



NATO Communications and Information Agency  
Agence OTAN d'information et de communication

# Newcomers' Guide for Location Glons

## From the Commander's Desk

### *Welcome!*

You are about to take on your new position at the NATO Communications and Information (NCI) Agency in Glons, Belgium. You will become part of a friendly community that serves its customers by providing in-service support (iSS) to NATO Air Command and Control (AirC2) systems. This used to cover software updates for maintenance and enhancement of the systems. Our work has evolved, and we are now also responsible for providing technical training, installation support, incident management, interoperability assessments, obsolescence management, etc. All of our services assure that the AirC2 systems optimally support our customers' operations.

Most staff you will meet in Glons are assigned to the NCI Agency Air Command and Control Programme Office and Services (AirC2 PO&S). In addition to the AirC2 PO&S staff, the site also accommodates staff from other parts of the NCI Agency in support of iSS activities and site management. About half of our personnel are military and the other half are civilian. Most of us are guests in Belgium; and we represent a high percentage of the NATO member nations.

Within this booklet, we will introduce you to our mission, the site, the little town of Glons and our host nation, Belgium. You will find useful information about the surrounding area, general administration and local schools. We hope this information will ease your transition into your new environment. In addition, you will be assigned to a sponsor, a current staff member who will assist you with any additional questions you may have.

I look forward to welcoming you.



Bernhard Bröcher  
Colonel DEU AF  
Commander NPC

## Chapter 1 Our Work

### Mission

It is our mission to provide efficient and effective system and advisory support to ensure maximum operational capability of the AirC2 assets entrusted to the Agency.

Our mission has expanded from software maintenance of in-service NATO AirC2 systems to the provision of all system support activities. This includes system engineering, obsolescence management, commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) software management and technical training.

Our mission places considerable emphasis on efficient and effective performance and, furthermore, demands the implementation of a recognized quality, safety and security management system.

### Organization

The NCI Agency site in Glons is commanded by a German Air Force Colonel, whose position is still referred to as Commander NPC<sup>1</sup> Glons. In addition to the role of Location Principal, the Commander also carries the responsibilities as Chief of in-Service Support. The Commander reports directly to the Director AirC2 PO&S.

The Director AirC2 PO&S directs the tasks for in-Service Support by approving the annual Programme of Work, which is generated in consultation with our customers. Most operations in Glons are supported by “common funds” from all NATO nations; however, system and software maintenance projects funded by one or more nations are becoming increasingly common.

We have a functional structure that incorporates resources provided by the branches of AirC2 PO&S, and supported by other parts of the NCI Agency (Education & Training, General Services, Human Resources, Finance and Acquisition). Our staff is split almost equally between civilian and military posts. Our staff represents 18 of the NATO member nations.

In addition to Glons, AirC2 PO&S staff are located in Brussels and The Hague. In the future, the iSS work that is currently carried out in Glons will relocate to The Hague. Most AirC2 PO&S staff will then be centrally located in The Hague. This transition is planned for summer 2018. For the latest updates on the move, please contact your sponsor.

### Competencies

We specialize in providing support to in-service NATO AirC2 systems and technical support to procurement organizations. To expand this capability, NATO, with support from the NATO

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<sup>1</sup> NPC, or the NATO Programming Centre, is the historical name for the Agency’s Glons location.

Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) and other partners, has established Glons as the System Support Centre (SSC) for the new generation of Air Command and Control Systems (ACCS) to combine traditional system support functions with logistics support.

Our military personnel and civilian staff work together in project teams to provide efficient and effective support for AirC2 systems, including software maintenance and training.

### Operational Expertise

Through regular rotation of military personnel every 3 to 4 years, we maintain a unique level of up-to-date operational experience across a broad spectrum of AirC2 matters, including air planning and air tasking. This expertise is used to anticipate operational trends and design the most efficient and effective solutions to fulfil operational challenges.

### Technical Expertise

We possess a high level of technical expertise that is maintained through an effective mixture of dedicated, long-serving civilian engineering staff. In daily cooperation with operational experts, our engineers implement innovative, cost-effective solutions in response to operational and technical challenges.

