

Dear future student,

We, the International Training Centre (ITC) team, hope you, your family and network are safe and well. We would like to thank you for your patience regarding the information outlining the next academic year at the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering of Ghent University. We will do our utmost to guide you through this life-changing experience to ensure you an unforgettable study period.

We are glad to announce that **all our international programmes will start without exceptions**, and at the scheduled timing. For our international students courses will be organized *on campus* as much as possible, as we consider it to be important that you get to know each other and the campus in real life. Online classes will also take place if COVID-19-related regulations require this. Evidently, the *on campus* experience will be organized within strict safety measures regarding everybody's health. **So we are happy to welcome you in Ghent in September 2020.**

We also want to reassure students with concerns about getting to Ghent in time. If you're not able to get to Ghent in time due to COVID-19-related measures, online alternatives will be available until the moment you arrive.

The unpredictable context of the pandemic is still in place and susceptible to sudden changes. This means that urgent measures can be taken during your stay in Belgium if the situation requires so.

Below you will find the **first instructions** on how to **prepare for your stay in Belgium**. A second document with other relevant information (travel instructions, enrolment at Ghent University, residence permit, luggage, bank account,...) will be available by the end of June. For the Erasmus Mundus programmes SINReM and IMSOGLO, programme-specific pre-arrival information will also be provided.

You will be asked to complete all necessary information on your personal EConsort page: [My application 2020](#). In order to log in, use the following links:

- First registration: <https://econsort.ugent.be/regis.asp?frm=2139>
- Application form 'My application 2020': <https://econsort.ugent.be/applicationform.asp?frm=42815>

In case of log in problems, or if you want your password to be reset, please contact applications.itc@ugent.be

1. Important note

At this moment, all non-essential inbound travel to Belgium is still prohibited and special regulations apply in the country and at Ghent University. It is unclear until when this situation will continue. This means that for the time being coming to Ghent University is not yet possible.

This pre-arrival information is written on the assumption that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will diminish in the upcoming months. **When the procedures mentioned below are subject to change, related to evolutions in the pandemic and the associated policies of the Belgian Government and Ghent University, the ITC will communicate this in time and as soon as possible to you.**

2. Confirmation of participation

As soon as you are sure to have gathered the necessary funding for your master programme (see §3), confirm your final participation to applications.itc@ugent.be. Inform us about the type of funding you obtained to finance your stay (own savings, support from family or friends, student loan, alternative scholarship from your

local government, etc.). Only in this way will we be able to provide you with up-to-date information and instructions.

Note that you do not have to confirm your participation if you have been granted a VLIR-UOS scholarship, an Erasmus Mundus scholarship, or an EIT AVSA scholarship.

If, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, you cannot make it to Ghent before the start of the academic year, we ask you to inform applications.itc@ugent.be. Please also indicate your estimated arrival date in [My application 2020](#).

3. Estimated cost

Living expenses amount to approximately €850/month (depending on personal needs and standard of living). This amount covers expenses related to housing, course materials, insurance, local transport, food and leisure. More information can be found here: [cost of living](#). Note that the living costs for Erasmus Mundus programmes may be higher, depending on the chosen mobility path and the cost of living in the different countries.

The tuition fee you will have to pay may differ according to your situation. The full tuition fee is €5,687.20. In certain cases, waivers are possible. Interuniversity programmes such as IMRD, SINReM and IMSOGL0 have specific tuition fees. Please carefully check which tuition fee applies to you.

Erasmus Mundus scholars do not have to pay the tuition fee. Self-supporting students who wish to enrol for an Erasmus Mundus programme, will receive an invoice for payment of the programme/tuition fee. This invoice must be paid before enrolment (see §4). After the payment is received, we will send you a payment proof, which needs to be submitted upon enrolment.

4. Enrolment

Admitted students (those who have received a Letter of Admission from the Registrar's Office) need to enrol online. This can be done by sending an e-mail to enrol@ugent.be, between August 10th and September 18th 2020. Enrolled students will receive a UGent login for access to all UGent platforms, which you will need for further administration. During the weeks following your arrival you will have to present yourself at the enrolment desk of Ghent University. Further instructions will be provided in the pre-arrival information part II, which will be available by the end of June.

5. International passport

Make sure you have a valid international passport (note that it must be valid until at least 6 months after your return, i.e. at least until March 2023). If you do not have an international passport yet, please start the application procedure as soon as possible.

6. Visa

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, many embassies are still closed. We cannot guarantee that all embassies will give priority to student visa once they re-open. We therefore advise students to communicate with their respective embassy as from now, and to start their visa application as soon as this is possible.

6.1. VLIR-UOS scholars

For VLIR-UOS scholars only, the visa application will be initialized by VLIR-UOS, allowing you to use a shortened procedure. Please await instructions from VLIR-UOS.

