

ZAPF

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this AK is to provide a hand-out which contains all the information regarding the study and life in German speaking countries for newly arrived international students.

## ACCOMMODATION

This is the most important thing of all. You need to find a place to live and have a valid address. Without a valid address you cannot open bank account or extend your visa. So it is crucial for everything. Here is a website to find accommodation and also a video link on how to find accommodation in Germany.

<https://www.wg-gesucht.de/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzclQrld3rk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5f-PDUJGHI>

## TV AND RADIO BROADCASTING FEES

In Germany it is mandatory to pay a fee for TV and Radio even though you don't have one and it is 17.50 euro in 2018. But it is charged per household and not per connection within the house so you just pay per house irrespective of how many TV's you got in.

## BUS TICKET (day ticket)

Usually it takes a few days to get the semester ticket and so it is useful to take something called tages ticket which means day ticket. It is valid for one entire day in the whole city and you can also find similar tickets with validity from few days up to a week.

## RATHAUS

This is a city registration office and all international students need to register in this RATHAUS as soon as possible. For example, in Siegen and Hamburg it should be done before 14 working days from their arrival to Germany and for Innsbruck it is only 4 working days! So, please check with local city office that you live in.

Most importantly, if you don't have a permanent address you should still visit them and give them the details of temporary accommodation or any of your friends address and later change it when you get a new address.

The address of the local RATHAUS is \_\_\_\_\_

## HEALTH INSURANCE

Health insurance is mandatory for everyone in Germany and so you must take it before you enrol at your university and as an international master student you can only join in few insurance companies and it also depends on where you study. So please check at the international office of concerned university before you get health insurance. And please don't forget to carry the insurance card whenever you visit a doctor.

Please note that you need a letter from the health insurance company in order to get enrolled in the university.

### HEALTH (diseases and vaccines)

This is the homepage of German health ministry:

<https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/en/topics.html>

You should take care of ticks, which are insects living in the forest, in parks or in the grassland. Ticks can transfer diseases like Borreliosis or tick-borne encephalitis (TBE).

The following are the documents regarding these two diseases for further information.

[http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/246167/Fact-sheet-Lyme-borreliosis-Eng.pdf](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/246167/Fact-sheet-Lyme-borreliosis-Eng.pdf)

[http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/246169/Fact-sheet-Tick-borne-encephalitis-Eng.pdf](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/246169/Fact-sheet-Tick-borne-encephalitis-Eng.pdf)

## LIABILITY INSURANCE

It is quite common that we may accidentally damage some third party property or assets (like losing keys of your dorm, damage in the kitchen or lab etc). German Private Liability insurance insures you against such "happenings" and the financial liabilities that come with it.

Please enquire at your bank for details and it cost around 5 euro per month.

## BANK ACCOUNT

After you get a valid address in Germany, you can get a bank account and international students must open a blocked account in which you have a restriction on the maximum amount you can withdraw per month. As per 2017-18 academic year it is fixed at 720 euro per month. And make sure you got (720x12 = 8640 euro) in it.

## VISA EXTENTION

In the beginning you get a visa for 3-6 months and after your arrival to Germany you need to extend your visa. It is usually done in the city you live and you need to visit the office at least

two months before your visa expiry date and schedule an appointment. Make sure you have your passport copy, visa copy, study certificate from German university, house rent contract, blocked account with sufficient funds, health insurance and filled application form and a photo.

Approximately after three weeks of your interview you will receive a card called residence permit (AUFENTHALTSTITEL) and also a letter called work permit by post. The visa extension period and your new expiry date is mentioned on the card. Please do carry this card all the time with you.

And after your masters is completed your visa can be extended to a maximum of 18 months for you to search for employment or PhD.

#### SEMESTER TICKET

Most of the universities issue a card known as 'semester ticket' to students for nominal sum of money with which they can travel for free using it within a certain region around the university. In general you can travel in bus and with some semester tickets you can also travel through trams and also through regional trains with it. So, please check with your university for specific details.

It should be noted that the semester ticket is **NOT** valid in trains named IC and ICE. Those are superfast trains mostly in white colour and easy to identify.

And semester ticket is also not mandatory to take. So you can avoid it if you don't want to.

#### STUDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LSF)

All the universities have an online portal to check the list of courses (and all its details) offered in that particular semester and also the students can get their study certificates, transcripts etc.. Please make sure you get the credentials (for logging in) during your enrolment at the university.

#### UNIVERSITY WIFI

Almost all universities in Germany and also some more in Europe has a common Wi-Fi server called Eduroam with which you can get access to free Wi-Fi within university and also possibly to your dorm. But make sure you don't download anything from torrents or any other illegal websites.

Eduroam is a wonderful example of globalization and please check the following link to find the list of all the universities and research centres connected via Eduroam.

<https://www.eduroam.org/where/>

## UNIVERSITY EMAIL

Every student gets their own email in university domain and please make sure that you check it regularly so that you don't miss any important official announcements from the department or university in general.

## LECTURES

It is very important to attend the first lecture of the course in which the students can ask the prof for the change of the schedule of class and other important details like language of the instruction. It is also important to know the requirements of the course and the minimum eligibility (for example you need to get minimum 50% of the exercise sheets or sometimes you need to present your solution on the board during exercise class) to participate in the final exam. So never miss the first lecture!

