



Practical guide for mobile researchers coming to Belgium

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GUIDE FOR THE MOBILE RESEARCHER

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**GUIDE FOR THE
MOBILE RESEARCHER**

INTRODUCTION

According to the internationally recognized ‘Frascati’ definition, a researcher can be described as “*a professional engaged in the conception or creation of new knowledge, products, processes, methods and systems, and in the management of the projects concerned*”. In Belgium, the designation “researcher” covers different categories (pre-doctoral students, doctoral students, post-doctoral researchers and researchers with an employment contract). The category to which the researcher belongs, determines the specific applicable rules regarding social security, taxation, work permits ... In this guide, only researchers with a Belgian fellowship or wage (paid out by a Belgian employer) will be discussed. Following categories can be distinguished:

1. STUDENTS (PRE-DOCTORAL) WITH A FELLOWSHIP

Foreigners can come to Belgium with the intention to study or to participate in study and research programmes in order to evaluate their research competence in view of a doctorate.

- 1.1. Nationals of the EEA and Switzerland →
- 1.2. Non – EEA nationals →

2. DOCTORAL STUDENTS WITH A FELLOWSHIP

Doctoral students with a fellowship are Ph.D. students who come to Belgium in order to prepare a doctorate. There is no employment relationship between the doctoral student and the host institution. Their scholarship is (fully or partially) subject to social security, meaning that the host university will treat them as employees regarding their social status. When it concerns their legal stay in Belgium (visa, residence permit), they are treated as students aiming to obtain a doctoral degree.

- 2.1. Nationals of the EEA and Switzerland →
- 2.2. Non – EEA nationals →

3. POST – DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS WITH A FELLOWSHIP

Post-doctoral researchers with a fellowship can not be classified as students. They are EEA citizens and non-EEA citizens with high qualifications (a doctor's degree or equivalent qualifications) who are admitted to carry out independent, fundamental scientific research at a university or host institution. There is no employment relationship between the post – doctoral researcher and the host institution.

- 3.1. Nationals of the EEA and Switzerland →
- 3.2. Non – EEA nationals →

4. RESEARCHERS WITH AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

“Pre-doctoral”, “doctoral” and “post-doctoral” researchers can perform research in a Belgian research institution or university on the basis of an employment contract.

- 4.1. Nationals of the EEA and Switzerland →
- 4.2. Non – EEA nationals →

STUDENTS (PRE-DOCTORAL) WITH A FELLOWSHIP

I. Nationals of the EEA and Switzerland

European Economic Area: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Czech Republic, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein.

1. Residence

You do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or national identity card you have the right to enter and reside in Belgium for maximum three months. In case the duration of your stay in Belgium exceeds three months, you will have to register in person with the communal authority of your intended place of residence. You have to submit following documents:

- a valid passport or identity card.
- five passport size photographs
- your scholarship attestation (as a proof of sufficient financial means)
- a certificate of enrolment at your host university.
- your European Health Insurance Card, delivered by your home country.

According to Directive 2004/38* of the European Parliament and Council, EU citizens do not longer need to apply for a residence permit if they move to another Member State. A registration at the competent authorities of the new state of residence suffices. The municipal authorities will provide you a blue card (the former residence permit for EU-citizens) which can be considered as a registration certificate.

* On 29 April 2004, a new Directive 2004/38 of the European Parliament and Council on the right of EU-citizens to move freely and reside within the European Union was adopted. Although not yet implemented into national law (the deadline expired on 30 April 2006), most of its provisions have direct force. This Directive abolishes residence permit for Union citizens. Union citizens and their family members may reside for a period up to three months without any conditions or formalities other than the requirement to hold a valid identity card or passport. For periods of residence of more than three months, a mere registration with the competent authorities suffices. The Directive maintains the requirement that Union citizens need to be economically active or to dispose of sufficient resources as well as a comprehensive sickness insurance in order to avoid that they become an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State.

2. Health insurance

Your fellowship will not be subject to social security contributions. However, your European Health Insurance Card (which replaces the forms E128 and E111) will prove that you already have insurance coverage in your home country. This Card will guarantee access to health care during your stay in Belgium: it facilitates (partial) reimbursement of medical costs and allows obtaining a reduction at the pharmacist.

If you don't have a Health Insurance Card, you will have to approach a health insurance company ("*ziekenfonds / mutuelle*"), immediately upon your arrival in Belgium, in order to obtain insurance coverage. There are several health insurance companies and they differ through political affiliation and the fact that they are denominational (Christian) or independent.

3. Taxes and other financial issues

3.1. Taxes

According to Belgian law, fellowships are exempt from taxes if they are provided by authorized institutions (annex II) and if following conditions are met:

- The fellowship facilitates extraordinary contributions to scientific research;
- The fellowship is awarded in circumstances which allow personal initiative by the fellowship holder in continuing his studies or conducting his research;
- The fellowship is granted free of charge, i.e. every dependency towards the grantor is excluded;
- The fellowship is directly nor indirectly financed by Belgian or foreign industrial, trading or agricultural companies, which may benefit, in one way or another, from the subsidized research activities.

3.2. How to open a bank account?

To open a current or checking account you will need a proof of identity (a valid passport) and a proof of legal residence in Belgium. Some banks may ask you for an extra document to prove your identity and residence in Belgium (e.g. a certificate of enrolment at your host university). Once the account is opened the bank will send you a debit card, probably with the Bancontact/Mister Cash logo. This card has to be signed and activated by choosing and confirming a personal PIN code. With this current account you will be able to carry out all standard bank transactions in Belgium such as cash withdrawals, debit card payments for items bought in shops, transferring money from your bank account to somebody else's bank account, etc. It is recommendable to apply for a "maestro" function on your card, which will allow you to withdraw money when you are abroad. Most banks also provide home-banking possibilities (via internet). You may also request a credit card. However, some banks may wait a while to check whether you have sufficient deposits coming on your account.

4. Bringing along family members

4.1. Eligible family members and required documents

Following family members, irrespective of their nationality, may join you to Belgium based on the principle of family reunification:

- your spouse
- your children younger than 21, or the ones who are (financially) dependent on you
- your partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

4.1.1. Spouse and children

If your family members are non – EEA citizens, they need to apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in their home country before coming to Belgium. In addition to their passport or identity card, they have to provide documents proving their marital or parental link with you (marriage certificate or birth certificate). Children older than 21 will have to prove their dependency (e.g. with bank statements). If the required documents are not in English, Dutch, French or German, they need to be translated into one of these languages. The translation of these documents must be authenticated as well. If all requirements are fulfilled, your family members will receive a visa type D (‘family reunification visa’). With this visa they can travel to Belgium. As soon as the Directive 2004/38 is implemented into national law (the deadline already expired on 30 April 2006), the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence will provide them a “residence card of a family member of a Union citizen”.

If your family members are EEA-citizens, they do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or identity card they have the right to enter Belgium. Once they arrive, they should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. They will have to prove that they have a valid health insurance and that you dispose of sufficient financial means in order to support them. The municipal authorities will provide them a registration certificate. According to Directive 2004/38 they do not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit.

4.1.2. Partner with whom you are having a long-term relationship

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she must apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in his or her home country. There he or she will have to submit a valid travel document, a document proving that you are not married, an official copy of his or her birth certificate, an extract from his or her judicial record, a medical certificate filled out by a doctor approved by the Belgian embassy and proof that your relationship is stable and long-term (letters, photographs etc...). You will have to sign a pledge of financial support. You can request this form at the municipal authority of your place of residence in Belgium. Once it has been legalized, the original must be sent to your partner. Once the submitted documents have been verified and the application is complete, the embassy will send it to the Immigration Service at the Federal Public Service Home Affairs in Belgium, which will then decide whether or not to issue a visa. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authority in your place of residence. He or she will have to prove that he or she has a valid health insurance and that you dispose of sufficient financial means in order to support him or her. You and your partner must actually live together in Belgium for the entire duration of your relationship and share the same household. Your partner will receive a registration certificate based on the partnership with a Union citizen.

If your partner is a EEA-national, he or she can come to Belgium only by presenting a valid passport or identity card. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. According to Directive 2004/38 your partner does not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit. He or she will have to prove that he or she has a valid health insurance and that he or she disposes of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide your partner a registration certificate.

4.2. Spouse’s and partner’s employment

4.2.1. Spouse

If your spouse, resident in Belgium under the “family reunification” scheme, wishes to work in Belgium, no formalities are needed. He or she will be authorized to work

without having to apply for a work permit, unless you are a national of a new EU - Member State (apart from Cyprus and Malta). In that case your spouse will still need a work permit B. The employer has to apply for this work permit at the regional employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

4.2.2. Partner

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she will not be able to work without a work permit C. Your partner must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). This work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

If your partner is a EEA-national, he or she will not need a work permit if he or she is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card of passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If he or she is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit C is required, since he or she is not yet covered by the rules of free movement of workers. Your partner must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). This work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

II. Non-EEA nationals

1. *Visa and residence permit*

1.1. Formalities prior tot departure

You need to apply for a visa at the Belgian Embassy or Consulate in your home country. The addresses of the Belgian Embassies abroad can be found on following website: <http://www.diplomatie.be/en/addresses/abroad/websites.asp>.

1.1.1 Short-term visa

The short-term “Schengen” visa is a tourist visa and allows you to stay in Belgium for maximum three months. It will also give you the right to travel freely through all the Schengen Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden).

However, if you are a citizen of one of the following countries, you do not require a short-term visa to enter Belgium: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, Estonia, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Israel, Japan, South-Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, Nicaragua, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Romania, San Marino, Singapore, Switzerland, The United States of America, Uruguay, Vatican City and Venezuela.

! Attention !

Since it is rather difficult to prolong your short-term visa once you are in Belgium, it is recommendable to apply immediately for a long term visa type D (see 1.1.2) before coming to Belgium. This visa will allow you to stay in Belgium for a period longer than three months.

1.1.2. Long-term visa

If you want to reside and study in Belgium for a period longer than three months, you will have to apply for an “authorisation for provisional sojourn”, also referred to as the “long-term visa type D”. It is important to notice that this visa type D only allows you to enter Belgium once. This means that while you are waiting for your Belgian residence permit, which can take several weeks, you are not allowed to travel outside Belgium. That’s why it can be useful to apply for a combined D + C visa, which was created especially to bridge this waiting period. With this visa you will be able to enter Belgium, apply for a residence permit, and then travel freely through all the Schengen countries during the first three months after the visa was issued.

You must apply for this visa at a Belgian diplomatic or consular post in your country of origin. You will have to submit following documents:

- a valid passport (with at least one year’s validity remaining)
- a proof of enrolment at your host university.
- a proof of solvency (‘sufficient financial means’) There are three acceptable types of the proof of solvency: a certificate of your host university or another institution demonstrating that you have been awarded a scholarship, a form ‘agreement for acceptance of financial responsibility’, signed by your parents, relatives or private sponsors in Belgium who must avail of sufficient income, or a proof of your own financial means by transferring a certain amount to a blocked bank account in Belgium in your name.
- a recent certificate of good conduct covering the last five years. This certificate is an extract from the criminal records which can be provided by the police department in your home country. If the police department does not provide this kind of certificates, the Belgian embassy will help you out.
- a medical certificate. You can obtain the official form from your host university or the Belgian diplomatic service in your home country. This certificate has to be completed by a doctor recognized by the Belgian embassy. It should state that you are in good health and not a carrier of contagious diseases.

For more information on visa and residence formalities, please visit the website of the Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs:

<http://diplobel.fgov.be/en/travel/traveldocs.asp>.

1.2. Formalities on arrival in Belgium

Once the visa is issued and you arrive in Belgium, you must go personally to the municipal administration (the “Foreigners Office”) of your place of residence in order to apply for a residence permit. You will need to present following documents:

- a valid passport or identity card, with the “authorization for provisional sojourn” stamped in it.
- a proof of solvency or scholarship attestation.
- a proof of enrolment at your host university.
- four recent passport size photographs.

A police officer will have to confirm that you actually reside at the given address. If you are not home at the time of the police officer’s visit, you will receive a letter inviting you to report to the police station in your district. Around six weeks after registration, a “certificate of registration in the alien’s register” will be issued, your residence permit. This white card will also function as your identity card and you are required to carry it with you always. Your residence permit has to be renewed every year.

2. *Health insurance*

After registration at your host university, you should affiliate with a Belgian health insurance company (“ziekenfonds” / “mutuelle”) of your choice, unless your fellowship includes health insurance. There are several health insurance companies and they differ through political affiliation and the fact that they are denominational (Christian) or independent.

At the health insurance company you must submit following documents:

- a valid passport
- your Belgian residence permit (if you already have it).
- the certificate of “family composition”, which you can obtain at the Foreigner’s Office.
- your bank account number.
- a certificate of registration at your host university.

As long as you don’t have your Belgian residence permit, you will be eligible for health insurance as a “student”. If you arrive in Belgium before the beginning of the enrolment period, you can not subscribe immediately to a health care policy as a student. To cover the period before your student coverage you can take out a temporary private health care insurance. Once you have received your Belgian identity card at the Foreigner’s Office, you will be eligible for health insurance as a “resident”. The health insurance company will provide you a membership card (“SIS-card”) as proof of affiliation. On this card you will find your own social security number.

3. Taxes and other financial issues

3.1. Taxes

According to Belgian law, fellowships are exempt from taxes if they are provided by authorized institutions (annex II) and if following conditions are met:

- The fellowship facilitates extraordinary contributions to scientific research;
- The fellowship is awarded in circumstances which allow personal initiative by the fellowship holder in continuing his studies or conducting his research;
- The fellowship is granted free of charge, i.e. every dependency towards the grantor is excluded;
- The fellowship is directly nor indirectly financed by Belgian or foreign industrial, trading or agricultural companies, which may benefit, in one way or another, from the subsidized research activities.

3.2. How to open a bank account?

To open a current or checking account you will need a proof of identity (a valid passport) and a proof of legal residence in Belgium (your residence permit). Some banks may ask you for an extra document to prove your identity and residence in Belgium (e.g. a certificate of enrolment at your host university). Once the account is opened the bank will send you a debit card, probably with the Bancontact/Mister Cash logo. This card has to be signed and activated by choosing and confirming a personal PIN code. With this current account you will be able to carry out all standard bank transactions in Belgium such as cash withdrawals, debit card payments for items bought in shops, transferring money from your bank account to somebody else's bank account, etc. It is recommendable to apply for a "maestro" function on your card, which will allow you to withdraw money when you are abroad. Most banks also provide home-banking possibilities (via internet). You may also request a credit card. However, some banks may wait a while to check whether you have sufficient deposits coming on your account.