### Quality Management Expertise

We maintain professional standards in quality management and quality assurance to cope with constant changes to personnel and the high level of reliability required to maintain our products. Our engineers and quality experts' work together to provide high quality system support in an effective and efficient manner using industry best practices. This is vital to fulfil the safety-critical requirements necessary for AirC2 products to work in conjunction with civil air traffic control. Our Quality Management System has been ISO 9001 certified since 2003.

### Safety and Security Management Expertise

Our security and safety experts have cultivated a high level of expertise in Communications and Information System (CIS) security and system and software safety. We apply this expertise to all system support activities, thereby ensuring that our products and services fulfil international and NATO safety and security requirements. Furthermore, these safety and security experts act as advisors to national and NATO entities helping to develop respective standards and guidelines.

### System Support and Maintenance

We are specialists in all activities required to provide system support and maintenance during the in-service phases of AirC2 systems.

### Application Software Maintenance

As one of our main activities, we perform application software maintenance for a variety of systems with different architectures, programming languages and complexity. We apply industry best practices to our maintenance activities and guarantee high quality output that satisfies NATO safety and security requirements.

### COTS Software Management

Our application software is often integrated with COTS software products, such as operating systems or database management systems. We perform maintenance from a system perspective to provide our customers with the appropriate installation and operation instructions.

### Hardware Engineering

Hardware engineering is essential to all aspects of system maintenance. These activities include development of special interfaces as well as life cycle planning for hardware platforms for the systems we maintain. Our engineers examine and test the behaviour of AirC2 software on various hardware platforms and recommend suitable combinations to the user community.

### Obsolescence Management

The ever-changing nature of COTS hardware and software requires us to constantly evaluate the market for new releases and products. We evaluate these products for compatibility with our current systems and recommend or provide upgrades to the users.

### Interoperability Engineering

One of the most complex tasks in maintaining military AirC2 systems is guaranteeing technical and operational interoperability with other systems in the NATO network. Hence, we have established a sophisticated interoperability test facility that allows testing of a variety of interfaces through a NATO-wide network. Furthermore, we actively participate in all major interoperability tests, thus guaranteeing a high level of operational interoperability.

### User Support

We provide user support for all products in coordination with the NCI Agency Centralized Service Desk and CSUs. Our support to the user community is normally limited to day-time operations, but key personnel are available outside of standard business hours to assist in urgent cases.

## Training

Training users is one of the key elements of integrated system support. In cooperation with the Education and Training service line, we provide NATO and national user communities with technical training on our portfolio of AirC2 systems.

## Installation Support

We support NATO and national sites during installation of AirC2 systems and support the integration with other (national) systems.

## Advice and Consultancy

In addition to the normal system maintenance support, we provide additional services to NATO and the nations to make best use of our expertise. We provide technical expertise to a variety of NATO working groups and committees, including the ACCS steering committee and the life cycle control board. In this capacity, our maintenance experience and expertise contributes to the definition of NATO policies and regulations. Our experts support nations and NATO components in the procurement of AirC2 systems and other systems that interface with AirC2 systems.

## Interoperability Assessment

We perform independent interoperability assessments of military (national AirC2 or weapon systems) or civilian (air traffic control) systems to determine the level of interoperability with the NATO Integrated Air Defence System (NATINADS) network.

## Chapter 2      A Look at Belgium

### Location

It is the heart of western Europe and the gateway to the continent. Belgium has a common frontier with the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany and France. All other European countries can be easily reached by road, rail or sea.

Belgium is a small country. With over 11 million inhabitants, it is one of the most densely populated countries of Europe.



<http://countrysimeters.info/en/Belgium/>

### Languages

Dutch is the language of the northern part of Belgium, whilst French is the language of the south. Both languages are spoken in Brussels. In the region of Eupen, Malmedy and in the southeast part of the province of Luxembourg, German is also spoken. English is widely understood, especially in hotels, restaurants and shops. Most official documents are written in two languages or in the language of the region.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages\\_of\\_Belgium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_of_Belgium)

### Climate

The climate of Belgium is characterized by its variability. Good and bad weather may be experienced in all seasons, and at any time of the year, large changes can occur within a few hours. The weather is largely controlled by a series of depressions moving from the Atlantic Ocean across north-western Europe in an easterly or north-easterly direction. Most of these pass well to the north, so that the area experiences a high frequency of mild, moist south-westerly winds. Extremes of cold in winter and of heat in summer occur in anticyclone conditions, when the air of westerly origin is replaced by air from the interior of the continent; settled dry periods occur in such conditions but may be accompanied by lots of fog in winter.

