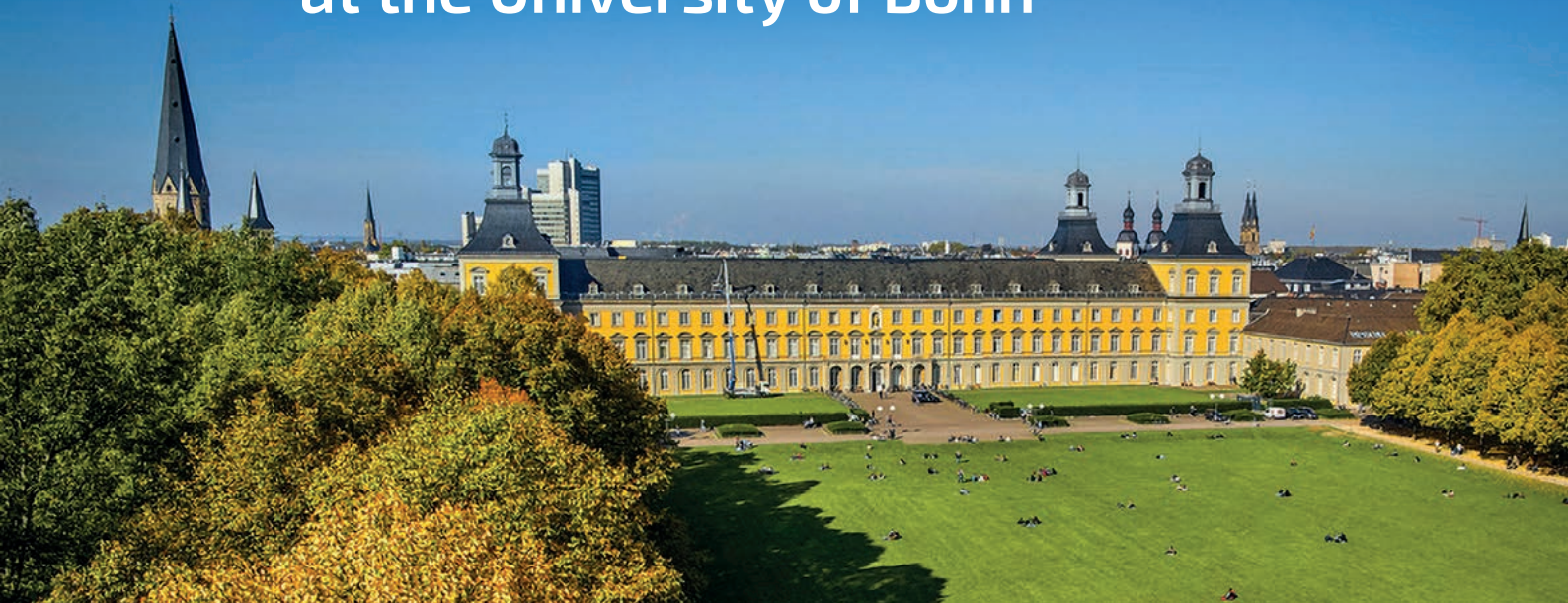


# Information for international students and doctoral students at the University of Bonn



# Content

Foreword . . . . .	5
The University of Bonn . . . . .	6

## Before you arrive

Visa and residence permit . . . . .	8
Getting here . . . . .	10
Preparation . . . . .	11
Accommodation . . . . .	14

## At the start of your stay

Enrollment . . . . .	17
Semester fee and re-registration . . . . .	18
Health insurance . . . . .	19
Medical assistance . . . . .	21
Registering with the local authorities . . . . .	23
Radio and television license fee . . . . .	25
Bank account . . . . .	25
Living expenses . . . . .	27





## During your stay

The academic year in Germany . . . . .	29
Learning German . . . . .	34
Getting around in Bonn . . . . .	37
Work permit . . . . .	39
Shopping . . . . .	40
Opening times . . . . .	40
Tipping . . . . .	41
SIM card . . . . .	41
Living sustainably in Bonn . . . . .	42
Waste sorting . . . . .	42

## Before the end of your stay

Career start or doctorate. . . . .	45
Things you should do before you return home . . . . .	46
More information . . . . .	49
Timeline . . . . .	52
Checklist . . . . .	54
Map . . . . .	57
Legal notice . . . . .	62







# Welcome!

**Dear international students and doctoral students,**

Welcome to the University of Bonn! We are excited to see you become a member of our Alma Mater and look forward to seeing you thrive in your academic discipline and learning from your international background and contributions in fruitful exchanges.

With its more than 200 years of tradition, the University of Bonn is synonymous with world-renowned research at the highest level. Many of our departments have earned a stellar reputation in comparisons with both national and international competition. It is for this and other reasons that the University of Bonn is one of eleven German Universities of Excellence and has successfully positioned itself among Europe's top universities, as renowned rankings show. With our partners across the world, our focus in teaching and research is to jointly overcome future challenges and answer questions of tomorrow-in science, technology and society.



I am confident that you will not only get settled here, but that you will come to love our international city of Bonn. Bonn is not only a city of science but also the German city of the United Nations, seat of the federal government and home to many global organizations and businesses. People from more than 140 nations call Bonn their home and appreciate its location on the Rhine and in the heart of Europe.

I am looking forward to meeting you in person. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Wishing you a good start and all the best!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Hoch". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Michael Hoch  
Rector

# The University of Bonn

The University of Bonn was founded in 1818 and now ranks among Germany's leading universities. It was one of the first Prussian universities to introduce Wilhelm von Humboldt's ideal of education as a holistic combination of research and teaching.

Nowadays, it is a modern, fully-fledged classic university of the arts and sciences with a strong track record in research and seven faculties: the Faculties of Catholic and Protestant Theology, the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences and the Faculty of Agriculture. It has some 35,000 students studying around 200 academic disciplines.

The University is embedded in Bonn's urban fabric, with its institutes and hospitals spread across the city. There are other university campuses in the city center as well as in the Poppelsdorf, Endenich and Castell districts.

The University of Bonn works closely with the University Hospital Bonn on Venusberg and a range of non-university research organizations and non-research academic institutions maintained by government and administrative organizations as well as foundations and other organizations. The Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Bonn also runs a number of teaching and research units in the environs of Bonn.







# Before you arrive

## Visa and residence permit

Please also check out our video on [visa and residence regulations](#) where we explain more details.

Once you have received your letter of admission from the University of Bonn, you will be able to ask the German embassy or consulate in your home country or country of residence whether you will need a visa. If so, you may also be able to apply for one there and then. Students who are EU/EEA nationals do not need a visa.