4. Bringing along family members

4.1. Eligible family members and required documents

Following family members may join you to Belgium, based on the principle of family reunification:

- Your spouse (older than 21)
- Your children (younger than 18)
- Your partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

4.1.1. Spouse and children

If your family members are non – EEA citizens, they are required to apply for an "authorization for provisional sojourn" (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in their home country before coming to Belgium. In addition to their passport or identity card, your family members must produce documents proving their marital or parental link with you (marriage certificate and/or birth certificate), as well as a copy of your

Belgian residence permit (your certificate of registration in the Alien's Register). Furthermore, they will have to provide proof of "suitable housing" in Belgium. When you are already in Belgium and have found suitable housing for yourself and your family, a police agent will visit you and draw up a report for the communal authority. The latter will provide you a document which you have to send to your family (or the Belgian embassy in their country) to prove that suitable housing in Belgium is ready. Besides that you will have to provide the evidence that you dispose of sufficient financial means in order to support your family members, and that you have a sickness insurance which also covers your family members. Your family members will have to submit all these required documents to the Belgian embassy in their home country in order to receive a "family reunification" visa. If these documents are not in English, Dutch, French or German, they need to be translated into one of these languages. The translation of these documents must be authenticated as well. If all requirements are fulfilled, your family members will receive a family reunification visa (visa type D). With this visa they can travel to Belgium. Once they arrive, your family members have to register at the municipal authority of the place of residence. A police officer will check whether you and your spouse and/or children are living together at the given address. After registration, they will receive a residence permit (a certificate of inscription in the alien's register).

If your family members are EEA-citizens, they do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or identity card they have the right to enter Belgium. Once they arrive, they should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. They will have to prove that they have a valid health insurance and that they dispose of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide them a registration certificate. According to Directive 2004/38 they do not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit.

4.1.2. Partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she must apply for a visa type D at the Belgian embassy in his or her home country before coming to Belgium. He or she must submit a valid travel document, a copy of your Belgian residence permit, a document proving that you are not married, an official copy of his or her birth certificate, an extract from his or her judicial record, a medical certificate filled out by a doctor approved by the Belgian embassy and proof that your relationship is stable and long-term (letters, photographs etc...). He or she will also have to provide the evidence that suitable housing in Belgium is ready. You will have to prove that you

dispose of financial resources which are sufficient to maintain yourself and your partner, and that you have a sickness insurance which also covers your partner. Once the submitted documents have been verified and the application is complete, the embassy will send it to the Immigration Service at the Federal Public Service Home Affairs in Belgium, which will then decide whether or not to issue a visa. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authority in your place of residence. You and partner must actually live together in Belgium for the entire duration of your relationship and share the same household. Your partner will receive a residence permit (a certificate of inscription in the alien's register).

If your partner is a EEA-national, he or she can come to Belgium only by presenting a valid passport or identity card. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. According to Directive 2004/38 your partner does not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit. He or she will have to prove that he or she has a valid health insurance and that he or she disposes of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide your partner a registration certificate.

4.2. Spouse's and partner's employment

4.2.1. Spouse

If your spouse is an EEA – national, he or she will be authorized to work without needing a work permit if he is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If your spouse is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit B will be required, since he or she is not yet fully covered by the free movement of workers.

If your spouse is a non – EEA national, he or she must apply for a work permit B through his or her potential employer. According to Belgian law, a work permit will only be issued to a non-EEA citizen if he or she possesses special expertise or skills, which are not available on the Belgian and European labor market.

4.2.2. Partner

If your partner is not an EEA-national, he or she will not be able to work without a work permit C. He or she must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

If your partner is an EEA-national, he or she will not need a work permit if he or she is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If he or she is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit C is required, since he or she is not yet covered by the rules of free movement of workers. Your partner must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). This work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

DOCTORAL STUDENTS WITH A FELLOWSHIP

I. Nationals of the EEA and Switzerland

European Economic Area: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Czech Republic, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein.

1. Residence

You do not need to apply for a visa before coming Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or national identity card you have the right to enter and reside in Belgium for a period of maximum three months. In case the duration of your stay in Belgium exceeds three months, you will have to register in person with the communal authority of your intended place of residence. You have to submit following documents:

- a valid passport or identity card.
- five passport size photographs
- your scholarship attestation (as a proof of sufficient financial means)
- a certificate of enrolment at your host university.
- your European Health Insurance Card, delivered by your home country.

According to Directive 2004/38* of the European Parliament and Council, EU citizens do not longer need to apply for a residence permit if they move to another Member State. A registration with the competent authorities of the new State of residence suffices. The municipal authorities will provide you a blue card (the former residence permit for EU-citizens) which can be considered as a registration certificate.

* On 29 April 2004, a new Directive 2004/38 of the European Parliament and Council on the right of EU-citizens to move freely and reside within the European Union was adopted. Although not yet implemented into national law (the deadline expired on 30 April 2006), most of its provisions have direct force. This Directive abolishes residence permits for Union citizens. Union citizens and their family members may reside for a period up to three months without any conditions or formalities other than the requirement to hold a valid identity card or passport. For periods of residence of more than three months, a mere registration with the competent authorities suffices. The Directive maintains the requirement that Union citizens need to be economically active or to dispose of sufficient resources as well as a comprehensive sickness insurance in order to avoid that they become an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State.

2. Social security

According to Belgian legislation, your fellowship will be subject to full social security contributions: your personal contribution will amount to 13,07% of your fellowship, your guest institution will pay 34,36%. This means you will be covered for health care, incapacity for work, retirement and unemployment. You will also be entitled to child allowances.

Due to the fact that your scholarship is subject to social security, you will be treated as an employee regarding your social status. However when it concerns your stay in Belgium (e.g. residence permit) you will be treated as a student aiming to obtain a doctoral degree.

In this guide, only a summary review of the different social security schemes will be given. For detailed information on the Belgian social security system please consult the brochure "*Everything you always wanted to know about social security*". You can download it on the website from the Federal Public Service for Social Security: <http://www.socialsecurity.fgov.be/EN/index.htm>.

For a list of the most important social security institutions, with addresses and websites, see annex V.

2.1. Health care

Your doctoral fellowship will cover your health insurance. However, once you arrive in Belgium, you should have to affiliate with a mutual health insurance company (“ziekenfonds / mutuelle”). The choice is free. There are several health insurance companies and they differ through political affiliation and the fact that they are denominational (Christian) or independent. Membership of a Belgian health insurance company entitles you to a full or partial (depending on the type of service) refund of the costs of medical care (e.g. doctor visits, hospital treatment, surgery ...) and a price reduction at the pharmacist. You will receive a membership card (“SIS-card”) as proof of affiliation. On this card you will find your own social security number.

2.2. Incapacity for work

2.2.1. Illness

If you are absent due to illness, you should inform your host university or institution as soon as possible. If the absence is longer than one month, your health insurance company will take over the monthly scholarship payments to your bank account. The payments you will receive will be slightly less than your normal scholarship after the first month.

2.2.2. Maternity and paternity

Pregnant doctoral students will be entitled to maternity benefits and can have a maximum maternity leave of 15 weeks. You will have to start this leave at least one week before the birth of the child. In Belgium, also paternity leave exists. On the occasion of the birth of your child, you have the right to be absent from work for 10 days. These 10 days have to be taken up within 30 days after the birth and they can be taken up in one or several periods.

2.2.3. Work-related accidents and occupational illnesses

A work-related accident can be defined as any accident leading to physical injury that occurs because of work, during work or on your way to or from your workplace. Occupational diseases are diseases recognised as such and are registered in a list. If you can not be present at the university due to a work-related accident, it is necessary to report this as soon as possible to your host university. The university's insurance company will take over the monthly scholarship payments to your bank account and the medical costs will be reimbursed.

2.3. Retirement

During your research stay in Belgium, you will be building up pension or retirement rights through the social security contributions, which will be extracted directly from your fellowship by your host institution. But what happens with your Belgian pension if you move back to your home country after you finished your research stay in Belgium? According to EC Regulation 1408/71, every Member State where a person was insured for at least one year will have to pay a proportional old age pension, corresponding to the insurance period completed in that country. However, the pension of this country will only be paid if you have reached the retirement age of that country, meaning that you will be entitled to your Belgian pension at the age of 65.

2.4. Unemployment

In principle, you will only be able to profit from Belgian unemployment benefits if you can legally stay in Belgium after your doctoral fellowship has ended. Next to legally residing in Belgium, you will have to fulfill other requirements in order to receive these benefits. One of the conditions is that you must have worked for a certain number of days during the period of reference relevant for your age. The working periods performed in any other Member State can be taken into account. These insurance periods can be certified by an E 301 form, issued by the competent institution of the Member State where these periods have been accomplished.

2.5. Child allowances

2.5.1. Maternity fee

If you or your partner gets pregnant, you can apply for a maternity fee. You may demand this fee from the sixth month of pregnancy onwards, and it can be granted two months before the supposed date of birth mentioned in the medical certificate that should be enclosed with the application form. The amount of maternity fee depends on the child's rank in the family.

2.5.2. Child allowance

In principle, you can apply for Belgian child allowances for children younger than 18. However, if your child follows a higher education or does an internship or vocational training the age limit of an entitled child will rise up to 25 years. The amount of the allowance depends on the number of children and their age. According to Belgian legislation, child allowances can only be granted for children who live in Belgium. However, exceptions are possible:

- if your child lives in another EEA-country, the benefit must be paid as if he or she was resident in Belgium. This does not apply however, if family benefits are also payable under the legislation of the Member State in which the children live. In that case it is the latter Member State that will provide the child allowance. However, if Belgian child allowances are higher, Belgian authorities will pay the difference.
- if your child lives in a non-EEA country, you can ask the Belgian Minister of Social Affairs to make an exception to the rule that the children need to reside in Belgium.

2.6. Care insurance

This care insurance (“zorgverzekering”) provides monthly payments for non-medical expenses to insured persons who are in need of long-term care. Affiliation is obligatory for every person who is 25 years or older, and has been living in Flanders for more than six months. If you live in Brussels Capital Region, affiliation is not obliged. If you live in Wallonia, affiliation is not possible. The cost (25 €per year) is

normally not covered by your fellowship, so you will have to pay it yourself. This insurance is only applicable if you have been living in Flanders or the Brussels Capital Region for at least five years. Since most doctoral students go back to their home country after their doctoral studies are finished, you may never be able to benefit from this. Nevertheless, participation in this scheme is compulsory.

3. Taxes and other financial issues

3.1. Taxes

According to Belgian law, fellowships are exempt from taxes if they are provided by authorized institutions (annex II) and if following conditions are met:

- The fellowship facilitates extraordinary contributions to scientific research;
- The fellowship is awarded in circumstances which allow personal initiative by the fellowship holder in continuing his studies or conducting his research;
- The fellowship is granted free of charge, i.e. every dependency towards the grantor is excluded;
- The fellowship is directly nor indirectly financed by Belgian or foreign industrial, trading or agricultural companies, which may benefit, in one way or another, from the subsidized research activities.

Doctoral fellowships of a Belgian university or federal scientific institution are exempt from taxes for a maximum of 48 consecutive months. Following conditions need to be fulfilled:

- The fellowship cannot be considered as professional income for activities carried under the assignment of the university or federal research institutions;
- The amount of the grant shall not be higher than the annual net wage of scientific personnel with same age and qualifications;
- The fellowship can not be granted to a researcher who, before beginning his/her doctoral studies, was employed as an assistant at the university or federal scientific institution for more than one year;
- Since there is no employment relationship between the researcher and the host institution, the fellow researcher may not exercise any other remunerated tasks at the university (or federal scientific institution). It is however accepted to

guide and/or monitor projects of students as long as this is limited to four hours a week.

3.2. How to open a bank account?

To open a current or checking account you will need a proof of identity (a valid passport) and a proof of legal residence in Belgium. Some banks may ask you for an extra document to prove your identity and residence in Belgium. Once the account is opened the bank will send you a debit card, probably with the Bancontact/Mister Cash logo. This card has to be signed and activated by choosing and confirming a personal PIN code. With this current account you will be able to carry out all standard bank transactions in Belgium such as cash withdrawals, debit card payments for items bought in shops, transferring money from your bank account to somebody else's bank account, etc. It is recommendable to apply for a "maestro" function on your card, which will allow you to withdraw money when you are abroad. Most banks also provide home-banking possibilities (via internet). You may also request a credit card. However, some banks may wait a while to check whether you have sufficient deposits coming on your account.

4. Bringing along family members

4.1. Eligible family members and required documents

Following family members, irrespective of their nationality, may join you to Belgium based on the principle of family reunification:

- your spouse
- your children younger than 21, or the ones who are (financially) dependent on you
- your partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

4.1.2. Spouse and children

If your family members are non – EEA citizens, they need to apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in their home country before coming to Belgium. In addition to their passport or identity card, your family members have to provide documents proving their marital or parental link with you (marriage certificate and/or birth certificate). Children older than 21 will have to prove their dependency (e.g. with bank statements). If the required documents are not in English, Dutch, French or German, they need to be translated into one of these languages. The translation of these documents must be authenticated as well. If all requirements are fulfilled, your family members will receive a visa type D (‘family reunification visa’). With this visa they can travel to Belgium. As soon as the Directive 2004/38 is implemented into national law (the deadline already expired on 30 April 2006), the municipal authorities of the place of residence will provide them a “residence card of a family member of a Union citizen”.

If your family members are EEA-citizens, they do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or identity card they have the right to enter Belgium. Once they arrive, they should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. According to Directive 2004/38 they do not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit. They will have to prove that they have a valid health insurance and that you dispose of sufficient financial means in order to support them. The municipal authorities will provide them a registration certificate.

4.1.2. Partner with whom you are having a long-term relationship

If your partner is a non-EEA citizen he or she must apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in his or her home country. There he or she will have to submit a valid travel document, a document proving that you are not married, an official copy of his or her birth certificate, an extract from his or her judicial record, a medical certificate filled out by a doctor approved by the Belgian embassy and proof that your relationship is stable and long-term (letters, photographs etc...). You will have to sign a pledge of financial support. You can request this form at the municipal authority. Once it has been legalized, the original must be send to your partner. Once the submitted documents have been verified and the application is complete, the embassy will send it to the Immigration Service at the Federal Public Service Home Affairs in Belgium, which will then decide whether or

not to issue a visa. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authority in your place of residence. Your partner will have to prove that he or she has a valid health insurance and that you dispose of sufficient financial means in order to support him or her. You and partner must actually live together in Belgium for the entire duration of your relationship and share the same household. Your partner will receive a registration certificate based on the partnership with a Union citizen.

If your family members are EEA-citizens, they do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or identity card they have the right to enter Belgium. Once they arrive, they should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. They will have to prove that they have a valid health insurance and that you dispose of sufficient financial means in order to support them. The municipal authorities will provide them a registration certificate. According to Directive 2004/38 they do not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit.

