

Relocation Brief — Brussels

A practical, street-aware shortlist and action plan for relocating to Brussels.

Client profile (snapshot)

Budget (buy)	1-700000 EUR purchase
Target	2+ rooms; type: Not sure; mode: buy
Household	Family with 1 children (ages: 1)
Priorities	EU quarter access, Culture & museums, Expats & international, Urban & dense, Art & design

Audience fit: built for your current household (Family).

What you get in this report (in 60 seconds)

- Top-3 communes (with microhood "search zones" you can use on portals immediately).
- A 7-10 day viewing plan + a simple note template to make decisions faster.
- Copy-paste templates (messages + questions) for agents and viewings.
- Brussels-specific pitfalls & due diligence checklist (buying basics).

How to use this report (7-day plan)

- **Day 1 - Setup (60-90 min):** create 3 portal searches, save 12 listings, send the message template.
- **Days 2-5 - Viewings:** aim 4-6 viewings; write quick notes after each (3-5 min).
- **Days 6-7 - Decision:** 2 final viewings in top pockets; request documents early; prep offer with agent/notary.

Fast promise

- After 6-8 viewings, you should have a clear top commune + top microhood type.
- A realistic view of trade-offs (parking vs space vs commute).
- A shortlist of 1-3 properties worth moving forward on.

One-page action plan

Your Top-3 shortlist

1) Etterbeek	Strong international / expat ecosystem and services.
2) Saint-Gilles	Balanced option around Saint-Gilles with a clear trade-off between space, commute and amenities.
3) Schaerbeek	Balanced option around Schaerbeek with a clear trade-off between space, commute and amenities.

Tomorrow checklist (30–90 minutes)

- 1 Create 3 portal searches (Immoweb; optionally also Zimmo).
- 2 Pick 12 candidates (4 per commune) and tag: Must-see / Maybe / Reject.
- 3 Send the pre-viewing message template to all Must-see listings.
- 4 Book 3-5 viewings (aim for 8 total across the week).
- 5 After each viewing: write quick notes (3-5 minutes).

Fast links

- 1 [Immoweb](#) - Largest Belgian property portal.
- 2 [Zimmo](#) - Very popular portal; broad coverage.
- 3 [Immoscoop](#) - Strong listings; many agent exclusives.

Pre-viewing message template (copy-paste)

Hi, I'm interested in this property and would like to schedule a viewing. Before we confirm a time, could you please share/confirm the following:

- 1) EPC rating + year of the last EPC
- 2) Monthly charges (syndic/HOA) and what they include
- 3) Reserve fund amount + planned works list (if apartment)
- 4) Electrical compliance status (inspection report)
- 5) Urbanism/permitting status if terrace/extension/regularisation is relevant
- 6) Windows / double glazing condition and street-facing noise exposure
- 7) Parking options (private spot / permit rules) + bike storage
- 8) Availability date + any required documents for the visit (ID, proof of funds, etc.)

Thank you.

Executive summary (quick scan)

Commune	Best for	Watch-outs	Top microhoods
Etterbeek	Strong international / expat ecosystem and services.	Prime pockets can be pricey; validate the full purchase cost.	Saint - Pierre · Jourdan
Saint-Gilles	Balanced option around Saint-Gilles with a clear trade-off between space, commute and amenities.	Traffic/noise can be noticeable on main arteries; shortlist street-by-street.	Porte de Hal · Gare du Midi
Schaerbeek	Balanced option around Schaerbeek with a clear trade-off between space, commute and amenities.	Check building charges, EPC, and noise insulation - these vary street-by-street.	Collignon · Dailly

Trust & method

Sources & freshness

- Immoweb / Zimmo / Immoscoop (listing supply & price checks)
- Google Maps (routes, street context), Street View (noise/arteries)
- STIB/MIVB network maps & schedules (public transport coverage)
- Commune / Brussels regional sites (parking permits, admin steps)
- Last updated: 12 Feb 2026

What is a microhood here?

A microhood is a practical search zone *inside a commune* (e.g., City of Brussels / Sablon). Names follow the city-pack microhood list and may differ slightly from portal labels.

Transparent scoring

- We compute five scores (Safety, Family, Commute, Lifestyle, BudgetFit) using city-pack signals and your stated budget.
- Overall is the rounded average of these five scores, so you can compare communes on one simple number.