On an average, the summer months are wetter than the winter months; however, in the summer, much of the rain falls in showers or



thunderstorms with intervening bright periods while continuous rain or drizzle is most frequent in autumn and winter. Average temperatures range from 2°C (35°F) in winter to 18°C (64°F) in summer but large fluctuations from these average values are quite common.

<http://www.weatheronline.co.uk/reports/climate/Belgium.htm>

## Government

Belgium is a constitutional monarchy, which is hereditary, and the King exercises the constitutional powers. All power in Belgium is derived from the Nation. The King, the House of Representatives and the Senate have legislative power. All Belgians are equal in the eyes of the law, and the Belgian constitution guarantees freedom of worship, the press and education.

## Provinces

Belgium is divided into ten provinces: five in Wallonia and five in Flanders.

Wallonian provinces:

- Liège – in which NCI Agency location Glons is located
- Hainaut – in which SHAPE, Mons is located
- Walloon Brabant
- Luxembourg
- Namur

Flemish provinces:

- Limburg – in which Tongeren is located
- Antwerp
- Flemish Brabant
- East Flanders
- West Flanders

You will often find names of cities, towns or places in two (Flemish, French) or even three (additional German) languages.

## Currency

The Belgian unit of exchange is the euro (€). The euro is made up of 100 cents. The following euro coins are available: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cent and 1 and 2 euro coins. Notes are issued in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500. The euro is also the official currency of our neighbour states, the Netherlands, Germany, Luxembourg and France, and is used throughout the Eurozone.



## Chapter 3 Preparation before Moving to Belgium

As soon as you receive orders to take a position in Glons, you should obtain the following information from your national authorities (if military) or your relevant Human Resources Office (if civilian):

- Customs formalities between your country and Belgium.
- National arrangements regarding the transportation of you, your family and household goods. (Household goods are normally exempt from import duty).
- Possible limitations on the amount of baggage or household goods that you will be allowed to take at your government's expense.
- Passport and national identity card requirements for you and your family.
- National dress regulations for military personnel serving with SHAPE/NCI Agency.
- National arrangements for your pay and allowances applicable to an assignment to NCI Agency location Glons.

### Civilian Personnel

New civilian personnel should contact SHAPE / Civilian Personnel or NCI Agency HR for current information concerning the formalities of moving to Belgium. Your sponsor will contact you as soon as it is known that you are assigned to a position in Glons. You should obtain from your sponsor advice on temporary and permanent accommodation, education for children, importation of a car, Belgian insurance regulations and costs and other matters. If you wish to import a weapon, your sponsor will be able to advise you on the regulations by contacting the Security section.

### Address

NCI Agency Glons  
Thier Mathias 1b  
4690 Bassenge (Glons)  
Belgium

T: 0032 4 289 9211

Nearest GPS address:

Route Provinciale 60, B-4690 Glons

Coordinates:

N50° 44'40,5" x E005° 32' 84,6 "

Google Maps:

CRC Glons



## Location

Our site is located in Glons, Belgium. It is some 20 kilometres from Liège, Belgium, and 25 kilometres SW from Maastricht in the Netherlands. The nearest town is Tongeren, which is about 10 kilometres NW. Mons, where SHAPE is located, is approximately 150 kilometres SW of Glons.

To travel to NCI Agency location Glons by car, follow the highway A13/E313 connecting Liège and Hasselt until exit 33 – Bassenge (Boirs).

- Coming from the direction of Liège:  
Follow the exit to the round-about, take the second exit (to the left). After 500m, leave the next round-about at the first exit.
- Coming from the direction of Hasselt:  
At the end of the motorway exit, leave the round-about at the second exit.

After 1.1km, turn left onto Rue Provinciale. After 400m, you will pass under a railway bridge.

