

**MOVE IT OR IMPROVE IT:**

# **SURVIVAL GUIDE**

**A FAST & CURIOUS DIVE INTO MOBILITY**



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WELCOME TO BELGIUM

# BELGIUM

## A quick overview



Belgium is a small but diverse country in Western Europe, bordered by France, Germany, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. It is known for its multilingual population, as people speak Dutch (Flemish), French, and German. Lots of people speak English as well .

Belgium is famous for its medieval towns, chocolate, beer, and being home to the European Union's headquarters in Brussels. The country has a long maritime tradition, with major ports like Antwerp and Zeebrugge playing crucial roles in international trade and shipbuilding.






## DISCOVERING GHENT

Ghent is a vibrant city known for its well-preserved medieval architecture, lively student atmosphere, and scenic canals. It is a blend of historic charm and modern innovation, making it the perfect place for all technology students. Here are some key highlights of Ghent:

- **Gravensteen Castle:** A medieval fortress dating back to the 12th century, offering a glimpse into Ghent's military history.
- **St. Bavo's Cathedral:** Home to the world-famous altarpiece, The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb.
- **Korenmarkt & Graslei:** The heart of Ghent's old town, surrounded by stunning guild houses and bustling cafés.



# SCHEDULE

Time	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
8:00		Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up
9:30		Breakfast & Travel	Breakfast & Travel	Breakfast & Travel	Breakfast & Travel	Breakfast & Travel	Breakfast & Travel	Breakfast
12:30		Lecture	Lecture	Exploring Bruges	Exploring Ghent	Lecture	Lecture	Departure
13:30		Lunch	Lunch			Lunch	Lunch	
16:30	Arrival, Check in & Free time	Lecture	Lecture			Lecture	Lecture	
18:30	Travel & Free time	Travel & Free time	Travel & Free time	Travel & Free time	Travel & Free time	Travel & Free time	Travel & Free time	
20:00	Official Opening	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	
	Evening Activity	Evening Activity	Evening Activity	Evening Activity	Evening Activity	Evening Activity	Evening Activity	

SCHEDULE

**Lecture 1**

bla bla bli bla bla ble

**Lecture 2**

bla bla bli bla bla ble

**Lecture 3**

bla bla bli bla bla ble

**Lecture 4**

bla bla bli bla bla ble

**Lecture 5**

bla bla bli bla bla ble

**Lecture 6**

bla bla bli bla bla ble

**Lecture 7**

bla bla bli bla bla ble

**Lecture 8**

bla bla bli bla bla ble

## CONTACT INFO

### **Our office**

We have a cozy little office right at the university. It can be used for 'official' communication with the organizers if you feel old school and want to write letters.

Office Local BEST Group Ghent:

J. Plateaustraet 22, 9000 Gent, Belgium

### **Overall contact**

E-mail: [ghent@best-eu.org](mailto:ghent@best-eu.org)



## MAIN ORGANISER

**Jasper Van der Linde**

+32 472 24 50 82

[jasper.van.der.linde@best-eu.org](mailto:jasper.van.der.linde@best-eu.org)

CONTACT INFO

**Rest of the team**



**Participants**  
**Ruben Van Watermeulen**



**Academics**  
**Randall Scheirlinckx**



**Social activities**  
**Jitse Decoodt**



**Social activities**  
**Seppe Meillander**



**Food**  
**Martina Matiec**



**PR**  
**Lotte D' Hoker**

CONTACT INFO

**OUR DEAREST KAREL**



Karel is our beloved mascot. Being a participant in our course means meeting Karel, which is a huge honour.

So prepare to become part of Karel's adventures and meet the BEST MASCOT EVER!

**Karel's contact information:**

karel.karel@best-eu.org

Instagram: @karelsbestadventures



## OUR LBG

This course would, of course, not be possible without the help of our lovely LBG. I hope you get the chance to meet them all. If I can speak a moment for myself, this was the most kind and loving group I ever got into, so I would say you're in great hands...