What can be wrong (limitations)

- Street feel and noise are highly street-dependent; validate in person (day + evening).
- Listings can hide humidity/insulation issues; rely on EPC + window quality + smell checks.
- Supply changes weekly; treat this shortlist as a refreshed starting point.

Assumptions used for this run

Budget	1-700000 EUR purchase
Target	2+ rooms; type: Not sure; mode: buy
Household	Family with 1 children (ages: 1)
Priorities	EU quarter access, Culture & museums, Expats & international, Urban & dense, Art & design

1. Etterbeek

Top microhoods: Saint - Pierre · Jourdan

Family: 5/5	Commute: 5/5	Lifestyle: 5/5	BudgetFit: 2/5	Overall: 4/5
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Why this commune

- Offers excellent metro access and proximity to parks.
- Welcoming atmosphere for expats and families.

Microhood shortlist (search zones)

Saint-Pierre

Portal keywords: Saint-Pierre, Saint Pierre, Brussels

Highlights: Good starting point with strong metro connectivity, solid schools/childcare density, good café and brunch scene. Watch for busier evenings in lively pockets.

Jourdan

Portal keywords: Jourdan, Brussels

Highlights: Good starting point with more green space and park access, solid schools/childcare density, good café and brunch scene. Watch for busier evenings in lively pockets; transit access varies street-to-street.

Trade-offs to watch (Brussels-specific)

- Prime pockets can be pricey; validate the full purchase cost (price + fees + recurring charges).

2. Saint-Gilles

Top microhoods: Porte de Hal · Gare du Midi

Family: 5/5	Commute: 5/5	Lifestyle: 5/5	BudgetFit: 2/5	Overall: 4/5
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Why this commune

- Strong fit for your stated priorities.
- Balanced trade-off between lifestyle and commute.

Microhood shortlist (search zones)

Porte de Hal

Portal keywords: Porte de Hal, Brussels

Highlights: Good starting point with more green space and park access, strong metro connectivity, solid schools/childcare density, good café and brunch scene. Watch for busier evenings in lively pockets.

Gare du Midi

Portal keywords: Gare du Midi, Brussels

Highlights: Good starting point with strong metro connectivity, good café and brunch scene. Watch for less greenery; check streets close to parks.

Trade-offs to watch (Brussels-specific)

- Traffic/noise can be noticeable on main arteries; shortlist street-by-street.
- Busier evenings in hotspots; confirm noise levels during a late walk-through.
- Competition can be high in prime pockets; be ready to move quickly on good listings.

3. Schaerbeek

Top microhoods: Collignon · Dailly

Family: 5/5	Commute: 5/5	Lifestyle: 5/5	BudgetFit: 3/5	Overall: 4/5
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Why this commune

- Strong fit for your stated priorities.
- Balanced trade-off between lifestyle and commute.

Microhood shortlist (search zones)

Collignon

Portal keywords: Collignon, Brussels

Highlights: Good starting point with more green space and park access, good tram coverage, solid schools/childcare density, good café and brunch scene. Watch for busier evenings in lively pockets.

Dailly

Portal keywords: Dailly, Brussels

Highlights: Good starting point with good tram coverage, solid schools/childcare density, good café and brunch scene. Watch for busier evenings in lively pockets.

Trade-offs to watch (Brussels-specific)

- Check building charges (syndic), EPC, and noise insulation - these vary street-by-street.

Questions to ask (copy-paste)

Before viewing

- Please confirm in writing and share documents where possible (EPC, electrical, syndic pack).
- EPC rating and heating type? Any planned works in the building?
- Monthly charges (syndic/HOA) and what's included? Reserve fund amount + planned works list (if apartment).
- Parking options (private spot / permit) and bike storage?
- Noise exposure: which side faces the street; double glazing?
- Any urbanism/permit constraints (extensions/terraces) if relevant?

During viewing

- Check street noise at the windows (open/closed) and at peak hours if possible.
- Test water pressure, heating, and ventilation; check humidity/mold signs.
- Ask for electrical report + verify consumer unit / grounding.
- Confirm insulation and windows; note orientation and natural light.
- Look for cellar/storage, stroller access, elevator, bike room.

Offer stage (Belgium specifics)

- Request documents early: EPC, electrical, urbanism (if needed), syndic docs, minutes, budget.
- Clarify conditions in the offer (financing, technical inspection, document receipt).
- Plan timeline: offer → compromis → deed (notary) and move-in date alignment.

