MIGRANTS · STUDENTS · JOBS

UPDATED · 2026

Student Job Regulation

A clear guide to the rules for a student job in Flanders — when you can work, your contract, your pay, your hours and your taxes.

Based on the official rules from
student@work · studentatwork.be

STUDENT AT WORK

START HERE

Are you looking for a student job?

This brochure explains all the rules you need to know when you want to work as a student. Read it before you start, so you know your rights and avoid surprises.

? **When can you work?**

? **When do you sign a contract?**

? **How many hours per year?**

? **How much can you earn?**

RULE 1

When can you work?

Two things matter: your **age** and your **school**.

1 Age

- Are you **16 or older**? Then you may start working.
- Are you **15** and have you finished the first two years of secondary school? Then you may start working.
- New since 2026: are you **15** and still in full-time compulsory education (e.g. OKAN)? Then only **light work**, under strict conditions.

2 School

To work as a job student, being a student must be your main occupation. You have to go to school to work as a student.

YOUR PAPERS

Which documents do you need?

Before you start looking, make sure you are allowed to work. Follow the questions below.

1. **Are you from an EU country?** (also Liechtenstein, Norway, Iceland or Switzerland)
   Yes: you may work. No: go to question 2.

2. **Do you have a residence card?**
   Yes: go to question 6. No: go to question 3.

3. **Are you applying for asylum?**
   Yes: do you have an orange card (certificate of registration)? If yes, go to question 4; if no, apply at your local authority. No: you are not allowed to work.

4. **Does your orange card say you may work?**
   Yes: go to question 5. No: you are not allowed to work.

5. **Do you live in an asylum centre or have a social assistant (OCMW / other)?**
   Yes: you may work if your social assistant gives permission. No: you are allowed to work.

6. **Does your residence card say "labour market: unlimited"?**
   Yes: you are allowed to work. No: see question 7.

7. **Does your residence card say "labour market: limited"?**
   Yes: you may work a maximum of 20 hours per week during the school year. You may work more hours during school holidays. No: you are not allowed to work.

Example: orange card (certificate of registration).
Source: Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering.

YOUR PAPERS

What does a residence permit look like?

If you have a residence permit, you receive an electronic foreigner's card. It states whether you are allowed to work.

Belgium has several types of foreigner's card for people from inside and outside Europe. Each card shows which residence permit you have and how long it is valid.

Example: electronic foreigner's card. Source: Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering.

Not sure if you can work?

Call **02 233 41 11** and ask the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue.

RULE 2

You found a job. Now the contract.

Before you start, you must sign a written contract. Read it carefully first.

What must be in it?

- Your name, address, date of birth
- Name and address of the employer
- Start and end date of the work
- Hours per day; start and stop times
- Days per week you work
- Your wage and the pay day
- Where you work and your job title

Two copies

One for you, one for the employer.

Three trial days

In the first 3 days you may still quit. After that you work to the end.

How long?

Up to **12 months**. To continue, sign a new one.

RULE 3

Your salary

How much?
Depends on the job, the sector and your age. There is always a legal minimum.

When?
Manual workers every 2 weeks; office workers monthly. The date is in your contract.

How?
Into your bank account. Under 18? A parent must help you open one.

Minimum student wage 2026

Gross hourly wage, 38-hour week. Absolute minimum from 1 April 2026.

AGE	HOURLY (GROSS)
18 and older	€ 13.30
17 years	€ 9.71
16 and younger	€ 8.91

Your sector's collective agreement (CAO) may set a higher wage. The full-time guaranteed minimum is € 2,189.81 gross / month.

RULE 4

How many hours can you work?

650 hours per year at **reduced social contributions**. Within these hours you keep the student benefits.

BENEFIT 1 — LOWER SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

As a student you pay only a solidarity contribution of **2.71%** of your gross wage, instead of the usual **13.07%**. Your employer pays 5.42%. This funds health care, pensions and unemployment — automatically.

BENEFIT 2 — USUALLY NO TAXES

In most cases you pay no taxes on your student wage. You still file a tax return — but it will say you owe nothing, as long as you stay under the limits (see the taxes chapter).

RULE 4 — CONTINUED

What if you work more than 650 hours?

- From the **651st hour** you pay the normal social contribution of **13.07%**. You stay a student, but the benefits are gone. You still sign a student contract.
- In Flanders you may work **80 extra hours per month** on top of the 650, but at the normal contribution.
- **Please note:** under 18 you always keep your child benefit (Groeipakket). From 18, working more than 80 hours in a month (excluding the first 650 student hours) may cost you your Groeipakket for that month.

Keep track of your hours

On the website or app **Student@work** you see how many hours you worked, for which employer, and how many you can still work. You can also download a certificate for your employer.

studentatwork.be

GET SET UP

How do you sign up for Student@work?

You need an **eID** (digital identity). Belgian citizens get one automatically from age 12; with an electronic foreigner's card you also get an eID. No eID yet but allowed to work? Apply for one at your local government.

itsme app

18 or older? Log in with the itsme app. Download it and follow the steps.

eID

Card reader

Plug a card reader into your computer and sign in with your identity card.

Security code

Sign in with a security code via email, mobile app, SMS or token.

Go to the Student@work website, press **sign up**, choose a method and follow the instructions.

TAXES

How much can you earn at most?

You cannot earn unlimited amounts as a student. Above certain limits, you or your parents pay more tax. These amounts change every year — below are the **2026** figures.

YOU PAY TAXES IF YOU EARN OVER

€ 15,971.43

Earn more than this in 2026 and you pay taxes on your income yourself.

YOUR PARENTS PAY MORE IF YOU EARN OVER

€ 22,385

Above this in 2026 you are no longer 'dependent', so your parents pay more tax.