6.2. All other students (Erasmus Mundus students, UGent Top-up scholars, self-supporting students).

You are responsible to apply for your visa. Students who need a visa to study in Belgium will have to apply for a **visa Long Stay – type D (multiple entry)**. Check the website of the [Belgian Embassy in your country](#) (or neighboring country) for your [visa application](#). More information on student visa can also be found [here](#).

A contribution and handling fee is required for the processing of certain long-term visa applications. More information can be found [here](#). Waivers may be granted to a specific group of foreign students who can present a signed “Model of certificate to prove their scholarship and by virtue of which they are exempted from the payment of an administrative fee (Appendix to the Ministerial Decree of 27 June 2016)”.

For scholarship students, this certificate will be supplied. The document will be uploaded in the 'Useful documents' section in [My application 2020](#).

When applying for a visa or a residence permit, students are asked to prove their solvency (i.e. creditworthiness). This [solvency](#) can be proved in different ways:

- A document certifying that the student has been granted a scholarship, sufficient to cover the expenses for studying, daily expenses, medical care and repatriation.
- An affidavit of support (or a financial guarantee).
- A [solvency letter](#): Ghent University can provide a letter to prove sufficient means of subsistence. In that case the financial means have to be transferred to the account of Ghent University, where they will be blocked on a personal account. The financial means will then be reimbursed to the student on a monthly basis. For more information, contact solvency.developmentcooperation@ugent.be.

Do not forget to inform your own embassy in Belgium (or the competent embassy by lack of country representation) about your coming to Belgium (useful in case of emergency).

7. [Accommodation](#)

VERY IMPORTANT!

Do not forget to apply for a room BEFORE your arrival.

The booking tool will be available as of beginning of June. Updates will be provided in due time.

You can either choose for a room in one of the [university halls of residence](#) or a room on the [private market](#). VLIR-UOS scholars, Erasmus Mundus and EIT AVSA scholars will get priority for a [university room](#). Erasmus Mundus scholars should use this link to apply for a room:

<http://www.ugent.be/en/facilities/housing/erasmusmundusapplication>.

University rooms will be available as of September 1st 2020.

When applying for a room, you will have to mention a bank account number in your home country (for deposit).

Note that the account number of a relative is also valid. In case of problems, please contact huisvesting@ugent.be.

Any cancellations of university room reservations should be communicated as soon as possible to huisvesting@ugent.be.

The coming academic year, students who have to cancel their room reservation due to COVID-19-related *force majeure*, will be exempted from paying the cancellation fee of €75. Of course the Housing Office has to be notified of your cancellation in advance. You can also make a reservation for a living unit in a student dormitory later during the academic year, when you know coming to Ghent is possible.

IMRD/Food Technology/SINReM students need to apply for a room in Ghent for the **first semester only** (until January 31st 2020). IMSOGLO students should apply for a room until January 31st, depending on the specialization chosen in the first year. For the second semester, students will receive further instructions upon arrival.

Note that once you have signed a contract with the housing department (after arrival), cancellations are no longer possible. This also applies in case the room does not meet your expectations. You are bound to the dates, terms and conditions stipulated in your contract. More information about the cancellation policy of university rooms can be found [here](#).

Those of you who are looking for a room on the private market should avoid making non-refundable advance payments as long as you are unsure about the possibility to come to Ghent University.

8. Bank account

All students are required to have a personal bank account at a Belgian (or European) bank. Scholarship students will receive their grant on that account. If you are interested to have your bank account opened prior to your arrival, we can assist you in this. Please upload the following documents (scanned) in [My application 2020](#):

- UGent admission letter
- Proof of scholarship or solvency
- Copy of your passport
- Proof of residence in Belgium (if different from room in university residence) = tenancy contract (will be provided upon arrival)

9. Insurance

All students, both European and non-European, are **absolutely required to have a valid health insurance** (sickness and disability). In addition, students should make sure they are adequately insured against accident, injury (i.e. civil liability insurance), repatriation, etc. Failure to do so, will be the student's sole responsibility.

UGent has concluded a collective policy with insurance company MARSH/XL Catlin Insurance Company SE, which offers an [all-in insurance](#) package (click [here](#) for terms and conditions) covering the minimum requirements worldwide (health, civil liability in private life and travel insurance) during academic and leisure activities and (international) transfers. For all Erasmus Mundus students, as well as for VLIR-UOS and other scholarship students (e.g. Top-up grant), this insurance is included. The insurance policy will be valid as of end of August 2020. Note that flight cancellations due to epidemics are not insured, so it is strongly advised to take an additional cancellation insurance when booking your flight.

