



YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING
Intercultural Exchange Programs

Welcome to Belgium-Flanders



YFU Belgium-Flanders - special programs

Why Flanders is awesome: 10 reasons

1. If you are a foodie, you will fall in love with **our cuisine**. With our famous “golden fries”, crispy waffles, delightful chocolate and last but not least the ‘speculoos’ (just imagine spreadable caramelised biscuits on your bread), we steal everyone’s hearts.
2. Our capital **Brussels** is the capital of the European Union, the second most cosmopolitan city in the world where you can visit many European Institutions. This is also home to the Grand-Place, an astonishing square listed as UNESCO world heritage! Furthermore our national symbol, the Atomium, is worth visiting.
3. **Bruges**, also an Unesco World Heritage city, is a place that will dazzle you with its picturesque beauty and charming historic centre. With its winding canals surrounded by medieval architecture, it is also known as the “Venice of the North”
4. You will at least spend one day in **Mechelen** during the orientation week. You will climb the famous St. Rumbold’s Tower, walk in the idyllic city centre and have a picnic in a beautiful garden. In 2016 the mayor was voted as the best one in the world!
5. Are you culturally-minded? We have a **rich cultural heritage** that you can admire in many different museums and galleries throughout Flanders. Enrich your life and get blown away by the many artistic encounters.
6. **Music** is an important part of Flemish culture. There are always concerts and music festivals to go to including one of the world’s largest and most notable music fest, Tomorrowland!
7. Nothing is too far: Belgium is a **small country** which means that everything is close by. It is easy to go to all the major cities (like Brussels, Bruges, Antwerp, Gent) with its efficient train network.
8. Our national **soccer** team currently ranks first at the FIFA world list. You can play this popular sport literally everywhere in Flanders!
9. Flanders has **one of the best educational systems** in the world (for primary, secondary and higher education).
10. **Multicultural**: In Belgium more than 180 different nationalities live together. This diversity in our society can be quite visible especially in cities.



Raphael from Ecuador



Why our special program?

Are you preparing yourself for a professional art career, do you want to get better in basketball or specialize in pastry-making? Ranked among the best scoring countries in the EU (even in the world) in regards to education, we offer **many different specialized courses in high-standard secondary schools**.

Check the programs below:

Dance

Visual arts

Sports

Specific sports

Music

Musical

Catering

Tourism

Fashion

Specifics of the general and special programs

YFU trip abroad: One trip to another European city is included in a year or a winter semester program. In the past years, we went to Paris and Amsterdam.

Support: You will have your personal counselor who lives close by. The host family has another counselor personally assigned to them. In case of problems, they will intervene and help resolve any situation together.

Language classes: You are encouraged to attend a Dutch course outside of school. When you finish the course successfully, you will receive a reimbursement of the course and necessary books up to 100 Euro.



with his 2 host sisters

Dance

Are you passionate about dance and do you want to be taught by international choreographers and dance teachers? In this case, you can apply for our Dance Program! Immerse yourself in the Belgian culture whilst attending one of our Belgian Dance Schools.



Fanni from Hungary

Specifics

You will be placed in a school that offers a dance program. This is a regular high school: they offer the base package of general subjects (math, languages, history, geography, science) combined with the rest of the subjects related to both practical and theoretical performing arts subjects (mainly dance: both classical-ballet and contemporary dance).

Admission procedure

You can only be accepted to the program after **school acceptance!**

Required documents:
Video of student performing 1) ballet and 2) a contemporary dance; motivational letter which explains why you want to come to Belgium to dance.

Depending on which school, the requirements could slightly differ (for example Skype interview).

Visual arts

If you want to combine a year abroad with developing your artistic skills, our Visual Arts program is made for you! Our program teaches you the history and theory of art and provides practical experience working with multiple media and art forms.



Mia from Switzerland

Specifics

You will attend a Belgian art school where you combine visual arts classes with general subjects like math. You can choose between 3 areas of study: audiovisual arts, visual arts or architecture. Belgium also offers a lot of internationally known art exhibitions and cultural events, where you can get inspired and meet like-minded people.

Admission procedure

Required documents:
You must prepare and submit a portfolio. You can only be accepted on the program after acceptance of a school based on the portfolio.



Sports - General

Do you love to train in sports at a high level? You can attend one of our Belgian high schools offering a sport program.

Specifics

You will be placed in a school that offers the basic general subjects like math, languages, history, geography, science... The rest of your subjects will be sports-oriented, both practical and theoretical. The focus will be the technical sport aspect, as well as fair play, team dynamics...

Because you follow a general program, different schools will offer a variety of sports. Acceptance to the program will depend on the school's willingness to enroll the student.

Admission procedure

Previous experience of the chosen sport (specialization) is required. This program demands good physical condition. You have to be open towards practicing different kinds of sports.

Sports - Specific

Is there a specific sport you just can't get enough of? Would you love to practice your favourite sport not just in your free time but during your time in school? This course is absolutely perfect for you!

Specifics

You will be going to a high school that offers some of the basic general subjects and the rest of the subjects are both practical and theoretical sports-related subjects. Examples of specific sports available in this program are soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton, dance, swimming, gymnastics, athletics, table tennis, cycling,... Acceptance to the program will depend on the availability of schools offering the desired sport program and their willingness to enroll an exchange student.

Admission procedure

You must have a good physical condition and be able to practice sports at a high level.

Required documents:

Motivational and recommendation letter from the current coach (explanation of level, participation in tournaments, team spirit,...)



Music

Is music your passion? Have you always got music stuck in your head? Are you the next Louis Armstrong or Ludwig Beethoven? You can come to Belgium and join our music program.

Specifics

You will be attending a regular high school where they only offer the basic generic subjects. The other subjects in your course are related to music, both practical and theoretical. You can specialize in jazz or classical music. When you enroll for this program a placement in a school that offers a music program is guaranteed.