Take the next right onto Rue de Chainay, where you will see a sign posted for NCI Agency and the CRC. Follow this road up the hill. At the top, turn right and you will see the military area where the NCI Agency site and the CRC are located.

The nearest railway station is Tongeren or at the main connection with Liège/Luik. As it is not possible to take public transportation to our address, you are advised to arrange for a taxi pickup or contact your sponsor for advice and further support.

If you travel by plane, the nearest airports are Brussels (Zaventem), Charleroi (Brussels South), Liège or Maastricht.

Please contact your sponsor to discuss your best options for travelling to Glons.

## Chapter 4 Upon Arrival

### At SHAPE

In general, the majority of military newcomers report directly to NCI Agency Glons. However, some nations require their military personnel to do some in-processing at SHAPE. Each national authority will inform their personnel if this is required. All new civilian personnel will have to report first to NCI Agency HR.

### At NCI Agency Glons

Prior to your arrival at NCI Agency Glons, your sponsor will be available to assist in such matters as arranging accommodation for you and your family. Be sure to contact your sponsor with your requirements. The sponsor will assist in getting you settled as quickly and as easily as possible.

Sponsors of military personnel will receive all necessary in-processing paperwork, including the SF 94 (SHAPE ID/AMIS card application), from the Deputy Personnel Officer. This form needs to be completed at the earliest opportunity, as it will commence the vehicle registration process at SHAPE through the site security staff.

Civilian newcomers are to collect their in-processing documentation from the HR Staff Assistant on site after initial in-processing at SHAPE.

## Chapter 5 Living in Belgium

### Housing

There are no military family quarters on site; therefore, you are required to rent accommodation for the duration of your tour, through a Belgian landlord (residing anywhere other than Belgium may affect your entitlement to privileges and immunities). You are advised to start by discussing with your family what kind of accommodation you require – how many rooms, space requirements, cost, facilities in the area, etc.

Your sponsor and the HR Staff Assistant will assist you in obtaining suitable housing as quickly as possible. Nevertheless, you should plan for approximately 30 days of living in hotel accommodation before your relocation is complete, provided your house hunting starts as soon as you arrive in Glons. Thirty days is the average time that our newcomers have taken to find the house and location that suited them best.

It will be helpful if you can advise your sponsor of special housing requirements prior to your arrival. Your sponsor will also help arrange transportation for your house hunting, if required.

Most houses in Belgium are brick built. Apartments, flats and newly built houses, as well as older houses are available. Rents range from 450 to 2000 euro per month (unfurnished), plus utilities. A lease is required in most cases with up to 3 months' rent as a deposit. Preferably, the deposit must be placed in a bank. A standard SHAPE lease is available from the HR Staff Assistant, but real estate agents use their own leases. The HR Staff Assistant is available for reviewing the lease contract and conditions.

Normally, oil or gas is used for heating, and gas or electricity is used for cooking. The European standard voltage is 230V, 50Hz. Most houses come without light fixtures and clothing closets. Although it is possible to obtain rental homes that have economical 380V sources for large appliances, such as stoves, washing machines, dryers and some heating units, the most commonly available current is 230V, 50Hz. This means that 110V, 60Hz appliances may be used with a transformer up to a maximum capacity of 3kW. The different cycle will not damage most appliances; however, they will run more slowly (e.g. an electric clock will run late). In any case, you should bring with you the equipment specification guides that came with your appliance. This will help the local mechanic determine whether your appliance may be converted to 230V or 380V, eliminating the need for a transformer. This is often possible for large appliances. If not, be sure to obtain a transformer large enough for your appliances. For lamps, no conversion is required; just buy 230V light bulbs locally.

## Additional Requirements

It is required in Belgium to have insurance on all leased properties. The responsibility for obtaining this insurance rests with both the landlord and the tenant. The insurance of the landlord will cover accidents for which the renter is not responsible.

The tenant has to obtain insurance against damage to the house/apartment (for example, fire, water damage, explosions and neighbour claims) for which they can be held liable. It is also recommended that you obtain family insurance. Detailed information is available from local insurance agents or the HR Staff Assistant.