You can find the addresses of Germany's embassies and consulates and details of entry requirements on the website of the [German Federal Foreign Office](#).

The same website also provides information on the country-specific criteria for issuing a visa.

### Applying for a residence permit

Students from non-EU/EEA countries who will be staying for more than three months in Bonn must apply for an [electronic residence permit \(eAT\)](#) from the city's immigration authority. If your visa covers the entire duration of your stay, then you do not require an eAT.

To apply for your residence permit, you will need to fill out the form that you will find right at the bottom of the immigration authority's webpage.

Once you have submitted your application, you will get confirmation of receipt followed by details of what documents you will need to provide so that your application can be processed. Please note that this can take between roughly six and eight weeks.



### Address of the Immigration Office

Oxfordstraße 19

53111 Bonn, Germany

or via email:

→ [antrag-auslaenderamt@bonn.de](mailto:antrag-auslaenderamt@bonn.de)

**Please do not enter the country on a Schengen or tourist visa! A tourist visa cannot be converted into a visa or residence permit for educational purposes.**

Residence permits are generally granted for a year and must be renewed. Please apply to the Immigration Office for an extension in good time (around three months before your permit is due to expire). The application form contains a question on your academic success, which you will need to ask your degree program coordinators to sign. Doctoral students will need to submit a letter from their supervisor.



## Getting here

### By train and bus

Deutsche Bahn (DB) is the largest and best-known rail operator in Germany. You will probably be taking one of its trains. You will be heading for "Bonn Hbf," Bonn's main station, from where you can continue onto your next destination by bus, tram or subway ("U-Bahn").

Some routes, particularly the ICE service from "Fernbahnhof Frankfurt Airport," take you via "Siegburg/Bonn" instead of Bonn's main station. From "Siegburg/Bonn" station, take the number 66 tram to Bonn.

The company that runs the city's mass transit system is called "SWB Bus und Bahn", while "VRS" operates services in the Cologne and Bonn region. Bonn is also served by long-distance buses such as Flixbus.

All these companies provide free apps for planning your journeys.

- [DB website](#)
- [SWB website](#)
- [VRS website](#)

### By plane

The "Airport Express SB 60" bus is the best way to get to Bonn from Cologne/Bonn Airport. You can punch your tickets on the machine at the stop.

### Travel cancellation

**We recommend taking out travel cancellation insurance, which will reimburse some or all of your costs if you are unexpectedly prevented from traveling or if anything else untoward occurs.**

## Preparation

Many students go abroad to learn another language, immerse themselves in a different culture and see a new part of the world. Getting to know another culture often means grappling with different customs, values and ways of behavior. Although this can be fascinating, it can also lead you to question your own views of the world. Getting your head around differences of this kind requires a degree of tolerance, patience, interest and enthusiasm. Although culture shock can sometimes be a difficult experience, the rewards for familiarizing yourself with a new culture are immense. You begin to see the world and your own culture in a whole new light. You learn to think more critically, gain a better understanding of international interrelationships and become more confident, independent and self-reliant on a personal level. Experiencing culture shock is perfectly normal, and it helps to talk to other people about it.



To make the process easier, it is important for you to gear yourself up for your stay abroad in advance by finding out all you can about what awaits you. One way of doing this is to get in touch with students at the University of Bonn or other German universities. Most German students will be extremely keen to find out about the culture of your home country and will be happy to meet future students to pass on their advice. This might mean that you already have someone you know in Bonn when you arrive. The „Study Buddy“ and „Pro Buddy Programs“ allow you to make contact with students and doctoral students at the University of Bonn even before you get here.



→ [Study Buddy Program](#) (for non-doctoral students)

→ [Pro Buddy Program](#) (for doctoral students)

Another way to prepare yourself for your trip is to read international newspapers or blogs in either English or German. Most German newspapers and journals are also available online, e.g. [www.faz.de](http://www.faz.de), [www.zeit.de](http://www.zeit.de) and [www.sueddeutsche.de](http://www.sueddeutsche.de). We also recommend the [study-in.Germany](#) blogs. This will give you an idea of what the important issues currently are in Germany's social and political life.

You can find the latest information on Germany on the [Deutsche Welle website](#). Deutsche Welle also has a [Learn German](#) section.

Please bear in mind that the media only cover one aspect of a country's culture and thus do not paint a full picture of the life that you will experience.

Once you have arrived in Bonn, you will find many [student organizations](#) that can help you adapt to the local culture. These groups are based all over the city and mainly meet in cafés or canteens. You are welcome to follow the University of Bonn on Instagram or Facebook to keep up to date about events in various places across the city. The International Office usually puts on a fair in November, where the student and international organizations speak about themselves and what they do.

Student groups such as the [Erasmus Student Network ESN](#) organize a wide range of activities to help international students to integrate. As well as their regular program during the lecture period, they also arrange various events in the Welcome Days, details of which you can find online.

## Welcome Days

Every semester, the International Office organizes the "Welcome Days" to welcome new international students and doctoral students to Bonn and give them an introduction to the German university system. They are generally held in the weeks before lectures start and consist of various events and talks that cover a wide range of academic and social issues and that provide help with dealing with the authorities. The various departments also host introductory events. We recommend going to these orientation events, as they are also an opportunity to get to know other students and make it easier to adapt to everyday life in Bonn. You can find more information on our website [www.uni-bonn.de/welcomedays](http://www.uni-bonn.de/welcomedays).

While you are studying at the University of Bonn, you can take part in workshops on intercultural skills during the semester. You are welcome to come along in order to share your experiences and reflect on them together with German and international students.

## Certificate of Intercultural Competence

The [Certificate of Intercultural Competence](#) is an extra-curricular qualification awarded by the University of Bonn in recognition of international experience, participation in language courses and other courses with an international flavor as well as involvement in international clubs or projects.

## Newsletter

The International Office provides information on upcoming events, ideas for excursions and much more in its fortnightly newsletter. To subscribe, please click [here](#) and enter your email address in the "Ihre E-Mail-Adresse:" ("Your email address") box and your name in the "Name:" box. Then click on "Ich abonniere die Liste bonnews.int" ("Subscribe me to the bonnews.int list") to complete your registration.

## Accommodation

### Signing a rental contract and moving in

Please also check out our video on [accommodation, city registration and broadcasting fee](#) where we explain more details.

Whether you are taking a room in a dormitory or a private apartment, you will need to sign a rental contract. This will specify all the main terms and conditions of your tenancy, particularly how much rent, ancillary costs and deposit you will pay, how long the lease is for and how much notice you will need to give.

Please read your rental contract through carefully and make sure that you ask if there is anything you do not understand.

