

# International Workcamp in the Domain of the Caves of Han

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<b>Project Title</b>	The Caves of Han
<b>Project dates</b>	From June to September
<b>City Location</b>	<p><b>Director:</b> Brigitte Malou</p> <p><b>Address:</b> Rue Joseph Lamotte, 2 5580 Han-sur-Lesse Belgique</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.grotte-de-han.be/en">http://www.grotte-de-han.be/en</a></p> <p><b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:info@grotte-de-han.be">info@grotte-de-han.be</a></p> <p><b>Phone number:</b> +32 (0)84/37 72 13</p>
<b>SVI contact</b>	<p><a href="mailto:incoming@servicevolontaire.org">incoming@servicevolontaire.org</a></p> <p>+32 2 888 67 13</p>
<b>Type</b>	Outdoor activities
<b>Max volunteers</b>	2 volunteers

You might want to download the latest version of this infosheet [directly from our website](#).

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## Who are we?

We are the SVI, Service Volontaire International (International Voluntary Service), a non-profit youth association managed by and for volunteers, to whom we give the chance to engage themselves in voluntary projects all over the globe. We aim to make our projects accessible to all, regardless of their age, financial resources or skills.

Each year, we send about 350 volunteers to projects all over the globe, as we work with local associations in nearly 70 countries. Our volunteers help local independent organizations, which are not subsidized. Indeed, the local volunteers share our values.

## The Organization:



The little village of Han-sur-Lesse, at the gateway to the Ardennes and one hour by road from Brussels, is home to one of the most famous caves on our continent, the Cave of Han. The Cave of Han is exceptional in terms of the beauty of its concretions and the immensity of its chambers and fashioned by the river Lesse that flows through it from one side to the other. It has welcomed more than 20 million visitors for over 250 years.



On the hill that overhangs the Cave and in the valley abandoned by the Lesse extends a 250-hectare park of unspoilt nature that accommodates the Wildlife Reserve, where you can contemplate the fauna of our regions in their natural environment.

Over 100,000 years ago the Lesse, a river flowing within the confines of the Ardennes, left its natural valley and forced its way into the limestone massif known as the Massif de Boine. It resurfaced 2 km further along, having crossed the massif from side to side. By crossing the massif, it contributed to the formation of an extraordinary network of underground caves, the Caves of Han.

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This phenomenon of the disappearance and re-emergence of a river is unique in Western Europe. The network of caves that has been discovered under the massif is of exceptional beauty. With their three stars in the Michelin Guide, the Caves of Han have been visited for 150 years and have already attracted over 20 million visitors.

The site of the Massif de Boine and of the "chavée", the ancient abandoned valley of the Lesse, has been laid out as a nature reserve for the wild animals of our lands: wolves, lynx, bears, bison, red deer, fallow deer, wild boar, ibex... This 250-hectare site of unspoilt nature allows you to contemplate these animals roaming free or semi-free in a natural setting of exceptional beauty.

Since the Neolithic age, the Han site has been known and venerated and the place of the re-emergence of the Lesse became a cult and pilgrimage site. Very many archaeological objects have been discovered at the bottom of the Lesse and on its banks, probably thrown in as offerings.

An interactive exhibition, the PrehistoHan, will help you relive the "prehistory" of the Caves of Han. In the "Han of Yesteryear" museum, you will relive the daily rural life of the inhabitants of Han of a hundred years ago.

### **Work:**

The walking route in the Wildlife Reserve is about 2, 5 kilometers long and allows the visitors to cross the upper part of the Reserve. During this walk, panoramas, lookouts and hides give him an opportunity to get as close as possible to nature and the animals. There can be around 500 persons a day on this route, the safari bus will drop them off at the peak of the Massif de Boine and pick them up again at Tivoli, at the end of the walk, to complete the tour by bus in the plain where the animals roam semi-free.

#### *The tasks of the volunteer are:*

- To watch over the path, while walking and observing the visitors in order to guide and help them.
- To prevent the visitors from leaving the path and venturing in other parts of the Reserve (there is a danger due to wild animals).
- To ensure that the visitors do not damage equipment or harm the animals and that they do not adopt dangerous behaviors (like to pass their hand through the enclosures), as well as that they do not disturb the path (noises, garbage, etc.).