Also, a big thank you to the board of this year. They keep this whole ship afloat and are always there to help.



# Emergency Numbers

You should call one of these numbers in any genuine emergency, such as serious or life-threatening medical problems, to report crimes, or if you see a fire.

- Medical service: 100 or **112**
- Fire service: 100 or **112**
- Police: 101 or **112**

# healthcare

If you need an ambulance, you'll be taken to the nearest hospital. There are multiple in Ghent; hopefully you can only admire them from the outside.

You may be charged for the ambulance, but this can be refunded if you have private health insurance.

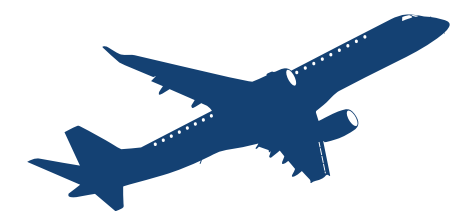
During the course, you are also insured for civil liability and personal physical accidents via the university. Hopefully also not needed, of course

# Light sickness

Just ask us for some help; we are always around. There are enough pharmacies and doctors in Ghent, so no need to worry. We also always carry around a first aid kit, good to know!

## GETTING THERE

### Planes and airport



**Important tip:** the earlier you order your ticket, the cheaper you can get it.

**Your rights as a passenger:** when flight companies cancel their flight, they often simply pay back your ticket (e.g., 40 EUR if you fly with a low-cost company). Know that the European legislation gives you the right to claim another flight to your destination without paying extra charges.

Scan or click the QR code for more information



#### Remarks:

- Low-cost companies often fly very early in the morning or late in the evening. So, pay attention when booking your ticket that you arrive enough before the latest train leaves. More information in the datasheet.
- If you want to leave Belgium by plane, we recommend getting to the airport at least two hours in advance.



## GETTING THERE

### Brussels Airport (Zaventem) - BRU



That's our national airport. In that airport, 4 trains an hour leave for a 15-minute trip to Brussels, from where you can get to Ghent easily. The total travel time is about 1 hour.

There are two possibilities for leaving that airport:

- **Public transport:** you take the train that's connected to the airport directly to Ghent (be aware that there is a supplement that needs to be paid alongside the ticket). Duration: 1 hour.
- There is a private (and more expensive) **shuttle service** Flibco to Gent, directly connected to your flight. Duration: 1 hour.

### Brussels South Charleroi Airport - CRL



Contrary to what the name of this airport tells us, this airport is not really close to Brussels.

There are two possibilities for leaving that airport:

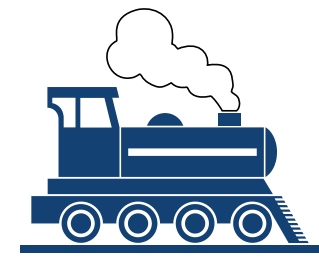
- **Public transport:** First you take the public TEC bus to the train station Luttre, from where three trains every hour leave for Brussels, from where you can get to Ghent. Duration: 2 hours.
- There is a private (and more expensive) **shuttle service** Flibco to Brussels, directly connected to your flight. From there, you can easily get to Ghent. Duration: 1,5 hours.

#### Other airports in and around Belgium

Some travel agencies and low-cost companies have their flights to other airports, such as Ostend, Maastricht, Eindhoven, Liege, etc. If you will arrive at one of these airports, please contact us for more information on how to get to Ghent from there.

## GETTING THERE

### International (fast) trains



If you use non-standard trains (night trains, ICE, Thalys, TGV, Eurostar...), you can get cheaper tickets if you order them early.

If your ticket includes the journey to Ghent, then it is possible that you cannot interrupt your journey to visit Brussels, Antwerp, Lille, or other cities you pass. Read the conditions of travel when you buy your ticket.