## TIMINGS

In general there are two types of times. One is called s.t and other c.t. This means the following

s.t (sine tempore) means It would start at the precisely the time mentioned. For example, 10.00 A.M s.t – 10.00 A.M

c.t (cum tempore) means it would start after 15 minutes after the mentioned time. For example,

10.00 A.M c.t – 10.15 A.M

## MASTER THESIS

This is the crucial part of the masters and it contains 60 credits which is 50% of your entire master credits. In general, one can start master thesis only after having 60 credits in the coursework.

## HOLIDAYS

The public holidays in German speaking countries vary from state to state so always check with your university calendar for the list of holidays in that particular semester.

## MENSA

Canteen is called Mensa in German and in the university Mensa all the students get subsidized meals. Make sure you carry your semester ticket or student ID. Please also note that the menu and its ingredients is mentioned so that you can find out yourself if you are allergic to any foods. In general the menu includes vegetarian and also meat section.

## MAXIMUM TIME FOR COURSE

If the masters in physics is a four semesters or a two year course then it is highly be completed in maximum of seven semesters. But make sure you get at least 20 credits on average per semester to get your visa extended without any further problems.

## STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

All the universities has student representatives namely FSR, AStA etc where you can discuss any difficulties that you face during your studies.

## ADDITIONAL COURSES

Unlike many other countries the German universities are quite flexible and encouraging so you can take any additional courses outside physics like mathematics, music or whatever. And you can always contact the professor and discuss any details regarding the course.

## SPORTS/MUSIC/ART

Almost all the universities has nice activates like sport clubs, music concerts, radio channel etc. So you can always find some interesting activities to participate.

## HOW TO LEARN GERMAN

Well there are millions of websites, books, apps and several other resources that would help you learn German and every university has a language learning centre and please ask them for language courses. And here are some useful resources.

1. <https://learngerman.dw.com/en/languages>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0tqMNKs0Jw&list=PLYzp2xhTw9W1Z9RvnCoveC0W7pkwUMHXy>
3. <https://www.vhs-aktuell.de/programm/german/german-as-a-foreign-language.html>
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUghVMaDx7A>
5. <https://dict.leo.org/german-english/>

## PART TIME JOBS

In general the students studying masters are allowed to work but not more than 20 hours/week during the semester period and 40 hours/week during vacation time.

Here is a quick video on how to find a part time job in Germany.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Hh\\_yiG0hgQ&t=59s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Hh_yiG0hgQ&t=59s)

## APPS FOR TRAVELLING (BUSES AND TRAINS)

There is an app called DB Navigator. Please use it to know the best connections to travel to anywhere in Germany. You can use this app to travel within a city or to distant places. It shows the connections of buses, trains and trams as well.

Ios :<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/db-navigator/id343555245?mt=8>

Andriod :<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=de.hafas.android.db>

Moreover for travelling long distances you can also use private services like Flixbus, Bus radar, BlaBlaCar and Ryanair. These are cheap ways to travel within Germany and also Europe as well.

<http://www.oebb.at/en/> (for travelling in Austria)

<https://www.flixbus.com/>

<https://www.busradar.com/?currency=EUR>

<https://www.blablacar.com/>

<https://www.ryanair.com/gb/en/>

And sometimes you also get discounts if you buy a group ticket or weekend ticket so check for all possibilities before you make reservation.

## KID SUPPORT

If you are married and have kids don't worry there are a lot of resources that can help you take care of your child.

## WINTER

Winters in Europe are very cold unlike tropical countries like India. And the consequences are that buses and trains may be delayed or sometimes cancelled so it is important that one may plan the day carefully and also dress accordingly.

## FACEBOOK PAGES

All cities have Facebook pages and groups for international people living there and also some especially for students. So join them for latest updates that happen around you in the city! And also you can check for accommodation or for used furniture or cycle for cheap in those Fb pages.

## STUDENT DISCOUNTS

It is a very good thing that not only in German speaking countries but also in the whole Europe that students are given discounts literally everywhere from Haircuts to entry tickets to museum, train tickets etc. So make sure you carry your student ID card all the time you travel in Europe and ask for discounts.

## DAYLIGHT SAVINGS

As you may be aware of the fact that most of the western countries do something called 'daylight savings' in which they turn their clock forwards (in summer) or backwards (in winter) for one hour. These are done on specific days at a specific time two times a year and please make sure you don't miss it especially if you are travelling. Usually it is done in last Sunday of March at 2.00 A.M to 3.00 A.M and last Sunday in October at 3.00 A.M to 2.00 A.M.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT

AMBULANCE, FIRE : 112

POLICE : 110

## LIST OF UNIVERSITY SEPARATE THINGS

1. Places to visit
2. Student management system
3. Getting Library card, semester ticket, Mensa
4. Eduroam, mailing address
5. Time table and class rooms
6. Scholarships
7. Examination office
8. International student office
9. Places to visit in the city
10. Faculty office
11. Places to sit and work
12. Coffee shop
13. Enrolment process