Second viewing checklist (5–10 min)

- Confirm charges breakdown (syndic/HOA) + reserve fund + planned works; get minutes and budget in writing.
- Verify heating system, insulation, and any moisture issues (cellar/bathroom corners, ventilation).
- Check noise at different times (street, neighbors) and window quality; ask about recent complaints.
- Validate parking reality (permit rules, availability, private spots) and storage (bikes/strollers).
- Review legal/urbanism points (permits, co-ownership rules) if you plan renovations or terraces.
- Ask for a clear inventory of included fixtures/appliances and estimated move-in timeline.
- If possible: bring a contractor/inspector for a quick sanity-check of hidden costs.

Belgium buying basics (compact)

Buying basics

- Typical flow: offer → compromis (sale agreement) → deed at notary (timing varies).
- Key docs: EPC, electrical inspection, urbanism/permit notes (if applicable).
- If apartment: syndic/HOA docs (charges, reserve fund, minutes, planned works).
- Registration fees & notary costs: factor them early (details depend on region and situation).
- Budget buffer: keep a margin for first-year fixes (windows, heating, humidity).

Brussels-specific pitfalls (quick list)

- If apartment: planned works can override "cheap charges"; always ask for minutes + budget + reserve fund.
- Noise on main arteries: validate street-by-street; avoid assuming the whole commune is quiet.
- Parking reality: permits vs private spots; check rules for the exact address.
- Old building trade-offs: EPC, insulation, humidity; ask about recent works.
- Syndic charges can vary widely; validate what's included and reserve fund health.
- Orientation/light: same street can be night/day difference; check sunlight in person.
- Schools/childcare: availability and waitlists; start inquiries early if relevant.
- Public transport nodes: great convenience but can mean higher noise/foot traffic.
- Renovations: confirm permits and restrictions for terraces/extensions if important to you.

Settling-in essentials (short)

Commune registration — typical minimum

Where to start: IRISbox (Brussels region) and your commune appointment page.

- Passport/ID + residence documents (if applicable)
- Proof of address (lease / deed / housing attestation)
- Civil status docs if relevant (marriage/birth) - originals + copies
- Work proof (contract/employer letter) if requested

First 72 hours

- Set up a local SIM / data plan and enable 2FA for banking.
- Confirm temporary address and keep copies of the lease / purchase agreement.
- Book commune appointment for registration (as soon as address is confirmed).

First 2 months

- Set up a Belgian bank account if needed and update payroll details.
- Review insurance (home contents, liability); confirm coverage start date.
- If driving: confirm parking permit process, resident rules, and any LEZ requirements.

First 2 weeks

- Register at the commune (address registration); follow up on police check if required.
- Choose a GP (médecin généraliste) and register with a mutualité (health fund).
- Arrange energy + internet contracts if not included (electricity/gas/internet).

Providers (quick shortlist)

- **Mobile:** Proximus / Orange / Telenet - compare coverage where you live.
- **Internet:** Proximus / Telenet - check fiber/cable availability by address.
- **Energy:** Engie / Luminus - compare fixed vs variable, contract terms.

Schools & childcare

- School/childcare types: communal (FR/NL) vs international/private (budget-dependent).
- Waitlists exist: prepare documents early (ID, proof of address, vaccinations if required).

Agencies and resources

Curated starting points for Belgium/Brussels.

How to choose an agent (quick criteria)

- Local focus: ask which communes they personally cover weekly.
- Deal type: apartments vs houses - relevant track record.
- Responsiveness: same-day replies and WhatsApp support.
- Due diligence: habits around syndic pack / EPC / urbanism.
- Negotiation: ask for 2 recent anonymized deal examples.

Recommended outreach order

- Start with 2 local agents + 1 network office per commune.
- Compare answer quality within 48 hours (docs, clarity, speed).

Agencies

- 1 [ERA Belgium](#) - National network (100+ offices).
- 2 [CENTURY 21 Belgium](#) - National network (130+ branches).
- 3 [TREVI](#) - Large Belgian network (35+ agencies).
- 4 [Dewaele](#) - Large network in Flanders & Brussels.
- 5 [Immo Francois](#) - Large network (24+ offices).

Websites

- 1 [Immoweb](#) - Largest Belgian property portal.
- 2 [Zimmo](#) - Very popular portal; broad coverage.
- 3 [Immoscoop](#) - Strong listings; many agent exclusives.