#### Useful to know:

- Brussels' international station: Brussel-Zuid or Bruxelles-Midi
- Brussels' central station: Brussel-Centraal or Bruxelles-Central
- Antwerp's main station: Antwerpen-Centraal or Anvers-Central
- Lille-Europe is ten minutes walking from Lille-Flandres
- Ghent's main station: Gent-Sint-Pieters or Gand-Saint-Pierre

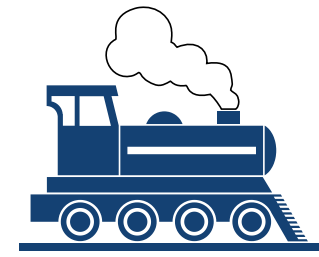
There is no public transportation at night from those stations to Ghent, and we won't be able to pick you up at any stations other than Ghent! In the NMBS app, you can find when the last train leaves. For more information, check out a bit further in this booklet.

#### Coming from England

Take the Eurostar, the train that goes under the Channel, to Lille-Europe or Brussels (depending on what is cheapest). From Brussels, you can get to Ghent by normal train. Know that before entering the Eurostar, you must pass by the customs office and the luggage check. It's better to be three-quarters of an hour in advance at the check-in desk.

## GETTING THERE

### International (fast) trains



#### Coming from the Netherlands with normal trains or the Eurostar

Well, it's easy: buy a ticket to Gent-Sint-Pieters in the local railway station. For the schedules, you can surf to the NMBS (Belgian railways) or NS (Dutch railways) website.

There's also a fast train (Eurostar) from Amsterdam to Antwerpen-Centraal and/or Brussels (look at what's the cheapest).

#### Coming from the northeast of France or Luxembourg

You can take a normal train to Ghent via Brussels. For the schedules, you can surf to the SNCF (French railways) or CFL (Luxembourg railways) website

#### Coming from the rest of France

If you aren't from the northeast of France, you have several options:



Normal train to Ghent via Lille (station Lille-Flanders) and Kortrijk/Courtrai. For the schedules, you can surf to the SNCF (French railways) or NMBS (Belgian railways) website. On the regular NMBS website, you can find some useful information, such as the track, delays, etc., but to buy the ticket, you will be sent to the b-europe website.

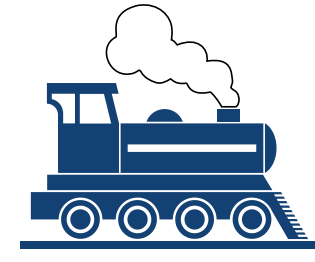
TGV to Lille-Europe or Brussels (depending on what's the cheapest). From there, you can easily get to Ghent. Info and tickets are found on the same websites as above.

Eurostar (mainly from Paris) to Lille-Europe, Brussels, or directly to Ghent (depending on what's cheapest). Thalys also offers the possibility to take a normal train from Brussels to any Belgian station for a few euros extra.



## GETTING THERE

### International (fast) trains



#### Coming from Germany

In Germany, there is the ICE network, with lots of fast connections. There are also some (slower) night trains in Germany. The trains are part of Die Bahn, so you can combine your ticket with the route that you travel with normal trains on. Find more info on the DB (German railways) website.

The German trains to Belgium have Brussels as the final destination, from where you can easily get to Ghent with a normal train.

**From Cologne (Köln)** and **Aachen**, you can also get to Brussels with the Eurostar trains.

### Coaches (busses)



With **Flixbus**, you can easily get from anywhere in Europe to Brussels (and sometimes directly to Ghent). That way of traveling is very cheap and flexible (there are many 'open return' tickets).