## Taxes

A number of taxes are mandatory in Belgium. Details of such taxes may be obtained from the HR Staff Assistant. As you are working for NATO, you may be exempt from some local tax bills. For detailed information, please contact the HR Staff Assistant.

## Control of Animals

Please take the following information into consideration with respect to bringing your pets:

### General

All dogs, cats and ferrets must have a passport, a tattoo or electronic identification tag and an up-to-date rabies vaccination. At any time, owners must be able to present an International Vaccination Certificate. When in public or communal areas, pets are to wear collars with readable name tags showing the owner's name, address, and telephone number. Dogs must be kept on a leash or under strict voice control. It is the responsibility of the dog owner to clean up any excrements left by his/her pet.

### Legal Liability

- a. Any person keeping an animal is legally responsible for any damage caused either when accompanied or when it has strayed or escaped. All pet owners are strongly advised to take out third party insurance coverage for their animals.
- b. Additionally, there are Belgian statutory provisions laying down penalties for damage due to a lack of control of domestic animals.
- c. Belgian law provides for sanctions in cases of ill treatment of animals in general and abandonment of domesticated animals in particular.
- d. If you are the owner of an exotic animal, it is recommended to contact an appropriate office, asking for detailed information on importing or carrying such animals to Belgium.

Prior to arrival, you are advised to check <https://www.shape2day.com/arriving--leaving-shape> for the most updated information. Your joining documentation will be sent by the NCI Agency HR.

## Chapter 6 Schools

Your sponsor will provide you with current information about schools specific to your nationality. In general, the available schools are:

### AFNorth International School

The AFNorth International School, located at JFC HQ Brunssum in the Netherlands (50 km from Glons), is available for children of military personnel from USA, GBR, CAN, DEU, DEN, NOR, TUR, GRC, ITA and FRA (if space permits). This facility is also available to children of NATO civilians. The German and USA forces currently provide a school bus service from Tongeren area to Brunssum.

Website: <http://www.afnorth-is.com>

### United World College Maastricht

The United World College Maastricht is an international school located in Maastricht, the Netherlands (20 km from Glons). The school provides pre-school, primary school and secondary school education, including an International Baccalaureate (IB) programme and an IB Middle Years Programme (MYP). It also accepts children of Dutch nationality if one of the parents works for the NCI Agency at Glons. The IB diploma gives direct access to most universities in the world. The school has a lively parent support group.

Website: <http://www.uwcmastricht.com>

### European School Mol

The European School Mol is located in Mol, Belgium (76 km from Glons). The school provides pre-school, primary school and secondary school education, including European Baccalaureate (EB) courses. The school has four linguistic sections: German, English, French and Dutch. The EB diploma is recognized by all European universities and in many universities overseas. The curriculum has been designed so that pupils may, at any stage and without difficulty, go back to their national system.

Website: <http://www.esmol.net>

### Local Belgian Schools

Local Belgian schools are available to all children. Dutch language is used in the Flemish area, e.g. Tongeren. French language is used in the Wallonian area, e.g. Liege.

### Other Schools

NATO supports International Civilians who wish to send their children to boarding schools in their country of origin by providing special allowances that cover part of the costs. Please contact the HR Office for more information.

## Chapter 7 Facilities in the Area

### Medical and Dental Services

#### Military Members and Dependants

There are no on-site medical facilities. Some nations have limited medical/dental support in the local area; others have none at all. Your sponsor or national authorities will advise you on the available facilities. In line with Belgium health and safety regulations, there is a group of staff members who are trained to provide first aid on site.

#### International Civilians and Dependants

The NATO 'Private Insurance Coverage' from Allianz covers medical and dental treatment. Treatment is obtained from local civilian doctors and dentists.

#### SHAPE Medical Centre

The SHAPE Medical Centre is available to both military and civilians and their dependants. The SHAPE Medical Centre (Building 401) is composed of a hospital (a new and modern 60 bed facility that provides in-patient care), and the polyclinic, which provides outpatient care. The polyclinic has an international medical staff of medical officers representing Belgium, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, Turkey and the United States. Numerous medical and dental services and specialists are provided within the hospital. Your sponsor will be able to furnish you current information on telephone numbers, visiting, and procedures for scheduling appointments.

