

CHILDCARE

Presentation



The system:

Belgium has an extensive network of quality childcare for young children aged 3 months to 3 years. A good starting point is to ask your municipality for a list of the day care centers, which is however not always complete. Their quality is supervised and supported by two official agencies one within the French Community, l'Office de la naissance et de l'enfance - O.N.E (the Office of birth and childhood), the other within the Flemish Community, Kind en Gezin - K&G (Child and Family). Childcare facilities in Belgium are subject to regulation. If you want to make a choice, be aware that day care centers are characterized by two main features, one is the type of facilities and the other is the type of financial participation.

- **collective facilities** : your child is welcomed into a group of children (8 minimum for K&G, 9 for ONE) generally divided into sub-groups, supervised by one or more nurses depending on the number of children.
- **family home**: your child is welcomed into the home of a childminder in a small group of children (from 1 to 8 maximum for K&G, 1 to 4 maximum for ONE).
- **accredited and subsidized facilities** : the day care center is accredited and subsidized by the ONE or K&G and the daily rate is based on the parents' income. This is the case for all municipal day care centers.
- **authorized by facilities** : the day care center is only authorized by the ONE or by K&G and the rate is freely determined by the day care center.
- **home care for sick children** : many municipalities organize home care for sick children and most national healthcare services also offer this service.

General information:

Brussels-Capital Region's website

Other useful websites:

The Gezinsbond (Dutch) and the Ligue des Familles (French) are two non-profit organizations that provide services to parents such as child care, legal aid and consumer advice.

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN



Brussels offers a wide range of extra-school activities for children. Several good sources are available :

Your municipality : again, a good starting point is the youth service of your municipality who will inform you on the activities in your neighborhood. The Kidsgazette is a quarterly cultural calendar in which you can find all the fun children's activities in Brussels. The Kidsgazette is trilingual and available free of charge in various locations in Brussels.

Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie : For youth activities in the Dutch-speaking sector of Brussels, the Commission of the Flemish Community (Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie (VGC)) is the best source of information.

Homework schools: there exists a large network of homework schools. They offer education support and cultural activities after school hours to children aged 6 to 18.

For general information see: be.brussels/ and for French language see "Fédération Francophone des Ecoles des Devoirs"

During the school holidays, various organizations run summer camps and playgroups : Bruxelles en vacances , Centre de vacances

FIRST CHILD



The birth of a child is an important moment in the life of a family. It also brings with it a number of administrative formalities for the parents. Here is a series of FAQs on various topics such as registering your child with the local authority, enrolling with an health insurance organization, and the allowances you can claim as parents.

1. Do I need to register my child with the local authority?

Yes. Within 15 days of its birth, the mother, father or both must go to the town hall (Registry Office) of the municipality in which the child was born to have a birth certificate issued.

2. Do I need to enrol my child with a health insurance organization?

Yes. Actually your child will be signed up automatically to the same health insurance company as the oldest parent, but of course the parents can also change this. All you need to do is submit the birth certificate issued by the local authority when the child was registered to your (new) health insurance organisation.

3. As a parent, do I qualify to receive some financial allowance from the authorities or other bodies?

Yes. You will receive a birth allowance which is a one-off payment made to parents when their child is born. It amounts to €1122 for the first child and €510 for subsequent children. A number of bodies (health insurance organisation, certain local authorities, trade unions etc.) award a birth bonus in addition to the birth allowance. This additional gift varies between €200 and €300. Finally, there is also the child benefit: this is a monthly contribution to the expenses incurred in your child's upbringing until its 18th birthday (or its 25th birthday if the child continues to study) and is based on your family situation.

4. Do I need to ask for these financial allowances or are they automatic?

No they are not automatic and therefore yes, you will need to make an application. If you live in Brussels, you can choose from the following child benefit funds, which will pay you both the birth allowance and child benefits : Famiris, Parentia Bruxelles, Infino Bruxelles, Brussels Family and Kids life Brussels. It is very easy to apply online. Do not forget to enclose the document received from the local authority when you registered your child.

5. What happens when parents work for European institutions?

In the event that both parents work for a European institution, it will become their institution's responsibility. When their child is born, they will automatically receive a birth allowance as well as child benefits. In the event that one parent works in the Belgian system (as employee or self-employed) and the other works for a European institution, you will not receive any EU allowance. However, the child can receive supplementary cover from the institution, after deduction of the amount already received under Belgian law.

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USEFUL LINKS



ONE

Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance

Kind en Gezin

Be.Brussels

Gesindbond

Ligue des Familles

VGC

Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie

KidsGazette

Ecole de Devoirs

Le Kid

Centres de Vacances