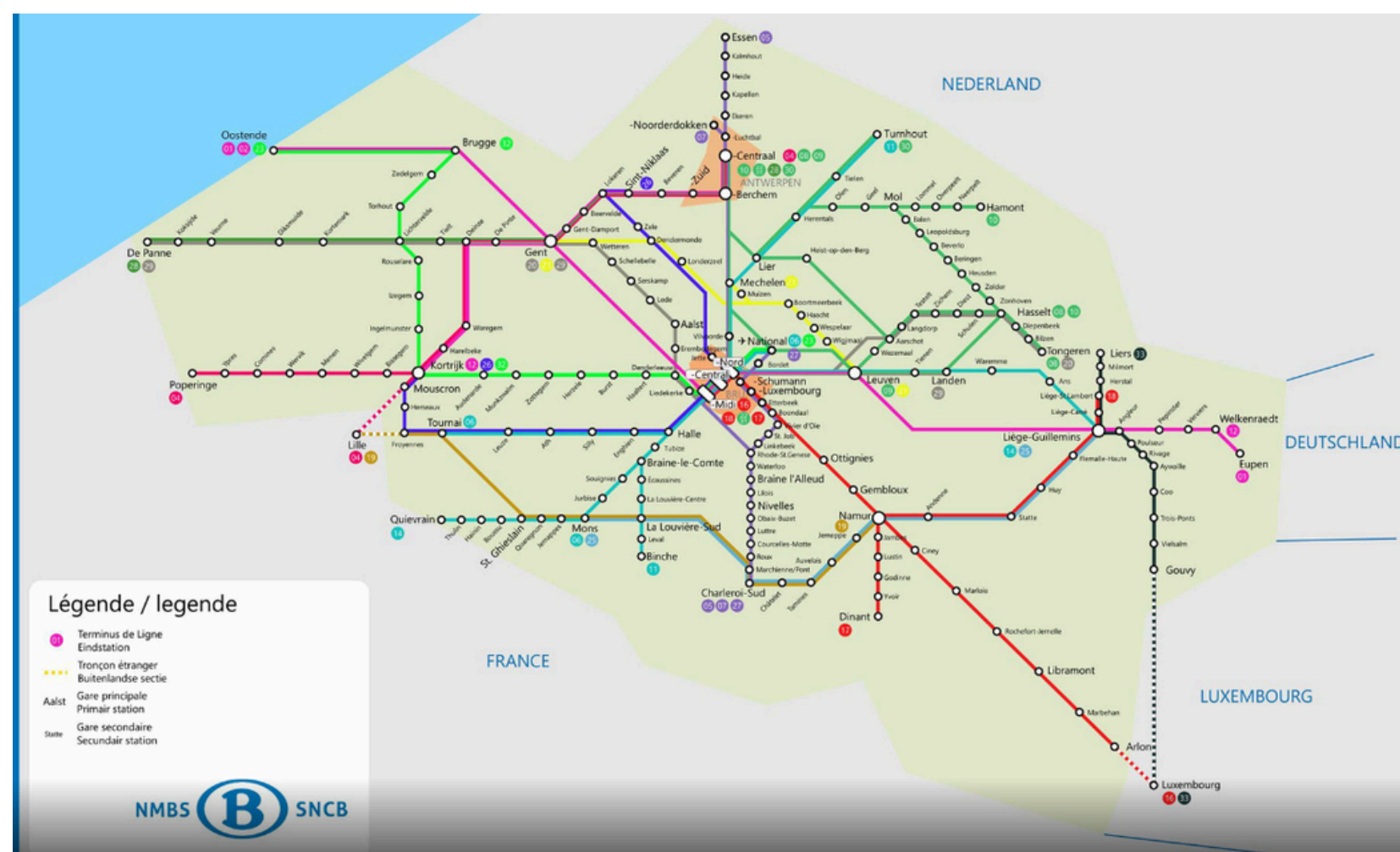
One disadvantage: this is one of the slowest ways of transport.

An advantage is that the bus station is only a 15 min walk from the accommodation.



# PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In Belgium we have one of the most performant railway infrastructures in the world. Our trains are fast, comfortable, and rather punctual (though a source for much amusement). Unfortunately, our trains are quite expensive, and they are the only convenient way of public transport for distances over 20 km. In the figure below, you can see the main railway lines.