### Moving into a dormitory

Please note that doctoral students can also apply for a dormitory place if they are being enrolled and are to receive a student ID.

You can only move into a dormitory once you have signed your rental contract and have transferred the deposit and first month's rent. The facility management team responsible for the dormitory will arrange your move. The relevant people are generally only available until around 4 pm Mondays to Fridays. You will therefore need to contact the relevant facility management team in good time to fix a date and time to get your room and keys and should not plan to arrive during the weekend or on a public holiday.

If you spot any problems (e.g. damaged furniture or lights not working) in your room when you move in, please tell facility management straight away so that they can be fixed as soon as possible and you cannot be blamed for damages when you move out.

Tip: If you have been given a dormitory room by the Studierendenwerk, we recommend buying a "Dorm Basic Set." You should arrange this before you arrive so that it will already be ready for you when you move in.

Studierendenwerk Bonn:

→ [www.studierendenwerk-bonn.de/en/accommodation/](http://www.studierendenwerk-bonn.de/en/accommodation/)



### **Lease term / Notice period**

When you sign a rental contract, please make sure that the month in which you are planning to move out is correct. If not, correct it accordingly so that you will not have to pay rent for longer than you intend. The standard notice period is three months.

### **International tutors in dormitories**

In Studierendenwerk dormitories, you can go to the international tutors with problems about your accommodation. These volunteers look after international students and can also lend a hand when you arrive.

The notice boards in your dormitory will have a list of all the tutors, including network tutors, for example, who can help you set up your Internet.

### **Rent and deposit**

When you sign your rental contract, you will need to pay your first month's rent plus a security deposit, which is generally equal to two to three months' rent. You will usually have to pay rent on your room or apartment for a full month even if you do not move in until part-way through that month.

If you have a dormitory room, your monthly rent will be collected from your bank account via direct debit from the second month onward. You will give the Studierendenwerk a so-called direct debit authorization for this purpose.





# At the start of your stay

## Enrollment

You will need to enroll (i.e. register) at the start of the semester in order to be able to study at the University of Bonn. Doctoral students can also enroll mid-semester. Please read the [latest enrollment information](#) on the website.

Program students (Erasmus, Global Exchange Program (GEP), Fulbright, Studienbrücke, etc.) will follow their own enrollment rules depending on their program. You will receive all the relevant information by email from your respective program coordinators.

International master's students will be sent their enrollment information together with their letter of admission, while doctoral students will get theirs from the doctoral office.

### You will need the following for enrollment:

- Your completed application for enrollment
- Your letter of admission or confirmation of admission to doctoral studies (for doctoral students)
- Your passport or ID card (for EU nationals)
- Proof of your German language skills, if required
- For students working toward a degree: an officially certified copy of your university entrance qualification
- For underage students: consent of your parents or carers

Proof of health insurance is not required for doctoral students. Please refer to the notes on health insurance on p. 19/20.





## Semester fee and re-registration

When you enroll, you will be given a bank transfer form for your so-called semester fee, which all University of Bonn students are required to pay. This is not an enrollment or tuition fee!

You can find [details of what the fee](#) is used on the webpage of the University of Bonn.

You should pay your semester fee by bank transfer as soon as possible. When – and only when – you have done so, you will receive your official student ID in the post after one to two weeks – your student ID is your student transit pass ("Semesterticket") – as well as your Uni-ID and your initial password, which you will need to access all the University's online services. Please make sure that your name is written on your letterbox or pigeon hole so that you do not miss any important mail. Your student ID will be sent to the address that you gave on your application. Sending mail outside Germany can take longer.

**Please ensure that you give your student ID number as a reference when making your bank transfer.**

Re-registration: If you wish to stay at the University of Bonn for more semesters, you must re-register for each one. You do so by paying your semester fee for the upcoming semester by bank transfer by the deadline indicated. The [deadlines](#) are listed at the webpage of the University of Bonn.

After you have paid, your new semester documents will be sent to the address that you gave when you enrolled. Please remember to check your address via the BASIS portal and update it if necessary.

## Health insurance

The law requires students in Germany to take out health insurance. You will need to prove that you have a valid health insurance policy in order to enroll at a German university. Doctoral students do not have to provide this kind of proof upon enrollment.

Germany has signed social insurance treaties with some countries, including the member states of the European Union and European Economic Area. This means that, if you hold statutory health insurance in your home country, you can have this cover recognized by a statutory health insurer in Germany. However, you should find out what documents you will need for this before you leave your home country. For students, this will usually be a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), which you can request free of charge from your health insurer.

**Important:** If you are an EU or EEA national studying in Germany and you take a part-time student job or paid internship, you will need to take out insurance with a German health insurer. There are only a few countries that

are exempt from this rule, so check with your health insurance provider.

For students from non-EU/EEA countries: If you do not have a valid health insurance policy, you will need to take one out with a German health insurer or arrange international health insurance in your home country. The University must receive a confirmation of health insurance to enrol you. Please contact a statutory [German health insurance provider](#) with our sender number **H0001178** and let them know that you want to enroll at University of Bonn.

We need to receive an electronic confirmation of your status of health insurance cover from your health insurance provider by the time of enrollment at the very latest. It is very important to contact your health insurance provider in good time. In case of an exemption to hold statutory health insurance cover, the provider must inform us electronically accordingly. Please be aware that this insurance cover must include certain benefits in order to be recog-

nized. If you are in any doubt, get in touch with the advice teams at the statutory health insurers in Germany. If you opt for German health insurance, you can choose between a statutory and a private insurance policy. The costs of the statutory health insurance for students is about 110,- Euro and is available until the end of the age 29. The normal charge of a statutory health insurance is higher than the student tariff in the private health insurance.

We recommend comparing the premiums for various private health insurance policies. You should also ask a statutory health insurer whether voluntary health insurance is an option. Doctoral students who have signed a work contract with the University of Bonn will usually be covered by mandatory statutory health insurance.

You can only switch from private to statutory health insurance under certain conditions, e.g. if you have a work contract.

Please note that a German health insurance policy will only cover you from the beginning of the semester, i.e. from October 1 or April 1. Make sure you have sufficient insurance cover, such as travel health insurance, if you are arriving beforehand.

In Germany, anyone who causes damage, harm or injury to a third party is obliged to pay damages out of their own pocket, e.g. in the event of injury or property damage. We would therefore strongly recommend taking out personal liability insurance.

More information on insurances you can find on the [webpage of the University of Bonn](#) and on the webpage of the [German National Association for Student Affairs](#) (DSW).



## Medical assistance

If you are ill and cannot wait for an appointment, you can go straight to a general practitioner during their surgery hours. It is best to phone in advance in order to potentially avoid lengthy waiting times. Be aware that most practices are closed on Wednesday afternoons.