Other income (besides child support or a scholarship)?

Call **02 572 57 57** and ask the Federal Public Service Finance how much you may earn.

Both are gross amounts after social contributions, assuming no other taxable income. A tax return is mandatory — even for students, even if you owe nothing.

COMING FROM ABROAD

International students in Flanders

Foreign students can work as a job student while studying in Belgium, if they are enrolled full-time and have a valid residence permit. What counts is what the **back of your residence card** says about the labour market.

EEA + Switzerland

From the EU/EEA (also Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) or Switzerland? Then you need **no work permit** and work under the same rules as Belgian students — up to 650 hours a year at reduced contributions.

NON-EEA STUDENTS — READ YOUR CARD

'Labour market: unlimited'

You work as a job student under the **same conditions as Belgian students** — the full 650-hour package.

'Labour market: limited'

Up to **20 hours per week** in the school year, and **unlimited during official school holidays**.

No separate work permit is required for student work. Your studies must stay your **main activity**: working more than allowed can put the renewal of your residence permit at risk. Recognised refugees and people with subsidiary protection may work as a job student even on a temporary permit.

THE LAST SUMMER

Working as a student after you graduate

A student job is meant for students — but there is one exception for school-leavers.

Graduated in June?

You may still work as a job student through the summer, up to 30 September — at 2.71% and within your 650 hours. From October only as a regular employee.

Graduated another time?

If you finish studies at another moment (e.g. January), you can **no longer** work as a job student.

Continuing your studies?

Enrolled for a new programme starting in September? Then you stay a student and can keep working.

Note · same employer afterwards?

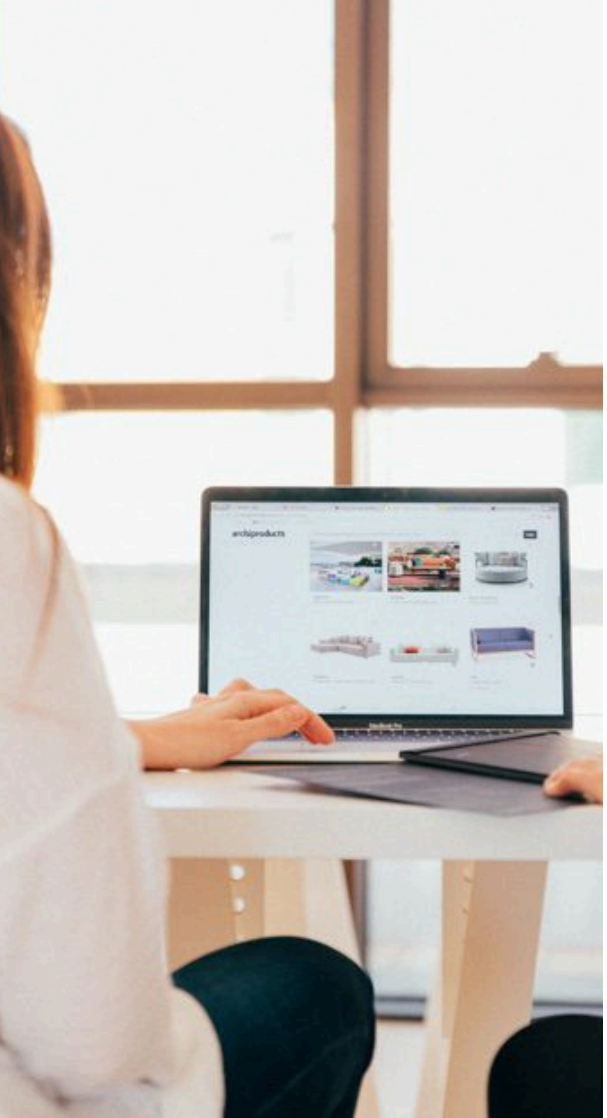
Your new regular job must clearly differ from your student job. It cannot be a cheap trial period.

Tip · register with VDAB

Sign up as a jobseeker with VDAB right after graduating, to start your integration period.

Non-EEA graduates

To keep working after your studies you need a **single permit** (work + residence), or apply for a **12-month 'search year'** permit to find a job or start a business. Apply **before** your student permit expires. In Flanders (since 1 Jan 2026) the single-permit job must be highly qualified.



GET STARTED

Where can you find a job?

1 · An interim office

Register at an interim (temp) office nearby. Make an appointment, register, and ask about the status regularly. They call or email when they find work.

2 · Look yourself

Go to an employer and ask. Small workplace (a bakery)? Step inside. Large workplace? Check their website for how to apply.

Questions or problems?

A trade union can help — e.g. ABVV Jongeren (abvv-jongeren.be).
More: interiminfo.be/en · migrants-students-jobs.thomasmore.be

A PROJECT OF MIGRANTS, STUDENTS AND JOBS

STUDENT AT WORK · SINT JOZEF Geel · PHAROS · Deaconess Foundation

SOURCES & DISCLAIMER

Where this information comes from

All rules and figures reflect the legislation in force in 2026 and were checked against the following official sources:

student@work — studentatwork.be (RSZ/NSSO)
FPS Employment, Labour & Social Dialogue — werk.belgie.be
FPS Finance — financien.belgium.be
National Social Security Office (RSZ/ONSS) — socialsecurity.be
National Labour Council — guaranteed minimum monthly income
Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering — document examples
Working in Belgium & Immigration Office (Dienst Vreemdelingenzaken)
Study in Flanders — studyinflanders.be
VDAB, ABVV Jongeren, interiminfo.be

This brochure is for information only and is not legal advice. Amounts are indexed and can change during the year — the hour package, minimum wages and tax limits are always most up to date on **studentatwork.be**. Last updated: July 2026.