4.2. Spouse's and partner's employment

4.2.1. Spouse

If your spouse, resident in Belgium under the “family reunification” scheme, wishes to work in Belgium, no formalities are needed. He or she will be authorized to work without having to apply for a work permit, unless you are a national of a new EU - Member State (apart from Cyprus and Malta). In that case your spouse will still need a work permit B. The employer has to apply for this work permit at the regional employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

4.2.2. Partner

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she will not be able to work without a work permit C. He or she must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

If your partner is a EEA-national, he or she will not need a work permit if he or she is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If he or she is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit C is required, since he or she is not yet covered by the rules of free movement of workers. Your partner must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). This work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

II. Non-EEA nationals

1. Visa and residence permit

1.1. Formalities prior tot departure

You need to apply for a visa at the Belgian Embassy or Consulate in your home country. The addresses of the Belgian Embassies abroad can be found on following website: → <http://www.diplomatie.be/en/addresses/abroad/websites.asp>.

1.1.1. Short-term visa

The short-term “Schengen” visa is a tourist visa and allows you to stay in Belgium for maximum three months. It will also give you the right to travel freely through all the Schengen Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden).

However, if you are a citizen of one of the following countries, you do not need a short-term visa to enter Belgium: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, Estonia, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Israel, Japan, South-Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, Nicaragua, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Romania, San Marino, Singapore, Switzerland, The United States of America, Uruguay, Vatican City and Venezuela.

! Attention !

Since it is rather difficult to prolong your short-term visa once you are in Belgium, it is recommendable to apply immediately for a long term visa type D (see 1.1.2) before coming to Belgium. This visa will allow you to stay in Belgium for a period longer than three months.

1.1.2. Long-term visa

If you want to reside and do research in Belgium for a period longer than three months, you will have to apply for an “authorisation for provisional sojourn”, also referred to as the “long-term visa type D”. It is important to notice that this visa type D only allows you to enter Belgium once. This means that while you are waiting for your Belgian residence permit (cfr. infra), which can take several weeks, you are not allowed to travel outside Belgium. That’s why it can be useful to apply for a combined D + C visa, which was created especially to bridge this waiting period. With this visa you will be able to enter Belgium, apply for a residence permit, and then travel freely through all the Schengen countries during the first three months after the visa was issued.

You must apply for this visa at a Belgian diplomatic or consular post in your country of origin. You will have to submit following documents:

- a valid passport (with at least one year’s validity remaining)
- a proof of enrolment at your host university.
- a proof of solvency (‘sufficient financial means’). There are three acceptable types of the proof of solvency: a certificate of your host university or another institution demonstrating that you have been awarded a scholarship, a form ‘agreement for acceptance of financial responsibility’, signed by your parents, relatives or private sponsors in Belgium who must avail of sufficient income, or a proof of your own financial means by transferring a certain amount to a blocked bank account in Belgium in your name.
- a recent certificate of good conduct covering the last five years. This certificate is an extract from the criminal records which can be provided by the police department in your home country. If the police department does not provide this kind of certificates, the Belgian embassy will help you out.
- a medical certificate. You can obtain the official form from your host university or the Belgian diplomatic service in your home country. This certificate has to be completed by a doctor recognized by the Belgian embassy. It should state that you are in good health and not a carrier of contagious diseases.

For more information on visa and residence formalities, please visit the website of the Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs:

→ <http://diplobel.fgov.be/en/travel/traveldocs.asp>.

1.2. Formalities on arrival in Belgium

Once the visa is issued and you arrive in Belgium, you must go personally to the municipal administration (the “Foreigners Office”) of your place of residence in order to apply for a residence permit. You will need to present following documents:

- a valid passport or identity card, with the “authorization for provisional sojourn” stamped in it.
- a proof of solvency or scholarship attestation.
- a proof of enrolment at your host university.
- four recent passport size photographs.

A police officer will have to confirm that you actually reside at the given address. If you are not home at the time of the police officer’s visit, you will receive a letter inviting you to report to the police station in your district. Around six weeks after registration, a “certificate of registration in the alien’s register” will be issued, your residence permit. This white card will also function as your identity card and you are required to carry it with you always. Your residence permit has to be renewed every year.

2. *Social security*

Doctoral scholarships are subject to full or partial social security coverage. Whether you have full or partial coverage depends upon the fact whether you are a national of a country with which Belgium concluded a bilateral agreement relating to social security or not. Belgium signed a bilateral social security treaty with Algeria, Australia, Canada, Chile, Israel, Croatia, Morocco, the Philippines, San Marino, Tunisia, Turkey, the United States, Japan and the independent states that used to form

the former Yugoslavia. If you are a national of one of these countries, your fellowship will be subject to **full** social security contributions: your personal contribution will amount to 13,07% of your fellowship, your guest institution will pay 34,36%. This means you will be covered for health care, incapacity for work, retirement and unemployment. You will also be entitled to receive child allowances.

If you are a national of a country with which Belgium did not conclude a bilateral social security treaty, your fellowship will be subject to **partial** social security contributions: your personal contribution will amount to 4,7% of your fellowship, your guest institution will pay 23,23%. This means you will be covered for health care, incapacity for work and child allowances, but not for unemployment and retirement.

In this guide, only a summary review of the different social security schemes will be given. For detailed information on the Belgian social security system please consult the brochure *“Everything you always wanted to know about social security”*. You can download it on the website from the Federal Public Service for Social Security: <http://www.socialsecurity.fgov.be/EN/index.htm>.

For a list of the most important public social security institutions, with addresses and websites, see annex V.

2.1. Health care

Your doctoral fellowship will cover your health insurance. However, you will still need to affiliate with a mutual health insurance company (“ziekenfonds / mutuelle”) as soon as you arrive in Belgium. The choice is free. There are several health insurance companies and they differ through political affiliation and the fact that they are denominational (Christian) or independent. Membership of a Belgian health insurance company entitles you to a full or partial (depending on the type of service) refund of the costs of medical care (e.g. doctor visits, hospital treatment, surgery, etc.) and a price reduction at the pharmacist. You will receive a membership card (“SIS-card”) as proof of affiliation. On this card you will find your own social security number.

2.2. Incapacity for work

2.2.1. Illness

If you are absent due to illness, you should inform your host university as soon as possible. If the absence is longer than one month, your health insurance company will take over the monthly scholarship payments to your bank account. The payments you will receive will be slightly less than your normal scholarship after the first month.

2.2.2. Maternity and paternity

Pregnant doctoral students are entitled to maternity benefits and have a maximum maternity leave of 15 weeks. You will have to start this leave at least one week before the birth of the child. In Belgium, also paternity leave exists. On the occasion of the birth of your child, you have the right to be absent from work for 10 days. These 10 days have to be taken up within 30 days after the birth and they can be taken up in one or several periods.

2.2.3. Work-related accidents and occupational illnesses

A work-related accident can be defined as any accident leading to physical injury that occurs because of work, during work or on your way to or from your workplace. Occupational diseases are diseases recognised as such and are registered in a list. If you can not be present at the university due to a work-related accident, it is necessary to report this as soon as possible to your host university. The university's insurance company will take over the monthly scholarship payments to your bank account and the medical costs will be reimbursed.

2.3. Retirement (only in case of full coverage)

During your research stay in Belgium, you will be building up pension or retirement rights through the social security contribution which are extracted directly from your fellowship. But what happens with your Belgian pension if you move back to your home country after you finished your research stay in Belgium?

If you move to a country **inside the European Economic Area** and you retire there, your Belgian pension will be exported according to Regulation 1408/71. According to this Regulation, which also applies to non – EEA nationals since Regulation 859/2003 entered into force, every Member State where a person was insured for at least one year will have to pay a proportional old age pension, corresponding to the insurance period completed in that country. However, the pension of a country will only be paid if you have reached the retirement age of that country. In Belgium the retirement age is 65.

If you retire in a country **outside the European Economic Area**, your Belgian pension will be exported only if you are a national of a country with which Belgium concluded a bilateral social security treaty (Algeria, Australia, Canada, Chile, Israel, Croatia, Morocco, the Philippines, San Marino, Tunisia, Turkey, the United States and the independent states that used to form the former Yugoslavia). If you are not a national of one of these countries, you will normally only receive a pension if you stay in Belgium.

For more detailed information on your Belgian pension rights, please consult the brochure “*Working and/or living abroad*”. You can download it on the website from the Belgian National Pension Office:

→ http://www.onprvp.fgov.be/onprvp2004/NL/T/T_d/T_d_00.asp

2.4. Unemployment (only in case of full coverage)

In principle, you will only be able to profit from Belgian unemployment benefits if you can legally stay in Belgium after your doctoral fellowship has ended. Most doctoral students only have residence in Belgium for study reasons and will have to return to their home country after they have obtained the doctoral degree. However, if you can extend your legal residence in Belgium after your scholarship has ended, you can ask for a C4-form at your host university. With this form, you can go to the Belgian Labour Office (RVA - ONEM) and apply for an unemployment allowance. Next to legally residing in Belgium, you will have to fulfill other requirements in

order to receive these benefits. One of the conditions is that you must have worked for a certain number of days during the period of reference relevant for your age.

2.5. Child allowances

2.5.1. Maternity fee

If you or your partner gets pregnant, you can apply for a maternity fee. You may demand this fee from the sixth month of pregnancy onwards, and it can be granted two months before the supposed date of birth mentioned in the medical certificate that should be enclosed with the application form. The amount of maternity fee depends on the child's rank in the family.

2.5.2. Child allowance

In principle, you can apply for Belgian child allowances for children younger than 18. However, if your child follows a higher education or does an internship or vocational training the age limit of an entitled child will rise up to 25 years. The amount of the allowance depends on the number of children and their age. According to Belgian legislation, child allowances can only be granted for children that live in Belgium. However, exceptions are possible:

- if your child lives in another EEA-country, the benefit must be paid as if he or she was resident in Belgium. This does not apply however, if family benefits are also payable under the legislation of the Member State in which the children live. In that case it is the latter Member State that will provide the child allowance. However, if Belgian child allowances are higher, Belgian authorities will pay the difference.
- if you are a national of a country with which Belgium concluded a bilateral social security agreement to that effect (Algeria, Morocco, Tunis, Turkey and the independent states of the former Yugoslavia) and your child lives in this country, you will also receive child allowances. The amounts and conditions in order to receive the allowances are determined in the respective agreement. The number of entitled children is limited to four.

- if your child lives in a non-EEA country, you can ask the Belgian Minister of Social Affairs to make an exception to the rule that the children need to reside in Belgium.

2.6. Care insurance

This care insurance (“zorgverzekering”) provides monthly payments for non-medical expenses to insured persons who are in need of long-term care. Affiliation is obligatory for every person who is 25 years or older, and has been living in Flanders for more than six months. If you live in Brussels Capital Region, affiliation is not obliged. If you live in Wallonia, affiliation is not possible. The cost (25 €per year) is normally not covered by your fellowship, so you will have to pay it yourself. This insurance is only applicable if you have been living in Flanders or the Brussels Capital Region for at least five years. Since most doctoral students go back to their home country after their doctoral studies are finished, you may never be able to benefit from this. Nevertheless, participation in this scheme is compulsory.

3. Taxes and other financial issues

3.1. Taxes

According to Belgian law, fellowships are exempt from taxes if they are provided by authorized institutions (annex II) and if following conditions are met:

- The fellowship facilitates extraordinary contributions to scientific research;
- The fellowship is awarded in circumstances which allow personal initiative by the fellowship holder in continuing his studies or conducting his research;
- The fellowship is granted free of charge, i.e. every dependency towards the grantor is excluded;
- The fellowship is directly nor indirectly financed by Belgian or foreign industrial, trading or agricultural companies, which may benefit, in one way or another, from the subsidized research activities.

Doctoral fellowships of a Belgian university or federal scientific institution are exempt from taxes for a maximum of 48 consecutive months. Following conditions need to be fulfilled:

- The fellowship cannot be considered as professional income for activities carried under the assignment of the university or federal research institutions;
- The amount of the grant shall not be higher than the annual net wage of scientific personnel with same age and qualifications;
- The fellowship can not be granted to a researcher who, before beginning his/her doctoral studies, was employed as an assistant at the university or federal scientific institution for more than one year;
- Since there is no employment relationship between the researcher and the host institution, the fellow researcher may not exercise any other remunerated tasks at the university (or federal scientific institution). It is however accepted to guide and/or monitor projects of students as long as this is limited to four hours a week.

3.2. How to open a bank account?

To open a current or checking account you will need a proof of identity (a valid passport) and a proof of legal residence in Belgium (your residence permit). Some banks may ask you for an extra document to prove your identity and residence in Belgium. Once the account is opened the bank will send you a debit card, probably with the Bancontact/Mister Cash logo. This card has to be signed and activated by choosing and confirming a personal PIN code. With this current account you will be able to carry out all standard bank transactions in Belgium such as cash withdrawals, debit card payments for items bought in shops, transferring money from your bank account to somebody else's bank account, etc. It is recommendable to apply for a "maestro" function on your card, which will allow you to withdraw money when you are abroad. Most banks also provide home-banking possibilities (via internet). You may also request a credit card. However, some banks may wait a while to check whether you have sufficient deposits coming on your account.

4. Bringing along family members

4.1. Eligible family members and required documents

Following family members may join you to Belgium, based on the principle of family reunification:

- your spouse (older than 21)
- your children younger than 18
- your partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

4.1.1. Spouse and children

If your family members are non – EEA citizens, they need to apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” at the Belgian embassy in their home country before coming to Belgium. In addition to their passport or identity card, they must produce documents proving their marital or parental link with you (marriage certificate and/or birth certificate), as well as a copy of your Belgian residence permit (your certificate of registration in the aliens’ register). Furthermore, they will have to provide proof of “suitable housing” in Belgium. When you are already in Belgium and have found suitable housing for yourself and your family, a police agent will visit you and draw up a report for the communal authority. The latter will provide you a document which you have to send to your family (or the Belgian embassy in their country) to prove that suitable housing in Belgium is ready. Besides that you will have to provide the evidence that you dispose of sufficient financial means in order to support your family members, and that you have a sickness insurance which also covers your family members. Your family members will have to submit all these required documents to the Belgian embassy in their home country in order to receive a “family reunification” visa. If these documents are not in English, Dutch, French or German, they need to be translated into one of these languages. The translation of these documents must be authenticated as well. If all requirements are fulfilled, your family members will receive a family reunification visa (visa type D). Once your family members arrive in Belgium, they have to register at the communal authority of the place of residence. A police officer will check whether you and your spouse and/or children are living together at the given address. After registration, your family members receive a residence permit (a certificate of inscription in the alien’s register).

If your family members are EEA-citizens, they do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or identity card they have the right to enter Belgium. Once they arrive, they should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. They will have to prove that they have a valid health insurance and that they dispose of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide them a registration certificate. According to Directive 2004/38 they do not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit.