If you would like to see a specialist, please note that you may need a referral from a general practitioner.

In the event of a serious accident or emergency, you can call an ambulance at any time of day or night (phone: 112).

If you are able to walk, you can go to the emergency department at the nearest hospital.

→ [University Hospital Bonn emergency center](#)

It is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for all serious emergencies involving adult patients.

University Hospital Bonn  
Venusberg-Campus 1  
Building 24  
53127 Bonn, Germany

Medical on-call service (Wednesday afternoons, nights and weekends): 116 117

Out-of-hours pharmacies (emergency pharmacy services):  
→ [www.aponet.de](http://www.aponet.de) (German only)

You can use this website to find doctors in Bonn:  
→ [www.kvno.de](http://www.kvno.de) (German only)



## Psychological counseling

If you come to the realization that you are no longer able to cope with problems or a certain situation on your own or are experiencing a crisis, do not hesitate to seek help or contact one of the following advisory services:

→ [Central Study Advisory and Counseling Service](#)

→ [Psychotherapy counseling center at the Studierendenwerk](#)

→ [General Students' Committee of the University of Bonn, social services department](#)

[No Worries group](#) for international students, organized by the General Students' Committee of the University of Bonn and the International Office – you can find meeting dates on the [International Club's Facebook page](#).



## Registering with the local authorities

Please also check out our video on [accommodation, city registration and broadcasting fee](#) where we explain more details.”

You are required by law to report to the city registration office.

At least two weeks after you move into accommodation, you will need to visit the office in person and present a valid address. A valid address in this context is a place of residence where you can receive mail and be contacted in person. Addresses of hotels, youth hostels, etc. do not count.

If you move elsewhere in the same city, you have two weeks to re-register with your new address. If you move to another city in Germany, you will automatically be deregistered from your old address when you register with your new one.

Please note that if you are given an appointment that is more than two weeks after you moved in, this will not normally be a problem as the authorities are aware of the high demand for appointments at the start of a semester.

However, bear in mind that you will also need your confirmation of registration for other purposes, e.g. to open a bank account or apply for a residence permit.

### What to do:

- You arrange an [appointment](#) (German only)  
Please note that this link only applies to City Hall in Bonn city center
- Select "Meldewesen" ("Reporting")
- Change the "Anmeldung" ("Registration") box to "1" and then click on "Weiter" ("Next") right at the bottom
- Choose a date and time
- Fill in your contact details and accept the privacy policy
- Click on "Reservierung abschließen" ("Complete booking").

You will then receive an email with your appointment number. Make a note of this and bring it with you to the reporting office when you come for your appointment.

**Remember that you can always ask your Study Buddy for help if you need any!**



**Tip:** You can book your appointment before you even arrive in Bonn if you are moving into a room with a valid address as soon as you get here. In addition, canceled appointments are automatically freed up again on weekdays around 7:30–8:00 am for later on in the same day, allowing you to get an appointment sooner.

You go along to your appointment

City Hall  
Berliner Platz 2  
53111 Bonn

### What do you need to bring with you?

- Your passport or ID card (for EU nationals)
- Your completed [registration form](#)
- Your lessor's certificate. The lessor's certificate is a written confirmation from your landlord. If you are going to be living in one of the Studierendenwerk Bonn dormitories, you will receive the lessor's certificate from facility management when you move in. If not, here is a [template](#) (German only).
- Marriage certificates and children's birth certificates from other countries will need to be translated as well as legalized/apostilled. This will depend on which country issued the document in question.

### What will you receive?

- Confirmation of registration
- Personal tax ID number (by post after one to four weeks)

## Radio and television license fee

Please also check out our video on [accommodation, city registration and broadcasting fee](#) where we explain more details.”

This costs €18.36 per month and must be paid by every household as a basic principle. A dormitory room is also deemed to be a separate household, even if the kitchen is shared. In shared accommodation, however, the fee only needs to be paid once by one person – everyone else can use the fee number of the person making the payment. Once you have registered with the City of Bonn, you will receive a letter from "ZDF Deutschlandfunk Beitragsservice" asking you to "anmelden" ("register").

You can find details at

→ [www.rundfunkbeitrag.de/welcome/index\\_ger.html](http://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de/welcome/index_ger.html)

## Bank account

Please also check out our video on [financial matters](#) where we explain more details.

If you want to open a bank account, simply visit the bank branch of your choice to find out your options.

### What do you need to take with you?

- Your passport or ID card
- Your letter of admission, student ID or other proof that you are studying at the University of Bonn
- Your confirmation of registration from the city registration office

### What will you be given?

- A bank account, which you can use for monthly payments such as rent
- A debit card, which you can use to buy shopping and withdraw cash from your account, for example. Make sure that you only use ATMs belonging to your bank, which will bear your bank's logo, otherwise you may be charged.



Accounts might be free for young people or students, or you may have to pay a monthly fee of around €5.00. Please contact your chosen bank directly to find out the exact costs.

You will need to provide your personal tax identification number ("TIN" or "tax ID" for short) in order to open a bank account. This will be posted to you automatically after you register at the city registration office. The whole process can take between one and four weeks.

If you are planning to open a German bank account, therefore, please bear this in mind and find out what your options are and what you will need for your chosen bank.

Make sure that you can also access money without a German bank account (or until you are able to open one, as the case may be), e.g. to make your first rent payment.

**If your card is ever lost or stolen, get it blocked as soon as possible by calling 116 116 (24 hours). Save or note down your card number in advance.**



#### **Blocked account:**

Many international students from non-EU countries will need a blocked account to prove (to embassies or immigration offices) that they have sufficient financial resources.

A blocked account is a bank account that will not permit any transactions until the day you arrive in Germany.

Please see the [website of the German Federal Foreign Office](#) for more information.

## Living expenses

Germany uses the euro (€). Although you can pay by card at most points of sale, there are some places that require you to pay cash or apply a minimum threshold to card payments. In other words, it is a good idea to always have some cash on you.

Your living expenses will amount to around €800 – €1,000 a month, naturally dependent on your individual lifestyle, what kind of accommodation you are in and how much your rent is. Among other things, you will need to pay for:

- Accommodation: €250–560
- Food: €200
- Laundry, clothes, toiletries: €80
- Health insurance: €110
- Books: €40
- Phone, hobbies, sporting activities: €90

You will also need to pay the semester fee of around €320 every semester.

You can also find some overviews of what your living expenses might consist of [here](#).

Please also check out our video on [financial matters](#) where we explain more details.