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- To be in charge of activities and give information along the path: to inform the visitors on practical questions (distances, timetable of the safari-bus, localization of the toilets, rain shelters etc.) and to provide further information concerning the animals and the nature to the visitors who wish it (a basic training in that field will be given to the volunteer at his/her arrival).
- To ensure the maintenance of the path: every evening, to empty the garbage cans and the dry toilets; to collect waste; to ensure some maintenance work (ex : painting of furniture)
- Certain days, to organize the picking-up of the visitors by the safari-bus at the end of the path (while being in contact with the central service and the drivers of the safari-bus by phone).
- When there are less visitor the volunteer can carry out other tasks from time to time, for example some maintenance work in the Reserve or to create pedagogic tools.
- Occasionally, participating in the preparation and animation of different events which take place in the Domain.

### *Working hours:*

The working hours are between 10.00 a.m. to 18.00 p.m. with a break for lunch. The volunteer will work 5 days a week, which will generally include Saturday and Sunday.

### *Supervision:*

The volunteer will be supervised by a mentor, Anthony Kohler: contact: [0498564135](tel:0498564135), [akohler@grotte-de-han.be](mailto:akohler@grotte-de-han.be) and will be part of the team of workers and volunteers, experienced people as well as many students working in the domain during holidays.

### **Volunteer profile:**

- To like animating people, want to speak with other people, being outgoing and able to provide information.
- To be able to show authority towards the visitors when necessary.
- To love nature and animals, as well as walking and being outside.

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### *Working language:*

It is compulsory to have a good level in French. The volunteers need to understand and to be understood by people on the walking route to answer their questions and to guide them. It is also welcomed to know other languages such as English, German or Dutch.

### **Accommodation:**

The volunteer will be hosted in a touristic inn just in front of the caves reception. You will share a 4 or 6 beds bedroom with all the facilities.



### **Food:**

The lunch meal is provided, you will eat in the domain. You're responsible for your breakfast and meal. (5/10€ a day will be enough).

### **Transport:**

Someone will drive you every day from the reception of the caves to the site of the project and you will also be provided a bike for your own transport on the walking path.

## How to prepare your trip to Belgium?

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### **Plane trip to Belgium:**

The volunteer might want to visit [our website](#) for cheaper plane tickets.

### **Visa:**

European citizens only need a national identity card or a passport. Non-European citizen may need a visa. The visa must be requested at the embassy or Belgian consulate of the country where they live.

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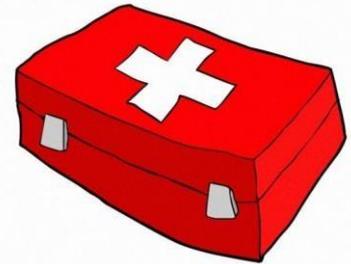
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If there is no embassy or Belgian consulate in the country where the volunteer lives, you should contact the Belgian Embassy, which is responsible for your country. It is usually located in a neighboring country.

The procedure for visa application can sometimes take a long time. Therefore, you must [apply for a visa](#) at least four weeks before your departure.

## Health:

You need a health insurance to cover your entire trip to Belgium (however usually the host has an insurance to cover his working time). Your sending association may help you find a suitable one. No vaccine is required but if you are going to do some physical work, we recommend that you take the vaccines against lockjaw and hepatitis. Make sure that you have seen a dentist before you leave home.



The volunteer must bring all the medicines you need. It might be complicated to buy it in Belgium if you do not have the necessary documents to get it. The medicine you may need might have a different name from the one it has in your country.

In cases of accident all participants from foreign countries are insured by the SVI. Nevertheless they need to have their own insurance plus a health insurance.

European volunteers need their [European Health Insurance Card](#) up to date. They can get it for free!

## Seven days before departure:

You need to confirm your trip seven days before departure by sending a confirmation form to his sending association (at home). That form will be communicated to the SVI, and allow us to organize your arrival with our partner association.

The volunteer needs to know that your sending association is allowed to require some subscription fees independently from the project in Belgium. These fees allow you to work and provide you with volunteering projects. For more information, the volunteer needs to contact his sending association. Once you are arrived in Belgium, there is no fee to pay to the host association.

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## When you arrive in Belgium:

The volunteers need to go to the meeting point by their own way!