4.1.2. Partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she must apply for a visa type D at the Belgian embassy in his or her home country before coming to Belgium. He or she must submit a valid travel document, a copy of your Belgian residence permit, a document proving that you are not married, an official copy of his or her birth certificate, an extract from his or her judicial record, a medical certificate filled out by a doctor approved by the Belgian embassy and prove that your relationship is stable and long-term (letters, photographs etc...). He or she will also have to provide the evidence that suitable housing in Belgium is ready. You will have to prove that you dispose of financial resources which are sufficient to maintain yourself and your partner, and that you have a sickness insurance which also covers your partner. Once the submitted documents have been verified and the application is complete, the embassy will send it to the Immigration Service at the Federal Public Service Home Affairs in Belgium, which will then decide whether or not to issue a visa. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register at the municipal authority in your place of residence. You and your partner must actually live together in Belgium for the entire duration of your relationship and share the same household. Your partner will receive a residence permit (a certificate of inscription in the alien's register).

If your partner is a EEA-national, he or she can come to Belgium only by presenting a valid passport or identity card. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. According to Directive 2004/38 your partner does not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit. He or she will have to prove that he or she has a valid health insurance and that he or she disposes of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide your partner a registration certificate.

4.2. Spouse's and partner's employment

4.2.1. Spouse

If your spouse is a non – EEA national, he or she must apply for a work permit B through his or her potential employer. According to Belgian law, a work permit will only be issued to a non-EEA citizen if he or she possesses special expertise or skills, which are not available on the Belgian and European labour market. The employer has to request for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). It is valid for a maximum period of twelve months and only for one single employer.

If your spouse is an EEA – national, he or she will be authorized to work without needing a work permit if he is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If your spouse is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit B will be required, since he or she is not yet fully covered by the free movement of workers.

4.2.2. Partner

If your partner is not an EEA-national, he or she will not be able to work without a work permit C. He or she must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

If your partner is an EEA-national, he or she will not need a work permit if he or she is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If he or she is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit C is required, since he or she is not yet covered by the rules of free movement of workers. Your partner must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). This work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS WITH A FELLOWSHIP

I. Nationals of the EEA and Switzerland

European Economic Area: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Czech Republic, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein.

1. Residence

A distinction has to be made between nationals of the “old” Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Greece, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Spain and Sweden) and Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland on the one hand and nationals of the “new” Member States (Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic) on the other hand. Regarding residence formalities nationals of Cyprus and Malta are treated as nationals of old Member States.

1.1. Nationals of the old Member States plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta.

You do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or national identity card you have the right to enter and reside in Belgium for a period of maximum three months. In case the duration of your stay in Belgium exceeds three months, you will have to register in person with the communal authority of your intended place of residence.

You have to submit following documents:

- a valid passport or identity card.
- five passport size photographs
- your scholarship attestation (as a proof of sufficient financial means)

- an official letter of appointment from your host institution
- your European Health Insurance Card, delivered by your home country.

According to Directive 2004/38* of the European Parliament and Council, EU citizens do not longer need to apply for a residence permit if they move to another Member State. A mere registration with the competent authorities of the new State of residence suffices. The municipal authorities will provide you a blue card (the former residence permit for EU-citizens) which can be considered as a registration certificate.

* On 29 April 2004, a new Directive 2004/38 of the European Parliament and Council on the right of EU-citizens to move freely and reside within the European Union was adopted. Although not yet implemented into national law (the deadline expired on 30 April 2006), most of its provisions have direct force. This Directive abolishes residence permits for Union citizens. Union citizens and their family members may reside for a period up to three months without any conditions or formalities other than the requirement to hold a valid identity card or passport. For periods of residence of more than three months, a registration with the competent authorities will do. The Directive maintains the requirements that Union citizens need to be economically active or to dispose of sufficient resources as well as a comprehensive sickness insurance in order to avoid that they become an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State.

1.2. Nationals of the new Member States (apart from Cyprus and Malta)

You have to apply for an 'authorisation for provisional sojourn' (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in your home country. This visa will only be issued if you submit following documents:

- a valid passport (with at least one year's validity remaining)
- proof of your scholarship attestation (as proof of sufficient financial means)
- an official letter of appointment from your host institution
- a recent certificate of good conduct covering the last five years
- a medical certificate.

Once the visa is issued and you arrive in Belgium, you must go personally to the Foreigner's Office of the municipal authority of your place of residence in order to be registered. Following documents must be submitted:

- a valid passport or identity card with at least one year's validity remaining with the visa stamped in it
- an official letter of appointment from your host institution
- four recent passport size photographs.

According to Directive 2004/38* of the European Parliament and Council, EU citizens do not longer need to apply for a residence permit if they move to another Member State. A mere registration with the competent authorities of the new State of residence suffices. The municipal authorities will provide you a blue card (the former residence permit for EU-citizens) which can be considered as a registration certificate.

* On 29 April 2004, Directive 2004/38 of the European Parliament and Council on the right of EU-citizens to move freely and reside within the European Union was adopted. Although not yet implemented into national law (the deadline expired on 30 April 2006), most of its provisions have direct force. This Directive abolishes residence permits for Union citizens. Union citizens and their family members may reside for a period up to three months without any conditions or formalities other than the requirement to hold a valid identity card or passport. For periods of residence of more than three months, a registration with the competent authorities. The Directive maintains the requirement that Union citizens need to be economically active or to dispose of sufficient resources as well as a comprehensive sickness insurance in order to avoid that they become an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State.

2. Social security

According to Belgian legislation, your fellowship will be subject to **full** social security contributions: your personal contribution will amount to 13, 07% of your fellowship, your guest institution will pay 34,36%. This means you will be covered

for health care, incapacity for work, retirement and unemployment. You will also be entitled to child allowances.

In this guide, only a summary review of the different social security schemes will be given. For detailed information on the Belgian social security system please consult the brochure *“Everything you always wanted to know about social security”*. You can download it on the website from the Federal Public Service for Social Security: <http://www.socialsecurity.fgov.be/EN/index.htm>.

For a list of the most important Belgian social security institutions, see annex V.

2.1. Health care

Once you arrive in Belgium, you will have to affiliate with a mutual health insurance company (“ziekenfonds / mutuelle”). The choice is free. There are several health insurance companies and they differ through political affiliation and the fact that they are denominational (Christian) or independent. Membership of a Belgian health insurance company entitles you to a full or partial (depending on the type of service) refund of the costs of medical care (e.g. doctor visits, hospital treatment, surgery, etc.) and a price reduction at the pharmacist. You will receive a membership card (“SIS-card”) as proof of affiliation. On this card you will find your own social security number.

2.2. Incapacity for work

2.2.1. Illness

If you are absent due to illness, you should inform your host university or institution as soon as possible. If the absence is longer than one month, your health insurance company will take over the monthly scholarship payments to your bank account. The payments you will receive will be slightly less than your normal scholarship after the first month.

2.2.2. Maternity and paternity

Pregnant post - doctoral researchers will be entitled to maternity benefits and can have a maximum maternity leave of 15 weeks. You will have to start this leave at least one week before the birth of the child. In Belgium, also paternity leave exists. On the occasion of the birth of your child, you have the right to be absent from work for 10 days. These 10 days have to be taken up within 30 days after the birth and they can be taken up in one or several periods.

2.2.3. Work-related accidents and occupational diseases

A work-related accident is defined as any accident leading to physical injury that occurs because of work, during work or on your way to or from your workplace. Occupational diseases are diseases recognised as such and are registered in a list. If you can not be present at the university due to a work-related accident, it is necessary to report this as soon as possible to your host university. The university's insurance company will take over the monthly scholarship payments to your bank account and the medical costs will be reimbursed.

2.3. Retirement

During your research stay in Belgium, you will be building up pension or retirement rights through the social security contributions, which will be extracted directly from your fellowship by your host institution. But what happens with your Belgian pension if you move back to your home country after you finished your research stay in Belgium? According to EU Regulation 1408/71, every Member State where a person was insured for at least one year will have to pay a proportional old age pension, corresponding to the insurance period completed in that country. However, the pension of this country will only be paid if you have reached the retirement age of that country. In Belgium the retirement age is 65.

For more detailed information on your Belgian pension rights, please consult the brochure "*Working and/or living abroad*". You can download it on the website from the Belgian National Pension Office:

→ http://www.onprvp.fgov.be/onprvp2004/NL/T/T_d/T_d_00.asp

2.4. Unemployment

In principle, you will only be able to profit from Belgian unemployment benefits if you can legally stay in Belgium after your postdoctoral fellowship has ended. Next to legally residing in Belgium, you will have to fulfill other requirements in order to receive these benefits. One of the conditions is that you must have worked for a certain number of days during the period of reference relevant for your age. The working periods performed in any other Member State can be taken into account. These insurance periods can be certified by an E 301 form, issued by the competent institution of the Member State where these periods have been accomplished.

2.5. Child allowances

2.5.1. Maternity fee

If you or your partner gets pregnant, you can apply for a maternity fee. You can demand this fee from the sixth month of pregnancy onwards, and it can be granted two months before the supposed date of birth mentioned in the medical certificate that should be enclosed with the application form. The amount of maternity fee depends on the child's rank in the family.

2.5.2. Child allowance

In principle, you can apply for Belgian child allowances for children younger than 18. However, if your child follows a higher education or does an internship or vocational training the age limit of an entitled child will rise up to 25 years. The amount of the allowance depends on the number of children and their age. According to Belgian legislation, child allowances can only be granted for children that live in Belgium. However, exceptions are possible:

- if your child lives in another EEA-country, the benefit must be paid as if he or she was resident in Belgium. This does not apply however, if family benefits are also payable under the legislation of the Member State in which the children live. In that case it is the latter Member State that will provide the child allowance. However, if Belgian child allowances are higher, Belgian authorities will pay the difference.

- if your child lives in a non-EEA country, you can ask the Belgian Minister of Social Affairs to make an exception to the rule that the children need to reside in Belgium.

2.6. Care insurance

This care insurance (“zorgverzekering”) provides monthly payments for non-medical expenses to insured persons who are in need of long-term care. Affiliation is obligatory for every person who is 25 years or older, and has been living in Flanders for more than six months. If you live in Brussels Capital Region, affiliation is not obliged. If you live in Wallonia, affiliation is not possible. The cost (25 €per year) is normally not covered by your fellowship, so you will have to pay it yourself. This insurance is only applicable if you have been living in Flanders or the Brussels Capital Region for at least five years. Since most researchers go back to their home country after their fellowship has ended, you may never be able to benefit from this. Nevertheless, participation in this scheme is compulsory.

3. Taxes and other financial issues

3.1. Taxes

According to Belgian law, fellowships are exempt from taxes if they are provided by authorized institutions (annex II) and if following conditions are met:

- The fellowship facilitates extraordinary contributions to scientific research;
- The fellowship is awarded in circumstances which allow personal initiative by the fellowship holder in continuing his studies or conducting his research;
- The fellowship is granted free of charge, i.e. every dependency towards the grantor is excluded;
- The fellowship is directly nor indirectly financed by Belgian or foreign industrial, trading or agricultural companies, which may benefit, in one way or another, from the subsidized research activities.

3.2. How to open a bank account?

To open a current or checking account you will need proof of identity (a valid passport) and proof of legal residence in Belgium. Some banks may ask you for an extra document to prove your identity and residence in Belgium. Once the account is opened the bank will send you a debit card, probably with the Bancontact/Mister Cash logo. This card has to be signed and activated by choosing and confirming a personal PIN code. With this current account you will be able to carry out all standard bank transactions in Belgium such as cash withdrawals, debit card payments for items bought in shops, transferring money from your bank account to somebody else's bank account, etc. It is recommendable to apply for a "maestro" function on your card, which will allow you to withdraw money when you are abroad. Most banks also provide home-banking possibilities (via internet). You can also request for a credit card. However, some banks may wait a while to check whether you have sufficient deposits coming into your account.

4. Bringing along family members

4.1. Eligible family members and required documents

Following family members, irrespective of their nationality, may join you to Belgium, based on the principle of family reunification:

- your spouse;
- your partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship;
- your (grand)children and the (grand)children of your spouse or partner who are younger than 21, or the ones who are (financially) dependent on you;
- your and your spouse or partner's dependent ascendants.

4.1.2. Spouse, (grand)children and ascendants

If your family members are non-EEA citizens, they need to apply for an "authorization for provisional sojourn" (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in their home country before coming to Belgium. In addition to their passport or identity card,

they must produce documents proving their marital or parental link with you (marriage certificate and/or birth certificate). Children older than 21 and your ascendants will have to prove their dependency (e.g. with bank statements). If the required documents are not in English, Dutch, French or German, they need to be translated into one of these languages. The translation of these documents must be authenticated as well. If all requirements are fulfilled, your family members will receive a special “family reunification visa”. With this visa they can travel to Belgium. As soon as the Directive 2004/38 is implemented into national law (the deadline already expired on 30 April 2006), the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence will provide them a “residence card of a family member of a Union citizen”.

If your family members are EEA-citizens, they do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or identity card they have the right to enter Belgium. Once they arrive, they should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. The municipal authorities will provide them a registration certificate. According to Directive 2004/38 they do not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit.

4.1.2. Partner with whom you are having a long-term relationship

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she must apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in his or her home country before coming to Belgium. He or she will have to submit a valid travel document, a document proving that you are not married, an official copy of his or her birth certificate, an extract from his or her judicial record, a medical certificate filled out by a doctor approved by the Belgian embassy and proof that your relationship is stable and long-term (letters, photographs etc...). You will have to sign a pledge of financial support. You can request this form at the municipal authority of your place of residence in Belgium. Once it has been legalized, the original must be sent to your partner. Once the submitted documents have been verified and the application is complete, the embassy will send it to the Immigration Service at the Federal Public Service Home Affairs in Belgium, which will then decide whether or not to issue a visa. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register at the municipal authority of your place of residence. You and partner must actually live together in Belgium for the entire duration of your relationship and share the same household.

Your partner will receive a registration certificate based on the partnership with a Union citizen.

If your partner is an EEA-national, he or she can come to Belgium only by presenting a valid passport or identity card. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. According to Directive 2004/38 your partner does not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit. He or she will have to prove that he or she has a valid health insurance and that he or she disposes of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide your partner a registration certificate.

4.2. Spouse's and partner's employment

4.2.1. Spouse

If your spouse, resident in Belgium under the “family reunification” scheme, wishes to work in Belgium, no formalities are needed. He or she will be authorized to work without having to apply for a work permit, unless you are a national of a new EU - Member State (apart from Cyprus and Malta). In that case your spouse will still need a work permit B. The employer has to apply for this work permit at the regional employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

4.2.2. Partner

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she will not be able to work without a work permit C. He or she must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

If your partner is a EEA-national, he or she will not need a work permit if he or she is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If he or she is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit C is required, since he or she is not yet completely covered by the rules of free movement of workers. Your partner must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). This work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

II. Non-EEA nationals

1. Visa and residence permit

1.1. Formalities prior tot departure

On 12 October 2005, a new European Directive 2005/71/EC was adopted. This Directive lays down the conditions for the admission of researchers coming from a non-EEA country to a Member State of the European Union for more than three months for the purposes of carrying out a research project in the frame of a hosting agreement with a research organization. Possession of such a hosting agreement will automatically imply the right to work and to do research without needing a work permit. The purpose of this Directive is to facilitate the entry of non-EEA researchers into the European Union, and to contribute to the Lisbon objectives of making Europe the most competitive and knowledge-based economy of the world. Recently this Directive was implemented into Belgian legislation.