### Shopping

#### Rationed Item Store

There is a Rationed Item Store (limited stock) on site for use by eligible persons. Your sponsor will advise you on eligibility, stock, hours of operation and procedures.

#### SHAPE Shopping Centre

The AMIS ID provides access to the SHAPE shopping centre at Casteau (Mons), including some tax-free facilities, where eligible. This shopping centre includes the following stores and services: barber shop, salon, bank, travel agency, laundry and dry-cleaning services, bookstore, automobile service station, grocery store, shoe repair shop, department store, tailor, watch repair and optical shop, florist, a rationed items store (tobacco and liquor), sports shop, snack bar, home centre, post office (US, UK and Belgian) and an all ranks cafeteria.

### Clubs

#### NPC Club

The NPC Club promotes community spirit amongst all members at the NCI Agency Glons site and their dependants. The club organizes various events on-site and off-site. Full membership is given

to all military, NATO civilian and Local Wage Rate (LWR) civilians working on site. Many events are open to partners and dependent children.

Being a relatively small unit, we do not have club facilities locally.

### Recreation

Apart from a small fitness room, there are no sports or recreation facilities on site. Active participation utilising outside facilities is encouraged. Staff are involved in many recreational activities from horseback riding to darts. The NCI Agency Glons site has its own soccer team. Bring your bowling ball; lanes are available in Liège and Tongeren. There are several good golf courses in the vicinity (30-45 minute drive).

Nearly all sports programmes are subsidised by the Sports and Recreation Committee funds. Trips to various places/countries for sporting events and/or recreational activities may be arranged either locally, through SHAPE or JFC HQ Brunssum or by other military and civilian agencies throughout Europe. Please check with your sponsor for the availability of recreational activities in which you have a particular interest.

### Banking

There is no bank or ATM on site, but there are many banks located in the area. Your bank preference might depend on your local residence or on a friend's recommendation. The first transfer of money from your own country to your local bank may take longer than anticipated. You should therefore have some funds available. Cash, credit cards or International Cheques/Euro Cards are widely accepted in the region. Please ask your sponsor for assistance if you wish to open an account before your arrival.

### Language Courses

The Flemish Government provides Dutch language courses (day and evening) from September until June. The nearest school is located in Tongeren. For detailed information, please contact the HR Staff Assistant.



## Chapter 8 Life on Site

### Dress

Uniform, in accordance with national regulations, is the dress for all military personnel during duty hours. Civilians are expected to dress in business casual attire.

### Duty Hours

Working hours are based on a five-day working week. We have implemented flexible working hours, with core hours from Monday through Thursday from 09:00 to 16:00. The site is open from 06:30 - 19:00 from Monday to Thursday. On Friday, the core hours are 09:00 – 13:00 and the opening hours are 06:30 – 17:00 hrs. Your working week should consist of 38 hours (excluding any breaks). A limited number of personnel will work in shifts.

### Leave

Leave regulations for military personnel vary considerably by nation. Granting of leave for military personnel must therefore be agreed upon by respective SNOs. The “NATO Civilian Personnel Regulations” cover leave regulations for NATO civilians.

### Holidays

There is a separate list of NCI Agency approved holidays. After receiving approval from the NCI Agency General Manager, this list is published and distributed at the end of each year for the succeeding year. In addition to NCI Agency holidays, military personnel may observe the national holidays of their respective countries. This is to be coordinated by your National Military Representative (NMR) at SHAPE or your Senior National Officer (SNO) on site. National holiday dates are published annually.

### Military Courtesies and Customs

Military personnel are required to maintain the high standard of military courtesy that exists in their own countries.

While at SHAPE, all military personnel will wear appropriate duty uniforms and render appropriate courtesies. When outdoors at SHAPE, salutes will be given by ORs to all officers and by junior officers to their seniors; indoors, compliments (salutes and/or greetings) will be paid in the appropriate national manner. While indoors, there is a general no hat/no salute policy. The same applies to the NCI Agency Brussels and The Hague areas.