The meeting point is at the reception of the caves: Rue Joseph Lamotte, 2  
5580 Han-sur-Lesse, Belgique

**If the volunteer is coming from Brussels airport, he has to go by train to the center, to take a train to Gemelle and then a bus to Han.**

There are some direct trains to the "Brussels Central Station". Check schedules on: <http://www.belgianrail.be/en/Default.aspx>.

From Brussels Central Station you have to take the train to go to the destination of Arlon and stop at Gemelle TEC and from there take the bus TEC n°29 Gemelle – Wellin – Grupont (one every hour) up to the center of Han-sur-Lesse.

**If you are coming from Charleroi airport (Brussels South airport), you can take a bus to the train station and then a train to the Gemelle station and then to Han.**

You have two options:

1) You can buy a single ticket (if you buy a return ticket, you must go and come back on the **SAME** day) from a selling machine. You can pay in cash or by credit card. The price of the ticket is 5 Euros. You take bus A to the Charleroi train station. When you get to the train station, you take a train ticket, you can check schedules on: <http://www.belgianrail.be/en/Default.aspx>.



2) You can buy a ticket "to any Belgian station". This ticket combines the bus ticket AND the train ticket from the airport to Charleroi train station and then to any other Belgian station. You can buy a single ticket (if you buy a return ticket, you must go and come back on the **SAME** day) from a selling machine. You can pay in cash or by credit card.

## General information about public transportation in Belgium:

In Belgium, it is possible to go to most places by bus or train. The volunteer must always buy his ticket before boarding. There is also a network of trams and undergrounds in Brussels and some other cities. If you plan to travel a lot through

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Belgium in train ([train schedules and tickets](#)), you might want to buy a Gopass (50€ for 10 travels if you are younger than 26; if you plan to travel a lot around Brussels ([general travel information](#)), you can buy a « jump – 10 trips » card for about 14€). Caution: taxi is much more expensive than in some other countries.

## Phone:

To give a phone call in Belgium, it is necessary to dial +32 or 0032 then the number without the initial 0. For example, if the volunteer needs to call SVI (International Volunteering Service) for any question or help about your volunteering, the local phone number is 028886713, but with a phone from any other country, you need to dial +3228886713 or 003228886713. The same principle applies if your relatives want to call you from abroad

## Cheaper international phone calls:

When you are abroad, giving and receiving phone calls can become very expensive. SVI recommends two services that are cheaper than traditional phone services:

- For a short term workcamp, [buy and international SIM card](#), it will allow you to receive phone calls from a foreign country free of roaming fees. The person who calls you will only pay the price of a call to Europe, or nothing if you have a phone package in Europe. This card costs only 12€ and allows to write an unlimited number of text messages and have a cheaper internet access (if available).

## Emergency phone numbers:

If the volunteer encounters any trouble related to his volunteering project, he can call **SVI** at +3228886713 or +32495680934.

The following numbers can be called free in any emergency situation:

	100	Medical emergency and fire service
	112	European service in case of accident or aggression
	070 245 245	Poison center
	071 448 000	Burn care center
	105	Help in case of sinister and catastrophe

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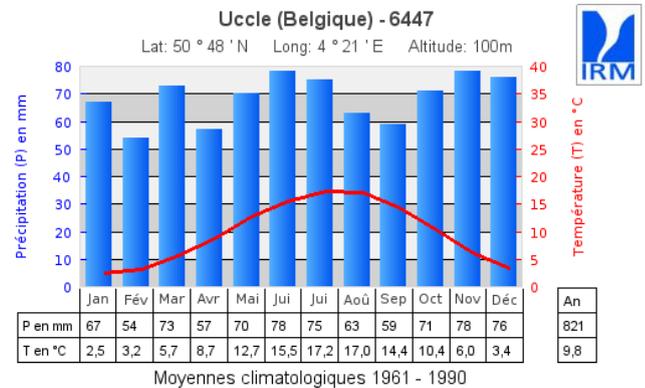
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It might be useful to check the address and phone number of [his country's embassy or consulate in Belgium](#).

## How to prepare your luggage?

- It is crucial for the volunteer to bring all your stuff in a backpack and not in any other type of suitcase, which might become very uncomfortable to move after a long journey.
- Belgium has a very unstable weather, it can be very cold or quite hot, and rain is always to expect. Keep that in mind when packing the clothes.



**We hope you will enjoy your stay in Belgium!**

[www.servicevolontaire.org](http://www.servicevolontaire.org)

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