The first thing you have to do if you want to carry out a research project at a research institute in Belgium, is signing a hosting agreement with this institute. This is a legal contract whereby you undertake to complete the research project and the organization undertakes to host you. Your host institute will help you out with the practical arrangements and administrative formalities. Thanks to the new Directive, a work permit is not longer required for non-EEA researchers who have signed a hosting agreement with an approved research institute (according to the former legislation, post-doctoral fellowshipholders from outside the EEA were already exempt from a work permit, but only for a period of three years). Once you are in the possession of this hosting agreement, you must apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” (a visa type D) at the Belgian embassy or consulate of your home country. You will have to provide the following documents:

- a valid travel document
- the hosting agreement signed by the Belgian research organization
- a medical certificate which states that you do not suffer from certain contagious diseases. This form should be completed by a doctor recognized by the Belgian embassy.
- a recent certificate of good conduct. This certificate is an extract from the criminal records which can be provided by the police department in

your home country. If the police department does not provide these certificates, the Belgian embassy will help you out.

If your application is approved, you will receive an “authorization for provisional sojourn”, which allows you to travel to Belgium and to stay there for a period of time limited to the duration of the hosting agreement and thus of your research project in Belgium.

If you already reside legally in Belgium, you shouldn't return home to apply for an authorization for provisional sojourn. You can submit your application for a residence permit immediately at the municipal authorities in your place of residence.

1.2. Formalities on arrival in Belgium

Once you arrive in Belgium, you must go personally to the foreigners' office of the municipal authorities of your place of residence in order to apply for a residence permit. You will have to show a valid passport or identity card, the hosting agreement and four recent passport size photographs. A police officer will have to confirm that you actually reside at the given address. If you are not at home at the time of the police officer's visit, you will receive a letter inviting you to report to the police station in your district. Around six weeks after registration, you will receive a “certificate of registration in the aliens' register”, your residence permit. The duration of validity is the same as the duration of the research project. This card will function as your Belgian identity card and you are required to always carry it with you.

2. Social security

Your right to Belgian social security benefits depends on the fact whether you are a national of a country with which Belgium concluded a bilateral agreement relating to social security or not. Belgium signed a bilateral social security treaty with Algeria, Australia, Canada, Chile, Israel, Croatia, Morocco, the Philippines, San Marino, Tunisia, Turkey, the United States, Japan and the independent states that used to form the former Yugoslavia. If you are a national of one of these countries, your fellowship will be subject to **full** social security contributions: your personal contribution will amount to 13, 07% of your fellowship, your guest institution will pay 34, 36%. This

means you will be covered for health care, incapacity for work, retirement and unemployment. You will also be entitled to child allowances.

If you are a national from a country with which Belgium did not conclude a bilateral social security treaty, your fellowship will be subject to **partial** social security contributions: your personal contribution will amount to 4,7% of your fellowship, your guest institution will pay 23, 23 %. This means you will be covered for health care, incapacity for work and child allowances, but not for unemployment and retirement.

In this guide, only a summary review of the different social security schemes will be given. For detailed information on the Belgian social security system please consult the brochure *“Everything you always wanted to know about social security”*. You can download it on the website from the Federal Public Service for Social Security: → <http://www.socialsecurity.fgov.be/EN/index.htm>.

For a list of the most important Belgian social security institutions, see annex V.

2.1. Health care

Once you arrive in Belgium, you will have to affiliate with a mutual health insurance company (“ziekenfonds / mutuelle”). The choice is free. There are several health insurance funds and they differ through political affiliation and the fact that they are denominational (Christian) or independent. Membership of a Belgian health insurance fund entitles you to a full or partial (depending on the type of service) refund of the costs of medical care (e.g. doctor visits, hospital treatment, surgery...) and a price reduction at the pharmacist. You will receive a membership card (SIS-card) as proof of affiliation. On this card you will find your own social security number.

2.2. Incapacity for work

2.2.1. Illness

If you are absent due to illness, you should inform your host university or institution as soon as possible. If the absence is longer than one month, your health insurance company will take over the monthly scholarship payments to your bank account. The payments you will receive will be slightly less than your normal scholarship after the first month.

2.2.2. Maternity and paternity

Pregnant post-doctoral researchers are entitled to maternity benefits and can have a maximum maternity leave of 15 weeks. You will have to start this leave at least one week before the birth of the child. In Belgium, also paternity leave exists. On the occasion of the birth of your child, you have the right to be absent from work for 10 days. These 10 days have to be taken up within 30 days after the birth and they can be taken up in one or several periods.

2.2.3. Work-related accidents and occupational diseases

A work-related accident is defined as any accident leading to physical injury that occurs because of work, during work or on your way to or from your workplace. Occupational diseases are diseases recognised as such and are registered in a list. If you can not be present at the university due to a work-related accident, it is necessary to report this as soon as possible to your host university. The university's insurance company will take over the monthly scholarship payments to your bank account and your medical costs will be reimbursed.

2.3. Retirement (only in case of full coverage)

During your research stay in Belgium, you will be building up pension or retirement rights through the social security contributions which are extracted directly from your fellowship. But what happens with your Belgian pension if you move back to your home country after you finished your research stay in Belgium?

If you move to a country **inside the European Economic Area** and you retire there, your Belgian pension will be exported according to Regulation 1408/71. According to this Regulation, which also applies to non – EEA nationals since Regulation 859/2003 entered into force, every Member State where a person was insured for at least one

year will have to pay a proportional old age pension, corresponding to the insurance period completed in that country. However, the pension of a country will only be paid if you have reached the retirement age of that country, meaning that you will be entitled to your Belgian pension at the age of 65.

If you retire in a country **outside the European Economic Area**, your Belgian pension will be exported only if you are a national of a country with which Belgium concluded a bilateral social security treaty (Algeria, Australia, Canada, Chile, Israel, Croatia, Morocco, the Philippines, San Marino, Tunisia, Turkey, the United States and the independent states that used to form the former Yugoslavia). If you are not a national of one of these countries, you will only receive a pension if you stay in Belgium.

For more detailed information on your Belgian pension rights, please consult the brochure "*Working and/or living abroad*". You can download it on the website from the Belgian National Pension Office:

→ http://www.onprvp.fgov.be/onprvp2004/NL/T/T_d/T_d_00.asp

2.4. Unemployment (only in case of full coverage)

In principle, you will only be able to profit from Belgian unemployment benefits if you can legally stay in Belgium after your fellowship has ended. Most researchers go back to their home country after their fellowship has ended. However, if you can extend your legal residence in Belgium, you can ask for a C4-form at your host university. With this form, you can go to the National Labour Office (RVA – ONEM, see annex V) and apply for an unemployment allowance. Next to legally residing in Belgium, you will have to fulfill other requirements in order to receive these benefits. One of the conditions is that you must have worked for a number of days during the period of reference relevant for your age.

2.5. Child allowances

2.5.1. Maternity fee

If you or your partner gets pregnant, you can apply for a maternity fee. You can demand this fee from the sixth month of pregnancy onwards, and it can be granted two months before the supposed date of birth mentioned in the medical certificate that should be enclosed with the application form. The amount of maternity fee depends on the child's rank in the family.

2.5.2. Child allowance

In principle, you can apply for Belgian child allowances for children younger than 18. However, if your child follows a higher education or does an internship or vocational training the age limit of an entitled child will rise up to 25 years. The amount of the allowance depends on the number of children and their age. According to Belgian legislation, child allowances can only be granted for children that live in Belgium. However, exceptions are possible:

- if your child lives in another EEA-country, the benefit must be paid as if he or she was resident in Belgium. This does not apply however, if family benefits are also payable under the legislation of the Member State in which the children live. In that case it is the latter Member State that will provide the child allowance. However, if Belgian child allowances are higher, Belgian authorities will pay the difference.
- if you are a national of a country with which Belgium concluded a bilateral social security agreement to that effect (Algeria, Morocco, Tunis, Turkey and the independent states of the former Yugoslavia), and your child lives in this country, you will also receive child allowances. The amounts and conditions in order to receive these allowances are determined in the respective agreement. The number of entitled children is limited to four.
- if your child lives in a country with which Belgium did not conclude a social security agreement, the Belgian Minister of Social Affairs can make an exception to the rule that the children need to reside in Belgium.

2.6. Care insurance

This care insurance (“zorgverzekering”) provides monthly payments for non-medical expenses to insured persons who are in need of long-term care. Affiliation is obligatory for every person who is 25 years or older, and has been living in Flanders for more than six months. If you live in Brussels Capital Region, affiliation is not obliged. If you live in Wallonia, affiliation is not possible. The cost (25 €per year) is normally not covered by your fellowship, so you will have to pay it yourself. This insurance is only applicable if you have been living in Flanders or the Brussels Capital Region for at least five years. Since most researchers go back to their home country after their fellowship has ended, you may never be able to benefit from this. Nevertheless, participation in this scheme is compulsory.

3. *Taxes and other financial issues*

3.1. Taxes

According to Belgian law, fellowships are exempt from taxes if they are provided by authorized institutions (annex II) and if following conditions are met:

- The fellowship facilitates extraordinary contributions to scientific research;
- The fellowship is awarded in circumstances which allow personal initiative by the fellowship holder in continuing his studies or conducting his research;
- The fellowship is granted free of charge, i.e. every dependency towards the grantor is excluded;
- The fellowship is directly nor indirectly financed by Belgian or foreign industrial, trading or agricultural companies, which may benefit, in one way or another, from the subsidized research activities.

3.2. How to open a bank account?

To open a current or checking account, you will need a proof of identity (a valid passport) and a proof of legal residence in Belgium (your residence permit). Some banks may ask you for an extra document to prove your identity and residence in Belgium. Once the account is opened the bank will send you a debit card, probably

with the Bancontact/Mister Cash logo. This card has to be signed and activated by choosing and confirming a personal PIN code. With this current account you will be able to carry out all standard bank transactions in Belgium such as cash withdrawals, debit card payments for items bought in shops, transferring money from the bank account to somebody else's bank account etc. It is recommendable to apply for a "maestro" function on your card, which will allow you to withdraw money when you are abroad. Most banks also provide home-banking possibilities (via internet). You may also request for a credit card. However, some banks may wait a while to check whether you have sufficient deposits coming on your account.

4. Bringing along family members

4.1. Eligible family members and required documents

Following family members may join you to Belgium, based on the principle of family reunification:

- your spouse (older than 21).
- your children younger than 18.
- your partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

4.1.1. Spouse and children

If your family members are non – EEA citizens, they need to apply for an "authorization for provisional sojourn" at the Belgian embassy in their home country before coming to Belgium. In addition to their passport or identity card, they must produce documents proving their marital or parental link with you (marriage certificate and/or birth certificate), as well as a copy of your Belgian residence permit (your certificate of registration in the alien's register). You will have to provide the evidence that you dispose of a sickness insurance which also covers your family members. Your family members will have to submit all these required documents to the Belgian embassy in their home country in order to receive a "family reunification" visa. If the required documents are not in English, Dutch, French or German, they

need to be translated into one of these languages. The translation of these documents must be authenticated as well. If all requirements are fulfilled, your family members will receive a special “family reunification visa”. Once they arrive in Belgium, they will have to register at the communal authority of the place of residence. A police officer will check whether you and your spouse and/or children are living together at the given address. After registration, your family members will receive a certificate of inscription in the aliens’ register, their residence permit. The duration of validity of this residence permit shall be the same as your residence permit.

If your family members are EEA-citizens, they do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or identity card they have the right to enter Belgium. Once they arrive, they should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. They will have to prove that they have a valid health insurance and that they dispose of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide them a registration certificate. According to Directive 2004/38 they do not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit.

4.1.2. Partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she must apply for a visa type D at the Belgian embassy in his or her home country before coming to Belgium. He or she will have to submit a valid travel document, a copy of your Belgian residence permit, a document proving that you are not married, an official copy of his or her birth certificate, an extract from his or her judicial record, a medical certificate filled out by a doctor approved by the Belgian embassy and prove that your relationship is stable and long-term (letters, photographs etc...). You will have to prove that you have a valid sickness insurance which also covers your partner. Once the submitted documents have been verified and the application is complete, the embassy will send it to the Immigration Service at the Federal Public Service Home Affairs in Belgium, which will then decide whether or not to issue a visa. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authority in your place of residence. You and partner must actually live together in Belgium for the entire duration of your relationship and share the same household. Your partner will receive a residence permit (a certificate of inscription in the aliens’ register). The duration of validity of this residence permit shall be the same as your residence permit.

If your partner is a EEA-national, he or she can come to Belgium only by presenting a valid passport or identity card. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. According to Directive 2004/38 your partner does not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit. He or she will have to prove that he or she has a valid health insurance and that he or she disposes of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide your partner a registration certificate.

4.2. Spouse's and partner's employment

4.2.1. Spouse

If your spouse is a non – EEA national, he or she must apply for a work permit B through his or her potential employer. The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed. According to Belgian law, a work permit will only be issued to a non-EEA citizen if he or she possesses special expertise or skills, which are not available on the Belgian and European labour market. However, this rule does not apply to family members of researchers who are in the possession of a post-doctoral fellowship.

If your spouse is an EEA – national, he or she will be authorized to work without needing a work permit if he is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If your spouse is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit B will be required, since he or she is not yet fully covered by the free movement of workers.

4.2.2. Partner

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she will not be able to work without a work permit C. He or she must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

If your partner is an EEA-national, he or she will not need a work permit if he or she is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If he or she is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit C is required, since he or she is not yet covered by the rules of free movement of workers. Your partner must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). This work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

RESEARCHERS WITH AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

I. Nationals of the EEA and Switzerland

European Economic Area: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Czech Republic, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein.

1. Residence

A distinction has to be made between nationals of the “old” Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Greece, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Spain and Sweden) and Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland on the one hand and nationals of the “new” Member States (Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic) on the other hand. Regarding residence formalities nationals of Cyprus and Malta are treated as nationals of old Member States.

1.1. Nationals of the old Member States plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta

You do not need a visa to enter Belgium. You have the right to enter and reside in Belgium for a period of maximum three months simply by presenting a valid passport or national identity card. In case the duration of your stay in Belgium exceeds three months, you have to register at the communal authority of your intended place of residence. You will have to submit following documents:

- a valid passport or identity card
- five recent passport size photographs
- a proof of employment.