## NMBS - App

First, install the NMBS app. You can purchase tickets on this app, and it will give you lots of useful information about the trains (departure/arrival times, tracks, delays...).

This is the logo of the app:



Then you can purchase a ticket. We recommend not buying this ticket too much in advance because the prices are fixed anyway. Also, most of the time when you buy a ticket, there is no fixed time, only a fixed day, which means you can take any train to your destination on the day of your ticket.

## TO GHENT

Ghent's main station is Gent Sint Pieters (Gand Saint Pierre), but the location is closer to the second train station, Gent Dampoort (Gand Dampoort).

From Ghent Sint Pieters, the university building is easy to reach. It's only a 25-minute walk and goes through Citadel Park. With its many ponds, this is a very calm and pretty place.

### **Lodging**

We will stay in 'De Zebra'. A cozy place right in the heart of Ghent, close enough to everywhere so you can reach every course location on foot. I would also highly recommend walking as much as possible. The city has many hidden secrets to explore, so look around and enjoy.

Another advantage is that we can rent the place completely. All rooms are available to us, and we don't need to keep quiet for other guests. It might not be the most cozy stay possible, but there are no better alternatives in Ghent. And with so many amazing people there, we ourselves will make sure that everyone's comfy!

### **Getting to the accommodation**

Get off at Station Ghent-Dampoort. From there, come to the front of the station, towards the water. Someone will be waiting there to accompany you; it's only a 15-minute walk from here. You will walk along the water, next to the lei. You will probably see this river some other times in Ghent as well.

**Baudelohof 6 , 9000 Gent**



## ABOUT BELGIUM

### Architecture

The historic architecture of Belgium offers a remarkable glimpse into our medieval past. This is especially visible in the older parts of Ghent and Bruges.

In Ghent, you can see rows of old houses with stepped roofs along the rivers, straight from the Renaissance. The steps made it easier to work on the roof and helped show off the owner's wealth and status. The more detailed and decorative the steps, the richer the owner was.

In many medieval cities, including Ghent, taxes were sometimes based on how wide your house was on the street. So people built narrow houses with tall, stepped roofs to save money but still make them look impressive!

Bruges feels like a small, quiet medieval town. It has narrow streets, canals, and brick houses. The main square is surrounded by colorful buildings and the tall Belfry of Bruges. You often see combinations of religion and art in the buildings.

### Food

Belgians do love some good food, and even though we don't truly have a Belgian kitchen, certain things you can't take away from us. We are very proud of our fries, and I hope you're excited to try them. Same with waffles; we will definitely prepare some for you, but still be sure to buy a freshly made one after walking through the old city--that will hit completely differently!

We have a well-varied cuisine, so this will also be shown in our selection of dishes that will be cooked for you. If you like them, be sure to give an extra compliment to our food responsible person who has worked it all out!



## ABOUT BELGIUM

### Weather



The weather in Belgium is very unpredictable in every season. In summer, it can hail and then be sunny within one day! Temperatures can be 10 °C higher or lower, even on the same day!

Just before you go to Ghent, check the weather forecast on the Internet. This can give you an indication, but you can never be sure! The middle of September is one of the heaviest cloudy periods in Belgium. There will still be a lot of mosquitoes and some bees and wasps. Make sure to bring mosquito repellent and always be prepared to run for ya lives!

### Clothes

Be prepared for various kinds of weather and bring appropriate clothing. And don't forget a raincoat, as an umbrella can't protect you when you're on a bike!

Belgium is not a very formal country, so there is no need to bring fancy clothing to go to restaurants.



