

Foyer nieuwsbrief internationaal (Verzending datum: 06/02/2012)

Welcome to the December-January edition of Foyer's international newsletter

First of all, even as late in the year as February, Foyer still wants to wish you the very best for 2012. In keeping with the new year theme, this newsletter is all about new beginnings: a new edition of the "BIS Award" project, a new newsletter, a fresh publication and intercultural lessons about birth rituals.

BIS Award – third edition

A fresh group of teenagers is ready for a challenge!

[Lees meer](#)

ICO Pronto: rites of passage

Intercultural lessons explore birth and coming of age

[Lees meer](#)

A tale of one language, one city and three continents

A new publication on the Angolan, Brazilian and Portuguese populations of Brussels

[Lees meer](#)

A new newsletter: "Gewoon Vreemd Bxl"

Foyer has recently launched a new, Dutch-language newsletter called "*Gewoon Vreemd Bxl*", which translates as "Normal Strange Brussels". Each issue gives in-depth information on a specific theme related to aliens law, undocumented immigrants, or Roma in Brussels.

The first edition of the newsletters focuses on the asylum seekers' accommodation crisis in Belgium. Exploring various aspects of this long-standing crisis, the newsletter addresses the following topics:

- Why is there so much bickering over authority in this matter?
- Why were there no manifestations in favour of the Accommodation Law?
- The "voluntary dispersal plan" of Prime Minister Di Rupo's administration.
- Enforcement of the right to accommodation, by petition or request for a preliminary injunction before the labour court.
- The apparent consensus on a stricter approach to the accommodation crisis.

Those who are interested in asylum and aliens law and read Dutch can sign up for the newsletter through www.foyer.be/newsletters.

BIS Award – third edition

BIS Award is Foyer's personal development project for young people. It consists of three main parts: study, sports and volunteering. The present edition will run until 2015. Last

October, 18 motivated boys and girls were selected for the new project. Aged between 13 and 15 years old, they come from a variety of ethnocultural and educational backgrounds.

In November the youngsters had their very first group activity. An expedition through Brussels was to give participants an idea of what BIS Award's annual expeditions are like: challenges that promote teambuilding and endurance. At the same time, Foyer's youth workers could make a first assessment of the participants' skills.

Armed with a compass, coordinates and a topographical map, the youngsters found their way to the neighbouring municipality, from where photographs guided them to the forest of Laarbeekbos. In the middle of the forest the path ended and the "tree-smelling" started: a trail of garlic had been left on tree trunks, guiding the explorers to a fifty-metre-long tunnel. This tunnel connects the municipalities of Jette and Wemmel, with the roar of the Brussels ring road overhead. The youngsters had to feel their way through the dark, because the tunnel was pitch-black. Nevertheless, the entire group made it to the other side.

This journey through Brussels was a symbolic appetizer for the expeditions and challenges that await the BIS Award participants over the next few years.

The first volunteering task that awaited the youngsters was a visit to Poverello, a social organization that provides aid to the poor. A presentation and tour of the organization gave participants a good idea of what happens at Poverello. The youngsters' final stop was the kitchen of Poverello's restaurant, where they met the enthusiastic volunteers that cook there for 150 to 300 people every day. All participants were impressed with the respect with which all people are treated at Poverello, and some already imagined themselves as volunteers there. To be continued!

For more information on the project, please contact [Anne-Sophie Van Der Bracht](#)

BIS Award is sponsored by KBC Bank and the Flemish Community Commission.

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ICO Pronto: rites of passage

ICO Pronto is a collection of intercultural lessons for pre-school and primary school. This year's theme is "rites of passage". The first lesson focuses on birth and is aimed at pre-schoolers.

Birth is not celebrated in the same way in all families and cultures, which is what the children discover in a playful way by looking at pictures from around the world, by preparing Belgian sugared almonds or Jewish cake, discussing the tasks of parents, designing birth cards, and much more.

The second lesson, for 10- to 12-year-olds, deals with "growing up" and reaching adulthood, which also happens in different ways and at different times in life around the world. The pupils become familiar with the notion of ritual and discover a variety of ceremonies that turn girls into women and boys into men.

All ICO Pronto lessons and educational material are made available on a website that can be accessed by subscribers (for subscriptions, please [contact Foyer](#)).

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A tale of one language, one city and three continents

Portuguese is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. Brussels, too, is home to a large Portuguese-speaking population. The new Foyer study “A tale of one language, one city and three continents”, launched at Foyer on 16 December, sketches a portrait of the three major Portuguese-speaking groups in Brussels: the Portuguese, the Brazilians and the Angolans. According to the official statistics, there are approximately 2,000 Angolans, 30,000 Portuguese and some 4,000 Brazilians in Belgium. Yet estimates of the resident population put the numbers much higher, most notably for the Angolans and the Brazilians. The Portuguese-speaking population lives scattered across the whole of the Brussels region, with concentrations in some seven municipalities.

The study gives an overview of the integration of Portuguese-speaking inhabitants of Brussels through work and community formation. The Portuguese language serves as an anchor point for telling the story of these three populations. Despite certain tensions between different groups within the Portuguese-speaking population, there are clear indications that the boundaries between different nationalities and subgroups are fading. “Ethnic” meeting places and events are increasingly becoming manifestly “pluri-ethnic”. Commercial interests play a part in this, but mixed couples and marriages as well. Where Portuguese-speaking migrants of various backgrounds meet in Brussels, something truly new is created, perhaps the beginnings of a “Lusophone” identification.

For many Portuguese, Angolans and Brazilians of the “first generation”, returning to the country of origin (sooner or later) remains the ideal. In the case of Portuguese and Brazilians, one can see it happen in reality; for most Angolans, matters are more complicated and returning to Angola is often impossible. Overall, a combination of flexibility and sense of adventure on the one hand, and saudade or longing for what was left behind on the other, creates a permanent basis among the Portuguese-speakers of Brussels for a desire to return to their roots, but also for a desire to explore new horizons.

The study, in Dutch, is available at Foyer [on request](#). A French version will be published later on in the year 2012.

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