## During your stay

### The academic year in Germany

At German universities, the academic year is divided into two semesters, a winter semester running from October 1 to March 31 and a summer semester from April 1 to September 30. Lectures start roughly a week after the beginning of the semester and end in early to mid-February (winter semester) or mid- to late July (summer semester). Outside the lecture period, i.e. between each semester, students write term papers, work on presentations, prepare themselves for examinations or gain career experience through internships.

You can find the [exact dates](#) on our website.



### Orientation Weeks and intensive pre-semester German course

You will usually begin your studies in Bonn with the Orientation Weeks in September or March, which last three and a half weeks. They are geared toward preparing you linguistically and culturally for studying at the University and living in Bonn before the semester actually starts. As well as an intensive German course, we also organize Welcome Days about studying in and familiarizing yourself with Bonn. There is also an extensive cultural program featuring excursions and other activities. You can find out more about the intensive German course in the *Learning German* section.





### How studies are organized in Bonn

The University offers some 200 degree programs and a wide range of courses. Between them, the seven faculties teach the full spectrum of the humanities, social and natural sciences, medicine and law. You can pick from the range of courses that forms part of your degree program as standard as well as take courses offered by other departments in some cases. Most teaching is done in German, although some departments offer courses in English. You can find a list of all courses on → [BASIS](#).

The Central Study Advisory and Counseling Service can provide [information on the degrees](#) that can be obtained at the University of Bonn.

Once you have chosen a degree program, there will be several people in your department who can help and advise you on questions about your studies (e.g. taking courses, examinations, changing your course selection, etc.). These include the departmental and degree program managers and, specifically for Erasmus students, the departmental Erasmus coordinators.

Various kinds of course are offered at the University of Bonn:

- **Bachelor's and master's degree programs** are made up of modules. Each module consists of a series of interlinked courses, such as a lecture, a seminar and a tutorial.
- **Students working toward a degree** will need to attend all the courses in a module and pass an examination in order to earn ECTS credit points (usually referred to as credit points or CPs) for the whole module.



→ **International program and exchange students** are free to choose individual courses from several modules and arrange an examination with the lecturers or the people responsible for the module. Make sure that you discuss this with the relevant teachers at the beginning of the semester. If you are a program student, you may also need to liaise with the coordinator responsible for you in your department.

### **Lecture**

Most lectures are given by professors. They serve to give students an overview of a certain topic or issue. There is generally little scope for discussion – students are mainly there to hear the lecturer speak. Lectures are offered at bachelor's and master's level. Please ask the professors in good time whether the lecture will be graded and, if not, clarify whether you can obtain a ruling for a grading that can be included in your transcript.

### **Seminar**

A seminar involves a smaller group of students actively involved in exploring and discussing a certain topic or

issue with the lecturer. Independent research papers and brief oral presentations are generally expected. Seminars are offered at bachelor's and master's level.

### **Tutorial**

A tutorial tends to be a relatively small course unit that teaches students the basics they will need for subsequent independent study. Weekly reading and sometimes writing assignments are usually set. Students may need to prepare an oral presentation and/or write a term paper.

### **Tutoring session/study group**

Tutoring sessions are mostly given by graduate students or teaching assistants. They are offered in combination with a lecture or seminar in order to consolidate participants' knowledge.

### **Graded courses**

A distinction is made between graded and ungraded (audit or pass/fail) courses. As a rule, an oral presentation is all that is required to simply pass a course that is not graded. If you want to prove your participation in a course, you should discuss with your lecturer how your attendance is

to be monitored, e.g. by signing an attendance list. To obtain a grade for a course, however, you will need to prepare an oral presentation and either write a term paper or sit a final examination.

### The German grading scale

- 1.0–1.5 = "Very good"
- 1.6–2.5 = "Good"
- 2.6–3.5 = "Satisfactory"
- 3.6–4.0 = "Sufficient"
- 5.0 = "Insufficient" → fail

### Times listed as "c.t." and "s.t."

Please note that lectures traditionally start 15 minutes after the hour. This is known as "cum tempore." "Sine tempore" means that the lesson will start exactly at the time indicated:

s.t. ("sine tempore") = "without time" = at the time indicated

c.t. ("cum tempore") = "with time" = 15 minutes later = the "academic quarter"

→ Example:

10 s.t. = 10:00 am

10 c.t. = 10:15 am

### Electronic course catalog (BASIS)

→ [basis.uni-bonn.de](https://basis.uni-bonn.de)

The electronic course catalog contains overviews of courses and contact details for all lecturers, departments and other University institutions. You can also search for courses taught in languages other than German. All courses also have a module guide, where you can find more detailed information on the content of all modules. Most module guides are also available on the relevant degree program websites.

### Registration

You will need to sign up in advance for most standard University courses, which you cannot do until you have enrolled and received your Uni-ID.

*Students working toward a degree* must register their participation in all courses via BASIS. The deadlines stated apply to all standard Bonn students.

*Students on international programs and exchanges:* Lecturers will usually admit international program students to their courses even if you have yet to receive your Uni-ID or the registration limit has already been reached. Please write or talk to your lecturers in order to register or ask the degree program managers or the departmental (Erasmus) coordinators for assistance.

### **eCampus**

Many lecturers use the eCampus electronic teaching and learning platform to disseminate course materials, copies of literature, literature lists and current information for course participants beyond what is provided at in-person events. You will need your Uni-ID to access eCampus.

### **Academic standards and requirements**

Please be aware that academic standards in Germany might be different to what you are accustomed to from your home university. To get a better idea of what is

required of you in terms of presentations, written examinations or term papers in your field, we would advise you to ask your lecturers for guidelines and maybe even sample examination papers in good time. Your fellow students and, in particular, the student councils can also be a good informal source of advice.

*Only for program and exchange students:*

### *Transcript of records*

*You will obtain credits in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) for all courses that you have successfully completed during your stay at the University of Bonn. The University of Bonn also calls these credits "credit points." You can find an overview of your courses and your transcript on BASIS. If you are in any doubt, contact your departmental Erasmus coordinators, who are responsible for issuing your transcript. As it is up to your home university to decide whether and how to recognize credits, we would advise you to get answers to all your questions in this regard before you come to Germany.*

## Learning German

The University of Bonn offers you various opportunities for consolidating and improving your German skills:

- German courses at A1.1 to B2.2 level before and during the semester, organized by the International Office
- German courses at B2 to C1 level at the Language Learning Center
- Rosetta Stone interactive learning software
- Language tandems
- German courses before and during the semester

Please also check out our video on [Learning German](#) where we explain more details.

