



Information for International Visiting Academics

Welcome to our University!

The International Welcome Centre is pleased to provide you with advice and assistance to make your stay on our campus as pleasant as possible. Here is an overview of things to keep in mind when preparing for your stay in Germany:



Accommodation: Finding housing in Germany from abroad can be difficult. To assist you with your search in the best possible way, please contact the Welcome Centre with your travel dates and requests for a room or apartment. We are not authorized to book your accommodation, but we will do our level best to help you find and reserve suitable accommodation! Possible accommodation options are the International Guest House in Bonn, furnished apartments or holiday rentals or even small bed and breakfasts. Most of our international guests choose to stay in Bonn but the much smaller cities of Rheinbach and Sankt Augustin respectively are also good options, especially if you would prefer to live close to campus. Depending on the length and purpose of your stay, it might be convenient to book a hotel for the first few days to be able to look for other accommodation options after arrival.

Health Insurance: Under existing international insurance agreements, residents of countries from the European Union and the European Economic Area may be able to use insurance from their home country while in Germany. Otherwise a new policy must be obtained either directly before or after arriving in Germany. Proof of a valid health insurance in Germany is often required to complete the visa process. There are two basic forms of health insurance in Germany: **Compulsory statutory health insurance** schemes generally charge a higher monthly fee, but provide a more comprehensive coverage. Another advantage is that children can be co-insured free of charge. They issue a health insurance card, which must be shown before every visit to the doctor. If you should decide for a **private health insurance**, please note that in most cases you will have to pay doctor's bills out-of-pocket before being reimbursed. In addition, private insurance generally will not cover treatment for pre-existing medical conditions.

- **Information for contracted academic staff:** the HR department at HBRS will provide you with detailed information about the compulsory statutory public health insurance/social security contribution scheme.
- **Information for visiting scholars:** the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) insurance policy might be an option for you: <https://www.daad.de/deutschland/in-deutschland/gruppenversicherung/en/11062-daad-group-insurance-scheme/>

Further information about the German health insurance system is available via <http://www.deutsche-sozialversicherung.de/en/>. Please also contact the Welcome Centre for further information.

Visa and Residence Permit: Citizens of EU member states, Switzerland, Norway, Lichtenstein and Iceland can enter Germany with only a personal ID card. Citizens from other countries usually require a visa, depending on the length of their stay. Please contact your local German em-

bassy or consulate before travelling to Germany. To check which visa rules apply to you, please go to http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen_node.html and www.diplo.de/visa. Specific information regarding the rights of residence pertaining to academic research can be found via http://www.hrk.de/uploads/media/HRK-Faltblatt_Aufenthaltstitel_1._Aufl._EN.pdf The **visa** itself usually allows for entry into Germany and residence for up to three months. Anyone who wants to stay longer than three months must then apply for a **residence permit** (Aufenthaltserlaubnis/Aufenthaltstitel) at the local **Aliens Registration Office (Ausländeramt)** in Germany.

Registering at the Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeamt): You must register your address with the local authorities within the first few days of your arrival. In order to do so, you will need your passport and a tenancy agreement (if available). Please contact the Welcome Centre for addresses and opening hours of the local registration offices.

Opening a bank account: We recommend that you open a bank account in Germany. For salaried staff, this is mandatory in order to receive salary payments. This way you can also save on transfer fees and will be able to use ATMs from your bank and its partner institutions for free. Most restaurants and businesses accept EC debit cards and/or credit cards. However, you should initially bring a sufficient amount of cash or a credit card to cover your costs until your bank account is set up and also until you receive your first salary (if applicable), as this is often paid one month in arrears.

Weather/Clothing: The weather in Germany is varied but moderate. There are four distinct seasons: the spring is temperate, summer is hotter with temperatures often going above 20 degrees Celsius (but rarely over 30 degrees), autumn tends to be cooler and windy. During the winter temperatures often drop below freezing and it may snow. As a rule, all households in Germany have functioning heating. Air conditioners and ceiling fans are less likely to be available.

Electricity: Electrical devices in Germany operate at 230 Volts/at 50 Hertz. You will need to buy a foreign electricity converter or adapter if that is not the case for your appliances. German power plugs have two round pins. If your appliance plug has a different shape or type of pins, you will need to bring a plug power adapter as well.

Arriving in Germany and how to find us: We can arrange for you to be met in Bonn upon your arrival and assist you with moving into your new accommodation. General Information on how to get to us can be found via:

<http://www.fh-bonn-rheinsieg.de/en/University/Addresses+and+how+to+find+us.html>

PS:

For further general service information on life and work in Germany please go to the portals provided by Euraxess and Research in Germany:

http://www.euraxess.de/portal/Incoming_en.html%20

<http://www.research-in-germany.de/dachportal/en.html>

For general information on a research stay or period of tuition please go to:

[FAQ Preparing a successful research stay in Germany](#)

<https://www.daad.de/deutschland/nach-deutschland/publikationen/en/>

Contact:

International Welcome Centre, welcome.centre@h-brs.de