# ABOUT BELGIUM

## Language

English	Dutch
Yes/No	Ja/Nee(n)
Hello	Hallo
Good morning/afternoon/evening	Goede morgen/middag/avond
My name is / I am...	Mijn naam is / Ik ben...
See you	Tot ziens / Salut
Please	Alstublieft (A.U.B.)
Exit / Emergency exit	Uitgang / Nooduitgang
Entry	Ingang
Toilet	Toilet / WC
Sorry / Excuse me	Excuseer
I'm sorry	Het spijt me
Sir / Madam	Meneer / Mevrouw
What time is it?	Hoe laat is het?
Where's the exit, please?	Waar is de uitgang, alstublieft?
Where's the toilet please?	Waar is het toilet, alstublieft

# ABOUT BELGIUM

## English

## Dutch

One beer, please

Een pint, alstublieft

A small/large packet of Belgian fries,  
please

Een klein/groot pak frieten, A.U.B

How much does this cost?

Hoeveel kost dit?

I'm a strawberry. Eat me

Ik ben een aardbei. Eet me

I have to throw up

Ik moet overgeven

I don't speak Dutch

Ik spreek geen Nederlands

Cheers

Gezondheid, schol, santé, prost

I love you

Ik hou van jou

Here you go (when giving someone  
something)

Alstublieft



# ABOUT BELGIUM

## Some Numbers

1	één	11	elf	30	dertig
2	twee	12	twaalf	40	veertig
3	drie	13	dertien	50	vijftig
4	vier	14	veertien	60	zestig
5	vijf	15	vijftien	70	zeventig
6	zes	16	zestien	80	tachtig
7	zeven	17	zeventien	90	negentig
8	acht	18	achtien	100	honderd
9	negen	19	negentien	0	nul
10	tien	20	twintig		

## LOCAL LANGUAGE

As in many countries, young people in Flanders don't use standard, classic Dutch. Instead, we usually talk to each other in various dialects.

So, on the next page, there are some phrases you can use with students you meet or that cute girl/guy at the bar.

# ABOUT BELGIUM

## English

## Dutch

How are you? Everything OK?

Cava (read: sava)? Alles goe?

I'm doing okay. Everything's OK.

Cava. Alles goed.

Do you want to dance?

Gaan we muilen?

You look beautiful.

Jij bent echt geil.

Hello!

Yow!

Goodbye!

Salu!

## PRICES

1 beer, soft drink, water (25cl)	2.00 - 3.50 EUR
1 water from the supermarket (50cl)	0.50 - 1.00 EUR
1 special beer (café)	4.00 - 6.50 EUR
1 can of beer in a shop (50cl)	0.90 - 1.40 EUR
1 small packet of french fries	2.50 - 3.00 EUR
1 bicky burger	4.00 - 6.00 EUR
1 meal in a cheap restaurant	15.00 - 16.00 EUR
1 public transport ticket (bus or tram)	3.00 EUR

## STUDENT CULTURE

Ghent is a true student city, with a large international community. You'll find plenty of affordable bars, restaurants, and cultural events. The city hosts the Ghent Festivities (Gentse Feesten), one of the biggest cultural festivals in Europe. Belgian cuisine is also a highlight—don't forget to try Belgian fries, waffles, and local beers! We hope this guide helps you settle in and make the most of your time in Ghent. Enjoy yourselves and explore everything this incredible city has to offer!

## OUR UNIVERSITY

**Ghent University (UGent)** is one of Belgium's leading universities, consistently ranked among the top institutions in Europe. Established in 1817, it has grown into a globally recognized research university with over 50,000 students, including a large international community. The university is known for its strong emphasis on innovation, interdisciplinary research, and collaboration with industries.

**The Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (FEA)** at UGent is a hub of cutting-edge research and technical education. It offers a wide range of engineering disciplines, including some fields exclusive to Belgium, like marine technology. The faculty has strong ties with industry and research institutions, ensuring that students gain practical, real-world experience.