The International Office puts on German courses in a variety of formats for beginners right through to advanced learners:

- Intensive courses before the semester starts from A1.1 to B2.2 level (16 hours per week)
- Everyday language courses from A1.1 to B2.2 level (4 hours per week)

- Courses at A2 to C1 level on various topics such as art, culture studies, business, academic vocabulary, presenting and debating, intercultural skills, etc. (2 hours per week)
- Skills courses at A2 to C1 level including phonetics, communicative grammar, etc. (2 hours per week)

To sign up for our courses, visit our website [Learning German – University of Bonn \(uni-bonn.de\)](#), where you can also find more details of the courses.

You will need a Uni-ID to take part in the courses. Doctoral students who are still in the process of being admitted or enrolled and do not yet have a Uni-ID are asked to report to the German as a Foreign Language section beforehand.

To register for the courses, you will need the result from your OnSet placement test or confirmation from the German as a Foreign Language section that you attended a German course last year. All information and details of how to access the free OnSet placement test can be obtained from the German as a Foreign Language section.

ECTS credits: The course certificate will indicate how many ECTS credits it is worth (everyday language courses: 4 ECTS, special topic and skills courses: 2 ECTS). Erasmus students can ask their departmental Erasmus coordinator to add these credits to their transcript of records.

### **Intensive pre-semester German courses**

These compact courses give you an introduction to the German language or an opportunity to consolidate your language skills within a short space of time, allowing you a bit of breathing space in your jam-packed program of studies during the semester.

Fee: €250 or €200 for Erasmus students  
Course times: September and March  
Duration: 3.5 weeks/56 teaching hours

### **Everyday language courses from A1.1 to B2.2 level**

Our courses take an interactive and practical approach to oral and written language acquisition, allowing you to master everyday communication situations in German.

Duration: 12 weeks/48 teaching hours; start: in the third week of lectures  
Course format: in-person or online classes with two two-hour lessons a week plus approx. two hours per week for an e-learning vocabulary module





**Special topic and skills courses at A2 to C1 level**

On these courses, you will learn a lot of interesting information about the Germans and their country or practice specific skills that you need for your studies.

Fee:	free of charge
Duration:	12 weeks/24 teaching hours; start: in the third week of the semester
Course format:	in-person or online classes with one two-hour lesson a week

→ [Registration for all courses](#)

**German courses at B2 to C1 level at the Language Learning Center**

Students who have reached C1/C2 level can register for one of the free German as a Foreign Language courses at the Language Learning Center (SLZ).

You can find details of available courses, placement tests and registration on the webpage of the [Language Learning Center](#).

**Rosetta Stone interactive learning software**

The University of Bonn offers its students and doctoral students free access to [Rosetta Stone language-learning software](#). This allows you to decide for yourself when, how, where and at what speed to learn a new language or consolidate what you already know – on your PC or via an app on your tablet or smartphone.



### Language tandems and other ways to learn German

You can use the [Language Learning Center's tandem service](#), while the General Students' Committee (AStA) also runs a [language tandem scheme](#).

The Sprachcafé International, organized by AStA's Department for International Students, is arranged in cooperation with the International Club. You are welcome to pop by → [www.facebook.com/bonninternationalstudents](https://www.facebook.com/bonninternationalstudents)

We also recommend checking out the Goethe Institute's ["Practice German Free of Charge"](#) and the [Deutsche Welle website](#).

### Getting around in Bonn

You will be given a student transit pass ("Semesterticket"), which includes free use of all public transport within the Bonn region and a limited number of free transport services elsewhere in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). Remember – your student ID is your student transit pass! Student IDs are always valid for one semester – from October 1 to March 31 (winter semester) or from April 1 to September 30 (summer semester) – and will be posted to you after you have enrolled or re-registered.

You can find information on the regional boundaries for your [student transit pass](#) (German only) on the AStA's webpage. Please be aware that your student transit pass is only valid in combination with a photo ID (e.g. a passport).

**It cannot be used in first class or on IC/EC or ICE trains.**

Should you need travel tickets before you receive your student transit pass, you are welcome to use the SWB service point on Bertha-von-Suttner-Platz.



### **Bicycles**

Most students at the University of Bonn use a bicycle to get around the city. You can buy second-hand bicycles from places including:

→ [Bike-House](#) (Caritas)

→ **Renting bikes**

[Nextbike](#)

Tip: if you sign up using your University email address, you will get your first 30 minutes of every day for free!

[Swapfiets](#)

### **Cars/driver's license**

If you are an EU/EEA national, you are allowed to use your driver's license in Germany without having to apply for a German one, although certain restrictions apply.

If you are a citizen of a non-EU/EEA country, you are permitted to use your foreign driver's license for six months after moving permanently to Germany. If you will be staying in Germany for between six months and a year, you can obtain a six-month extension for using your existing driver's license. If you will be living in Germany for over a year, you will need a German driver's license.

Everything you need to know about driver's licenses in Germany you can find on the [webpage of the Federal Ministry of for Digital and Transport](#).

## Work permit

Students from an EU or EEA country have free access to the German job market and are treated just like German students, including for internships.

Students (including doctoral students) of other nationalities only have a limited entitlement to work while in Germany. They are permitted to work 120 full or 240 half days a year or be employed as a student assistant or research assistant at the University for up to 19 hours a week.

The Immigration Office will indicate this on your residence permit.

In all other cases, you must obtain the Immigration Office's permission before engaging in gainful employment. Find out from the Immigration Office what exact documents you will need.

You will need to pay tax and social security contributions on any income from working in excess of 19 hours a week or if you earn more than €450 a month. This is generally settled via your employer.

**Important:** If you are an EU or EEA national studying in Germany and you take a part-time student job or paid internship, you will need to take out insurance with a German health insurer. There are only a few countries that are exempt from this rule, so check with your health insurance provider.

Please also check our video on [jobs and internships](#) where we explain more details.

## Shopping

Major grocery chains/supermarkets include ALDI, EDEKA, LIDL, NETTO and REWE. The cheapest ones are ALDI, LIDL and NETTO. Ask your roommates or Study Buddies to tell you where the nearest supermarket is. You can find fresh fruit and vegetables at the daily market in front of the old city hall (Marktplatz).

There are many different organic supermarkets spread across the whole of Bonn. You can find chains such as denn's, Alnatura, Bergfeld's and SuperBioMarkt as well as smaller shops like the traditional store Momo in Bonn-Beuel.

If you are particularly keen to buy regional produce, you can get an organic food box delivered to your door. There are several farms in the Bonn area that offer this service. Alternatively, head to the market: the products sold by the [Marktschwärmer](#) ("market ravers") won't have traveled any further than 40 km.

Bonn is now also home to a number of zero waste shops ("unverpackt"). In the shops in [Kessenich](#) and [Duisdorf](#), shoppers can save on plastic and packaging waste.

