slachthuislaan 3 and J. P. Minckelerstraat 76

LIDL J.P. Minckelerstraat 116 and Vlinderlaan 2, Kessel-Lo

COLRUYT Lombaardenstraat 2; Tiensesteenweg 237, Kessel-Lo and Groenveldstraat 71, Heverlee

GB Tervuursevest 113

GB Express Naamsestraat 48; Brusselsestraat 60 and Tiensevest 10

AD Delhaize Tervuursevest 19; Denon Brusselsestraat 31

Delhaize Naamsepoort (ring)

Home supplies

BLOKKER Bondgenotenlaan 58

CASA Diestsestraat 93/2; Ridderstraat 4, Bierbeek

HEMA Parijsstraat 2

DOMO Bondgenotenlaan 169

IKEA Weiveldlaan 19, 1930 Zaventem (between Leuven and Brussels)

Dates to remember:

-Monday of the last full week of September: Start of classes in the first semester

-Last week end of October: Change to Winter Time (+1h)

-1st and 2nd of November: All Saint's and All Souls' Day (Holidays)

-From the 22nd of December to the 6th of January: Christmas and New Year's Holidays for students

-From the 25th of December to the 1st of January: Christmas and New Year's Holidays for the personnel of the K. U. Leuven

-Three weeks between January and February: First semester exams

-11th of February: Start of the academic year classes in the second semester

-Easter holidays (the exact time changes with the catholic calendar)

-Last weekend of March: Change to Summer Time (-1h)

-1st of May: Labor Day

-Ascension: 40 days after Easter

-Pentecost: 50 days after Easter

-23rd of May: End of classes in the second semester

- 21st of July National Day (Holiday)
- Three weeks between June and July: Second semester exams
- End of June/July: Proclamation week

For more information consult the brochures:

“Travelling to Leuven”: <http://www.kuleuven.be/english/travelling/index/pdf>

“Living in Leuven”: <http://www.kuleuven.be/english/living/living.pdf>

For further questions on the university system contact: Mr Tom Barbe’,
hrdepartment@kuleuven.be

Scientific integration in the lab

Laboratory of Aquatic Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (LAE&EB): Prof. Luc Brendonck,
luc.brendonck@bio.kuleuven.be

+32 (0)16 32 37 14,+32 (0)16 32 45 75

Laboratory of Animal Diversity and Systematics (LADS): Prof. Filip Volckaert,
filip.volckaert@bio.kuleuven.be

+32 16 32 39 66

Secretariat:

Conny Coeckelberghs, Conny.Coeckelberghs@bio.kuleuven.be (secretary). Conny will assist you in all the practicalities concerning your stay at the Laboratory of Aquatic Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and the Laboratory of Animal Diversity and Systematics.

Frans Panggih Purwoko, Frans.PanggihPurwoko@bio.kuleuven.be (IT responsible). For any computer-related question ask Frans.

Remind Conny to add you to the e mail lists of the lab to get updates of the scientific and social lab life. Send an email to Joost Vanoverbeke, joost.vanoverbeke@bio.kuleuven.be or Gregory Maes, gregory.maes@bio.kuleuven.be to receive information about ecogen (journal/discussion group). Send an email to Robbie Stoks, Robby.Stoks@bio.kuleuven.be to be added to seminar list. Being in this lists will keep you updated with the lab activities.

Remember to hand over your picture and a short text for your personal webpage to Frans or Conny. Ask the IT responsible for more details.

Ask your promoter to give you a tour of the lab facilities and to introduce you to at least one member of the internationalization/welcoming team (see below for contact details).

The K.U. Leuven offers extensive programs in English:

<http://www.kuleuven.be/english/teaching/>. Visit the webpage to explore your possibilities.

The laboratory has an extensive program of seminars and weekly discussion groups. To learn more about them visit the webpage: <http://bio.kuleuven.be/de/dea/workshop.php>

Social integration in the lab:

There is a social wall in the coffee room where all the “off duty” activities are displayed (e.g parties, sport activities, language groups, etc.). Feel free to join the organized activities or to propose some yourself. If you subscribe to one of the mailing lists in the lab (ask Conny Coeckelberghs), you will receive invitations to join the social activities happening in the lab.

Students and Post Docs that are new in the lab are encouraged to arrange the yearly Christmas party and BBQ to facilitate their social integration in the laboratory.

Further assistance.

In case you need further assistance after reading this guide, contact a member of the internationalization team (in alphabetic order):



Silvia Brusciotti, 2nd floor room MT 02.01

Silvia.brusciotti@bio.kuleuven.be



Nellie Konijnendijk, 1st floor room KM 01.01

Nellie.Konijnendijk@bio.kuleuven.be



Luisa Orsini, 2nd floor room MT 02.01

Luisa.Orsini@bio.kuleuven.be



Joost Raeymaekers, 1st floor room KM 01.02

Joost.Raeymaekers@bio.kuleuven.be



Alexandros Triantafyllidis, 1st floor room KM 01.02

Alexander.Triantafyllidis@bio.kuleuven.be



Evelyne Vanvlasselaer, 2nd floor, room MT 03.05

Evelyne.Vanvlasselaer@bio.kuleuven.be



Aline Waterkeyn, 3rd floor, room KM 03.01

aline.waterkeyn@bio.kuleuven.be

For confidential issues, talk to one of the laboratory's official "ombuds" (negotiator):
Tine is the general ombuds:



Tine Huyse, 1st floor room KM 01.02

Tine.Huyse@bio.kuleuven.be

The ombuds for PhD students is Dirk:



Dirk Schaerlaekens, 1st floor room MT 03.03

Dirk.Schaerlaekens@bio.kuleuven.be

Please contact the Secretariat or a member of the internationalization team in case you discover outdated information.

Enjoy your time in the lab!