# STUDENT CULTURE

## GOING OUT

### Overpoort

This area is the heart of the city's student culture, packed with bars, clubs, and late-night food spots that stay lively well into the early morning. You'll find a very open and social atmosphere; it's normal to strike up conversations with strangers. Drinks are really affordable, and the vibe is casual rather than fancy, so you can just show up and enjoy. Just be prepared: it can get quite loud and crowded, especially on Thursdays, which are the main student party nights.

### Korenmarkt

During evenings and weekends, the square fills with students, locals, and visitors sitting on terraces, going out for drinks, or meeting up before heading to nearby bars and clubs. It's more mixed and open than purely student-focused areas like Overpoort, so you'll see a wider range of ages and nationalities. Drinks are a bit more expensive here, but the amazing views make it definitely worth it!

### Vlasmarkt

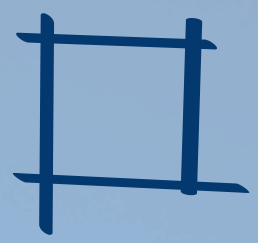
Compared to places like Korenmarkt, Vlasmarkt feels more compact and underground, with people spilling out onto the streets and music coming from multiple venues at once. It's especially popular after midnight, when the bars and clubs around the square fill up, and the atmosphere becomes very crowded, loud, and party-focused.

### Vrijdagsmarkt

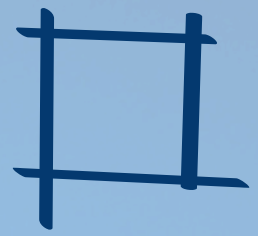
Here you find more of the older cafes where you can look at their beer card for half an hour. For a laid-back vibe or to talk all night, this is definitely the place to go.



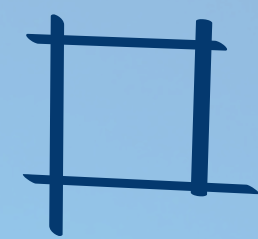
# How to become a proper Belgian



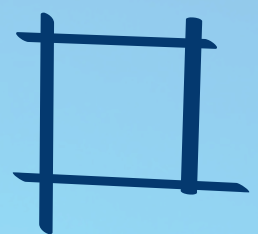
**COMPLAIN ABOUT THE WEATHER - ALWAYS**



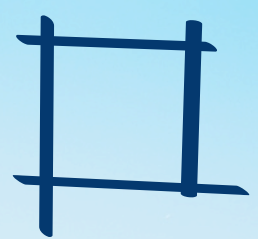
**EAT A KEBAB AT 5:00 AM.**



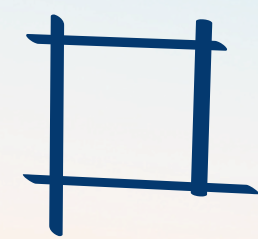
**DRINK A TEMPUS-SHOT DURING THE CANTUS**



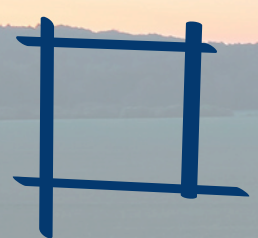
**BIKE UP THE "MOUNTAINS" OF GHENT**



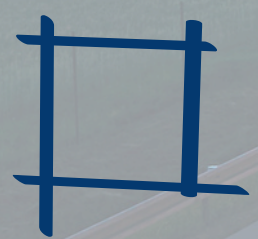
**GIVE A LITTLE NOD TO A STRANGER, BUT DON'T SAY ANYTHING**



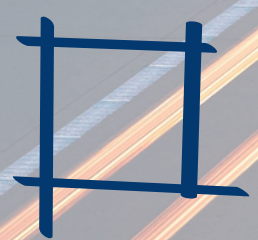
**BIKE OVER THE RAILS WITHOUT FALLING**



**EAT SOME CUBERDONS IN THE CITY CENTRE**



**ORDER A SMOS = HAM, CHEESE, AND MAYO**



**TRY COMBINING PEACH AND TUNA.**