### Stationery

The [AStA shops](#) sell stationery at reasonable prices.

## Opening hours

Germany has stricter rules on opening hours than many other countries.

Most shops and businesses in the city center open from 10 am to 8 pm Monday to Saturday, while some in the suburbs close even earlier.

Banks are open Monday to Friday. They usually close at 4 pm but may stay open until 6 pm on some days in the week. Banks and some other shops and businesses often close for an hour for lunch.



**On Sundays and public holidays, everything is closed apart from some gas stations, pharmacies and stores inside the main rail station.**

As the opening hours of local council offices will vary significantly, it is advisable to check online before visiting them.

## Tipping

It is standard practice to give a tip in restaurants, cafés and bars, to cab and delivery drivers and in other places such as hairdressers. An average of 5 to 10 percent of the total is recommended for a tip.

## SIM card

You can find a German prepaid SIM card for your cellphone in many shops. MediaMarkt and dm (drugstore), both in the city center, sell SIM cards from various providers. Several telecom firms, likewise located in the city center, sell their own SIM cards. Please be aware that the law requires an identity check before prepaid SIM cards can be activated.

## Sustainability and protecting the environment

Sustainability and climate-friendly behavior have become much more important in recent years. More and more people are thinking about protecting the planet in terms of their consumption and daily lives.

Bonn is home to many institutions that are committed to the sustainability cause, including a large number of small initiatives alongside international UN organization and German government authorities. For instance, Bonn has been a Fair Trade Town since 2010 and is one of four Regional Hubs for Sustainability Strategies in Germany.

The [Bonn im Wandel](#) ("Bonn in Transformation") initiative brings together many different campaign groups, including a [repair workshop/repair café](#) in north Bonn.

### Environmental protection

If you're interested in doing your own bit for nature, you can also roll up your sleeves and get involved.

For instance, you could grow bee-friendly plants on your balcony or build a bug hotel. And, if you don't have your own garden or balcony, you can also sponsor a tree and help protect the trees in your street from drought stress. Alternatively, you can join a [communal garden project](#) such as the Internationaler Garten ("International Garden") in Meßdorfer Feld or other [urban gardening](#) projects.

## Waste sorting

You may already have spotted various different trash cans in various colors, either in your dormitory building or dotted around the city. These are used to separate and recycle your waste:

- Black trash can: non-recyclable waste
- Blue trash can: paper and cardboard
- Yellow trash can: plastic and aluminum packaging (e.g. yogurt pots, cans, cling film, Tetrapak – milk and juice cartons, etc.)
- Green trash can: biodegradable waste

## During your stay

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- Returnable bottles with a deposit: When you buy drinks in Germany, you often have to pay a deposit for bottles and cans, which you get back when you return your empties to the shop. Before you throw your bottles into one of the glass bins listed below, therefore, make sure that it isn't a "Pfandflasche" with a deposit attached.
- Non-returnable bottles: Jars and glass bottles bought without a deposit are collected in special glass bins that you can find everywhere in the city. Bottles are separated by the color of their glass (green, brown and clear).



Many dormitory buildings and supermarkets also have recycling containers for spent batteries.

You can find more information on the topic at

→ [www.bonnorange.de/](http://www.bonnorange.de/) (only in German)







# Before the end of your stay

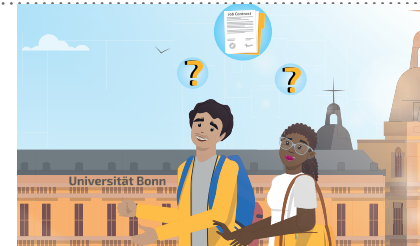
## Career start or doctorate?

The University of Bonn offers the opportunity to participate in the [iStart Career Program](#). The DAAD-funded program supports you in identifying your strengths and goals. The aim is to help them shape your careers successfully during and after your studies and thus facilitate your entry into the job market – regardless of whether they plan to start your career in Germany, in your home country or in another country. To this end, the iStart-team works closely with employers in the region, as well as with international alumni and alumnae of the University of Bonn. In addition, events are held as part of the program with the Federal Employment Agency and the Foreigners' Registration Office to clarify the legal framework.

Contact: iStart-team, [start@uni-bonn.de](mailto:start@uni-bonn.de)

If you are considering starting a doctorate, please feel free to contact the [Bonn Graduate Center](#) for advice. International doctoral candidates are supported by the [Pro-Motion project](#) before and during their doctorate with an advisory and support service, including a PhD café, peer monitoring and networking events. In addition, scholarship programs for international PhD students at the University of Bonn, German language courses and intercultural trainings are organized and coordinated here.

Contact: Sandra Papel, [s.papel@uni-bonn.de](mailto:s.papel@uni-bonn.de)





## Things you should do before you return home

Give notice on your accommodation (if necessary). If you intend to move out before the end of your lease term as stipulated in your rental contract, you must give the Studierendenwerk written notice as soon as possible to ensure that another tenant can be found to take over from you. Otherwise, you will be required to pay rent on your room until the end of your tenancy.

Please email your dormitory manager at least three weeks before your departure to tell them on what day you will be leaving and arrange an inspection of your dormitory room. The Studierendenwerk will only return your security deposit if your room is clean and nothing has been damaged. You will need to pay any costs incurred for damage or for cleaning your room.

Some dormitory managers will give you a checklist that you can work through to make sure that you've covered all the requirements. It's a good idea to be there when your room is being inspected so that minor issues can be sorted there and then.

At the end of the room inspection, you will sign the departure report together with the dormitory manager and will return your keys.

Your deposit will be reimbursed to you around eight weeks after you hand your room back to facility management. It will either be transferred into a bank account (including in a different country, minus the fee for foreign bank transfers) or paid out in cash (please ask the Studierendenwerk what the criteria are for this).

### **Deregister from the University**

If you would like to bring your studies at the University of Bonn to an end, you will need to deregister as a student. You can find the application for [deregistration](#) on the webpage of the University of Bonn. Another way to deregister is by not re-registering for the next semester.

If you are keen to stay in touch with the University after you have finished studying in Bonn, sign up with our [Alumni Network](#).

Notifying the local authorities of your departure.

**Documents required:**

- [Deregistration form](#) (German only), completed and signed (please print and sign)
- Copy of your passport or ID card and your residence permit, if you have one

Please post all necessary documents to Bundesstadt Bonn, Amt 33-41, Berliner Platz 2, 53103 Bonn or email them to [buengeramt@bonn.de](mailto:buengeramt@bonn.de).

Cancel your health insurance (if you are insured with a German health insurer). Some health insurers require you to report in person and may ask you to return your insurance card. Please get in touch with your insurer and ask what you need to do before your departure.