All other students (mainly self-supporting) have the following options:

- Subscribe to the [all-in MARSH/XL Catlin insurance](#) (highly recommended, especially for students who will have to travel during their study!)
Subscription fee: €0.89 per day

- Subscribe to the Belgian governmental health insurance fund HZIV (basic health insurance):
<https://www.caami-hziv.fgov.be/en>
One-time administration fee of €62.30; once you are registered as a Belgian citizen: free of charge.
Information only available in Dutch and French.
- Subscribe to a private health insurance fund, e.g. Partena (more coverage than HZIV):
<https://www.partena-ziekenfonds.be/nl>
Yearly premium of appr. €150)

Please indicate in My application 2020 which insurance fund you would like to subscribe to. The subscription will be settled upon arrival. In case you choose a private health insurance fund, you will have to take care of the administration yourself.

Note that the ITC cannot be held liable in case you refuse to conclude or extend your health insurance, or if you refrain from paying the subscription fee. In case of illness or accident without being insured, you will be responsible for all costs/administration incurred.

10. Arrival date / travel

Students enrolling for the preparatory programme BEPreP (see §11) are advised to arrive in Ghent preferably between September 1st and 6th 2020. This will enable us to start up some important administration. If, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, you cannot make it to Ghent in time, we will guide you through these administrative steps later on.

Note that rooms at the University Halls of Residence are only available as of September 1st, so if you wish to arrive earlier, you will have to look for additional accommodation (own responsibility/expense).

VLIR-UOS scholars' flight tickets will be booked by the ITC (through travel agency 'Key travel'). Please upload your travel preferences in My application 2020. Flights will be booked taking into consideration the actual situation worldwide.

IMSOGLO and SINReM students with an Erasmus Mundus or EIT AVSA scholarship, as well as self-supporting students, need to book their ticket themselves and upload their travel data in My application 2020.

Depending on COVID-19 measures in Belgium and Germany, SINReM students will be expected to arrive in Ghent between September 1st and 6th OR in Freiberg during the first part of September. This decision will be taken and communicated during the coming weeks/months.

Self-supporting students (non-Erasmus Mundus students):

Enter your travel data in My application 2020 (expected arrival date, flight details: airport of origin, flight number, ...) and upload your E-Ticket as soon as it is available. When booking, please consider the current situation in your country of departure. We strongly advise these students to take an additional travel and cancellation insurance, in case their flight would get cancelled unexpectedly.

11. BEPreP

BEPreP is a 3-week preparatory programme for all international students of the faculty of Bioscience Engineering to refresh their general knowledge on mathematics, chemistry, statistics and/or economics. Besides

refresher courses, the programme also includes a workshop on ICT and laboratory skills and social/cultural activities.

Due to possible COVID-19 and quarantine measures, BEPReP 2020 will be organised **online**. Online material for self-study will be available as of August 15th, live sessions will start on September 7th 2020.

Note that adequate knowledge of the abovementioned subjects is an absolute requirement for successfully attending a master programme at the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering. Participation is thus highly recommended for self-supporting students and **compulsory for scholarship students!** It is also an ideal opportunity to virtually meet fellow (international) students.

The programme is free of charge. Please check our [website](#) for regular updates.

Do not forget to register your participation and the modules you are interested in taking in [My application 2020](#).

12. [UGent Welcome Days](#)

On September 17th and 18th 2020, Ghent University organizes its Welcome Days for International Students (subject to change due to the COVID-19 pandemic). The programme is free of charge. [More information](#) as well as a registration link will be available at beginning of September 2020.

13. [Useful links](#)

International Training Centre

www.itc.ugent.be

www.facebook.com/itcugent (follow us on Facebook!)

Faculty of Bioscience Engineering

www.ugent.be/bw/en

Ghent University

[Welcome guide 2019-2020](#) (updated version will be available soon)

www.ugent.be/en

www.ugent.be/en/ghentuniv/contact

City of Ghent

www.stad.gent/ghent-international

Study in Flanders

www.studyinlanders.be

VLIR-UOS

www.vliruos.be

14. Recap of important dates

What ?	When ?
Passport and visa application	As from now
Housing application	As from beginning of June
Complete your information in My application 2020 on EConsort	As from now
Registration for BEPreP in EConsort	As from now until August 14 th
Final pre-arrival instructions	End of June
Arrival of students registered for BEPreP	Between September 1 st and 6 th
Enrolment at UGent (enrol@ugent.be)	Online between August 10 th and September 18 th
Administration by the International Information Desk (on campus)	As from September 7 th
BEPreP	Online, live sessions as from September 7 th
Arrival of all other students (non-BEPreP)	September 15 th at the latest
UGent Welcome Days	September 17 th and 18 th
Official start of the academic year 2020-2021 / start of classes	September 21 st

If you need more information or if anything remains unclear after having gone through this document, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#)! Note that further relevant information will be provided at a later stage.

Looking forward to meeting you!

Kind regards,
the International Training Centre team
Aaron, Hilde, Jarre, Jean, Joke, Leen, Michel, Sylvie, Veerle and Wim