According to Directive 2004/38* of the European Parliament and Council, EU citizens do not longer need to apply for a residence permit if they move to another Member State. A mere registration with the competent authorities of the new State of residence suffices. The municipal authorities will provide you a blue card (the former residence permit for EU-citizens) which can be considered as a registration certificate.

* On 29 April 2004, the Directive 2004/38 of the European Parliament and Council on the right of EU-citizens to move freely and reside within the European Union was adopted. Although not yet implemented into national law (the deadline expired on 30 April 2006), most of its provisions have direct force. This Directive abolishes residence permits for Union citizens. Union citizens and their family members may reside for a period up to three months without any conditions or formalities other than the requirement to hold a valid identity card or passport. For periods of residence of more than three months, a registration with the competent authorities will do. The Directive maintains the requirement that Union citizens need to be economically active or to dispose of sufficient resources as well as a comprehensive sickness insurance in order to avoid that they become an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State.

1.2. Nationals of the new Member States (apart from Cyprus and Malta)

You have to apply for an 'authorisation for provisional sojourn' (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in your home country. This visa will only be provided if you submit following documents:

- a valid passport (with at least one year's validity remaining)
- a work permit (cfr. 2)
- a recent certificate of good conduct covering the last five years
- a medical certificate

Once the visa is issued and you arrive in Belgium, you must go personally to the Foreigners' Office of your place of residence in order to be registered. Following documents will have to be submitted:

- a valid passport or identity card with the visa stamped in it
- your work permit
- four recent passport size photographs.

According to Directive 2004/38* of the European Parliament and Council, EU citizens do not longer need to apply for a residence permit if they move to another Member State. A registration with the competent authorities of the new State of residence will do. The municipal authorities will provide you a blue card (the former residence permit for EU-citizens) which can be considered as a registration certificate.

* On 29 April 2004, the Directive 2004/38 of the European Parliament and Council on the right of EU-citizens to move freely and reside within the European Union was adopted. Although not yet implemented into national law (the deadline expired on 30 April 2006), most of its provisions have direct force. This Directive abolishes residence permits for Union citizens. Union citizens and their family members may reside for a period up to three months without any conditions or formalities other than the requirement to hold a valid identity card or passport. For periods of residence of more than three months, a registration with the competent authorities will do. The Directive maintains the requirements that Union citizens need to be economically active or to dispose of sufficient resources as well as a comprehensive sickness insurance in order to avoid that they become an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State.

2. Work permit

In general, EU citizens do not need a work permit thanks to the free movement of workers, a fundamental right which allows nationals of one EU Member State to work in another EU Member State under the same conditions as that Member State's own citizens. However, again a distinction has to be made between nationals of the 'old' Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Greece, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Spain and

Sweden) and nationals of the 'new' Member States (Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic). Regarding the free movement of workers citizens of Cyprus and Malta are treated as citizens of 'old' Member States: they do not require a work permit.

2.1. Nationals of 'old' Member States plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta

Your identity card or passport is enough to allow you to reside and work in Belgium. A work permit is not required since you are covered by the rules of free movement of workers.

2.2. Nationals of the 'new' Member States (apart from Cyprus and Malta)

In May 2006 Belgium decided to extend the transitional measures which restrict the free movement of workers from, to and between the new Member States. This means that if you are a national of one of these states you must have obtained a work permit before entering Belgian territory. It is your employer or host institution who will apply for this work permit at the regional employment services in Belgium. You have to send your employer a copy of your passport, a recent medical certificate issued by a doctor recognized by the Belgian embassy and three passport size photographs. Once the work permit is granted, your employer or host institution will send it to you. This work permit will allow you to apply for a visa type D (cfr. 1.2.).

3. *Social security*

According to the EC Regulation 1408/71, you are subject to the legislation of the country where you carry out your professional activity. This means that if you work in Belgium as a researcher you will be subject to the Belgian statutory system of compulsory contributions to social security. Contributions are made as a percentage of gross remuneration, with no upper limit. At present, the employee's contribution amounts to 13,07 % of the gross salary, the employer's contribution between 33,10 % and 34,85 %. Your personal contributions are deducted from your salary by your employer, who completes the necessary formalities to register you for social security.

You will be covered for health care, incapacity for work, retirement and unemployment. You will also be entitled to child allowances.

In this guide, only a summary review of the different social security schemes will be given. For detailed information on the Belgian social security system please consult the brochure *“Everything you always wanted to know about social security”*. You can download it on the website from the Federal Public Service for Social Security:
→ <http://www.socialsecurity.fgov.be/EN/index.htm>.

For a list of the most important social security institutions, see annex V.

3.1. Health care

Once you arrive in Belgium, you will have to affiliate with a mutual health insurance company (“ziekenfonds / mutuelle”). The choice is free. There are several health insurance funds and they differ through political affiliation and the fact that they are denominational (Christian) or independent. Membership of a Belgian health insurance fund entitles you to a full or partial (depending on the type of service) refund of the costs of medical care (e.g. doctor visits, hospital treatment, surgery, etc.) and a price reduction at the pharmacist. You will receive a membership card (SIS-card) as proof of affiliation. On this card you will find your own social security number.

3.2. Incapacity for work

3.2.1. Illness

If you are absent due to illness, you should inform your employer as soon as possible. You will not only obtain reimbursement of your sickness costs, but you shall also be entitled to benefits covering your income loss. To use your entitlement to sickness benefits, you must have worked 120 days or assimilated days (paid vacation days and sickness leave days) during a period of six months prior to obtaining benefits. If

necessary, Belgium will take into account activity periods completed in other Member States. You will have to present an E104 form.

3.2.2. Maternity and paternity

Pregnant researchers are entitled to maternity benefits and can have a maximum maternity leave of 15 weeks. You will have to start this leave at least one week before the birth of the child. In Belgium, also paternity leave exists. On the occasion of the birth of your child, you have the right to be absent from work for 10 days. These 10 days have to be taken up within 30 days after the birth and they can be taken up in one or several periods.

3.2.3. Work-related accidents and occupational illnesses

A work-related accident is defined as any accident leading to physical injury that occurs because of work, during work or on your way to or from your workplace. Occupational diseases are diseases recognised as such and are registered in a list. If you can not be at work because of a work-related accident, it is necessary to report this as soon as possible. Your host institution's insurance company will provide you a compensation and your medical costs will be reimbursed.

3.3. Retirement

During your research stay in Belgium, you will be building up pension or retirement rights through the social security contributions, which are deducted directly from your wage. But what happens with your Belgian pension if you move back to your home country after you finished your research stay in Belgium? According to EC Regulation 1408/71, every Member State where a person was insured for at least one year will have to pay a proportional old age pension, corresponding to the insurance period completed in that country. However, the pension of this country will only be paid if you have reached the retirement age of that country, meaning that you will be entitled to your Belgian pension at the age of 65.

For more detailed information on your Belgian pension rights, please consult the brochure “*Working and/or living abroad*”. You can download it on the website from the Belgian National Pension Office:

→ http://www.onprvp.fgov.be/onprvp2004/NL/T/T_d/T_d_00.asp

3.4. Unemployment

In principle, you will only be able to profit from Belgian unemployment benefits if you can legally stay in Belgium after your employment contract was ended. Next to legally residing in Belgium, you will have to fulfill other requirements in order to receive these benefits. One of the conditions is that you must have worked for a number of days during the period of reference relevant for your age. The working periods performed in any other Member State can be taken into account. These insurance periods can be certified by an E 301 form, issued by the competent institution of the Member State where these periods have been accomplished.

3.5. Child allowances

3.5.1. Maternity fee

If you or your partner gets pregnant, you can apply for a maternity fee. You can demand this fee from the sixth month of pregnancy onwards, and it can be granted two months before the supposed date of birth mentioned in the medical certificate that should be enclosed with the application form. The amount of maternity fee depends on the child’s rank in the family.

3.5.2. Child allowance

In principle, you can apply for Belgian child allowances for children younger than 18. However, if your child follows a higher education or does an internship or vocational training the age limit of an entitled child will rise up to 25 years. The amount of the allowance depends on the number of children and their age. According to Belgian

legislation, child allowances can only be granted for children that live in Belgium. However, exceptions are possible:

- if your child lives in another EEA-country, the benefit must be paid as if he or she was resident in Belgium. This does not apply however, if family benefits are also payable under the legislation of the Member State in which the children live. In that case it is the latter Member State that will provide the child allowance. However, if Belgian child allowances are higher, Belgian authorities will pay the difference.
- if your child lives in a non-EEA country, you can ask the Belgian Minister of Social Affairs to make an exception to the rule that the children need to reside in Belgium.

3.6. Care insurance

This care insurance (“zorgverzekering”) provides monthly payments for non-medical expenses to insured persons who are in need of long-term care. Affiliation is obligatory for every person who is 25 years or older, and has been living in Flanders for more than six months. If you live in Brussels Capital Region, affiliation is not obliged. If you live in Wallonia, affiliation is not possible. You will have to pay the cost (25 €per year) yourself. This insurance is only applicable if you have been living in Flanders or the Brussels Capital Region for at least five years. Researchers who do not stay in Belgium after their employment contract was ended, will never be able to benefit from this. Nevertheless, participation in this scheme is compulsory.

4. Taxes and other financial issues

4.1. General issues

Taxation provisions, like social security, have not been harmonized at the level of the European Union, but remain completely subject to the decision of the Member States. Double taxation would normally occur when income arising in one country is received by someone residing in another country and is taxable in both countries. In

order to avoid this, Belgium has signed tax treaties with different countries. These treaties prescribe which of the involved countries may subject a certain income of a person to its national taxes. In this way, the income in one of the countries is exempt from taxation. Generally you will be liable for income taxation in the country where you reside, Belgium. Residents are taxed on their world-wide income, which comprises income from real estate property, professional income and income from property such as dividends, interest on loans and income from capital invested in partnerships.

If your employer in your home country sends you to Belgium to work (as a ‘posted’ worker), you will only be considered as a “fiscal Belgian resident”, if you spend an aggregate of 183 days or more in Belgium in a certain tax year. This is called the ‘183-days rule’. This rule is only applicable if your employer is not a Belgian resident or is not established in Belgium.

4.2. Tax rates

Your income will be liable to a progressive income tax schedule:

INCOME	TAX RATE
0 € - 7.100 €	25 %
7.100 € - 10.100 €	30 %
10.100 € - 16.380 €	40 %
16.830 € - 30.840 €	45 %
30.840 € - ...	50 %

4.3. Tax formalities

Income tax is assessed once a year. Employers withhold a percentage of your monthly income to offset the tax bill at the end of the year. This means that the amount of income tax due is normally paid before the end of the taxable year. You will have to complete an annual tax return reporting income received during the

preceding calendar year, and return it usually in the last week of June of the following year. Some months after submitting the tax declaration, the tax authorities will issue a tax statement. It indicates the amount to be paid, or the refund to be received. If you have to leave Belgium but are still entitled to a tax refund, you should contact the tax office and ask for a form that will permit declaring your income in advance.

4.4. How to calculate your next wage

The wage or salary determined in your employment contract is your gross wage. From this amount your employer will deduct monthly:

- your social security contributions. These contributions come to 13,06 % of your gross wage. The amount that remains is called your taxable income.
- a withholding tax on income. The amount of this tax is determined in scales, and depends on the level of your wage and your family situation.
- a special social contribution

The final result is called your net wage and will be paid every month by your employer.

Example: An unmarried employee with no children has a gross wage of 2.500 € per month. His net wage is calculated as follows:

<i>Gross wage:</i>	<i>2.500, 00 €</i>
<i>Social security contributions:</i>	<i>- 326, 75 €</i>
<i>Taxable income:</i>	<i>2.173, 25 €</i>
<i>Withholding tax on income:</i>	<i>- 648, 62 €</i>
<i>Special contribution:</i>	<i>- 24,04€</i>
<i>Net wage:</i>	<i>1.500, 59 €</i>

4.5. How to open a bank account?

To open a current or checking account, you will need a proof of identity (a valid passport) and a proof of legal residence in Belgium. Once the account is opened the bank will send you a debit card, probably with the Bancontact/Mister Cash logo. This

card has to be signed and activated by choosing and confirming a personal PIN code. With this current account you will be able to carry out all standard bank transactions in Belgium such as cash withdrawals, debit card payments for items bought in shops, transferring money from your bank account to somebody else's bank account, etc. It is recommendable to apply for a "maestro" function on your card, which will allow you to withdraw money when you are abroad. You may also request for a credit card. However, some banks may wait a while to check whether you have sufficient deposits coming on your account.

5. Bringing along family members

5.1. Eligible family members and required documents

Following family members, irrespective of their nationality, may join you to Belgium, based on the principle of family reunification:

- your spouse;
- your partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship;
- your (grand)children and the (grand)children of your spouse and or partner who are younger than 21, or the ones who are (financially) dependent on you;
- your and your spouse or partner's dependent ascendants

5.1.1. Spouse, (grand)children, ascendants

If your family members are non-EEA citizens, they need to apply for an "authorization for provisional sojourn" at the Belgian embassy in their home country before coming to Belgium. In addition to their passport or identity card, your family members must produce documents proving their marital or parental link with you (marriage certificate and/or birth certificate). Children older than 21 and your ascendants will have to prove their dependency (e.g. with bank statements). If the required documents are not in English, Dutch, French or German, they need to be translated into one of these languages. The translation of these documents must be

authenticated as well. If all requirements are fulfilled, your family members will receive a special “family reunification visa”. With this visa they can travel to Belgium. As soon as the Directive 2004/38 is implemented into national law (the deadline already expired on 30 April 2006), the municipal authorities of the place of residence will provide them a “residence card of a family member of a Union citizen”.

If your family members are EEA-citizens, they do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or identity card they have the right to enter Belgium. Once they arrive, they should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. The municipal authorities will provide them a registration certificate. According to Directive 2004/38 they do not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit.

5.1.2. Partner

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she must apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” (visa type D) at the Belgian embassy in his or her home country before coming to Belgium. There he or she will have to submit a valid travel document, a document proving that you are not married, an official copy of his or her birth certificate, an extract from his or her judicial record, a medical certificate filled out by a doctor approved by the Belgian embassy and proof that your relationship is stable and long-term (letters, photographs etc...). You will have to sign a pledge of financial support. You can request this form at the municipal authority of your place of residence in Belgium. Once it has been legalized, the original must be sent to your partner. Once the submitted documents have been verified and the application is complete, the embassy will send it to the Immigration Service at the Federal Public Service Home Affairs in Belgium, which will then decide whether or not to issue a visa. Within eight days of arrival in Belgium, your partner must go in person to the municipal authority in your place of residence in order to register. You and partner must actually live together in Belgium for the entire duration of your relationship and share the same household. Your partner will receive a registration certificate based on the partnership with a Union citizen.

If your partner is an EEA-national, he or she can come to Belgium only by presenting a valid passport or identity card. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence.

According to Directive 2004/38 your partner does not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit. He or she will have to prove that he or she has a valid health insurance and that he or she disposes of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide your partner a registration certificate.