### NCI Agency Communicator

The NCI Agency Communicator is issued three times per year. The NCI Agency Communicator is an internal magazine containing general information on Agency business and social life.

## Chapter 9 Vehicles and Traffic

### Bringing your Car into Belgium

The Belgian authorities and SHAPE have agreed on certain procedures for the import of the privately owned vehicles of members of SHAPE. Your imported car may be temporarily free of taxes and duties. You may not, however, sell or dispose of that car in Belgium without informing the Belgian customs Authorities or the Vehicle Registration Office.

If you sell an imported car to someone who is not a member of NATO/SHAPE, the buyer will be liable to pay tax and import duties. Please be reminded that this regulation could adversely affect the price you get for your car.

<https://www.shape2day.com/arriving-leaving-shape/vehicles/importing-a-vehicle>

**Note:** If you intend to buy a car (new or used) in Belgium from a dealer, you will be exempt from payment of the sales tax upon production of a certificate issued by your responsible HR Office. If you buy such a car from a private person, you will have to pay the sales tax. In either case, you can subsequently dispose of the car as you wish, except that the purchaser will be liable for the 25% sales tax.

### Important Procedures for Entering Belgium

#### By Car:

If your car already has a set of registration plates of any nationality, you may drive the car across the frontier by showing the registration certificate/log book or comparable document, certificate of insurance (green card) valid for Belgium, and a valid national driving licence. The car may then enter Belgium with its original registration plates on a temporary basis, until you can complete the registration procedures at SHAPE as outlined below.

#### Shipping your Car to Belgium:

It is considerably easier to import a car that already has a set of number plates, regardless of the country of issue. It is advisable, therefore, to arrange for any new car to be registered prior to shipment. When your car arrives in Belgium, you can drive it to Glons with its registration plates.

As soon as your car arrives on site, you should report to the Security Office. There, you have to provide your ownership information (bill of sale, registration certificate or similar document) and information about your car's specifications (i.e. weight, value, type of engine, engine number, horsepower, number of cylinders, type of body and its colour, type and colour of upholstery and number of seats). Security staff will arrange the issue of the necessary customs documents.

## Insurance

You will not be able to drive your car in Belgium without an International Certificate of Insurance (green card) that is valid for the BENELUX countries and shows your Belgian address.

## Buying a Car

If you decide to ship a new car to Belgium and the car will have no licence plates, contact the SHAPE Registrar – through our site’s Security Office – before arrival. The Registrar will provide you with full details on this matter. On arrival at Glons, go to the Security Office with proof of ownership and the same specification details mentioned previously. Security will then provide you with the necessary forms for endorsement to the customs officials. The endorsed forms will support your application to register your vehicle and to obtain plates for it. Registration formalities can take up to ten working days, and you may not drive the vehicle until they have been completed.

## Registration Procedures

A car registration system has been approved for privately owned vehicles of non-Belgian citizens staying in Belgium for more than 6 months. Licence plates have a leading digit followed by three letters and three digits, e.g. (1-AAA-111). The Vehicle Registration Service in Brussels registers the application. All NON-BELGIAN NCI AGENCY PERSONNEL must initiate registration of their cars under this system within seven days of the vehicle’s arrival in Belgium with the SHAPE Provost Marshal, who is the registering authority for the Belgian Government. Registration with the Belgian civil authorities is prohibited. Each individual is personally responsible for Belgian laws and regulations concerning vehicle registration, operation and disposal. The registration fee is €45 (including front and back plates) for a car and €35 for a motorcycle.

Be aware that **only the first car is exempt from the annual Belgian Road Tax**. The amount of tax for additional cars you own and drive in Belgium depends on the size of the car engine.

*Table 1. Approximate Tax for Engine Sizes*

Engine Size	Estimated Tax
1300 cc	€179
2000 cc	€396
4000 cc	€1.938

For more information see:

[http://www.wallonie.be/sites/wallonie/files/pages/fichiers/bareme\\_tc9.pdf](http://www.wallonie.be/sites/wallonie/files/pages/fichiers/bareme_tc9.pdf).

