

## **E4U National Reports: introducing Belgium**

### ***My Area***

I live in Mechelen. It's not a big city but it's also not a small city, it's between. There are a lot off tourist visiting our city. We have a big historical tower called the Sint-Romboutstoren, it's quite big. It's attractive for tourists. We have quite some restaurants and hotels because there comes a lot off business people to our city. We have 1 cinema. We have 2 big parks where you can relax and where the kids can play. In the weekends I like to go to other city's because I know Mechelen so well that I want to see something else. We have a train station. There aren't a lot off job opportunities because Mechelen is a city with a lot off students so it's very hard to find a job because almost every job is taken by a student.

### ***Family Life***

There aren't a lot of families with a lot of kids, 5 is the maximum I think. Mechelen is a city with different kinds of cultures. The most kids when they turn 18 go to another city to go a university or a college of higher vocational education. We do have a college of higher vocational education in Mechelen but I doesn't have a lot of options to choose from. Then the household. I don't really help with the household because I'm always busy with school. I try but it isn't always easy.

### ***School Life***

My school is called Ursulinen Mechelen. We have almost 2 thousand students in our school. Our school is big but it isn't the biggest in the city. Every hour we have a new teacher. They help the kids with mental problems and also if you have problems at home, there aren't a lot of school that do that so I am very proud of my school. I only have one problem with schools. Why do we need to go to school for 7 to 8 hours a day. That's not fun and then when you go home you need to make your homework. My spend almost every day more as 12 hours working for school, but that's life and I starting to get used to it.

### ***Traditions***

We celebrate Christmas like many other countries. We put our Christmas tree and the decorations after St. Nicholas. That is on December six. That's a holiday where kids that are nice get a present. Our city is now full of decoration, there are a lot off Christmas light. Our stores close very early on Christmas night. It's a tradition that family comes together and that they open there present.

### ***Social Habits and Customs***

Here the most people give kisses for respect or they shake hands, that's also good. But that's out school. In school you can't kiss the teachers, you only can shake hands or say "Hello sir". In Belgium it's not a big thing to smoke. There are a lot of kids that smoke around 15-16 years. They accepted it a long time ago because it's very hard to stop smoking. In school we can talk about almost everything with or teachers but you need to be careful because there are teachers who don't like to talk about their colleges and I agree with them because I wouldn't like that either. In our school you van kiss your boyfriend or girlfriend but nothing more. You can't sit on each other lap or do anything else.

### ***Food***

Belgium people love their food. They love eating but they do want to eat something that isn't that greasy. They love fries but they don't want it to cook in a lot of oil. They think a lot about their health. The famous meal is fries with simmered meat and they love some good wine with it. The

most love to go to a restaurant because they love to do something fancy. But the newest generation doesn't love the fancy stuff they like the greasy stuff like burgers and durum's. Most women in our country cook; it depends on who finishes earlier than the other one. There are also a lot of teens who like to cook for example after every exam period me and my fiends cook something at home and then go to somebody's home and eat the food. It's like our tradition.

### ***Famous People***

We have a lot of famous people. We have every year a Belgium's got talent were you can audition and you can show your talent. We have girls group who are mostly singing for kids, they are very famous. Everybody from Belgium and the Netherlands knows them. Their called k3. There are also so listen like for example Natalia Druyts, Koen Wauters and Laura Tesoro, you might know Laura from Euro song festival, she was one of the finalist. We also have actors for example Nathalie Meskens and Lars De Wulf.

This was my little introduction about my country, I hope you learned a little more about the small but interesting country.

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