5.2. Spouse's and partner's employment

5.2.1. Spouse

If your spouse, resident in Belgium under the “family reunification” scheme, wishes to work in Belgium, no formalities are needed. He or she will be authorized to work without having to apply for a work permit, unless you are a national of a new EU - Member State (apart from Cyprus and Malta). In that case your spouse will still need a work permit B. The employer has to apply for this work permit at the regional employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

5.2.2. Partner

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she will not be able to work without a work permit C. He or she must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

If your partner is a EEA-national, he or she will not need a work permit if he or she is a national of an ‘old’ Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card of passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If he or she is a national of a ‘new’ Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit C is required, since he or she is not yet completely covered by the rules of free movement of workers. Your partner must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). This work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

II. Non-EEA nationals

1. Visa and residence permit

1.1. Formalities prior to departure

On 12 October 2005, a new European Directive 2005/71/EC was adopted. This Directive lays down the conditions for the admission of researchers coming from a non-EEA country to a Member State of the European Union for more than three months for the purposes of carrying out a research project in the frame of a hosting agreement with a research organization. Possession of such a hosting agreement will automatically imply the right to work and to do research without needing a work permit. The purpose of this Directive is to facilitate the entry of non-EEA researchers into the European Union, and to contribute to the Lisbon objectives of making Europe the most competitive and knowledge-based economy of the world. Recently this directive was implemented into Belgian legislation.

The first thing you have to do if you want to carry out a research project at a research institute in Belgium, is signing a hosting agreement with this institute. This is a legal contract whereby you undertake to complete the research project and the organization undertakes to host you. Your host institute will help you out with the practical arrangements and administrative formalities. Thanks to the new Directive, a work permit is not longer required for non-EEA researchers who have signed a hosting agreement with an approved research institute. Once you are in the possession of this hosting agreement, you must apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” (a visa type D) at the Belgian embassy or consulate of your home country. You will have to provide the following documents:

- a valid travel document
- the hosting agreement signed by the Belgian research organization
- a medical certificate which states that you do not suffer from certain contagious diseases. This form should be completed by a doctor recognized by the Belgian embassy.
- a recent certificate of good conduct. This certificate is an extract from the criminal records which can be provided by the police department in your home country. If the police department does not provide these certificates, the Belgian embassy will help you out.

If your application is approved, you will receive an “authorization for provisional sojourn”, that allows you to travel to Belgium and to stay there for a period of time limited to the duration of the hosting agreement and thus your research project in Belgium.

If you already reside legally in Belgium, you shouldn't return home to apply for an authorization for provisional sojourn. You can submit your application for a residence permit immediately at the municipal authorities in your place of residence.

1.2. Formalities on arrival in Belgium

Once you arrive in Belgium, you must go personally to the foreigners' office of the municipal authorities of your place of residence in order to apply for a residence permit. You will have to show a valid passport or identity card, the hosting agreement and four recent passport size photographs. A police officer will have to confirm that you actually reside at the given address. If you are not at home at the time of the police officer's visit, you will receive a letter inviting you to report the police station in your district. Around six weeks after registration, you will receive a “certificate of registration in the aliens' register”, your residence permit. The duration of validity is the same as the duration of the research project. This card will function as your Belgian identity card and you are required to always carry it with you.

2. *Social security*

In the field of social security there are no special provisions for highly qualified knowledge workers. All workers who are subject to the Belgian social security system have the same rights and obligations. The foreign researcher's wage will be subject to the Belgian statutory system of compulsory contributions to social security. Contributions are made as a percentage of gross remuneration, with no upper limit. At present, the employee's contribution amounts to 13,07 % of the gross salary, the employer's contribution between 33,10 % and 34,85 %. Your personal contributions will be deducted from your salary by your employer, who also will complete the necessary formalities to register you for social security.

In principle, the social security rights that were accrued by paying these contributions can not be exported. However, Belgium has concluded bilateral social security treaties

with following countries: Algeria, Australia, Canada, Chile, Israel, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Morocco, Poland, the Philippines, San Marino, Tunisia, Turkey, the United States, Japan and the independent states that used to form the former Yugoslavia. The rules featured in these treaties are similar to those in the EU regulations, and adopt the principle whereby the person concerned is subject to the social security legislation of the country where the employment is exercised, Belgium. For nationals of these countries the accrued social security rights can be exported: the Belgian insurance periods can be taken into account in the worker's own country, a (pro rata) Belgian pension can be paid abroad, and they are entitled to family benefits for children that are raised in the country of origin.

In this guide, only a summary review of the different social security schemes will be given. For detailed information on the Belgian social security system please consult the brochure "*Everything you always wanted to know about social security*". You can download it on the website from the Federal Public Service for Social Security: → <http://www.socialsecurity.fgov.be/EN/index.htm>.

2.1. Health care

Once you arrive in Belgium, you will have to affiliate with a mutual health insurance company ("ziekenfonds / mutuelle"). The choice is free. There are several health insurance funds and they differ through political affiliation and the fact that they are denominational (Christian) or independent. Membership of a Belgian health insurance company entitles you to a full or partial (depending on the type of service) refund of the costs of medical care (e.g. doctor visits, hospital treatment, surgery, etc.) and a price reduction at the pharmacist. You will receive a membership card (SIS-card) as proof of affiliation. On this card you will find your own social security number.

2.2. Incapacity for work

2.2.1. Illness

If you are absent due to illness, you should inform your employer as soon as possible. You will not only obtain reimbursement of your sickness costs, but you shall also be entitled to benefits covering your income loss. To use your entitlement to sickness benefits, you must have worked 120 days or assimilated days (paid vacation and sickness leave days) during a period of six months prior to obtaining benefits.

2.2.2. Maternity and paternity

Pregnant researchers are entitled to maternity benefits and can have a maximum maternity leave of 15 weeks. You will have to start this leave at least one week before the birth of the child. In Belgium, also paternity leave exists. On the occasion of the birth of your child, you have the right to be absent from work for 10 days. These 10 days have to be taken up within 30 days after the birth and they can be taken up in one or several periods.

2.2.3. Work-related accidents and occupational illnesses

A work-related accident is defined as any accident leading to physical injury that occurs because of work, during work or on your way to or from your workplace. Occupational diseases are diseases recognised as such and are registered in a list. If you can not be present at your host institution due to a work-related accident, it is necessary to report this as soon as possible. Your host institution's insurance company will provide you a compensation and your medical costs will be reimbursed.

2.3. Retirement

During your research stay in Belgium, you will be building up pension or retirement rights through the social security contributions, which will be extracted directly from your wage. But what happens with your Belgian pension if you move back to your home country after you finished your research stay in Belgium?

If you move to a country **inside the European Economic Area** and you retire there, your Belgian pension will be exported according to Regulation 1408/71. According to this Regulation, which also applies to non – EEA nationals since Regulation 859/2003

entered into force, every Member State where a person was insured for at least 1 year will have to pay a proportional old age pension, corresponding to the insurance period completed in that country. However, the pension of a country will only be paid if you have reached the retirement age of that country, meaning that you will be entitled to your Belgian pension at the age of 65.

If you retire in a country **outside the European Economic Area**, your Belgian pension will be exported only if you are a national of a country with which Belgium concluded a bilateral social security treaty (Algeria, Australia, Canada, Chile, Israel, Croatia, Morocco, Poland, the Philippines, San Marino, Tunisia, Turkey, the United States and the independent states that used to form the former Yugoslavia). If you are not a national of one of these countries, you will normally only receive a pension if you stay in Belgium.

For more detailed information on your Belgian pension rights, please consult the brochure "*Working and/or living abroad*". You can download it on the website from the Belgian National Pension Office:

→ http://www.onprvp.fgov.be/onprvp2004/NL/T/T_d/T_d_00.asp

2.4. Unemployment

In principle, you will only be able to profit from Belgian unemployment benefits if you can legally stay in Belgium after your employment contract was ended. If you can extend your legal residence in Belgium, you can ask for a C4-form at your host university. With this form, you can go to the Belgian Unemployment Services (RVA) and apply for an unemployment allowance. Next to legally residing in Belgium, you will have to fulfill other requirements in order to receive these benefits. One of the conditions is that you must have worked for a number of days during the period of reference relevant for your age.

2.5. Child allowances

2.5.1. Maternity fee

If you or your partner gets pregnant, you can apply for a maternity fee. You can demand this fee from the sixth month of pregnancy onwards, and it can be granted two months before the supposed date of birth mentioned in the medical certificate that should be enclosed with the application form. The amount of maternity fee depends on the child's rank in the family.

2.5.2. Child allowance

In principle, you can apply for Belgian child allowances for children younger than 18. However, if your child follows a higher education or does an internship or vocational training the age limit of an entitled child will rise up to 25 years. The amount of the allowance depends on the number of children and their age. According to Belgian legislation, child allowances can only be granted for children that live in Belgium. However, exceptions are possible:

- If your child lives in another EEA-country, the benefit must be paid as if he or she was resident in Belgium. This does not apply however, if family benefits are also payable under the legislation of the Member State in which the children live. In that case it is the latter Member State that will provide the child allowance. However, if Belgian child allowances are higher, Belgian authorities will pay the difference.
- If you are a national of a country with which Belgium concluded a bilateral social security agreement to that effect (Algeria, Morocco, Tunis, Turkey, The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, The Republic of Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and your child lives in this country, you will also receive child allowances. The amounts and conditions in order to receive the allowances are determined in the respective agreement. The number of entitled children is limited to four.

- If your child lives in a country with which Belgium did not conclude a social security agreement, the Belgian Minister of Social Affairs can make an exception to the rule that the children need to reside in Belgium.

2.6. Care insurance

This care insurance (“zorgverzekering”) provides monthly payments for non-medical expenses to insured persons who are in need of long-term care. Affiliation is obligatory for every person who is 25 years or older, and has been living in Flanders for more than six months. If you live in Brussels Capital Region, affiliation is not obliged. If you live in Wallonia, affiliation is not possible. You will have to pay the cost (25 €per year) yourself. This insurance is only applicable if you have been living in Flanders or the Brussels Capital Region for at least five years. Researchers who can not stay in Belgium after their research project or employment contract was ended, will never be able to benefit from this. Nevertheless, participation in this scheme is compulsory.

3. Taxes and other financial issues

3.1. General issues

Taxation provisions, like social security, have not been harmonized at the level of the European Union, but remain completely subject to the decision of the Member States. Double taxation would normally occur when income arising in one country is received by someone residing in another country and is taxable in both countries. In order to avoid this, Belgium has signed tax treaties with different countries. These treaties prescribe which of the involved countries may subject a certain income of a person to its national taxes. In this way, the income in one of the countries is exempted from taxation. Generally you will be liable for income taxation in the country where you reside, Belgium. Residents are taxed on their world-wide income, which comprises income from real estate property, professional income and income from property such as dividends, interest on loans and income from capital invested in partnerships.

If your employer in your home country sends you to Belgium to work (as a ‘posted’ worker), you will only be considered as a “fiscal Belgian resident”, if you spend an aggregate of 183 days or more in Belgium in a certain tax year. This is called the ‘183-days rule’. This rule is only applicable if your employer, who pays your wage, is not a Belgian resident.

3.2. Tax rates

Your income will be liable to a progressive income tax schedule:

INCOME	TAX RATE
0 € - 7.100 €	25 %
7.100 € - 10.100 €	30 %
10.100 € - 16.380 €	40 %
16.830 € - 30.840 €	45 %
30.840 € - ...	50 %

3.3. Tax formalities

Income tax is assessed once a year. Employers withhold a percentage of your monthly income to offset the tax bill at the end of the year. This means that the amount of income tax due is normally paid before the end of the taxable year. You will have to complete an annual tax return reporting income received during the preceding calendar year, and return it usually in the last week of June of the following year. Some months after submitting the tax declaration, the tax authorities will issue a tax statement. It indicates the amount to be paid, or the refund to be received. If you have to leave Belgium but are still entitled to a tax refund, you should contact the tax office and ask for a form that will permit declaring your income in advance.

3.4. How to calculate your next wage

The wage or salary determined in your employment contract is your gross wage. From this amount your employer will deduct monthly:

- Your social security contributions. These contributions come to 13,06 % of your gross wage. The amount that remains is called your taxable income.
- A withholding tax on income. The amount of this tax is determined in scales, and depends on the level of your wage and your family situation.
- a special social contribution

The final result is called your net wage and will be paid every month by your employer.

Example: An unmarried employee with no children has a gross wage of 2.500 € per month. His net wage is calculated as follows:

<i>Gross wage:</i>	2.500, 00 €
<i>Social security contributions:</i>	- 326, 75 €
<i>Taxable income:</i>	2.173, 25 €
<i>Withholding tax on income:</i>	- 648, 62 €
<i>Special contribution:</i>	- 24,04€
<i>Net wage:</i>	1.500, 59 €

3.5. How to open a bank account?

To open a current or checking account, you will need a proof of identity (a valid passport) and a proof of legal residence in Belgium (your residence permit). Once the account is opened the bank will send you a debit card, probably with the Bancontact/Mister Cash logo. This card has to be signed and activated by choosing and confirming a personal PIN code. With this current account you will be able to carry out all standard bank transactions in Belgium such as cash withdrawals, debit card payments for items bought in shops, transferring money from your bank account to somebody else's bank account, etc. It is recommendable to apply for a "maestro" function on your card, which will allow you to withdraw money when you are abroad.

You may also request for a credit card. However, some banks may wait a while to check whether you have sufficient deposits coming on your account.

4. Bringing along family members

4.1. Eligible family members and required documents

Following family members may join you to Belgium, based on the principle of family reunification:

- your spouse (older than 21).
- your children younger than 18.
- your partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

4.1.1. Spouse and children

If your family members are non – EEA citizens, they need to apply for an “authorization for provisional sojourn” at the Belgian embassy in their home country before coming to Belgium. In addition to their passport or identity card, your family members must produce documents proving their marital or parental link with you (marriage certificate and/or birth certificate), as well as a copy of your Belgian residence permit (your certificate of registration in the Alien’s Register). You will have to provide the evidence that you dispose of a valid sickness insurance which also covers your family members. Your family members will have to submit all these required documents to the Belgian embassy in their home country in order to receive a “family reunification” visa. If the required documents are not in English, Dutch, French or German, they need to be translated into one of these languages. The translation of these documents must be authenticated as well. If all requirements are fulfilled, your family members will receive a special “family reunification visa”. With this visa they can travel to Belgium. Once they arrive in Belgium, they will have to register at the municipal authority of the place of residence. A police officer will check whether you and your spouse and/or children are living together at the given address. After registration, your family members will receive a certificate of

inscription in the aliens' register, their residence permit. The duration of validity of this residence permit shall be the same as your residence permit.