## Safety Inspection

All vehicles imported into Belgium that are older than 4 years must pass a contrôle technique (CT) inspection before they can be registered with SHAPE. A certificate of a satisfactory inspection is required to operate the vehicle. The cost of inspection is currently €32.80 for gasoline and €40.20 for diesel. When you arrive on site, the Security Office will give you all the necessary information pertaining to this inspection.

## Roadworthiness

Under Belgian law, it is an offence to operate a car with worn tires, inadequate lights or faulty brakes. As previously stated, to drive any car in Belgium you must have an International Certificate of Insurance (green card) valid for the BENELUX countries. You should request the green card from your insurance company. The green card must show your Belgian address.

## Driving Licences

Non-Europeans in possession of a Belgian identity card must acquire a SHAPE or Belgian driving licence before driving a registered vehicle in Belgium. Any dependants over the age of 18 who drive must also obtain a SHAPE or Belgian licence. This licence will be issued upon display of a valid national licence from a nation that uses the International Road Sign System. Persons not in possession of a valid national licence must present a certificate of satisfactory completion of driving instruction classes and behind the wheel training from an authorised civilian facility.

## Vehicle Equipment

Special attention should be given to emergency and safety equipment for your car. Belgian law requires drivers to keep several items on hand within their vehicles:

- A warning triangle made of reflective material must be in the vehicle at all times.
- A Belgian approved first aid kit must be in the vehicle at all times. The kit must contain a list of contents and usage instructions in both French and Flemish. To comply with this requirement means you will probably have to obtain your kit in a local Belgian pharmacy or at SHAPE.
- A fire extinguisher must be in the car and placed so as to be accessible to the driver. The fire extinguisher must be of a Belgian government approved type, so indicated by a seal 'B' stamped on the extinguisher. An identical fire extinguisher from another country, but not containing the 'B' seal, will not meet the requirements of the law.

All cars registered in Belgium are required to have a rear fog light. This light must be marked "B1" to indicate approval by the Belgian authorities. It must be fitted in the middle or between the middle and the left side of the vehicle. You may install two fog lights. If installed, fog lights

must be marked "B2" indicating approval by the Belgian authorities. These lights may only be used in case of fog, snow or heavy rain.

### Import of Caravans

NCI Agency staff may import caravans intended for their personal use free of duties and taxes. However, caravans delivered to the personnel in question in Belgium are subject to TVA (there are no provisions in the Status of Forces Agreement or Protocol to allow them to be granted exemption from TVA for purchases made on the Belgian market). A yearly road tax for caravans must be paid.

### Driving SHAPE Registered Vehicles

Information concerning car registration, driving licences and legal regulations are available at the site's Security Office and at the SHAPE Vehicle Registration Office.

## Chapter 10      Legal Aspects

### Jurisdiction

While you and your family are residents in Belgium, you are subject to Belgian law. The Belgian authorities are considerate and helpful to NCI Agency personnel, and they make every allowance for newcomers. You should, however, familiarize yourself with the most important regulations concerning road traffic and make every effort to observe them, in the interests of yourself and others on the road. If you are unfortunate enough to become involved in a legal infraction, you should cooperate fully with the civil authorities, always remembering that your position in the NCI Agency gives you no immunity or diplomatic status. On such occasions, the Provost Marshal Office and Belgian police services are always available to give you advice and provide assistance. Make sure you and your family are aware of the emergency procedures and are ready to use them when necessary.

### Special Identity Cards

Belgian law requires all foreign nationals who reside in Belgium to have a special identity card (Carte d'Identité d'Etranger), which bears the cardholder's identification details, address and picture. NCI Agency civilian personnel and their dependants must apply for special identity cards through the site's Security Office within 7 days of arrival in Belgium. Military personnel are exempted from this requirement, but dependants of military personnel are not.

Individuals should not apply through any civil authority or commune. NCI Agency personnel (military and civilian) are responsible for ensuring that all family members complete their applications in the manner described above.

Other personnel not assigned to SHAPE or NATO support units and their actual dependants (i.e. servants, casual labour, 'au pair') are not registered through SHAPE, but should apply personally to their local commune in accordance with Belgian regulations.

### Accident Reporting

When you are involved in a traffic accident, you are required to submit a European traffic accident report together with the other persons involved in the accident.

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