Don't forget to close your bank account before leaving Bonn.

If you have a blocked account, you will need written confirmation from the immigration authority in order to lift the block. About 14 days before you are due to leave, send an email to the immigration office ([auslaenderamt@bonn.de](mailto:auslaenderamt@bonn.de)) telling them your departure date and asking them for confirmation that your account can be unblocked. Don't forget to provide your full name and your address in Bonn. The immigration office will then send a letter to your dormitory.

You will also need to cancel other subscriptions such as your [radio and television license fee](#) and your BahnCard to make sure you aren't charged for any automatic renewals!

Sell, donate or properly dispose of anything that you don't want to take with you.



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FAKULTÄT

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high potential

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# More information

[German Federal Foreign Office](#)

[List of diplomatic missions](#)

[German Academic Exchange Service \(DAAD\)](#)

[Study in Germany](#)

[Information for international students](#)

[University homepage](#)

[Study Compass](#) (German only)

[Bonn University and State Library \(USL Bonn\)](#)

[USL Bonn film](#)

[University IT](#)

[University Sports](#)

[Student groups](#)

[Information for students with children](#)

[Information for students with disabilities](#) (German only)

[Studierendenwerk Bonn](#)

Video: [Jobs and Internships](#)

[Erasmus Departmental coordinators](#)

## **Emergency numbers**

Police: 110

Fire service: 112

Ambulance: 112

## Key dates

### Winter semester 2022/2023:

October 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

[Preliminary courses for bachelor's students working toward a degree](#)

[Introductory and orientation events organized by the faculties and student councils](#)

### Intensive German language and culture course:

September 8 to 29, 2022

**Lecture period:** October 10, 2022 to February 3, 2023

**Opening of the academic year:** tbc

**Dies Academicus:** December 7, 2022

**Lecture-free period:** tbc

### Summer semester 2023:

April 1 to September 30, 2023

### Intensive German language and culture course:

March 8 to 30, 2023

**Lecture period:** April 3 to July 14, 2023

**Dies Academicus:** tbc

**Lecture-free period:** tbc

→ [For further information please check.](#)







# Timeline

## Following admission

*If required: Apply for a visa (p. 8)*



## Before arriving

- *Plan your journey (plane, train, bus, p. 10)*
- *Find a room/apartment / Check and sign your contract / Pay your deposit and first month's rent (p. 14)*
- *Sign up to the Study Buddy or Pro Buddy Program (p. 12)*
- *Agree a date and time to move in and get your keys*
- *Take out travel health insurance if required*
- *Sign up for Orientation Weeks and an intensive German course if required*

## Before/for enrollment

- *Find out how the enrollment process works and what documents you need (p. 17)*
- *Health insurance – find out about it and take out a policy if required (p. 19)*
- *Pay the semester fee (p. 18)*



### After enrollment

- **Register for courses on BASIS (requires a Uni-ID) (p. 32)**
- **Discuss requirements and examination options with lecturers if relevant**

### Before or after arriving

- **Attend the Welcome Days (p. 13)**

### After arriving

- **Obtain a lessor's certificate from your landlord / facility management (p. 24)**
- **Register with the local authorities (p. 23)**

### After registering with the local authorities

- **Apply for a residence permit if required (p. 8-9)**
- **Find out whether you need to pay the radio and television license fee and do so if necessary (p. 25)**
- **Open a bank account (p. 25)**

### Lectures start

**October 10, 2022 / April 3, 2023**

### Before the end of the semester

- **Re-register for the next semester or plan your return home (p. 18 und p. 45/46)**

### Before returning home

- **Check your departure date and give notice on your accommodation if required (find out about getting your deposit back and agree a time and date for moving out, p. 46-47)**
- **Deregister from the University (p. 46)**
- **Unregister with the local authorities**
- **Cancel your health insurance**
- **Close your bank account**



# Checklist

Below is a list of things that we recommend bringing with you. This overview makes no claim to be complete but is merely intended to serve as a guide.

## Important documents

- A valid ID card or passport – plus a visa for students (including doctoral students) who need one before entering the country
- Documents relating to your studies that you have already received, e.g your letter of admission and certificate of enrollment as well as your scholarship approval notification or work contract, if applicable
- Proof of funding: bank account statement, notarized letter from your parents, etc., proof of scholarships from your home university or the institution awarding the scholarships
- Debit card, credit card, cash (euros)
- Driver's license, if you have one
- (International) student ID, if you have one

## Health

- Prescription drugs and prescriptions for the duration of your stay. Ask your doctor if you can get your medication on prescription in Germany.
- Medical reports that you need for continued medical treatment in Germany
- Proof of health insurance (either for the period between your arrival and the beginning of the semester (October 1 or April 1) or for your entire stay; European Health Insurance Card or similar
- Vaccination record, coronavirus vaccination certificate if applicable

## Technology

- Charging cable for your electronic devices such as your cellphone, laptop, tablet, etc.
- Plug adapters so that you can use and charge your electronic devices. Germany uses Type F plug sockets and 220 V mains electricity.
- Ethernet cable to use the internet in your dormitory

- We recommend asking your phone provider at home whether you can use your own cellphone with a German prepaid card. Please bear in mind that calls to other countries from German cellphones are fairly expensive.

### Clothes and linen

- Towels, bed linen and other clothes that you will need for your accommodation. If you are taking a room in a Studierendenwerk dormitory, you can order a "Dorm Basic Set" before you arrive. You will find information about this in your tenancy documents.

- Also bring clothes that you will feel comfortable in if you need to have an interview for an internship or make a presentation. Find out about what the weather is like in Germany so that you pack enough warm clothes for the winter and lightweight clothes for the summer.
- Cosmetics: You should bring enough toiletries to cover the start of your stay.
- You will not need to bring or ship over large quantities of these items as they are readily available in Germany.

### For the journey

- Directions to your accommodation
- Translation app
- A small padlock, e.g. to lock your suitcase/trunk or use on a locker in your institute library



### For life in Bonn

- Address book (paper or electronic): contact details of your family, friends, important contacts, emergency numbers in Germany
- Photos and other little mementos for decorating your room – what will help you get set up and feel comfortable in your accommodation?

Please also bear in mind the import restrictions imposed by the German customs authorities (for travelers from outside the EU/EEA).

You will generally be able to bring your luggage into Germany without paying any import duties or having to clear customs. You can also bring in study materials and other equipment you need for your studies without paying customs charges.

**Certain goods may be subject to specific volume and value limits. Please also be aware of the rules on souvenirs and gifts.**

You can find more details on the website of the German Central Customs Administration: [www.zoll.de](http://www.zoll.de).

















# Legal notice

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