If your family members are EEA-citizens, they do not need to apply for a visa before coming to Belgium: simply by presenting a valid passport or identity card they have the right to enter Belgium. Once they arrive, they should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. They will have to prove that they have a valid health insurance and that they dispose of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide them a registration certificate. According to Directive 2004/38 they do not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit.

4.1.2. Partner with whom you are having a stable, long-term relationship

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she must apply for a visa type D at the Belgian embassy in his or her home country before coming to Belgium. He or she must submit a valid travel document, a copy of your Belgian residence permit, a document proving that you are not married, an official copy of his or her birth certificate, an extract from his or her judicial record, a medical certificate filled out by a doctor approved by the Belgian embassy and proof that your relationship is stable and long-term (letters, photographs etc...). He or she will also have to provide the evidence that suitable housing in Belgium is ready. You will have to prove that you have a valid sickness insurance which also covers your partner. Once the submitted documents have been verified and the application is complete, the embassy will send it to the Immigration Service at the Federal Public Service Home Affairs in Belgium, which will then decide whether or not to issue a visa. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authority in your place of residence. You and partner must actually live together in Belgium for the entire duration of your relationship and share the same household. Your partner will receive a residence permit (a certificate of inscription in the alien's register). The duration of validity of this residence permit shall be the same as your residence permit.

If your partner is an EEA-national, he or she can come to Belgium only by presenting a valid passport or identity card. Once your partner arrives in Belgium, he or she should register with the municipal authorities of the intended place of residence. According to Directive 2004/38 your partner does not have to apply for a Belgian residence permit. He or she will have to prove that he or she has a valid health

insurance and that he or she disposes of sufficient financial means. The municipal authorities will provide your partner a registration certificate.

4.2. Spouse's and partner's employment

4.2.1. Spouse

If your spouse is a non – EEA national, he or she must apply for a work permit B through his or her potential employer. According to Belgian law, a work permit will only be issued to a non-EEA citizen if he or she possesses special expertise or skills, which are not available on the Belgian and European labour market.

If your spouse is an EEA – national, he or she will be authorized to work without needing a work permit if he is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If your spouse is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit B will be required, since he or she is not yet fully covered by the free movement of workers.

4.2.2. Partner

If your partner is a non-EEA national, he or she will not be able to work without a work permit C. He or she must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). The work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

If your partner is an EEA-national, he or she will not need a work permit if he or she is a national of an 'old' Member State plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Malta. An identity card or passport is enough to allow him or her to work. If he or she is a national of a 'new' Member State, apart from Cyprus and Malta, a work permit C is required, since he or she is not yet covered by the rules of free movement of workers. Your partner must apply for this work permit at the public employment service of the competent region (VDAB for the Flemish region, FOREM for the

Walloon region, ORBEM-BGDA for the Brussels region and ADG for the German-speaking region). This work permit has a validity of one year but can be renewed.

ANNEX I: Source material

- “*Statuten buitenlandse studenten en onderzoekers*”, Bureau Internationaal Onthaal, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Naamsestraat 22, 3000 Leuven (<http://www.kuleuven.be/binto>).
- “*Travelling to Leuven*”. *International students and scholars at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven*”, Office for International Students and Scholars, University Hall, Oude Markt 13, 3000 Leuven.
- “*Living in Leuven. 2005-2006*”, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, City of Leuven, KHLeuven, Group T, Lemmensinstituut, Office for International Students and Scholars, Naamsestraat 22, 3000 Leuven.
- “*The Community provisions on social security. Your rights when moving within the European Union*”, European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and equal opportunities, Update 2004.
- “*A rough guide to the Marie Curie Actions*”, European Commission, Directorate-General for Research, Information and Communication Unit, 2002.
- “*Werken en/of wonen in het buitenland*”, Rijksdienst voor Pensioenen, Zuidertoren, 1060 Brussel (<http://www.rvponp.fgov.be>).
- PIETERS, D., “*The Social Security Systems of the Member States of the European Union*”, Social Europe Series, Volume 1, Intersentia, 2002.
- “*Social Security for migrant workers*”, European Parliament, Directorate-General for research, 2001.
- JANSSENS, C., “*Praktijkgids. Internationale tewerkstelling: fiscale aspecten*”. Standaard Uitgeverij, 2004.

- European websites:
 - www.europa.eu.int/eures
 - www.europa.eu.int/youreurope
 - www.infopointeurope.be
 - www.europarl.eu.int

ANNEX II: list of institutions authorized to grant tax-free fellowships

- De Staat, de Gemeenschappen, de Gewesten, (de Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie, de Franse Gemeenschapscommissie, de Gemeenschappelijke Gemeenschapscommissie), de provincies, de agglomeraties, de federaties van gemeenten en de gemeenten
- De Koninklijke Academiën
- De Universiteiten
- Het instituut voor Aanmoediging van Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek in Nijverheid en Landbouw
- De Geneeskundige Stichting Koningin Elisabeth
- Het Francqui-Fonds
- De Universitaire Stichting
- De Studerende Jeugd
- De Internationale Muziekwedstrijd Koningin Elisabeth
- De Nobelstichting te Stockholm
- De Fondation Alexandre et Gaston Tytgat
- Het Institut européen de Recherches et d'Etudes supérieures en Management
- De Fondation rurale de Wallonie
- De Stichting Balzan-Prijs te Milaan
- Het Belgische Werk tegen Kanker
- De Noord-Atlantische Verdragsorganisatie
- De Wolf-stichting te Herzlia (Israël)
- De Vereniging voor Economie
- De Fondation économique et sociale du Brabant wallon
- De Vereniging voor Kankerbestrijding
- De Stichting van Gysel
- De Stichting Nancy Philippart
- La Fondation Rik & Nel Wouters Stichting
- De Fondation René De Cooman
- De European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer Fondation
- De Robert Koch Stiftung
- De Heineken Stichting

- De Stichting Alfred Heineken Fondsen
- La Fondation Prix Willy et Marcy De Vooght
- Het Centrum voor Studie en Behandeling van Gezwelziekten te Gent
- De Fondation Philippe Wiener – Maurice Anspach
- De Wetenschappelijke Stichting van het Universitair Kinderziekenhuis Koningin Fabiola
- De Belgische Federatie tegen Kanker

ANNEX III: list of scientific institutions authorized to receive tax exemption

- Afdeling Waterbouwkundig Laboratorium en Hydrologisch Onderzoek;
- Algemeen Rijksarchief en Rijksarchief in de Provincies;
- Association pour la Recherche avancée en Microélectronique et Intégration de Systèmes;
- Babbage Institute for Knowledge and Information Technology;
- Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België
- Biomed;
- Born-Bunge Stichting v.z.w.;
- Centrum voor Gemeenschappelijk Onderzoek van de EG;
- Centre d'économie rurale de Marloie;
- Centrum voor Onderzoek in Diergeneeskunde en Agrochemie;
- Studie- en Documentatiecentrum Oorlog en Hedendaagse Maatschappij;
- Studiecentrum voor Kernenergie – Mol;
- Centre de Recherches agronomiques de Gembloux;
- Centrum voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek der Belgische Keramische Nijverheid;
- Opzoekingscentrum voor de Wegenbouw;
- Centrum voor het Wetenschappelijk en Technisch Onderzoek der Metaalverwerkende Nijverheid;
- Centrum voor Technisch en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek van de Leerlooierijen, Schoen-, Pantoffel- en andere Lederverwerkende nijverheden;
- Internationaal Centrum voor de Studie van de Middeleeuwse Schilderkunst in het Schelde- en het Maasbekken;
- Centre International de Recherches et d'Information sur l'Economie publique, sociale et coopérative;
- Nationaal Centrum voor Wetenschappelijk en Technisch Onderzoek der Cementnijverheid;
- Centre provincial d'Essais industriels;
- Wetenschappelijk en Technisch Onderzoekscentrum voor Diamant;
- Wetenschappelijk en Technisch Centrum van de Belgische Textielnijverheid;
- Wetenschappelijk en Technisch Centrum voor het Bouwbedrijf;
- Centrum voor het Wetenschappelijk en Technisch Onderzoek der Groentenconserven;

- Technisch centrum van de Houtnijverheid;
- Technisch en Wetenschappelijk Centrum van de Brouwerij, de Mouterij en aanverwante Nijverheden;
- Centrum voor Technisch en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek der Springstoffennijverheid;
- Centrum voor Bevolkings- en Gezinsstudiën;
- Centrum voor Landbouwkundig Onderzoek – Gent;
- Koninklijke Militaire School
- European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer;
- Fondation universitaire luxembourgeoise;
- Fruitteeltcentrum;
- Afrika – instituut / Afrikaans studie- en documentatiecentrum;
- Belgisch Instituut voor Ruimte-Aëronomie;
- Europees Instituut voor Managementwetenschappen;
- Nationaal Geografisch Instituut;
- Institut international de Chimie-Physique-Solvay;
- Ludwig Instituut voor Onderzoek tegen Kanker;
- Nationaal Instituut voor Criminalistiek;
- Nationaal Instituut voor Radio-Elementen;
- Koninklijk Belgisch Instituut voor Natuurwetenschappen;
- Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium;
- Koninklijk Meteorologisch Instituut van België;
- Wetenschappelijk instituut Volksgezondheid;
- Institut scientifique de Service Public;
- Instituut voor Bosbouw en Wildbeheer-Geraardsbergen;
- Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium;
- Instituut voor Natuurbehoud;
- Instituut voor ontwikkelingsbeleid- en beheer;
- International Institute of Cellular and Molecular Pathology – AIBS;
- Interuniversitair Centrum voor Micro-Electronica;
- Nationale Plantentuin van België;
- Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten – Antwerpen;
- Koninklijke Maatschappij voor Dierkunde;
- Langzaam Verkeer;
- Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika;
- Koninklijk Museum van het Leger en de Krijgsgeschiedenis;
- Musée royal de Mariemont;
- Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis;

- Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten van België;
- Nationale Instelling voor Radioactief Afval en Verrijkte Splitsstoffen;
- Prins Leopold Instituut voor Tropische Geneeskunde te Antwerpen;
- Provinciaal Centrum voor Opsporing van Metabole aandoeningen;
- Provinciale Dienst voor Land- en Tuinbouw;
- Station de Recherches forestières;
- Stichting Technologie Vlaanderen;
- Vlaams Interuniversitair Instituut voor Biotechnologie;
- Vlaamse Compostorganisatie;
- Vlaamse Instelling voor Technologisch Onderzoek;
- Van Karman Institute for Fluid Dynamics;
- Centrum voor Research in de Metallurgie;
- Researchinstituut voor Bekledingen, Verven en Inkten;
- Belgisch Instituut voor Lastechniek;
- Meurice R & D v.z.w.

ANNEX IV: Legislation

1. Residence formalities

Wet van 15 december 1980 betreffende de toegang tot het grondgebied, het verblijf, de vestiging en verwijdering van vreemdelingen, *B.S.* 31 december 1980.

Koninklijk Besluit van 8 oktober 1981 betreffende de toegang tot het grondgebied, het verblijf, de vestiging en verwijdering van vreemdelingen, *B.S.* 27 oktober 1981.

Directive 2004/38 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, *Pb.L.* 229/35.

[COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2005/71/EC](#) of 12 October 2005 on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research

[21 APRIL 2007](#) – Law amending the law of 15 December 1980 on entry to the country, stay, and expulsion of aliens

[8 JUNE 2007](#) – Royal Decree containing the conditions for approval of research organisations wishing, in the context of research projects, to enter into hosting agreements with researchers from non-European Union countries, and laying down conditions in which such hosting agreements can be entered into.

2. Work permit

Wet van 30 april 1999 betreffende de tewerkstelling van buitenlandse werknemers, *B.S.* 21 mei 1999.

Koninklijk Besluit van 9 juni 1999 houdende de uitvoering van de wet van 30 april 1999 betreffende de tewerkstelling van buitenlandse werknemers, *B.S.* 26 juni 1999.

Council Directive 2005/71/EC of 12 October 2005 on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research, *Pb.L.* 289/15.

[12 SEPTEMBER 2007](#) – Royal Decree amending, for researchers and executives, the royal decree dated 9 June 1999 executing the law of 30 April 1999 on the employment of foreign workers.

3. Social security

Artikel 3bis van het Koninklijk Besluit van 28 november 1969 tot uitvoering van de wet van 27 juni 1969 tot herziening van de besluitwet van 28 december 1944 betreffende de maatschappelijke zekerheid der arbeiders, *B.S.* 5 december 1969.

Council Regulation (EC) 1408/71 of 14 June 1971 on the application of social security schemes to employed persons, self-employed persons and to members of their families moving within the Community.

4. Taxes

Tax exemption of fellowships: artikel 53 Koninklijk Besluit van 27 augustus 1993 tot uitvoering van het Wetboek van de Inkomstenbelastingen 1992, afgekort als “KB/WIB1992”, *B.S.* 13 september 1993.

Tax exemption of doctoral fellowships (limited to 48 months): Circulaire nr. Ci.RH.241/467.677 (AOIF 25/2002) dd. 08.10.2002, Bull. nr. 831, pag. 3142-3148.

Tax exemption for authorized research institutions: Koninklijk Besluit van 4 mei 2004 houdende erkenning van de wetenschappelijke instellingen bedoeld in artikel 385 van de Programmawet van 24 december 2002, *B.S.* 24 mei 2004.

5. Family reunification

Wet van 15 december 1980 betreffende de toegang tot het grondgebied, het verblijf, de vestiging en verwijdering van vreemdelingen, *B.S.* 31 december 1980.

Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 september 2003 on the right to family reunification, *Pb.L.* 251/12.

ANNEX V: list of public social security institutions

National Office for Social Security (RSZ – ONSS)

Victor Hortaplein 11

1060 Brussels

02/509 31 11

www.onssrszls.fgov.be

contactcenter@eranova.fgov.be

National Institute for Sickness and Invalidity Insurance (RIZIV – INAMI)

Tervurenlaan 211

1150 Brussels

02/739 71 11

www.riziv.fgov.be

communication@riziv.fgov.be

Fund for Accidents at Work (FAO – FAT)

Troonlaan 100

1050 Brussels

02/506 84 11

www.securitesociale.fgov.be/faofat

info@faofat.fgov.be

Fund for Professional Diseases (FBZ – FMP)

Sterrenkundelaan 1

1210 Brussel

02/226 62 11

www.fmp-fbz.fgov.be
secr@fmp-fbz.fgov.be

National Pension Office (RVP – ONP)

Zuidtoren

1060 Brussels

0800 50256

www.onprvp.fgov.be (with a very interesting brochure “working and living abroad”)

info@onprvp.fgov.be

National Labour Office (RVA – ONEM)

Keizerslaan 7

1000 Brussels

02/515 41 11

www.rva.fgov.be

webmaster@rva.fgov.be

National Office for Family Benefits for Salaried Persons (RKW – ONAFTS)

Trierstraat 70

1000 Brussels

02/237 23 40

www.rkw.be

info.medation@rkw-onafts.fgov.be