Belgian invention - Adolphe Sax

Admission procedure

Required documents:

A portfolio. Depending on which school, the requirements could slightly differ. You will probably have to provide an audio and/or video recording. All candidates will be interviewed via Skype after they have been selected based on their portfolio. The school is looking for candidates with a passion for music and they should not be beginners.

Enrollment is possible from the age of 16 and older. Students enrolling in the 7th year specialization music have preferably finished high school already or should turn 18 in the calendar year they arrive in Flanders.

Schools usually do not make a decision before January/February of the year the program starts. Early enrollments are thus hard to promise.

Musical

Do you love musical theatre? Are you dreaming of ever starring in Broadway or The West End? Are you looking for an exchange year where you can improve your musical theatre skills? Choosing this course, which specializes in musical theatre, might just be the right thing to do!

Specifics

You will be attending a regular high school that offers this course as a specialization year. All subjects are related to both practical and theoretical music and musical (singing, dancing, making music) subjects. When you enroll for this program a placement in a school that offers a musical program is guaranteed.

Admission procedure

Required documents:

A portfolio. Depending on which school, the requirements could slightly differ. You will probably have to provide an audio and/or video recording. All candidates will be interviewed via Skype after they have been selected based on their portfolio.

You need prior experience in singing, dancing, making music and need to be able to play at least one musical instrument.

You will get enrolled in the 7th year specialization (music) and will have preferably finished high school already or should turn 18 in the calendar year you arrive in Flanders.

Catering

Do you love spending hours and hours in the kitchen? Are you passionate about cooking, baking, grilling? Or do you dream about working in a hotel? This course might be the perfect one for you.

Admission procedure

Required documents:

Motivation letter. You will need to explain which catering subjects you would like to attend and why.

Specifics

The school offers a program tailored to the interests of the student (bakery, cooking, hotel, etc.) so you can find the course that is perfect for you. When you are enrolled in this program you are guaranteed to be placed in a school that offers a catering program. You can only be accepted to the program after school acceptance.



Hotelschool Hasselt

Tourism

Are you passionate about tourism and travel? Would you love to make a career out of your passion? Our Tourism course is the perfect first step in the right direction. You will learn about organising, selling and guiding travel trips. This course will also broaden your geographical, cultural and historical knowledge.

Specifics

You enroll in a program where you are guaranteed to be placed in a school that offers a tourism program. These are regular high schools where they offer the base package of generic subjects (math, languages, history, geography, science...). The rest of the subjects are related to both practical and theoretical tourism subjects.

Admission procedure

None but you should have the willingness and ability to learn new languages (quickly) as the program will include Dutch, French, English, German and/or Spanish.

Fashion

Follow in the footsteps of famous Belgian fashion designers, such as Dries Van Noten, An Demeulemeester en Raf Simons, and enroll in our Fashion Program. You will meet a whole bunch of creative people!

Specifics

This course will teach you how to create fashion items, accessories and interior items. You will learn everything about translating a creative idea on paper into an actual unique design.

Admission procedure

If you want to participate in the fashion program you must have a keen interest in fashion.



Succes stories



Rebeca= second from the right

2018-2019

Rebeca from Argentina was in Flanders for one semester. During that semester, she proved herself to be a great dancer and team member of a dance team.

She got the opportunity to participate in the World Championship in Leiden (The Netherlands)!

With a great result and a ton of new dance friends, she returned back home feeling very satisfied.

2017-2018

Florian from Germany followed a special theatre program in Flanders. He excelled at speaking the language so he gained a lot of opportunities in this field.

With this experience, he was accepted in a prominent theater school in Aachen (Germany).



Florian=first row on the right



Peter Goossens=famous chef in Belgium

2016-2017

Pablo from Ecuador stayed in Flanders for one school year. He followed classes in the hotel school in Hasselt and specifically chose the catering course. Once, he got the chance for an exclusive meet and greet with a famous Belgian chef named Peter Goossens.

Regular school program

Of course it is not necessary to follow a special program to be able to come to Flanders. You are more than welcome to join us in a regular school program! What does this mean?

School system

There are four categories. This division is determined by the demonstrated academic abilities of the students, the host family's choice of school, availability and partly by the student's preference and experience:

General secondary education: ASO
(highest educational level)

Artistic secondary education: KSO
(same level as ASO)

Technical secondary education: TSO

Professional secondary education: BSO

School specifics

In **ASO** you can study languages (Dutch, French, German, English, Spanish), mathematics, sciences, Latin, history, geography, philosophy, social sciences and economics.

In **KSO** you can choose between the special programs that we offer: dance, art, music and musical

In **TSO** there are many options: construction, maritime education, optics, dental techniques, agriculture, etc.

In **BSO** you also have a wide variety of options: body care, construction, mechanics/electricity, personal care, wood work, etc.

Between TSO and BSO there are many options that are the same but they focus on different aspects of the field.

YFU welcomes you

YFU offers you the experience of a lifetime; an adventure that brings out the best in you and enables you to make friendships that will change your view of the world forever.

Through YFU Intercultural Exchange Programs you discover the world. We give you the opportunity to experience a culture from within and instills the understanding that we are all residents of the same world.

With over 50 years of experience in the YFU network worldwide, we are able to offer a good and qualitative exchange program. YFU is a non-profit organization where professional staff, together with the many trained and experienced volunteers, ensure that each student bring home with them a rich and fulfilling intercultural year.

YFU Flanders offers a range of programs, from 3 months up to one school year and for young people from 16 to 19 years old. We are a youth organization that is nationally recognized by the Flemish government.

*Are you ready
for your adventure of a lifetime?*
#maketheworldyourhome

Visit us on:

