Guide for International Researchers

Welcome to the University of Bonn!
We should like to thank EURAXESS Germany and the German Aerospace Center (DLR) for their contribution to content.
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Welcome to the University of Bonn!

I am delighted that you have decided to come to the University of Bonn for your research stay. I hope your time here will be successful from a professional point of view and enriching for you personally!

You will certainly discover ideal conditions here in Bonn. The Welcome Center will be pleased to help you and your family deal with all organizational matters relating to your stay – even before you arrive in Bonn. This Guide is designed to give you an impression of our university and to offer valuable advice on planning and organizing your research stay. It also contains interesting information about the City of Bonn with its diverse leisure opportunities as well as the Bonn/Rhein-Sieg science region with its many research institutions and science organizations that are closely linked to the university.

Both nationally and internationally, the University of Bonn holds a leading position and is renowned for excellent research – particularly in the clusters of excellence, Mathematics and Immunosensation. But it is also a world leader in the natural sciences in general. Outstanding researchers work in many other fields, as well, and top-class research of this kind thrives on dedicated, curious, creative people from different countries and cultures. We are therefore looking very much forward to sharing ideas with you and learning about your research results, which bring such dynamism into our scientific dialogue and which I hope will also inspire you to investigate new questions and approaches in your own personal field.

At the University of Bonn, an international approach to studying and research is a matter of course: We cooperate with a host of universities and research institutions around the world, some 13 per cent of our students and 14 per cent of our academic staff come from other countries. I hope that you will soon feel at home in our university community and that you will be able to make excellent progress with your research. You may certainly count on your colleagues at the institute as well as on direct contact to me and my team of Deputy Rectors. We want to create the best possible preconditions for your activities and work together with you to make the University of Bonn a hub for forward-looking research and teaching.

Bonn is not only an excellent choice in academic terms, however. The city and the region will certainly play their part in helping you to settle down quickly. The Rhineland boasts attractive countryside and a vibrant cultural scene. The people of Bonn will welcome you to our cosmopolitan city. Thanks to Bonn’s history as the former capital, the wealth of international organizations here – particularly the many United Nations institutions – and, of course, the uncomplicated, open character of the local people, you will experience a genuine culture of welcome.

I should thus like to wish you every success for your time at the university and in the Rhineland with many interesting encounters both in academic and personal terms.

Sincerely,

Welcome to the University of Bonn!

Professor Dr. Michael Hoch
Rector of the University of Bonn
Welcome to Bonn!

Dear readers,

A very warm welcome to Bonn! Our international city on the Rhine is embedded in a vibrant science region. In addition to the University of Bonn and other institutions of higher education, we are also home to numerous international research institutes as well as science policy and science administration institutions. The Bonn region is one of the leading locations for research and innovation and enjoys a high volume of regional and international networking.

In its role as the German seat of the United Nations, the second political center in the Federal Republic and a major location of German development cooperation, Bonn has become a powerhouse of sustainability – which includes a firm place for the academy. Bonn hosts the Vice Rectorate of the United Nations University in Europe that also offers a joint Master’s together with the University of Bonn. The Center for Development Research is the seat of the Right Livelihood College, as well, and works together with Alternative Nobel Prize winners. Students participate in Model United Nations simulations.

BION, the Biodiversity Network Bonn, connects biodiversity research across the disciplines – from the UN to federal authorities, from research institutes to commercial enterprises as well as to NGOs. Shaping a sustainable future – the motto of the United Nations in Bonn – will certainly influence your activities as well as the high quality of life – a city, incidentally, that offers very interesting professional prospects for academics with an international background!

You will find a wealth of useful information on everyday life, events and contact details in Bonn (including the point people at the municipal administration) on our English website www.bonn-international.org. This is where you can also register for a newsletter we publish three or four times a year. And you can take advantage of the events announced on www.bonnewspat.com and meet other expats. Delve into our city’s cultural offerings, ranging from the Beethovenfest to the Museum Mile, cabaret and open-air events; enjoy the leisure opportunities in our beautiful area and make friends with people in Bonn who are famous for that special Rhineland lifestyle!

We are looking forward to welcoming you and wish you all the very best for your stay in Bonn!

Ashok Sridharan
Mayor of Bonn
1.1 Rooted in the Rhineland – at Home in the World

Globally recognized top-level research and a history rich in tradition shape the image of the University of Bonn. Founded in 1818, today it is a modern research university with an international impact. Our 35,500 students, 550 professors and some 6,500 staff benefit from studying and working in the unique atmosphere of historically significant buildings paired with an excellent research infrastructure.

The University of Bonn is not only an extremely attractive place to do research and teach but also has a unique locational advantage in Germany. The international Federal City of Bonn and the surrounding region are home to a large number of scientific institutions, research funding organizations, UN agencies and other institutions that operate internationally. The University of Bonn’s regional roots and networks are a gateway to the world that sustainably strengthens the university’s international network.

Insider Info: Where’s the uni?!

Ask people in Bonn the question “Where’s the uni?” and they will probably reply, “That depends!” This has nothing to do with being non-committal – a trait often ascribed to people in the Rhineland – but with the fact that ‘the university’ does not exist in Bonn. It is located in more than 370 buildings spread all over the town. The most striking is undoubtedly the main building in the town center, the former residence of the prince electors, now home to the Arts Faculty and both Theological Faculties. In combination with the ‘Hofgarten’ – the grounds of the residence – this landmark has a considerable impact on the university’s unmistakable flair.
In the interdisciplinary research field of immunology, Bonn researchers have also made a name for themselves with their outstanding results. Take the “ImmunoSensation” cluster of excellence, in which highly-qualified specialists in immunology, sensory systems and neurodegeneration work together closely. As a result, some 33 million euro flow into the university coffers. Following the award of the Leibniz Prize to Gunter Hartmann and Christian Kurts in 2012, the cluster could boast another prize winner in 2016, Frank Bradke.

Physics and astronomy, moreover, achieved huge success in the Excellence Initiative with the approval of funding for the Bonn-Cologne Graduate School of Physics and Astronomy (BCGS), a collaboration between the universities of Bonn and Cologne. In this structured program, physics students can study for their Master’s and doctoral degrees.

In the field of detector physics, Bonn is also one of the premier locations in Germany. In 1989, Bonn scientist Wolfgang Paul was awarded the Nobel Prize for developing the ion trap that bears his name. Currently, a new detector physics research facility is under construction in the immediate vicinity of the existing laboratories and the Bonn accelerator ELSA.

Economics is another priority area at the University of Bonn. With its research focus on game and contract theory, monetary and international macroeconomics, labor market economics, the financial economy and experimental economic research, it is one of the leading institutes in Europe. For his contributions to game theory, Reinhard Selten is the only German to have been awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics to date.

1.2 Research University Bonn

With a global reputation and a network to match, the University of Bonn is a research university with clearly defined fields of excellence in research. The success of Bonn’s researchers is evidenced by two Nobel Prizes, numerous Leibniz Prizes and other academic honors as well as “third-party funds” amounting to approx. 154 million euro, which are raised each year in stiff competition with other researchers. When it comes to acquiring third-party funding for natural science, Bonn actually comes in first place in Germany.

Bonn is an internationally-visible center of research and teaching in the full range of mathematics. In addition to numerous research projects and non-university research institutions, Bonn hosts Germany’s only cluster of excellence in mathematics, the Hausdorff Center for Mathematics, for which more than 57 million euro have already been raised. Many academics with international reputation conduct their research in Bonn, including MPI Director Gerd Faltings, who is the only German holder of the Fields Medal. In 2016, Peter Scholze was awarded the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Prize and is the youngest recipient of the prize in its over 30-year history.

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1.3 The University of Bonn – a Global Player

If you speak to a member of the university in the grounds behind the main building, there is a very good chance that he or she will come from North America, Asia or another European country. From Australia to Zimbabwe, nearly 4,500 students and some 700 researchers from more than 140 countries currently enliven the academic and social life of the city.

This cosmopolitanism is not new: The University of Bonn has fostered relations with European, Asian and American universities for many years. Cross-faculty cooperation agreements exist with over 70 universities around the globe, and there are ERASMUS agreements with no less than 300 European universities, all with the aim of exchanging students.

But the University of Bonn is a global player in research, too. Its researchers have an extensive network of contacts all over the world, involving more than 1,500 collaborations. This kind of partnership is essential for a research university: many projects can only be tackled by researchers from different countries pooling their expertise. And, in addition, many visiting academics and leading researchers from abroad come to Bonn to teach and conduct research every year.

Amongst the fellows and award winners of the prestigious Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the University of Bonn has long since been one of the most sought-after universities in Germany. In regional terms, too, the University of Bonn makes full use of the opportunities offered by its location in the ABC-region (Aachen-Bonn-Cologne). The three ABC-universities cooperate in many areas. And top-class non-university research institutions, such as the Forschungszentrum Jülich, workplace of the 2007 Physics Nobel Prize Winner, Peter Grünberg, the Life & Brain Center on the Venusberg, or the caesar Research Center in Bonn complement this multi-layered research landscape. All three are closely linked to the University of Bonn.

The University of Bonn – Facts and Figures:

- Cooperation agreements with more than 70 partner universities worldwide
- Just over 300 partner institutions in the European ERASMUS network
- More than 1,500 international research projects worldwide
1.4 We Didn’t Get Where We Are Today Overnight …

… it took us nearly two centuries. On October 18, 1818, King Friedrich Wilhelm III founded the “Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn”. In the intervening years, the University of Bonn has had its ups and downs. A revolutionary idea up to this time, the universitiesties (with a few exceptions like Göttingen, Jena and Halle) had had the sole task of educating future public servants, judges and the clergy. Research was the prerogative of academies and learned societies. At the University of Bonn, we are still committed to Humboldt’s ideal of the unity of research and teaching to this day. Back in the decades immediately following its foundation, the pioneering university was a motor for enormous growth in Bonn. Eminently academicians were drawn to the town on the Rhine, followed by famous students. In the course of the 19th century, it also gained a reputation as the ‘Princes’ University’ – this was where the sons of Germany’s ruling houses came to study.

Foundation and Revolution

Founded in the Age of Idealism, the new university was imbued with the spirit of Wilhelm von Humboldt’s Prussian cultural policy: together with Berlin and Breslau, Bonn was one of the three Prussian universities to introduce Humboldt’s vision of the unity of teaching and research. Professors no longer had to restrict themselves to reading aloud from existing textbooks. On the contrary, they were explicitly permitted to write the contents of their lectures themselves. The background to this was the ideal of the free researcher, unchallenged by the authorities, deriving the contents of his teaching from the results of his research.
1.5 Rectorate, University Council, Faculties – the Most Important University Bodies

Rectorate
The university is managed by the "Rektorat", a steering committee chaired by the Rector who is elected for a period of six years. The Rector is the official representative of the university. In addition to the Rector, the committee currently comprises five Deputy Rectors and the "Kanzler", the head of university administration.

University Council
The "Hochschulrat" is composed of three members from the university itself and seven leading personalities from academia, politics and society. It advises the Rectorate and supervises their activities.

Senate
 Altogether, there are 24 members of the "Senat"; representatives of the teaching, academic and other staff as well as students. The Senate is charged with matters such as changes in regulations and monitoring the Rectorate's annual statement of accounts.

Faculties
These seven faculties constitute the core of the University of Bonn:
- Faculty of Catholic Theology
- Faculty of Protestant Theology
- Faculty of Law and Economics
- Faculty of Medicine
- Faculty of Arts
- Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences
- Faculty of Agriculture

The faculties are headed by a Dean or Dean's Council. They are responsible for organizing matters relating to studies and examinations, the range of courses offered and evaluation. The Dean also chairs the Faculty Council which is responsible for faculty regulations, including examination regulations.

Faculty Conference
The "Fakultätskonferenz" is a committee of the Faculty Deans. It advises the Rectorate and the University Council on all matters relating to research, teaching and studies that are of basic importance to the university as a whole or to its central bodies.
Welcome to Bonn

2.1 University City with Flair

Alexander von Humboldt, we are told, who is reknowned for having seen and experienced so much of the world on his travels, once stood at the “Alter Zoll”, one of the surviving parts of the old Bonn fortifications, enjoying the view over the Rhine to the “Seven Mountains” on the other side and declaring it to be one of the most beautiful panoramas in the world. Even if this incident never actually took place, and we have nothing to prove it did, it certainly could be true, as anyone who has stood on the same spot and let their eyes roam over the Rhinescape will tell you.

When you start looking around your new home you will soon realize that “the northernmost town in Italy” as it is known has a lot more to offer than just beautiful surroundings criss-crossed by cycle routes and footpaths. Bonn has a vibrant theater and cinema scene, for example, not to mention a whole host of museums. And, last but not least, it has international flair that is not only a result of the many UN institutions located here.

However, Bonn is also a prospering business center and the heart of a pulsating science region with a number of high-profile non-university research institutions – something many of you will probably be able to turn to your advantage during your stay here. Many of the companies and institutions located here not only have job opportunities for partners but also cooperate with the University of Bonn itself in many fields. We have put together everything else you need to know about this university city on the following pages. We may not have included absolutely everything, but we certainly hope it will help you get off to a good start in Bonn.
2.2 Bonn – a City with Many Facets

Bonn is one of Germany’s growth regions and, despite the fact that more than 15 years have now elapsed since the parliament and much of the government moved to Berlin, it is more international than ever. Bonn started to make its mark on the international stage right back in the 1950s when it was the capital of Germany, and its top-class museums and concert halls are by no means typical for a medium-sized city. When the parliament moved away, Bonn saw no reason to bury its head in the sand. On the contrary, Bonn has continued to pursue its goal of becoming an international hub for research and sustainable development with as much dedication as ever. And with no small success as the facts prove.

Federal City

Bonn is a ‘Bundesstadt’ or Federal City: although the members of parliament, nearly all the diplomats and representatives of the Federal States have long since made their way to Berlin together with most of the lobbyists, all the ministries still maintain a presence in Bonn, indeed six of them have their first official residence here. One focus of Bonn’s activities as a seat of government is development policy. In addition to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the ‘Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)’ also has its headquarters in Bonn. It’s not surprising after all, that about 150 international or internationally operating organizations have settled in Bonn, many of which focusing on development policy and/or humanitarian aid. Moreover, nearly 50 federal agencies like the Federal Court of Auditors or the Federal Cartel Office are also located here, the old city on the Rhine still plays an important role in politics to this day.

Bonn – Some Statistics

Geographical Location:
50°44’2” north; 7°6’8” east
(point of reference: university main building); 196.85 feet above sea-level.

Area:
87.73 square miles, three-quarters of which are on the left bank of the Rhine; 24.48 square miles are wooded. There are 47 streams in Bonn, most of which flow into the Rhine.

Climate:
With an average annual mean temperature of 10.3 °C Bonn is one of the warmest regions in Germany. In summer the temperature may go up to 30°C, in winter it may even drop below zero.

Tallest Buildings:
The radio mast on the Venusberg (180 m), the Post Tower (at 162.5 m, the highest office building in North Rhine-Westfalia and 5 m higher than Cologne Cathedral), the “Langer Eugen” (115 m, former House of Representatives, now center of the UN Campus).

Population:
320,820 inhabitants, of whom some 89,000 have moved to Bonn from 175 countries across the world; 36% of the Bonn population are Catholics, 20% Protestants.

Health:
According to a study carried out by the Hanover Medical School, Bonn is a particularly healthy place to live: in their “Health Atlas” Bonn came fourth amongst the 81 largest towns in Germany. The researchers based their study on the figures for healthcare, air quality, green areas, sports facilities and crèche availability.

(as of October 2016)
Welcome to Bonn

UN City

Today, the political and administrative center Bonn also enjoys international significance as a base of the United Nations. Some 19 UN organizations have now established their seat in Bonn so that around the German UN Headquarters in the former House of Representatives (“Langer Eugen”) a continually growing UN Campus has established itself. Directly next door is the new Conference Center Bonn (WCCB) which hosts many national and international conferences.

Business Center

Even if the city used to be a bit too self-satisfied with its role as capital of Germany, it has long since recognized the significance of the business factor. Bonn is a dynamic and growing business location. It was, of course, a real stroke of luck for the city that some of today’s global players like Deutsche Post DHL and Deutsche Telekom, such as SolarWorld, had recognized the significance of the business location. It was, of course, a real stroke of luck for the city that some of today’s global players like Deutsche Post DHL and Deutsche Telekom, some 80,000 people travel to Bonn to work.

When it comes to brilliant prospects for the future, Bonn has been given an “official” seal of approval: According to the DeKaBank’s city rankings, which compare factors like affluence, growth, potential and education, Bonn actually came as first place amongst the German cities of national and regional importance.

Center of Research and Learning

Without a doubt, Bonn is one of the leading centers of research and learning in Germany. Apart from the University of Bonn and the four universities of applied science in the region, there are a whole host of research institutes, belonging to the Fraunhofer Society, the German Aerospace Center (DLR), the Max Planck Society and many other important institutes like the Center of Advanced European Studies and Research (Caesar) which focuses on user-oriented basic research in the neurosciences. Other outstanding establishments include the Life & Brain Research Center and the German Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases (DZNE). And in addition to all this, you do not need to go far to find the most important research funding organizations: The German Research Foundation (DFG), the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) are all located in Bonn.

Cultural Center

Culturally, the Beethoven city Bonn has a lot to offer, too, and not just in connection with its famous son who is appropriately honored with the Beethoven House and the annual Beethoven Festival. Bonn has an opera house and theater, a symphony orchestra and countless fringe venues. There is a plethora of distinguished museums including the Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Bonn Museum of Modern Art, the House of the History of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Deutsches Museum Bonn (museum of post-1945 research and technology in Germany), the UNESCO World Heritage Sites Museum (museum of cultural history of the Frenchlands) and the Alexander Koenig Research Museum (natural history museum and zoological research institution). So there is plenty to do apart from working.

What else?

Bonn is a green city in an attractive location at the entrance to the romantic middle section of the Rhine (UNESCO World Heritage). Here you can live extremely well and you can find many appealing leisure opportunities. Whether you seek recreation, nature adventures or family activities – the opportunities are most diverse and accessible by public transit. Wine tasting in the Ahr valley? Hiking in the Eifel National Park or a relaxing Rhine cruise? There is a lot to discover!

Employment in Bonn:
For years, Bonn has had one of the lowest unemployment rates in North Rhine-Westphalia. Every day, some 80,000 people travel to Bonn to work.

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Science and Research Institutions in Bonn:

Institutes in the Fraunhofer Society

Max Planck Institutes

Humboldt Foundation

German Research Foundation (DFG)

German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

www.avh.de

www.caesar.de

www.dfg.de

www.daad.de

www.dzne.de

www.fhr.fraunhofer.de

www.max-plexi.de

www.mpimp-golm.mpg.de

www.mpg.de

www.caesar.de

www.fhr.fraunhofer.de

www.daad.de

www.dzne.de

www.avh.de
A Quick Tour Through History

The fate of this city, which celebrated its bi-millennium in 1989 (after Trier but before Cologne), has always been determined by the River Rhine, and continues to do so to this day. On the left bank the Romans erected their castra bonnensia, a mighty fort on the border to the lands of the Barbarians on the other side of the Rhine. Even soldiers need provisions, so tradespeople and craftsmen, farmers and innkeepers, servants and riffraff of all kinds gravitated towards the camp. The town of Bonn was born, even if it only received its formal charter much later in the Middle Ages.

Let's take a quick tour through Bonn's history: The Romans were followed by the Franks, Roman gods by Christianity; then came the secular and religious rulers of the Middle Ages, the kings, emperors and prince electors of Cologne. The latter were of particular importance for Bonn (and its university). Fed up with the continual in-fighting with the confident citizens of their own town, in 1601, they decided without further ado to transfer their residence to Bonn where the citizens were apparently less obstreperous. Here they set themselves up as befitted their station with a palace in town (today's university main building), “Schloss Clemensruhe” (today’s “Poppelsdorfer Schloss” which belongs to the university) and the “Jagdschloss Herzogsfreude”, a hunting lodge in the “Kottenforst” forest near Bonn which no longer exists today. This continued until Napoleon occupied the Rhineland, which was then allotted to the Prussians at the Congress of Vienna. Friedrich Wilhelm, King of Prussia, founded the University of Bonn in 1818, gave it his name and threw in the palaces to become places of learning.

Bonn can look back with genuine pride on the 50 years dividing these two decisions. It was from the “Small Town in Germany” of John Le Carré fame that the economic miracle of the post-war years was launched; it was in the “Bundesdorf” (“federal village”), as the seat of government was mockingly known, that by way of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC), many of the seminal decisions were taken that have created Europe as we know it today: a continent (almost) without borders, with (almost) identical aims and ideals. In retrospect, the major achievement of the “Bonn Republic” was to ensure its citizens peace and prosperity.

Initially, people in Bonn were less than happy about losing their role as capital of Germany. But the people of Bonn are also the people of the Rhineland, and so they soon reminded themselves of the paragraphs in the “Basic Law of the Rhine-land” which state: “Et es, wie et es” (Things are what they are) and “Watt fott es, es fott” (What’s gone, is gone.). This may smack of resignation, but it is actually the extraordinary ability of people in the Rhineland to adapt quickly to new circumstances. After all, they know “Et hätt noch emmer jet jejange” (It’ll all come out in the wash).
2.4 Culture and Leisure Opportunities

Dedicated. Correct: Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770 to 1827, one of the greatest composers of all time and Bonn’s greatest son. If you are talking about Bonn as a cultural center, you will not get round Beethoven: the “Beethoven-Haus” (his birthplace), the “Beethovenhalle” (concert hall), “Beethoven-Kammermusiksaal” (chamber concert hall), Beethoven Archives, Beethoven Orchestra, Beethoven Foundation, Beethoven Statue, Beethoven Competition, Beethoven Ring (awarded to outstanding young musicians), “Bürger für Beethoven” (friends of the International Beethoven Festival), Beethoven Guided Tour, “Beethovenstraße” (street name) – and in the very near future, the celebrations to mark the 250th anniversary of Beethoven’s birth.

The city on the Rhine is to Beethoven a bit what Bayreuth is to Wagner and Salzburg to Mozart: a festival city. There have been festivals of various kinds in Bonn since 1845, and with varying degrees of success. Today, the annual Beethoven Festival has become fixed in the diaries of classical music fans. Every year in autumn, a four-week festival takes place in Bonn featuring world-famous performers and highly talented young musicians. And in time for the anniversary year in 2020, the city’s largest concert venue, the Beethovenhalle, will reopen after major refurbishment.

The People of the Rheineland

Apropos the people of the Rheineland or “Rheinländer”. Who and what is a “Rheinländer”? This brings us back to the river that gives its name to the people, the main traffic route of ancient times.

Everyone arrived by river: Celts and Romans, Franks and Goths, Vikings and Frisians and, later on, Bavarians, Swiss, Dutch, French, Prussians and many others – some as peaceful traders, others as hostile invaders. And many of them stayed on indefinitely. So, as the German author Carl Zuckmayer put it, they are a bit of everything. And this is even truer of the Bonn population today: when Bonn was the capital, people were recruited from every single Federal State to work at the ministries and supreme federal authorities, and they have now become “locals”. At some stage, they got the bug, too, infected by the charm of the town with its almost Mediterranean flair, its elegant avenues like the “Poppelsdorfer Allee”, its spacious parks like the “Rheinpark”, dense forests like the “Kottenforst”, panoramic views from the “Drachenfels” or the “Petersberg” and the hiking trails in the “Eifel” and “Ahr” regions. And they were also infected by the overwhelmingly happy-go-luck inhabitants of this region themselves who tend to be more tolerant than opinionated, more hedonistic than Spartan, more fashionable than philistines.

Culture and Leisure Opportunities in Bonn:

www.bonn.de
> Tourism & Culture, Sport & Leisure

www.bonn-region.de

Beethoven Jubilee:

www.bthvn2020.de
Another highlight of Bonn’s museum landscape is the “LVR-LandesMuseum”, a recently renovated, state of the art museum dedicated to the cultural history of the Rhineland. Here you can trace the history of the area – from the Neanderthals of the Stone Age via the Romans and the Middle Ages to modern times. Another feature of this diverse landscape is the Women’s Museum, once the very first of its kind in the world, focussing, as the name implies, on the work of female artists. And finally there is the Beethoven House, the composer’s birthplace, containing treasures like original scores and musical instruments from the period, some of which belonged to the maestro himself.

A word should be said about the contribution made by the University of Bonn to the city’s museum landscape. Although primarily intended for study and research purposes, the university’s museums and collections are also open to the public. Every so often, the university museums and collections even hit the headlines around the globe as is the case when the largest flower in the world is in bloom in the Botanical Gardens. A visit to the university museums is also guaranteed to be an exciting, entertaining and instructive outing. Give it a try!

It goes without saying that the Beethoven Orchestra does not only play Beethoven, and apart from Eroica and Elise, there are plenty of other opportunities to enjoy the arts in Bonn. The city’s Opera House has a very good reputation, as does the Theater in Bad Godesberg. Experimental performances can be seen at the “Werkstattbühne” or the “Halle Beuel”. There is also a private theater and concert scene serving all tastes from comedy to political cabaret, from Blues to Rock. Venues include the Konzerthaus, Kleines Theater Bad Godesberg, Euro Theater Central, Brotfabrik, Pantheon, Haus der Springmaus, Junges Theater Bonn, Theater in Bad Godesberg, Pathologie, Theater im Keller, Harmonie, Anno Tubac and many, many more. One venue deserves special mention: “KUNSTRASSEN”. On this plot in the Rheinaue park, open-air concerts take place throughout the summer. Many thousand people can come here to listen to international names from the pop, rock, blues and folk circuits.

Welcome to Bonn
Insider Info: When is carnival?

The precise date of the street carnival is determined by the date of Easter: Ash Wednesday, the end of carnival and the beginning of the Christian fast, Lent, is always 46 days before Easter Sunday.

2.5 Customs and Events

“In Bonn ist was los!” (There’s loads happening in Bonn). This slogan that was originally the motto of a municipal summer program for children is actually true all year round. Any excuse is better than none to have a celebration in the Rhineland. And, if there is no excuse, you simply devise “events.”

One event that did not need devising is the famous, indeed infamous, traditional “Rheinischer Karneval”. The carnival season officially opens at 11 minutes past 11 o’clock on 11 November every year and lasts until the beginning of Lent, usually in February or March. It culminates in a street carnival that lasts from “Weiberfastnacht”, which is the Thursday before Ash Wednesday, until the end of “Karnevalsdienstag” (Mardi Gras). Under the motto “jeck simmer all”, “jeck” being a pun meaning that everyone is crazy/a carnival reveller, people in the Rhineland don costumes and launch themselves into the merry-making, be it at indoor events known as “Sitzungen” or at the equally popular street carnival which reaches its climax with parades on “Rosenmontag” (Carnival Monday). Bonn, or more precisely the part of town on the right bank called Beuel, played a special role in the history of carnival in the Rhineland. It was here that “Weiberfastnacht” was born.

And this is how it came about: in the 19th century, Beuel was a laundry servicing center. The women did their employers’ washing in the Rhine and their husbands took it back to the owners, as far away as nearby Cologne. At carnival time, the men particularly enjoyed their work, staying on for several days in the cathedral city and only returning home when their purses were empty. At some stage, the women got really fed up with their husbands’ escapades and used their absence to celebrate their own carnival. When the men came home they were duly ashamed and ate humble pie, but to no avail: they were excluded from the proceedings and continue to be so to this very day. And that is the reason why the Thursday before “Rosenmontag” is the highest point of the carnival season on the right bank of the Rhine. On this day, the “Wiewer” (women) storm Beuel Town Hall and, every year, the men posted to defend it experience the most monumental defeat.

Another highlight not to be overlooked is the International Silent Film Festival in Bonn that draws cinema lovers from far and wide to the inner courtyard of the university main building every summer. For 11 days, Germany’s largest festival of its kind shows famous and less famous movies from the early days of cinema – exactly as they were shown at the time: in some cases, hand-colored, in the original picture format and at the right speed. The whole event is a feast for the ears, too, some of the best and most renowned silent film pianists in the world provide the appropriate musical accompaniment.

And what could be nicer on a balmy summer evening than fleeing the lab or lecture hall in favor of a seat in a beer garden on the Rhine – with a direct view of the river and the Seven Mountains in the background.

Bonn and leisure – this means a quiet glass of beer in a beer garden, a cup of cappuccino at the “Kaisersaal”, or “Riesloch” (“Riebloch” – like halibut) browned) at the Christmas Market. There is no shortage of eateries in Bonn – from fast food to haute cuisine, from one end of the culinary world to the other. Both in terms of price and atmosphere a lot of restaurants cater for a largely student clientele. Be it in the multicultural “Alstädte”, in “Poppelfeldorf” or in the cultural hotspot “Endenkirch”, you will need to go far to find something to please your palate.

“Silent Film Festival”
www.film-ist-kultur.de

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Welcome to Bonn
Music Festivals

People in Bonn love music and the open air. So, every year in the summer three open-air festivals take place in Bonn: Rockaue, the Green Juice Festival, and Panama Open Air. Famous and less well-known artists from all over the world guarantee top entertainment and atmospheric summer evenings. The City Garden Concerts at the “Alter Zoll” are also very popular — they are free of charge and take place right next to the university main building.

“Rhine in Flames”

One of the most spectacular events of the year takes place on the first Saturday in May, the mega firework display: “Rhine in Flames”. People congregate in their thousands between Linz and Bonn to experience the kaleidoscope of lights. A mighty convoy of illuminated ships sails down the river, passing the banks and vineyards bathed in Bengal fire. Rockets shoot up and explode in the night sky, raining down millions of colored stars. The whole event ends with a magnificent pyrotechnical display in the “Rheinau”, the park along the bank of the Rhine, which is the venue for a huge party lasting the whole day. It is an absolute must see, especially as it is completely free of charge.

On the left bank of the Rhine, however, it is “Rosenmontag” that brings the revellers onto the streets in their thousands. When ‘de Zoch kütt’, i.e. the parade passes by, they line the streets swaying in time to the music, cheering the floats and participants on foot and shouting for “Kamelle” (sweets) and other items being thrown from the floats. Although “Rosenmontag” is not an official public holiday, everything from ministries to corner shops shuts down on this day (although some employers do expect people to work off the time beforehand or afterwards). Invoking the right of custom and practice, some of the public servants who had to move from Bonn to Berlin in the 1990s even tried to get “Rosenmontag” recognized as an official public holiday in Berlin but they failed. Incidentally, the battle cry of the Bonn carnival revelers is “Alaaf”, as it is in Aachen and Cologne. On no account should you shout “Helau” or “Ahoi” — these exclamations are used by the revellers in Düsseldorf for Mainz, and when it comes to carnival, local patriotism has it all down the line.

“Pützchens Markt”

Every year, on the second Friday in September, it is time for a big happening, and one that lots of people in Bonn look forward to for weeks beforehand: “Pützchens Markt”. Pützchen, part of Beuel, becomes a place of pilgrimage for young and old alike — because what actually used to be a place of pilgrimage is now the venue for Germany’s fifth largest annual fair, attracting up to 1.5 million visitors. Hundreds of fairground rides — from Loop-O-Pianos to Chair-O-Pianos — lottery booths, snack stalls, beer tents and wine bars all haul in the crowds. And, to cap it all, there is a “Plundermarkt”, stalls selling every kind of bric-à-brac you can imagine. It is a gaudy, strident, noisy world of adventure in which the children are not the only ones to gape in open-mouthed astonishment.

Well, that was it, although it was, of course, by no means everything. The Easter Fair in Beuel, the Museum Mile Festival, Bonnfest, Deutsche Post Marathon, the Bonn ‘Knastlopp’, United Nations Day, Open Monument Day, Family Play Day, the Bonn Beer Festival, miners’ festivals and, on every third Saturday in the month, the enormous flea market in the “Rheinau” — you could keep adding to the list indefinitely. But now it is your turn to get out and discover Bonn yourself. It will not take you long to decide on your own favorites.
3.1 Welcome Center

Welcome Center

Service and Advice for International Researchers

The Welcome Center is the University of Bonn’s central service and advisory point for international researchers.

We offer wide-ranging advice and practical support when you are planning your research stay as well as once you have arrived. We will provide you with information and tailored help on all the aspects that are important for your research stay in Bonn. We aim to make it as easy as possible for you to relocate to the University of Bonn and find your feet here. We also run regular information sessions and excursions which we hope will play a major role in ensuring your research stay is both successful and pleasant.

Our services at a glance:

- Online portal in German and English
- Assistance in finding accommodation
- Checklists for preparing your stay and managing the first few days after arrival
- Advice on formalities (visa, residence permit, health insurance, pension schemes etc.)
- Support in your dealings with the authorities
- Help in finding a kindergarten or school for your children
- Excursions and events
- German courses

On our website you will find regularly updated information and links, which should help you to organize your stay and manage everyday life, as well as information on current events and offers. Please do not hesitate to turn to the team at the Welcome Center if you have any questions, problems, wishes or suggestions. You can reach us by e-mail, phone or just drop by – we are here to help you!

University Institutions and Services
3.2 Family Office

Service and Advice for Families

The University of Bonn actively promotes the reconciliation of work and family life. As part of our central services, we therefore have a Family Office which will give you advice and help on the following issues:

- Maternity leave, parental leave
- Parental allowance
- Childcare
- Care of dependents

You will encounter a lot of information, rules and offerings on the topic of reconciling work and family life. We will help you to find the right information and contacts to suit your own personal situation.

Make our online portal your first port of call: Here you will find a raft of important information and advice which will help you to acquire an overview of the main topics and discover the many offers.

Come to the office and speak to us personally. We will be pleased to help find solutions that fit your particular needs. If you wish, these advisory sessions can be held in English.

Family-Friendly University

Since December 2011, the University of Bonn has held an “audit” certificate for family-friendly universities. To obtain this certificate the university pledges to build a family-friendly infrastructure and to continue developing regulations and offers that help members of the university to reconcile childcare and other care-related responsibilities with their professional obligations. The “re-audit” that was conducted in March of 2015 confirmed that the University of Bonn has proved successful in this area.

Family Office
Konviktstraße 4
53113 Bonn
0228 / 736565
familienbuero@uni-bonn.de
www.familienbuero.uni-bonn.de

3.3 Equal Opportunity Commissioner

The main contact person for all women working, studying, teaching or researching at the University of Bonn is the “Gleichstellungbeauftragte” (Equal Opportunity Commissioner). Her tasks, rights and duties are legally defined. The Equal Opportunity Commissioner is chosen by a women’s electoral body. She advises and supports university management in implementing gender equality policy. She campaigns to ensure that university structures observe gender equality, that any disadvantages relating to women are removed and that the general conditions for women entering academia are improved.

Equal Opportunity Commissioner at the University of Bonn
Konviktstraße 4
53113 Bonn
0228 / 736573 or 737490
gleichstellung@uni-bonn.de
www.gleichstellung.uni-bonn.de
The University of Bonn has elaborated a number of measures to recruit more women for science, to motivate them to continue their academic careers and to support them on their path in science and research. These measures are part of the Maria von Linden Program, named for the first titular female professor at the University of Bonn.

The mentoring and training program "MeTra" for female doctoral candidates, post-docs and junior professors is a permanent constituent of the program. It features a framework program of training seminars and networking meetings as well as mentors who help female scientists and scholars to plan their careers.

Furthermore, the Maria von Linden Program offers a comprehensive raft of measures tailored to the needs of each individual qualification level. These include fellowships, for example, or financial and personal support for the various phases of academic qualification. Not least with an eye to how the figures for the number of women at the various qualification stages develop, these measures are regularly evaluated and adjusted.

Maria von Linden Program

The Equal Opportunity Commissioner’s main tasks include:

■■ Developing and implementing measures to increase the percentage of women in professional or managerial positions
■■ Accompanying and monitoring professional and other appointment procedures
■■ Developing measures to promote female junior researchers
■■ Improving the reconciliation of science, studies, job and family

We are here to help you whether you need information on gender equality or require concrete assistance in problem situations.

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Maria Countess von Linden
Parasitologist at the University of Bonn and first female professor at a German university

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3.4 Human Resources Development & Career

The Human Resources (HR) Development & Career Department at the University of Bonn supports all status groups in matters relating to the diversity and planning of career paths as well as to the acquisition of competencies by individuals and by the university itself. It is our task to boost and maintain the ability of both individual members and the university as a whole to learn, perform and achieve. We do this by imparting professional, personal and methodological competencies, using a diversity of formats.

By amalgamating the "brands" HR Development, Career Center and Healthy Campus Bonn under one roof, we have bundled our expertise in health, career guidance, career planning/development and qualifications/continuing education.

As one of the university’s strategic factors for success and competitive advantage, HR Development strives to secure its pool of specialist and managerial staff for the long term and gain the commitment of high achievers and key employees for the university. Qualifications, leadership development and change management regarding the University of Bonn’s strategic goals are our thematic focus. In addition to academics, our target groups include staff employed in technical and administrative areas as well as students and graduates.

Offers for Academics

Our offers for academics are differentiated according to the various stages of career development. The PostDoc Plus series, which includes management workshops as well as seminars on self-management, career management, presentation and project management, essentially targets postdocs, assistant professors and junior professors. Academics in leadership positions can come to us for advice and workshops on management themes. For doctoral candidates we offer opportunities to acquire soft skills through the Promotion Plus program which is run by the Bonn Graduate Center (BGZ). Finally, Startkabel is an onboarding program for new professors that is designed to help them get off to a good start at the university.

3.5 Research Support

For all issues relating to funding advice, dual career, third-party agreements and technology transfer, the Research Support Unit is the central contact point for researchers at the University of Bonn.

Funding Advice

If you are looking to apply for third-party funding for a research proposal, the Funding Advice Service is the first place to turn for advice. We will advise you on both national and international funding programs and help you apply for collaborative research funding as well. If you register online for our regular newsletter, you will receive information on the latest calls issued by the various funding organizations.

Dual Career

The University of Bonn’s Dual Career Service is designed for all newly-appointed professors and junior researchers with their own research groups. We should like to help you and your family settle down in Bonn and the area and be able to combine a successful professional career with partnership and family. To this end, we cooperate with other services at the University of Bonn as well as with external partners in academia and business.
Every university needs a computer center to centrally organize all the IT services required for research, teaching and studying. The University Computer Center (HRZ) is also conceived as a university service provider, sharing its specialized IT knowledge with students and staff.

The portfolio of the University Computer Center at the University of Bonn includes:

- Maintaining the central server for the purposes of research, teaching and studying, including providing network services such as e-mail, identity management, web hosting, file storage facility, etc.
- Maintaining and extending the university’s internal communication network BONNET (including wireless)
- Advising on IT issues and supporting users at the IT Helpdesk
- Conducting IT training sessions
- Providing workstations for public use by members of the university
- Providing support in obtaining software licenses

Apart from the huge servers working in the background, there is a collection of other hardware available for students and staff to use (in some cases a fee is chargeable). This includes:

- Workstations (Windows) with fast internet access and frequently used applications
- A multifunctional printer and copier
- Plotters for color printing on normal paper or photo paper up to DIN A0+
- A roll laminator for laminating posters
- A large-format scanner for digitizing and copying documents up to DIN A0+
- Uni ID

If you want to make use of the services offered by the HRZ you must be a member of the University of Bonn and have a valid university ID (“Uni ID”). If you do not yet have the “Uni ID” you can apply for it, you can access the online form and detailed instructions on the HRZ website. By entering your “Uni ID” and password you can access all the university’s central services. Visit the HRZ website for further details.

E-Mail

Your e-mail address: Uni-ID@uni-bonn.de

You can use the Identity Management (ImMo) “GOsa” to save a private e-mail address for password recovery and register up to two additional e-mail addresses as an alias. You can easily check your e-mails via https://mail.uni-bonn.de.

The storage capacity of your mailbox is 1 GB (staff) and it is protected by anti-spam and anti-virus programs. Please note that the University of Bonn will send all relevant messages to this university mail address, so be sure to check your e-mails regularly.

IT Training Sessions

As needed, the HRZ offers its users a broad spectrum of free, high quality IT training sessions. Topics include, for example, office and statistics applications, presentation, data bases and programming.

Assistance

A lot of information about using the university’s IT services can be found on the HRZ website. If you have any other questions you will find friendly staff to help you at the HRZ’s “IT Helpdesk”. You are most welcome to drop in, call or send an e-mail with your questions or problems.
Software Licenses for Employees

On behalf of the University of Bonn, the HRZ has signed basic agreements with software companies which mean that this software can be used via the university, often at a much reduced cost. Most of these software packages are for the exclusive use of university institutions, but some of them are available for students and employees. A software shop has been set up for the University of Bonn with “ASKnet AG” where staff and students can register and purchase software at special prices. Visit the HRZ website for further details.

Internet and Network Access / Mobile Devices

At various places around the university, wireless internet access is available. It is intended for users who want to access the internet in lecture halls, seminar rooms and other public areas within the University of Bonn. In order to access Wi-Fi you will have to use an authenticated VPN client or eduroam. You can then sit out on the grass behind the main building and work at your laptop.

Net Security (Anti-Virus Software)

Using the internet is always a risky business, involving danger to workplace systems and data. Malware (viruses and trojans), in particular, can do a lot of damage. All members of the university are allowed to use state of the art anti-virus software, under license to the university, completely free of charge. This applies both to the university’s own hardware and to private computers and notebooks used for academic work. Visit the HRZ website for further details.

Wireless Access Points: Where Are They?

Currently, the University of Bonn uses well over 300 buildings; so even in the medium term it will not be possible to ensure that Wi-Fi is available everywhere. However, in the central buildings wireless internet access is ubiquitous. So far, the following areas of the university have Wi-Fi: the central section of the university main building (around the inner courtyard), the “Hofgartenwiese” (grounds behind the university) and the “Akademisches Kunstmuseum” (University Art Museum), the “Juridicum” (Law Faculty), a number of the institutes in the Faculty of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Agriculture in Poppelsdorf and Endenich, the Bonn University Library, the “Zentrale Studienberatung” (service providing course guidance) and the Nassestraße dining hall. A complete list can be found under “Wi-Fi” on the HRZ website.

CIP Pools

When you come to the university you will discover rooms in all the faculties containing workstations which can be used by students and other members of the university free of charge, and from which you can access the Internet. If you do so, you are bound to be confronted with the cryptic abbreviation “CIP Pool”. This refers to a Computer Investment Program which helped universities build up the number of workstations. Consequently, CIP Pool has become the term everyone uses to refer to the central computer rooms in the individual departments and faculties.

In order to work at a CIP pool computer, you will need a valid university User ID which you can obtain from the University Computer Center (HRZ). In some cases, you will also have to apply for a code card to enter certain rooms. On the whole, you can use whichever CIP pool you like, but it is possible that use is restricted to the members of the faculty or subject group that maintain the CIP pool. The individual faculties will inform you about the terms of use and opening hours.
3.7 Language Courses

Language is the key to a country’s culture. And even if it is possible to use English as a working language in many institutes and seminars at the university, for the purposes of leisure and everyday life it is much easier if you speak at least some German.

German Courses offered by the International Office

Every semester, the International Office at the University of Bonn offers German courses for foreign academics and their (marital) partners. They usually cater for beginners (Levels A1-A2) and advanced learners (Levels B1-B2) and are subject to a fee.

The way the courses are built and timetabled is designed to enable you to attend regularly without impinging on your research activity.

You have to register at the beginning of the semester. You can find a detailed description of the courses, current dates and information on how to register online.

The Language Learning Center (SLZ)

The Language Learning Center (“Sprachlernzentrum”) offers a broad spectrum of language learning opportunities to all members of the university. It currently maintains a media center stock ing some 1,800 largely multimedia learning programs for more than 72 languages. Teachers and students may use them for course teaching and private study.

Tandem language learning

The SLZ also arranges tandem learning opportunities. Tandem language learning means that two people with different native languages cooperate in order to learn systematically with and from each other. If, for example, you want to improve your German, you can work together with someone in addition to your language course or quite independently – whose native language is German and who, in turn, wants to learn your native language. The SLZ team will be pleased to help you organize your tandem activities.

Contact for International Researchers:
Christa Buchholz-Oelmeier
0228 / 739521
information@ulb.uni-bonn.de

3.8 Libraries

As befits an old university that has grown up over the years, Bonn does not have one central university library of the type found especially at the new universities founded in the 1960s. Rather, there is a branch library system which means that library stocks are spread around the city and organized via the university library and the individual departmental libraries. The conditions for using the libraries differ.

Bonn University Library

The Bonn University Library (ULB) is the central lending library and archives for the University of Bonn and has two branches:

- The main library is situated at Adenauerallee 39-41 and holds stocks of general information and literature in the humanities and social sciences, law and economics, theology and psychology.
- The departmental library for medicine, natural sciences and agriculture (“MNL”) is located at Nußallee 15a and stocks, as its name suggests, literature on medicine, natural sciences, computer sciences and agricultural sciences.

The ULB is open to students, teachers and employees of the University of Bonn as well as to the inhabitants of Bonn, the region and members of other universities in North Rhine-Westphalia. Visiting academics are usually able to use the university library on much the same conditions as other members and affiliates of the university. In order to borrow books, you need a library card with a user number which can be obtained from the circulation desk at the main library or at the MNL. New members of staff have to present their employment contract and passport to apply for a library card. If you are a visiting academic, you will need your passport and a letter from your host institute confirming the length of your stay. Help is available for new users online and in the brochure “ULB quick & easy” which everyone is given when they register.
The constantly growing and already comprehensible range of digital contents, which the ULB has licensed centrally for the entire university, can be accessed at any computer in the university network. If you are a member of the university you can get access from anywhere at all provided that you log in using your personal university User ID (see Chapter 3.6).

The German Research Foundation (DFG) sponsors a special program designed to enhance regional stocks of scientific literature. In this context, the ULB maintained three special collections for decades: “General Romance Studies”, “French Language and Literature” and “Italian Language and Literature”. As a result, the literature relating to these subjects has been collected more or less in its entirety. Since the beginning of 2016 under the follow-up program “Scientific Library Services and Information Systems” (LIS), the ULB has been building a “Scientific Library Service for Romance Studies” together with the Hamburg State and University Library. In addition to holding specialist scientific literature, the unit carries out other research-related services. The ULB is also the library of the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia and, as such, is tasked with preserving written cultural heritage and legally obliged to collect and make accessible the publications of the Cologne administrative district.

Working in the Library

There are plenty of workplaces at both branches of ULB. Computers in the Information Center allow you to access the catalogs and databases, e-books and e-journals as well as the Internet. The reading rooms with their individual workplac- es provide a quiet working atmosphere, and there are additional rooms for group work or a coffee break. By activating your university User ID, you can get wireless access from your own notebook wherever you happen to be. The libraries are open from 8 a.m. to midnight seven days a week. Visit the website for details of opening hours and current announcements.

Media – Search and Find

You can view the entire library collection simply and quickly online. The “bonnus” discovery service covers books, journals and other media held by the University of Bonn. Not only print media but also electronic media can be accessed directly online – in many cases, however, only within the Bonn university network. “bonnus” also contains a large number of documents that are not available in Bonn. If you are a registered user, you can order them from other libraries through inter-library loan.

Training and Tutorials

At the beginning of each semester, the ULB offers an introduction to help you find your way around the library, including regular training sessions on “Citavi”, the reference management program. In addition, the ULB’s specialist staff will be pleased to give you guidance on using the library for your specific subject – on a one to one basis and in English, if preferred. They are the people to turn to if you need information or want to make sugges- tions for acquiring specialist literature.

The ULB staff will be happy to answer your ques- tions about the library and its use, either person- ally or by telephone or e-mail.

Institute Libraries

In addition to the central ULB there are also many libraries belonging to the faculties and institutes. They range from small specialist collections on the institute’s particular research area to major specialist libraries. The institutes themselves de- cide who may use them, when they are open and how to register. Most of them are reference librari- es, i.e. they are freely accessible but you cannot borrow anything to take away with you. Most of the books in these libraries can be found on the search portal “bonnus”, as can the addresses and opening hours. So you can do all your research at home in peace and only then set off for the library itself.
3.9 University Museums

To discover the individual museums' own websites, visit: www.museen.uni-bonn.de

Ägyptisches Museum – Egyptian Museum
(Regina-Pacis-Weg 7; entrance next to the Koblenzer Tor, in the direction of the Alter Zoll)
The Egyptian Museum presents its treasures at a central location directly above the Koblenzer Tor. With some 700 exhibits, it is the most important Egyptian collection in North Rhine-Westphalia. The permanent exhibition conveys a comprehensive picture of the cultural history of Ancient Egypt.

Bonner Altamerika-Sammlung – Pre-Columbian American Collection
(Oxfordstraße 15)
Everyone can go on a journey through the time and space of the Americas in the Bonn Pre-Columbian Collection. You can also take a slight detour to Africa or the Pacific for exciting insights into the different cultures and their ways of life.

Botanische Gärten – Botanical Gardens
(Meckenheimer Allee 127)
Investigating, preserving and experiencing the diversity of plant life. Bonn’s Botanical Gardens are some of the most beautiful and traditional gardens in Germany. Over 11,000 different species of plant are cultivated in grounds covering more than 12 hectares.

Goldfuß-Museum – Museum of Fossils
(Nußallee 8)
The Goldfuß Museum contains fossils from all over the world, concrete evidence of life on earth going back over millions of years. Apart from fossilized marine animals and plants, there is no shortage of dinosaur fossils either.

Museum Köenig – Natural History Museum
(Adenauerallee 160)
The permanent exhibition "Our Blue Planet" is an exciting presentation of the interplay between all forms of life on earth. The visitor is invited on a tour of discovery through the savannah, rain forests, Arctic/Antarctic, Central Europe and the bird world. The shop and café are inviting, too.

Universalitätsmuseum Bonn – University Art Museum
(Am Hofgarten 21)
The museum contains plaster casts and originals of Greco-Roman art. With 700 exhibits and 1,500 objects not on display, the collection of plaster casts is the largest in Germany. In addition, there are some 5,000 original works made of marble, terracotta and boronite.

Arithmeum – Museum of Mathematics
(Lennéstraße 2)
The Arithmeum is not only a modern museum at the interface of art and science in a modern sense of the architecture; apart from exhibiting historical calculating machines, it also explains all about modern computers and visitors can also investigate the workings of microprocessors.

Universitätsmuseum Bonn – Bonn University Museum
(Regina-Pacis-Weg 1)
The University Museum vividly presents the development of the University of Bonn from its beginnings in 1818 to the present day. Illustrated posters tell the history of the nearly 200-year-old university and its various institutions and facilities. The permanent exhibition includes fascinating original objects from science, research, student life and university traditions. The permanent collection is complemented by attractive temporary exhibitions.
3.10 Culture Forum

Music & Dance Forum

The ensembles in the Music & Dance Forum provide opportunities for music enthusiasts, be they students, professors, staff or those from outside the university, to put their enthusiasm and curiosity for music and ensemble playing into practice. We have something on offer for every kind of musical taste:

Chamber Choir and Orchestra
Magnificent choir and orchestra music, from ancient to modern, in diverse formations, always under professional leadership.

Since 2011, during the vacations, the University of Bonn Chamber Choir has worked on challenging choral works from the Renaissance to the present, placing special emphasis on a cappella literature. Concert tours have taken the choir to Padua/Venice (2012), Paris (2013) and Oxford (2015). Experienced singers are invited to register their interest.

Camerata Musicale
Originally started as a chamber orchestra, this ensemble has grown, especially during the last few semesters, into a major student symphony orchestra.

Choir and Orchestra of the Collegium Musicum Bonn
Composed of some 120 active, largely student members, the Choir of the Collegium musicum Bonn concentrates its enthusiasm on many different varieties of choral music. The program chosen by the Orchestra of the Collegium musicum Bonn covers the whole spectrum of the symphonic repertoire with a particular focus on great Romantic works.

BigBand
Since it was established in 2002, the BigBand has become one of the university’s flagships. It regularly performs at university events.

Uni Bonn Jazz Choir
Ever since it was formed, the Uni Bonn Jazz Choir has given, particularly students, their very own voice. The choir concentrates on 20th century jazz arrangements.

Campus Brass
Campus Brass is a cross-orchestra brass project which plays a range of literature for brass ensembles.

Joining In
All the ensembles meet every week and usually rehearse one program per semester which is then performed at university concerts and events or on other occasions in and around Bonn. Anyone interested is welcome to attend an open rehearsal (usually at the beginning of the semester).

Uni Bonn Jazz Choir

Music & Dance Forum

Head (music): Jörg Ritter
(University Musical Director)
Head (dance): Iskra Zankova
(University Ballet Mistress)
Am Hof 7
53113 Bonn
0228 / 73 5872 (music) and
0228 / 735894 (dance)
musik@uni-bonn.de
ballett@uni-bonn.de
www.musik.uni-bonn.de
www.ballett.uni-bonn.de
In addition, staff at the University of Bonn are also welcome to take part in the following ensembles:

Lunch Break Choir
For any members of university staff who enjoy singing together in their lunch break. No previous experience necessary!

Parents’ Choir
Choir music of all types from nursery rhymes to Romantic music, to a cappella pop and any special requests. Children can participate, listen and/or play.

Ballet Studio
Classes in the Ballet Studio are open to those in all faculties. They are held in combination with University Sport in the Ballet Studio at Römerstraße 164. In order to participate in lessons, a fee is due for a semester card, which can be ordered from University Sport.

Litterarium (Literature & Theater)
The palette of events run by the “litterarium” ranges from readings, literary-musical evenings, theatrical and musical performances such as jazz sessions and literary concerts, to theater courses and book groups. The regular monthly program includes formats like “quizbar” and “hörbar”: In the university’s FAZ-Café/Infopunkt, cultural quiz nights are held and visitors listen to professors chatting about their literary heroes or discuss a piece of literature with other book lovers.

Atelier (Arts Studio)
The “Atelier für bildende Kunst” (Fine Arts Studio) has existed since the university was founded. During the semester, it offers artistic and creative courses in addition to regular studies. Courses include painting, drawing, sculpture, printing, graphic reproduction and photography for beginners and advanced learners.

3.11 University Sports: “Keep Moving!”

There is a long sporting tradition at the University of Bonn. From the very beginning, exclusive sporting activities were offered to young academics: fencing, riding, dancing and gymnastics. Today, University Sports embraces more than a hundred different types of sport, offering students, staff and members of the university a huge program to choose from. Irrespective of whether you are a beginner or an expert – everyone can choose from a raft of well-known and less well-known, old and new sports: Aquarobics, beach volleyball, archery, fencing, golf, hip-hop, indoor cycling, jazz dance, canoeing, rowing, dancing, diving, Tai Chi, trampolining. Thai Bo and yoga are just a few examples among many. Not to forget the other opportunities that demonstrate the cultural diversity and cosmolopolitanism of the university sports program, such as Oriental dance, salsa, Irish dancing and Tango-Argentino, or martial arts like Aikido, Capoeira, judo, Katori-Shinto-Ryu or Taekwondo.
“Click here for Fitness”

On the website of the university sports facilities you are just a mouse click away from sport and exercise. You can find out exactly what is on offer every day. As a member of staff or visiting researcher you will need a “Semesterkarte für Bedienstete” (semester staff card) in order to use the sports facilities. It costs 25 euro per semester and can be ordered online. You can also decide which classes you want to take online.

Many classes are available at no additional charge. Some expensive sports incur an additional fee.

Use the online booking system to acquire the ticket for the activity of your choice. If you are on a waiting list for a course and a place becomes available, or if the times or location of courses change, the system will inform you by e-mail automatically.

University Sports Centers
University Sports makes use of some 30 spaces (sports halls, gymnastics and dance studios, fencing halls) and outdoor facilities (football pitches, beach volleyball and tennis courts) covering a total of nearly 37,000 square meters at three large university sports centers. The center on the “Venusberg” is particularly picturesque. The sports center in “Römerstraße” is near the city center in “Bonn Nord”. It has several sports halls and is also home to two of the university’s highlights: the fitness studio and the climbing walls.

Due to the way the university’s sports facilities function, even traditionally expensive sports like rowing, canoeing, trampolining, fencing, ice hockey and diving, are affordable.

Advice & Introductory Offers at the University Sports Office:
On arrival, all new foreign staff and visiting researchers are given a “Semesterkarte für Bedienstete” (semester card for staff) free of charge if they collect the card personally from the University Office. This is a one-off concession (the card costs 25 euro per semester online, as of 2016). By presenting the semester card and proof of employment from your institute you will be able to use the sports facilities and attend any of the free courses run by University Sports. Please remember that you will need both if you want to use the sports facilities.

The health initiative, Healthy Campus Bonn, is a joint project run by the German Sport University Cologne and the University of Bonn. The aim is to teach sustainable health consciousness and an exercise-based lifestyle. It is designed to motivate both students and staff at the university to get regular exercise and eat healthily. To this end, the Healthy Campus provides a wide range of information, advice and events on the topic of health.

To provide sustenance for the bodies as well as the minds of its students and staff, Bonn Student Services run their own restaurants. Every day at the university and the neighboring university of applied sciences, up to 10,000 people are catered for in dining halls, cafés and bistros.
Dining Halls and Bistros

Anything up to eight different dishes are on offer daily in the dining halls (“Mensa”), including vegetarian and vegan options. There is also a large salad bar.

The prices for students are subsidized; employees and members of the university can eat in the dining halls and bistros at special rates. If you wish to do so, you will need a Mensa Card which you can obtain from the information point at the Mensa Nassestraße or at any cash desk.

Cafes

Bonn Student Services run cafes offering drinks and snacks at reasonable prices to keep you going. They exclusively serve fair trade coffee as well as tea, cocoa, cold drinks, sandwiches, cakes, sweets and ice cream. Some cafes also sell stationery and newspapers.
3.13 Offers by and for Alumni

My Global Network: the University of Bonn’s Alumni Network

Since 2007, the University of Bonn’s Alumni Network has connected current and former students and staff. Membership of the Alumni Network is free. Former students can search for and contact university friends or keep up-to-date with developments at the university and on the network. This is also where you will find fascinating articles, for example on our “Bonn alumni worldwide”.

You can communicate with other Bonn alumni in specialist and regional groups and, if you are relocating, quickly make new contacts. Via the dedicated “International Research Alumni” group you can receive information on research and funding at the University of Bonn as well as return opportunities.

When you join the Alumni Network you will receive your personal “Alumni-Karte” (Alumni Card). It entitles you to benefit from special concessions that have been negotiated in and around Bonn. As a member, you are also welcome to continue using your personal University of Bonn e-mail address and receive regular newsletters as well as the online edition of the University Magazine “Forsch”.

We should like to stay in touch with all members of the “Bonn University family” – so do join the Alumni Network!

Bonn University Society

On 7 July 1917, the “Gesellschaft von Freunden und Förderern der Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn” (GEFFRUB – The Society of Friends and Supporters of the Friedrich Wilhelm University Bonn) was born – and is thus one of the oldest societies in Germany promoting a university. By amalgamating with the Alumni Club in 2007, the GEFFRUB became the non-profit “Universitätsgesellschaft Bonn – Freunde, Förderer, Alumni e.V.” (UGB – Bonn University Society – Friends, Supporters, Alumni).

Since its foundation, UGB has dedicated itself to promoting the University of Bonn. Membership fees are used, amongst other things, to award various prizes. Special mention should be made of the Doctoral Award for an outstanding doctoral thesis, the Initiative Award, which is granted to a student initiative for special services, and the Ernst Robert Curtius Award, which recognizes a life’s work in letters.

The UGB is involved in the Germany Fellowship, supports events at the university – such as the University Fest and the opening of the academic year – and sponsors various projects, particularly student initiatives. Consequently, in the last few years, it has supported a raft of cultural projects, excursions and conferences.

Furthermore, the UGB sees its role as a linchpin between the university and the regional economy. Join a well-established network – become a member of the UGB.
"A creative and supportive atmosphere in Bonn coupled with outstanding work conditions make my research at the University of Bonn a great pleasure. Being an international researcher at the University of Bonn is a great opportunity to further enhance my research prowess and also to contribute to the abundant academic repertoire. The program is well structured and I enjoyed every bit of it; from the state-of-the-art research facilities to the challenging engagements. Moreover, the community is not only research-friendly but also hospitable and family-friendly. In fact, Bonn is my second home."

- Dr. Misbaudeen Abdul-Hammed | Nigeria

- Life and Medical Sciences Institute (LIMES)

"My stay at the University of Bonn has been very productive. The day to day interaction with excellent colleagues has given me a much deeper understanding of relevant methodological and scientific questions. I am very keen to continue this collaboration in the future. The service center for international researchers provided useful support which helped me to quickly settle in. Therefore, I was able to fully concentrate on my research and did not have to battle with red tape. On an unrelated note, the Botanical Gardens on campus are absolutely beautiful!"

- Dr. Maryse Bourgault | Australia

- Institute of Crop Science and Resource Conservation (INRES)

"After almost completing my first year at the University of Bonn, I look back with satisfaction and gratitude at my decision to come here as Juniorprofessor in Economics. The academic and professional environment is top notch, with generous research conditions, an exciting seminar series, collegial peers and good students. I think that Bonn is a great place to grow as a researcher and hope to continue benefiting from the unique academic environment. I am very grateful for all the help I have received from the Welcome Center for International Researchers throughout my stay. Their friendly and helpful staff supported me with everything ranging from housing, taxes, visa and permit issues. Last, but not least, the Center also offers nice opportunities to socialize with fellow international researchers in different venues."

- Prof. Dr. Felipe Valencia Caicedo | Columbia

- Institute for Macroeconomics and Econometrics

"When I moved to Bonn a few months ago, I had never lived in Germany before. The support offered by the Welcome Center was greatly appreciated and helped me to keep track of all practical matters such as health insurance, taxation or language courses. Thus, I was able to focus on my new job right away. I can also recommend joining one of the regular Welcome Center events, especially the hiking tours are really nice!"

- Prof. Dr. Margherita Disertori | Italy

- Institute for Applied Mathematics, Hausdorff Center for Mathematics

"Ever since I began my research stay in Bonn, each day has been unfolding with new lessons and surprises; it is not an exaggeration, if I mention this stay as the best part of my professional life so far. I am very much indebted to my entire lab for accommodating me smoothly and for being supportive in all difficulties faced by a foreigner relocating to this country. I must acknowledge that the Welcome Center has been instrumental in making life easier for us and for serving as a solid support mechanism to fall back on. Our queries have not once gone unanswered and I really appreciate the commitment shown by the staff to help foreign researchers during all stages of their stay."

- Dr. Jayagopi Surendar | India

- Institute of Medical Microbiology, Immunology and Parasitology

- "Voices"
4.1 Checklists

Before You Leave Home

The following checklist should help you with your travel preparations:

- Decide when you are going to start work and discuss the date with your (host) institute well in advance.
- Put together the most important documents (see Chapter 4.2).
- Apply for your visa and those of any members of your family accompanying you (see Chapter 5.1).
- Find out about accommodation in Bonn (see Chapter 7).
- Arrange health insurance cover for yourself and any members of your family accompanying you (see Chapter 8).
- If applicable, enquire about local childcare/schools well in advance (see Chapter 10).
- Visit the EURAXESS Germany website for additional useful information (see Chapter 4.3).

A Roadmap for Your Research Visit

Insider Info

The Welcome Center at the University of Bonn is there to help you prepare your research stay and assist you in completing the formalities. In order for us to be able to offer you the best possible support, please register at the Welcome Center as soon as possible.

www.welcome-center.uni-bonn.de
4.2 Important Documents

You will usually need the following documents in order to enter the country:

- Passports or equivalent identity documents for yourself and any members of your family accompanying you (see Chapter 5.3)
- Register your children at kindergarten or school
- A letter of invitation from the university or fellowship award letter or hosting agreement
- A biometric passport photo for your residence permit (please observe the requirements for passport photos laid down by the German Foreign Office)
- Possibly other passport photos for the various ID cards you will need during your stay
- Birth certificates for yourself and any members of your family accompanying you (preferably in German translation)
- Marriage certificate (preferably in German translation)
- Certified copies of your doctoral certificate or any other certificates awarded for academic degrees (preferably in German or English translation)
- Confirmation of financing (refer to fellowship-holders and self-financers)
- Vaccination certificate and documents referring to illness or medication, if applicable
- Confirmation from your health insurance provider if your health insurance cover is also valid in Germany (in German or English)
- If you intend to drive while you are in Germany: international driver’s license or foreign driver’s license including translation (depending on country of issue); if you wish to take your car with you to Germany, you will need additional documentation. Please contact the Welcome Center for further information
- If you sign an employment contract with the university – depending on the type of contract – you will need additional documents; please ascertain which documents are necessary in your particular case prior to entering the country (see Chapter 6.1)

In many cases you will also need the following documents:

- Vaccination certificates for yourself and any members of your family accompanying you
- Confirmation of financing (refer to fellowship-holders and self-financers)
- Vaccination certificate and documents referring to illness or medication, if applicable
- Confirmation from your health insurance provider if your health insurance cover is also valid in Germany (in German or English)

When You Arrive

These are the first steps you will need to take as soon as you arrive:

- Visit your department/institute
- If you have an employment contract, sign it at the responsible HR Department (please note that, in this case, you will have to apply for a “Führungszeugnis” [certificate of good conduct] at the Residents’ Registration Office)
- Sign your lease agreement and ask your landlord to sign the “Wohnungsgesamtsatzung” (landlord’s confirmation)
- Register yourself (and your family) at the local “Einwohnermeldeamt” (Residents’ Registration Office) (see Chapter 5.2)
- Open a bank account
- Take out health insurance for the entire period
- Extend your visa or apply for a residence permit, also for any members of your family accompanying you (see Chapter 5.3)
- Register your children at kindergarten or school
- Set up your workplace (internet access, library card etc.)
- Obtain information as soon as possible on potential taxation obligations and pension rights

Checklists on the Welcome Center Website:

www.welcome-center.uni-bonn.de

Service and Advice > Checklists

A Roadmap for Your Research Visit
4.3 EURAXESS – the Network of European Mobility Centers

What is EURAXESS (Germany)?

EURAXESS is a Europe-wide network providing information and advice for internationally mobile researchers. Forty countries are involved. The EURAXESS network typically comprises a central organization in each country that coordinates the activities in that country and maintains contact with the central organizations in the other countries as well as with the European Commission. In addition, numerous universities and research institutions in all the countries cooperate at local level. In Germany, the role of "National Coordination Point for EURAXESS Germany" has been taken on by the DLR Project Management Agency.

What Services Does EURAXESS Germany Offer to Mobile Researchers?

- Website: www.euraxess.de with extensive information for mobile researchers as well as FAQs on the topics: visa & entry, working, social security, taxation etc.
- A Helpdesk (info@euraxess.de): initial advice and potential mediation with responsible local service centers for mobile researchers
- Facebook page: "EURAXESS Germany – Support for mobile researchers" where questions about researcher mobility can also be answered
- A comprehensive funding database
- A free, Europe-wide job portal in which researchers can post their CVs and institutions can advertise vacant positions

Interplay Between Welcome Centers at Local Level and EURAXESS Germany:

The national EURAXESS coordinators work together with partners and research institutions in their respective countries. In Germany, there are more than 80 universities and research institutions – including the University of Bonn – which are registered as local EURAXESS centers. For their part, the partners at universities and research institutions have agreed to support the researchers at their institutions. In practice, tasks are roughly distributed as follows:

- EURAXESS Germany at the DLR Project Management Agency
  - Initial guidance for researchers on the topics mentioned above
  - Mediating contacts to individual universities and research institutions in Germany
  - Mediating contacts to partners in the EURAXESS network in other countries
  - Networking and continuing education events for "researcher advisers" at universities and research institutions in Germany
- Local EURAXESS centers in the network:
  - Dealing with individuals at the local institution
  - Providing information on the specific institution/location
  - Mediating contacts to the responsible local organizations/institutions
5.1 Visa and Entry

In order to enter Germany, you usually need a visa and, for a longer stay, a residence permit. You should apply to the German foreign mission in your own country or current country of residence for your visa at the earliest possible opportunity. If in doubt, please always ask at a German foreign mission whether you need a visa. This is the only place where you will be given legally-binding information.

If your marital partner and child/ren are intending to accompany you it is recommendable to apply for visas for everyone at the same time even if they are only going to join you in Germany at a later date. Please note that many Visa Sections only accept applications if you have made an appointment in advance and that processing applications can take several weeks. So do make an appointment as soon as possible and enquire which documents you have to bring with you.

Nationals of the EU, the EEA and Switzerland

If you are an EU national or come from Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland you will normally need a visa. You may enter Germany on a valid national identity card or valid passport. If you intend to stay in Germany for more than 90 days you must register at the “Einwohnermeldeamt” (Residents’ Registration Office) within two weeks (see Chapter 5.2 and 5.3). Swiss nationals staying for more than 90 days must apply for a “Residence Permit-Switzerland”.

Entry and Residence

Insider Info:

Fee remission: If you are in receipt of a publicly-funded fellowship from a German funding organization, such as the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation or DAAD, you are exempt from paying fees for your visa and your residence permit.

Visit the website of the Federal Foreign Office for information on visa requirements, entry regulations and addresses of German Missions abroad:

www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN
Insider Info: Online Application Form

If you only need a visa for a short visit of up to 90 days, you can complete the application form online. When you have filled in the form completely you must print it out and present it in person to the German Mission abroad together with all other application documents required.

Visits lasting more than three months

If you are planning to stay in Germany for more than 90 days, you must apply to a German foreign mission for a National Visa (D-Visa) while you are still in your own country or current country of residence. Please note that this applies even if you are already staying in another European Union country.

Do not, under any circumstances, enter Germany on a “Visitor’s or Tourist Visa” (Schengen Visa). This type of visa cannot be extended and only entitles you to stay in Germany for a maximum of three months. You would then have to return to your own country at your own expense and apply for the right visa there. The same is true for members of your family. Please be sure to state “scientific work” or “research” as the purpose of your stay in your application for a National Visa.

The National Visa entitles you to stay in Germany or to travel to other Schengen States for a maximum period of 90 days within a 180-day period. To apply for a D-Visa you will usually require the following documents:

- Passport (please observe the regulations regarding validity, date of issue etc. You will find relevant information on the website of the Federal Foreign Office.)
- Proof of your intended activity (e.g. fellowship, employment contract, letter of invitation or hosting agreement from the university)
- Proof that you will be able to support yourself financially if this is not evidenced by the documentation above
- Adequate health insurance cover
- Details of your proposed accommodation in Germany
- Marriage and birth certificates of family members
- Application form (available from diplomatic missions)

Depending on the individual Embassy, the documents required may differ. Please contact the relevant diplomatic mission at the earliest opportunity in order to ascertain which documents you will need for your visa application.

National visas are usually issued for a period of 90 days. Once you have entered Germany you must present this visa to your local “Ausländerbehörde” (Immigration or Foreigners’ Office) to apply for a residence permit (see Chapter 5.3).
5.2 Registering at the Residents’ Registration Office

Everyone who moves into a house or apartment in Germany is obliged to register. So within two weeks of entering the country you and any family members accompanying you will have to register at the “Einwohnermeldeamt” (Residents’ Registration Office) responsible for the area in which you live. One of the questions on the registration form refers to your religious faith. The reason for this is that in Germany religious communities are entitled to use the services of the Tax Office to collect “Church Tax” (see Chapter 9.5).

At the Residents’ Registration Office you can:
- Acquire a “Meldebescheinigung”: This is a paper confirming that you have registered. You will need official proof of registration if you wish to open a bank account.
- Apply for a “Steueridentifikationsnummer”: When you register you will automatically be applying to be issued with a Tax Identification Number which is valid for your entire lifetime. It will be sent to you by post about two weeks after registration. If you have an employment contract this number must be forwarded to the Landesamt für Besoldung und Versorgung (LBV) via the HR Department responsible for you.
- Acquire a “Polizeiliches Führungszeugnis”: As part of recruitment procedures for public service positions, a Certificate of Good Conduct is required. It should immediately be sent to your employer.

Transferring/canceling registration
If you move house during your stay you will have to go to the local Residents’ Registration Office at your new place of residence to register your new address. When you leave Germany at the end of your research visit you must cancel your registration at the Residents’ Registration Office.

“Wohnungsgeberbestätigung”
You will need confirmation from your landlord in order to be able to register or transfer to cancel registration at your apartment or house. It is recommended to acquire this confirmation from your landlord at the same time as you sign a tenancy agreement.

5.3 Residence Permit

Before your entry visa runs out you must apply for a residence permit at your local “Aussäuber- behörde” (Immigration Office).

If you are a national of Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea or the USA and not only entered the country without a visa but intend staying in Germany for a longer period of time you also have to apply for a residence permit within 90 days of entering the country.

We recommend you to submit your application as soon as possible after having registered at the Residents’ Registration Office (see Chapter 5.2). You will usually have to present the following documents to the Immigration Office:
- Completed application for a residence permit (available at the Immigration Office)
- Valid passport (please observe the required validity)
- Biometric passport photo (please observe the requirements set out by the Federal Foreign Office)
- Fellowship award letter, employment contract or hosting agreement with the university (stating the amount of the monthly fellowship or salary as proof that you can support yourself financially)
- Proof of health insurance cover valid in Germany
- Marital partner/children: German or English translations of marriage and birth certificates
- Fees (dependent on residence permit and duration)

Passport photo requirements
set out by the Federal Foreign Office

www.epass.de

Insider Info:
The Welcome Center staff (see Chapter 3.1) can make appointments for you at the Residents’ Registration Office and the Immigration Office at short notice and accompany you to the official appointments, if desired.
In Germany, there are different types of residence permits which are defined in the Residence Law. The criteria for issue vary as do the rights con-
nected with the relevant titles. A decision as to which residence title is appropriate for which ap-
clicants depends on duration and purpose of the stay. Comprehensive information on the various
residence titles can be obtained on the Welcome Center website. The Welcome Center staff will
be glad to give advice by telephone, e-mail
or in an individual meeting.

Freedom of Movement for Nationals of Member States of the EU, the EEA and Switzerland

If you are a national of a Member State of the EU or the EEA, you will need a valid passport or identity
card to enter and remain in Germany. Any mem-
bers of your family who come from third countries will require a residence card which must be ob-
tained from the Immigration Office.

Swiss nationals who wish to stay for more than 90
days merely have to apply to the Immigration Office for a declaratory residence permit.

As a foreigner, if you want to work in Germany you usually require a residence permit which allows
you to pursue gainful employment. You have to
apply for it at the Immigration Office in the place
you are staying, often as part of the visa proce-
dure.

In some cases, the Immigration Office itself then
has to seek the approval of the Federal Employ-
ment Agency; however, this does not apply to
research staff at universities and research insti-
tutes, guest researchers, technical staff employed
in a guest researcher’s research team or staff
teaching language skills at universities. These
positions do not require the approval of the Fed-
eral Employment Agency. The Immigration Office
itself is entitled to issue authorization allowing
you to pursue academic activity and enter this
authorization in your residence permit.

In Germany, there are different types of residence
permits which are defined in the Residence Law. The criteria for issue vary as do the rights con-
nected with the relevant titles. A decision as to which residence title is appropriate for which ap-
clicants depends on duration and purpose of the stay. Comprehensive information on the various
residence titles can be obtained on the Welcome Center website. The Welcome Center staff will
be glad to give advice by telephone, e-mail
or in an individual meeting.

5.4 Employment Law Regulations

As a foreigner, if you want to work in Germany you usually require a residence permit which allows
you to pursue gainful employment. You have to
apply for it at the Immigration Office in the place
you are staying, often as part of the visa proce-
dure.

In some cases, the Immigration Office itself then
has to seek the approval of the Federal Employ-
ment Agency; however, this does not apply to
research staff at universities and research insti-
tutes, guest researchers, technical staff employed
in a guest researcher’s research team or staff
teaching language skills at universities. These
positions do not require the approval of the Fed-
eral Employment Agency. The Immigration Office
itself is entitled to issue authorization allowing
you to pursue academic activity and enter this
authorization in your residence permit.

If your marital partner is not an academic but
would like to work in Germany a work permit will
be issued automatically in combination with the
residence permit for accompanying family mem-
bers.

In Bonn, the “Ausländeramt” (Immigration Office) is responsible for issuing residence permits.

The welcome portal “Make it in Germany” offers a wealth of
information on the topics “Discover
Germany”, “Working” , “Visa” ,
“Living” and “Training and learning”.
From preparations at home right
through to your arrival and first
steps in Germany – you can make
it successfully!

www.make-it-in-germany.com/en
Academic employees at universities conclude employment contracts with the university which state the salary scale and conditions of employment. In Germany, however, many professors and academic staff are public servants, and they are appointed.

Public servants’ salaries are laid down by the “Bundesbesoldungsgesetz” (the law regulating the salaries of public servants) and the corresponding regulations of the respective Federal State. The salary scale for professors is called “W”. In most Federal States academic staff are paid according to a collective pay agreement known as “TV-L”.

You will have to sign your employment contract before you officially start working. Your institute or the HR department will tell you in advance which forms and documents have to be submitted in order to draw up the contract. As an employee you will usually be required to pay tax and social security contributions. This is dealt with in Chapters 8 and 9. Please read them carefully.

LBV NRW

The “Landesamt für Besoldung und Versorgung NRW (LBV)” is the authority responsible for calculating and paying the salaries of all employees and public servants, so you will receive your salary statement from the LBV directly. You can find the coordinates of people to contact on your salary statement or by using your LBV-pin number to access the LBV’s website. Here you will also find additional information on collective pay agreements, child benefit and taxation.

Insider Info: What Do Academics Earn in Germany?

For information on collective pay agreements and salary scales visit:

www.academics.com
www.oeffentlicher-dienst.info
www.hochschulverband.de

Depending on the type of working relationship and the financing, HR matters are dealt with by different departments at the University of Bonn.

Department 3 – Human Resources

Unit 3.1 – Scientific staff, public servants and auxiliary staff financed from planned resources
Unit 3.3 – Professors, appointment procedures and travel expenses
Regina-Pacis-Weg 3 (main building)
53113 Bonn
www.uni-bonn.de > Einrichtungen
> Zentrale Einrichtungen
> Universitätsverwaltung
> Dezernat 3 – Personal

Department 7 – Office for Research

Unit 7.4 – Third-party funded personnel
Regina-Pacis-Weg 3 (main building)
53113 Bonn
www.uni-bonn.de
> Research > Office for Research
> Personnel financed through Third-Party Funds

LBV
www.lbv.nrw.de
6.2 Visiting Fellowships

If an institute invites you to work at the university as a fellow, you will become a member of the university for the duration of your stay and will be entitled to make use of the facilities and opportunities offered by the university. As such, you will be subject to the terms and regulations obtaining at your host institute. We recommend you to clarify issues like the use of equipment and laboratories and how cooperation with other members of the academic and, if applicable, technical staff at the institute is supposed to work in practice with your academic host at the earliest opportunity.

Please note that fellows and visiting researchers are not insured by the university. You are obliged to take out health insurance cover yourself. In addition, we recommend you to take out accident and third-party liability insurance cover. Many insurance companies offer appropriate insurance packages (see Chapter 8.2).

Finance and Funding for Research Visits to Germany

EURAXESS Germany maintains a comprehensive database containing more than 100 programs offered by funding organizations in Germany. You can also find funding programs for students, post-graduates and post-docs in the scholarship database run by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). And on the website of the “Research in Germany” campaign a mass of information can be discovered on financing and sponsoring research visits, as well.

EURAXESS Funding Database
www.euraxess.de
> Jobs & Funding > Find Funding

DAAD Scholarship Database
www.daad.de/en > Information for Foreigners > Finding Scholarships > Scholarship Database

6.3 Intellectual and Industrial Property Rights (IPR)

On principle, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) confer ownership and the rights that come with this on the person who has produced the work results. In the case of inventions, the “Arbeitnehmerfindungsgesetz” (law on employees’ inventions) states that all inventions authored by members of universities must be reported to the employer. When the invention has been reported to the employer, the latter has the right to lay claim to the invention and to exploit it. The employer is deemed to have exploited the invention before four months have elapsed. If the employer does not lay claim to the invention, it must be released. In this case, you would retain ownership and be entitled to exploit the invention. Depending on your position and any agreements with your (former) employer, special conditions may apply.

In the field of copyrights, the position is different from the above: the rights to the work results (so-called works) reside with you and you are entitled to exploit them irrespective of your status, your agreements with your (former) employer and your remit. In view of all the details that have to be taken into account, please contact your (former) employer and the Office for Research at the University of Bonn at the earliest opportunity.

The Office for Research is your first port of call for advice on dealing with intellectual property issues, for registering inventions and for exploitation activities. You will be informed about the necessary procedures and regulations at the University of Bonn and given support in taking the necessary steps to protect intellectual property. In this, the University of Bonn is assisted by the ProVendis GmbH patents agency.

In Bonn:
For all issues relating to IPR as well as knowledge and technology transfer you should turn to the Research Support department within the Office for Research.

Department 7 – Office for Research
Unit 7.1 – Research Support
Regina-Pacis-Weg 1 (main building)
53113 Bonn
0228 / 732210
forschung@uni-bonn.de
www.uni-bonn.de
> Research > Office for Research > Research Support

Principles of Good Scientific Practice at the University of Bonn
www.uni-bonn.de
> Research > Good Scientific Practice

Tipp: Research in Germany

The Research in Germany portal gives you an overview of the German research landscape and funding.
www.research-in-germany.org/en
7.1 The Housing Market in German Cities

There is a shortage of housing in Germany which means that accommodation is expensive, at least in the larger cities. You often have to spend 40 percent of your monthly salary/fellowship on rent. This is particularly true for furnished and partly furnished accommodation, which can be rented at short notice and on a short lease.

The demand, particularly in cities where there are large numbers of students, changes radically in the course of the year and increases exponentially at the beginning of the semester. Offerings are often snapped up in a very short time.

Therefore, we urgently recommend you to start looking for accommodation for yourself and your family in Germany as soon as possible, preferably several months before you begin your stay.

**Online Accommodation Search:**
- Furnished apartments
  - www.airbnb.de
  - www.apartments-b2b.com
  - www.apartments-rosenburg.de
  - www.bonnhome.de
  - www.dolores.de
  - www.emilien.de
  - www.citypensionbonn.de
- Furnished and unfurnished apartments
  - www.immobilienscout24.de
  - www.immonet.de
  - www.kalaydo.de/immobilien
  - www.ebay-kleinanzeigen.de
  > Immobilien > auf Zeit & WG
  - www.zimmerfrei-bonn.de
- Private student residences
  - www.house4students.de
  - www.quartiermitte.de
  - www.studenten-wg.de
  - www.wg-gesucht.de
- Short-term accommodation
  - If you are looking for somewhere to stay during the first few days after you have arrived or need to bridge short periods, you can consult the following online sites:
    - www.asta-bonn.de > English > Service > Student Housing
    - www.studenten-wg.de

**Insider Info**

If an advertisement does not mention that the accommodation is furnished or partly furnished, you must assume that it will not contain any equipment or furniture even if furnishings are shown on photos.
7.2 Searching for Accommodation

Private Accommodation

If you want to search for accommodation privately, you have various different options:

- Online search
- Advertisements in local newspapers
- Notice boards at the university
- Place an advertisement online or in the newspaper
- Use a realtor (may incur charges)

It is worth reading the ads in the local newspaper and checking the notice boards at the university for offers. You can also post your own ad online or in local newspapers and on notice boards.

Before you start your search, you should decide on your budget, the type of apartment you need (furnished/partly furnished/unfurnished), the location, the number of rooms and the size of the apartment. Many online providers offer a good selection of search criteria, such as:

- Location
- Price
- Furnished or short-term accommodation
- Partly furnished (e.g. including built-in kitchen)
- Distance from city center in kilometers or minutes
- Balcony/terrace/garden

Please note, in particular:

- Number of tenants (often only one tenant is foreseen)
- Minimum rental period

Apartments for two people and families are often a lot more expensive!

If you are hoping to live near your place of work, you may be disappointed because demand and prices are likely to be high. Bonn has a very extensive public transport system. Increase your search radius, taking note of the public transport options available at the various locations. Find out more about this in Chapter 11.5.

Rents

Many offers include the following details:

- Kaltmiete Basic rent excluding utility costs for heating, water, electricity etc.
- Nebenkosten Operating costs charged to the tenant for utilities such as waste removal, water, staircase lighting, elevator maintenance, property tax, garden maintenance etc. Please inquire whether the heating costs are already included. Nebenkosten are usually paid monthly, in advance, and accounts are balanced once a year. This can mean you have to pay extra or receive a refund.
- Gesamtmiete This 'total rent' includes basic rent and operating costs.
- Pauschalmiete If the offer is described as a 'flat-rate rent' this usually means the costs of electricity, hot water and internet (irrespective of usage) are included; in some cases, radio license fees as well. Please ask for an explanation of the individual items.

In Bonn, Bonn University Club Guest House

Near the main university building, the University Club Guest House has 22 apartments on offer. If you would like to reserve a room, your department or the Welcome Center will be pleased to help you.

www.uni-club-bonn.de

In Bonn: Private Accommodation

Property advertisements for the Bonn area can be found in the local daily newspaper “Bonner General-Anzeiger”. Advertisements appear in the next edition on Wednesdays and Saturdays; you can also view them online:

www.kalaydo.de/immobilien

The Welcome Center at the University of Bonn has a list of reliable private landlords. If you need assistance searching for accommodation, please contact the Accommodation Support Service at the Welcome Center at the earliest opportunity:

researcher-housing@uni-bonn.de

In order to benefit from this service, you need to register at the Welcome Center:

www.welcome-center.uni-bonn.de

> Registration

On our website you will find additional links to professional agencies offering furnished accommodation - in a few cases for a fee.

www.welcome-center.uni-bonn.de

> Service and Advice > Accommodation
Moving In

The exchange of keys should take place during the day so that the state of the apartment and any furnishings can be photographed and noted down in a handover report. You can download a blueprint from the German Tenants’ Association (‘Deutscher Mieterbund’) and add any points of specific relevance to your apartment. Note down any existing signs of wear and tear in the rooms in the handover report so that you will not be held responsible for them when you move out. Draw up an inventory if the accommodation is furnished.

Check:

- All electrical cables and equipment (oven, range), faucets, controls, sinks work properly
- State of the walls, ceilings, floors, tiles, silicone seams (bathroom)
- State of the basement, balcony, parking bay or garage
- Take a note of meter readings and meter numbers: electricity, gas, cold and hot water, heating (there may be a meter on each radiator)
- Write down which keys you have received
- At the end of the rental period, you can return the apartment in the same way by completing an acceptance report
- Don’t forget to get the landlord to sign it, including the date and place.

If the rented property is not in the agreed condition and is defective in any way, this should be noted separately and dealt with by the landlord within the agreed period.
8.1 Research Visit Based on an Employment Contract

Germany has a good social security system. If you conduct your research in Germany on the basis of an employment contract you are classified as an employee who is required to pay the full range of fixed statutory social security contributions. As such, you are insured against the main risks, such as illness, accidents at work, unemployment and old age.

German social security covers five areas:
- Health insurance
- Pension scheme
- Unemployment insurance
- Accident insurance
- Nursing care insurance

The employer and the employee each pay approx. half of the contributions. Only accident insurance contributions are paid entirely by the employer.

As soon as you start work your host institute will take the steps necessary to register you for insurance. If you have a preference for a certain health insurance provider, inform your host institute. Otherwise you will automatically be registered with the “Krankenkasse” chosen by the university. The health insurance provider selected will then inform the other social security providers about your membership. Once registration has been completed, you will receive a “Sozialversicherungsnummer” (social security number) from the pension scheme provider. Please inform the HR Department of your social security number.

The employer is responsible for paying the social security contributions and the sum will be deducted at source.
Health Insurance

“Krankenversicherung” (health insurance) is mandatory in Germany. You will need proof that you are insured in order to obtain a residence permit and conclude an employment contract. The policy must at least cover medical treatment in the event of serious illness or accidents. There are two kinds of health insurance in Germany: statutory and private.

Statutory Health Insurance

Statutory health insurance cover in Germany is provided by “Krankenkassen”. The basic level of contributions has been standardized. There are, however, differences in additional contributions, additional benefits, optional premiums and customer service. You are free to choose your own statutory health insurance provider so it is definitely worth making a comparison. Contributions for health insurance cover are deducted from your gross salary at source.

If members of your family accompany you to Germany, it may be possible under certain circumstances to insure them on the same policy at no additional cost (family insurance). In order to benefit from this offer, the family members must be registered in Germany as their main residence.

In contrast to private insurance companies, statutory insurance providers pay the costs to the doctor or hospital directly. You merely have to present your insurance card before treatment.

In certain exceptional cases, however, the health insurance regulations valid in your own country may continue to be applicable if a “Sozialversicherungsabkommen” (Social Security Agreement) has been concluded with Germany.

Private Health Insurance

As an employee of the University of Bonn you are required, as a matter of principle, to pay social security contributions and are thus covered by statutory health insurance. If your gross annual salary exceeds the annually-adjusted statutory insurance limit, you are free to choose between a statutory health insurance provider and a private health insurance company. Private health insurance contributions are not based on your salary but on your age, gender and state of health. If your salary does qualify you for freedom of choice, it is advisable to compare the costs and benefits of statutory and private health insurance providers very carefully.

Statutory Health Insurance Providers

The following statutory health insurance providers have branches in Bonn:

- AOK
  www.aok.de
- BARMER GEK
  www.barmier.de
- DAK-Gesundheit
  www.dak.de
- Techniker Krankenkasse
  www.tk.de

List of all statutory health insurance providers:
www.gkv-spitzenverband.de/krankenkassenliste.pdf

Private Health Insurance Providers

www.pkv.de > Verband > Mitglieder
Pension Scheme

Contributions to “Rentenversicherung”, the German pension scheme, are part of the statutory social security payments. The scheme protects those insured and their families if their employment capacity is endangered or reduced and when it ends due to age or death. It covers medical rehabilitation measures, professional rehabilitation, pensions due to diminished employment capacity, old-age pensions and dependents’ pensions.

Contributions to the statutory pension scheme are deducted from your gross salary at source. As a rule, the employer is responsible for paying half of the contribution, the employee the other half. If you have been employed in different countries in the course of your working life and have paid contributions to the respective social security providers in the individual countries well in advance, please apply for a refund of the pension contributions. The Welcome Center will be pleased to arrange an appointment for you with an adviser from the German statutory pension insurance scheme.

Recognition of Pension Rights

When examining the prerequisites for entitlement, Member States of the EU, the EEA, Switzerland and Partner to the Agreement are able to recognize periods during which pension rights have been accrued in Germany. Periods during which pension rights have been accrued in countries which do not have a “Sozialversicherungsabkommen” (social security agreement) with Germany may not be added to the German periods in order to fulfill the prerequisites for entitlement. If you return to a country which does not have a social security agreement with Germany, you can receive a number of different pensions. As a general principle, it is not foreseen that a single pension, comprising all the periods covered, should be paid by one country. There are just a few exceptions to this rule aimed at avoiding mini-pensions.

Your pension scheme contributions will remain valid in every country in which you have been covered and have paid contributions until you have reached pensionable age according to the laws of the respective country. All social security providers award pensions on the basis of their own national legislation. This could mean that you might receive a number of different pensions.

Pension Contribution Refunds

If you apply for exemption at the HR Department, you will have to register you for the VBL’s voluntary insurance scheme. In this case, it is only the employer who pays into the scheme, at a reduced premium however. This allows you to accrue occupational pension rights without having to pay the contributions yourself.

You can only apply for exemption at the HR Department within two months of starting work. VBL will advise you on your occupational pension rights and, provided that you were not insured under the statutory scheme for more than 60 months, on potential refunds of contributions.
Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment insurance, called “Arbeitslosenversicherung” in German, is part of statutory social security. It provides insurance cover for jobless people to ensure that they have a secure income while they are searching for work.

If you were in work in Germany before becoming unemployed, were employed subject to statutory social security regulations for at least twelve months in the last two years, and are available for recruitment, you will normally be entitled to claim German unemployment benefit. Periods of employment in other EU Member States, the EEA States and Switzerland can be taken into account.

Unemployment insurance contributions are deducted from salaries at source. The employer is responsible for paying half of the contribution, the employee the other half. Employees do not need to take any action.

To what extent benefits accrued in Germany will be recognized by unemployment insurance providers in other countries must be ascertained in the respective country.

Accident Insurance

Accident insurance, or “Unfallversicherung” in German, is part of statutory social security. Every employed person is protected by statutory accident insurance. It covers accidents that happen at the workplace or on the way to and from the workplace as well as occupational illnesses. It does not cover private accidents.

The costs of statutory accident insurance are borne entirely by the employer. The employee does not need to take action on payments. Employers register their employees with the relevant professional association or accident insurance provider.

If you have an accident at work or on the way there or back, you should inform your superior immediately. He or she will have to report the accident and forward the information to the HR Department.

Nursing Care Insurance

Nursing care insurance (“Pflegeversicherung”) is part of statutory social security. It is directly linked to health insurance cover and automatically taken out with it. Nursing care insurance is designed for people who are in need of care and dependent on the assistance of others. It provides for domestic and in-patient care.

Contributions to nursing care insurance are deducted from the employee’s gross salary at source. The employer pays half the contribution, the employee the other half. Childless employees pay a surcharge on top of this. Contributions are not refundable.

Liability Insurance

Apart from statutory social security, there are also numerous private insurances which you can take out to insure against all manner of risks. In Germany, third-party liability insurance is very common because anyone can be held responsible for damage inflicted on others, and parents are responsible for damage caused by their children. Therefore, it is usual to take out a (family) third-party liability insurance policy to protect yourself and your family. The number of additional insurances you consider necessary depends very much on your own attitude towards safety issues, your personal situation and the length of your stay in Germany. If you are moving to Germany for an extended period, you may want to consult the “Verbraucherzentrale” (consumer advice center) to enquire which insurances are usual in Germany and what you should look out for when making a decision.
Special Case: Public Servants

A public servant is someone who is appointed by the state to a position of service and trust (e.g. professors). Due to this special employment relationship, separate regulations sometimes apply to this group.

One of the most important differences is that public servants are exempt from statutory social security. Instead of the statutory health and nursing care insurance providers, their costs for health insurance, nursing insurance and maternity claims are partly paid by a state subsidy scheme called “Beihilfe.” This does not, however, cover the entire costs, so public servants are required to procure adequate private health and nursing care insurance cover too.

In consequence, public servants usually take out nursing care insurance in compliance with the state subsidy scheme and comprehensive private health insurance. Children and marital partners who are not liable for statutory insurance may also be eligible for “Beihilfe.” If the public servant does not, however, wish to be insured privately or is unable to do so due to other factors such as pre-existing medical conditions, it is possible to take out statutory insurance on a voluntary basis. If this option is chosen, the state subsidy scheme can no longer be invoked.

As a result of the exemption from the social security system, there are also differences in the area of pension schemes. Traditionally, public servants were appointed for life, which meant that they moved seamlessly from employment to retirement. In the last few years, however, the number of public servants on fixed-term contracts (e.g. junior professors) has increased. If this applies to you, it is possible that you will leave public service without pension rights. In this case, your former public service employer will pay retrospective insurance premiums into the German Pension Scheme for you just as though you had been a salaried employee for the entire duration, but not into the Pension Institution of the Federal Republic and the Länder, VBL. Another difference pursuant upon exemption from social security obligations is that you are ineligible to draw unemployment benefit if you become unemployed after being a public servant on a fixed-term contract. In this case (although not if you voluntarily relinquish your status as a public servant before reaching retirement), you will receive a transitional allowance (“Übergangsgeld”) based on your previous salary and the duration of your employment as a public servant.

There are also differences between public servants and employees in relation to work-related accidents. It is not the accident insurance provider who pays for claims by public servants; any actions necessitated by an accident will be covered by the “Beihilfe” or the public service employer. Work-related accidents should always be reported to the university as quickly as possible.
8.2 Research Visit Based on a Fellowship

Non-EU Nationals

Health Insurance

If you are funding your research visit to Bonn pri-
vately or with a fellowship you are not usually li-
able for social security payments in Germany. Nevertheless, you, too, must be covered by health
insurance for the entire duration of your stay from
the very first day. We therefore recommend you to
take out private health insurance cover.

Some insurance providers offer special rates for
international researchers who are staying for a
fixed period. They have different benefits and
rates and should not be confused with compre-
ensive private insurance policies, which offer
more extensive protection but are significantly
more expensive. It is very important to note that
most of the costs for pre-existing medical con-
tions will not be covered. Provided that import
regulations allow, you should consider whether
to bring all necessary medications with you from
your own country. Ante-natal care and childbirth,
dentistry and psychological disorders are also
excluded from private health insurance policies.
Travel insurances are valid for a maximum period
of five years.

Accident Insurance

If you hold a fellowship you will not usually be
insured by the university and will probably have
to arrange adequate insurance cover for yourself.
This is the case, for example, if you are enrolled at the university or if you are employed
by the University of Bonn despite holding a fel-
lopporship. Apart from health insurance, which is
essential, it is also recommendable to take out in-
surance against accidents and third-party liability
claims. Some insurance providers offer combined
health, accident and third-party insurance pack-
ages (see Insider Info).

Pension Scheme

If you want to avoid gaps in your pension history, you can pay voluntary contributions
into the German Pension Scheme during your fel-
lopporship. The German Pension Scheme will advise
you on this point.

EU Citizens

EU citizens should initially contact their own
health insurance provider at home to ascertain
whether their existing health insurance policy
covers their research visit to Germany as well. If
this is the case, you should apply to your domestic
health insurance provider for Form S1 which you
will then receive the same benefits as a German national
insured with the same provider. The German pro-
vider will subsequently invoice your domestic pro-
vider for the costs. If you are only making a short
visit, a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC),
which you can use if you need to see a doctor, should suffice.

If it is not possible to remain insured with your
domestic provider, you have the choice between
voluntarily joining the statutory insurance scheme or
taking out a private travel or comprehensive
insurance (see above).

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

To facilitate access to treatment during temporary
visits abroad, the EHIC offers comprehensive
cover and is not limited to treatment related
to the purpose of your visit. All EU citizens are entitled to
an EHIC, which is valid for:

- for temporary visits abroad only
- for necessary medical services only
- not for trips abroad specifically for the purpose
- of travel
- not for the costs incurred in transporting an
invalid home

Here you will find a wealth of information on
mobility within the EU:

www.ec.europa.eu/social

The European Commission – Directorate
General for Employment, Social
Affairs and Inclusion

The EHIC is valid, for example:

EU citizens

8.2 Research Visit Based on a Fellowship

Insider Info

For a list of the insurance pro-
viders known to us who offer
special rates for international
researchers staying for a
fixed-term, visit:

www.welcome-center.
uni-bonn.de > Service and
Advice > Social Security >
Information for Fellows
(without a work contract)
Research Visit Based on a Fellowship

If your research visit to Germany is supposed to take place in the framework of a fellowship you may, under certain circumstances, be exempt from taxation under German income tax law. It is certainly worth consulting the organization which has awarded the fellowship on this point. Furthermore, you should find out whether the fellowship paid in Germany is subject to taxation in your own country.

The preconditions for tax exemption on fellowships in Germany are:

- Fellowship awarded from public funds, via a public or non-profit agency (recognized under German law) or by intergovernmental/supranational agencies of which the Federal Republic of Germany is a member
- Fellowship awarded to promote research or academic or artistic training or continuing education
- Fellowship no higher than the amount required to fulfill the research task or to cover living and training needs
- Fellowship granted in accordance with the regulations of the donor
- Fellowship does not involve a quid pro quo requirement or employment of the recipient
9.2 Research Visit Based on an Employment Contract

If your research visit is based on an employment contract in Germany and you have a permanent address or usually reside in Germany, you will be taxed in Germany on your globally-earned income and assets.

Income Tax

Income tax is deducted from your salary at source and paid to the state directly by your employer, i.e., the university. The amount of tax depends on income, marital status and tax bracket. For tax-ation purposes, everyone who is registered or liable to pay tax in Germany is issued with a Tax Identification Number which accesses the personal information on the holder registered at the Residents’ Registration Office (such as whether you are married and have children). The Tax Identification Number is issued for life.

9.3 Double Taxation Agreements

In order to avoid a situation in which foreigners are liable to pay tax both in Germany and in their own countries, double taxation agreements have been signed with many countries. They regulate in which country you have to pay tax.

If you stay in Germany for less than 6 months (183 days), your income will be taxed in your own country provided that you work for a foreign employer and that the double taxation agreement assigns the right of taxation to your own country. If one of these conditions is not met, your salary will be taxed in Germany.

Agreements exist with some countries stating that university teachers and researchers who come to Germany for a maximum (in most cases) of two years to teach or work on research at a public research institution may pay their taxes in their own countries. Details can be found in the double taxation agreements with the Member States of the EU and certain other countries.

For matters relating to double taxation, the Finanzamt Düsseldorf-Süd is responsible for staff at the University of Bonn. This tax office will process applications and allocate the relevant tax bracket. If you have any other questions, you can turn to the department dealing with international tax law at the Finanzamt Düsseldorf-Süd.

Finanzamt Düsseldorf-Süd
Kruppstr. 110–112
40227 Düsseldorf
0211 / 7798 0
www.finanzamt-duesseldorf-sued.de

You will also find useful information, forms and leaflets on the subject of taxation and double taxation in North Rhine-Westphalia on the website of the Regional Tax Office:
www.oberfinanzdirektion-rheinland.de

If your permanent address is in Bonn, one of the two Bonn tax offices will be responsible for your taxation. You can turn to them for general information and forms for your tax return.

Finanzamt Bonn-Innenstadt
Wessenerstraße 15
53111 Bonn
0228 / 7180

Finanzamt Bonn-Außenstadt
Bachstraße 36
53195 Bonn
0228 / 72680

You may find the required forms for your tax return also online:
www.formulare-bfinv.de

You may find the required forms for your tax return also online:
www.elsteronline.de

Insider Info: Tax ID

As soon as you have registered your address in Germany, the Federal Central Tax Office will automatically send you your Tax Identification Number by mail. You should then forward this number to the HR Department.

Insider Info

Visit the website of the Federal Ministry of Finance for a list of the countries that have signed double taxation agreements with Germany:
www.bundesfinanzministerium.de
> English > Issues > Taxation > Double Taxation

www.formulare-bfinv.de
www.elsteronline.de

www.bundesfinanzministerium.de
> English > Issues > Taxation > Double Taxation
9.4 Tax Return

At the end of each calendar year, you may apply to the tax office at your place of residence for a “Lohnsteuerausgleich” (income tax adjustment). This may entitle you to a partial refund of tax paid. The necessary documents can be obtained online from the Federal Ministry of Finance website or from your local “Finanzamt” (tax office) or “Rathaus” (town hall). You can also submit a tax return electronically via ELSTER (electronic tax return) or from your own country if you have already returned home. It must reach the local tax office by May of the following year; at the very latest by December 31st. When the tax office has processed the tax return you will receive a “Steuerbescheid” (tax statement) informing you whether and to what extent tax will be refunded.

It may be worth paying a “Steuerberater” (tax accountant) to help you complete your tax return.

9.5 Church Tax

An unusual feature of taxation in Germany is state-collected “Kirchensteuer” (church tax). Under certain circumstances, churches can have their tax collected for them by the tax office. In the case of major churches, church tax (roughly 9% of income tax) is collected by the state together with income tax and automatically deducted from your monthly salary. This is the reason why you are asked to state your religion when you register at the Residents’ Registration Office.

As not all denominations have their tax collected by the state, you may want to ask at the Residents’ Registration Office whether you are liable for church tax.
Family

10.1 Childcare

If you are bringing your children with you to Germany, you should look into the question of childcare at the earliest opportunity and take steps to find a place for your children while you are still at home. If you wait until you arrive in Germany, you will have to reckon on joining a waiting list for a place in a childcare facility.

Day-Care Centers

Day-care centers ("Kindertagesstätte" or "Kita") look after children from the age of four months until they start school. Full-time day-care is usually offered for 45 hours per week.

Day-care centers are operated by different kinds of organization. Apart from municipal facilities, there are also church-run and private day-care centers as well as associations (so-called parents’ initiatives) in which parents are expected to play an active role. The University of Bonn also operates two day-care centers of its own in cooperation with Bonn Student Services. When you have decided on a facility, get in contact immediately to ensure that your child can be catered for.

There is a charge for childcare which varies according to family income, age of the children and number of hours of care required. In addition, a separate monthly sum has to be paid for a catering package.

In-Home Care Providers

For children from the age of four months onwards, there is the option of choosing in-home day-care instead of a day-care center. This is provided by carers known as "Tagesmütter" or "Tagesväter" (day mothers or day fathers) on an individualized basis with flexible hours. They usually look after several children at a time in their own homes. Day parents must be trained and have an official "Pflegeerlaubnis" (care license) issued by the local "Jugendamt" (Youth Welfare Office). Ever more day parents are getting together to form professional groups and hiring accommodation.

In Bonn:

When searching for the right childcare solution for your family, you can get advice and support at the University of Bonn’s Family Office which accepts applications for the university’s own day-care centers and can also offer you the names of potential babysitters.

Family Office at the University of Bonn

Konviktstraße 4, 53113 Bonn

0228 / 737273

familienbuero@uni-bonn.de

www.familienbuero.uni-bonn.de

City of Bonn – Information on Childcare:


International Childcare in Bonn:

www.welcome-center.uni-bonn.de > Service and Advice > Family > Childcare

Kita Search NRW

www.kita.nrw.de > Kita-Finder NRW

Insider Info

In Germany, children who have completed the first year of life have a legal right to childcare in a day-care center ("Tagesstätte" or "Tagespflegeeinrichtung").
All children living in Germany are required to attend school between the ages of 6 and 15. The first stage of school is called "Grundschule" (Years 1–4). After this, there is a choice between three different types of school: "Hauptschule", which continues until Year 9 or 10 and leads to a general school leaving certificate called "Hauptschulabschluss"; "Realschule", which continues until Year 10 and culminates in an intermediate school leaving certificate, known as "Realschulabschluss"; "Gymnasium", which continues until Year 12 and leads to the higher school leaving certificate, or "Abitur", which is also the entrance qualification for higher education. Apart from these schools, there are also "Gesamtschulen" and "Sekundarschulen", which combine the three types of school under one roof and offer the various school leaving certificates.

Attendance at state-run schools in Germany is free of charge. There are only very few fee-paying private and international schools. The local "Schulamt" (education authority) can provide information on the situation in your area. You usually decide which school to choose after a visit and an interview with the school management. Depending on the Federal State, the school year normally begins after the summer vacation between July and September. At most schools in Germany lessons only take place in the morning, although day-schooling is being extended significantly.
10.3 Family Benefits

Child Benefit

Parents are eligible to apply for "Kindergeld" (child benefit) for children up to at least the age of 18. Under certain circumstances, foreign parents are also entitled to child benefit.

Child benefit is usually paid when the applicant is domiciled or normally resident in Germany. Applicants resident abroad may be eligible for child benefit if they are subject to unlimited tax liability in Germany.

Child benefit is currently 192 euro per month for the first and second child, 198 euro for the third child and 223 euro for each additional child. Child benefit is usually paid when the applicant is employed.

Applications for child benefit can be made in writing after birth. It is usually paid by the responsible "Familienkasse" (Family Office) of the Federal Employment Agency. If the parent who wishes to claim child benefit is a public servant, the responsible Family Office is the same institution as the one responsible for salaries. Employees at the University of Bonn receive their child benefit from the "Landesamt für Besoldung und Versorgung NRW" (NRW Salaries and Pensions Office, LBV).

If you have a settlement permit or a residence permit, you are entitled to child benefit. The responsible Family Office for employees at the University of Bonn is the "Landesamt für Besoldung und Versorgung NRW" (NRW Salaries and Pensions Office, LBV). The responsible Family Office for persons who do not draw their salary from LBV is the "Familienkasse Nordrhein-Westfalen Rheinland-Pfalz".

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Parental Allowance

Parental allowance is an important form of support for families during the first months of a child’s life. It compensates for loss of income following the birth of a child. Parental allowance makes it easier for mothers and fathers to interrupt or temporarily reduce work commitments in order to have time for their child. Parental allowance comes in the form of "Basiselterngeld" (basic parental allowance) and "EtterngeldPlus" (parental allowance plus).

Basic parental allowance compensates for the loss of income after the birth of the child. In the case of low incomes, this percentage can be higher. The monthly parental allowance ranges from a minimum of 308 euro to a maximum of 1,800 euro. The minimum sum of 308 euro can be claimed even if the parent was not previously in employment. Starting with the birth of the child, parents can receive parental allowance for a maximum period of 14 months; it is paid in accordance with the months of the child’s life. Parents are able to split this period between them, deciding who spends more time at home. Either parent may claim for a maximum of two and a maximum of 12 months. The allowance is paid for an additional two months if both parents make use of the option (partner months) or if the applicant is a single parent and the family income will be completely or partially lost for at least two months.

Parental allowance plus is a flexible form of classic parental allowance. It is calculated in the same way as the basic allowance but can only reach a maximum of half the sum parents would be entitled to receive if they did not have a part-time income after birth. Parental allowance plus is paid for twice the period of time: one "parental allowance month" equals two "parental allowance plus months". The partnership bonus of four additional parental allowance plus months is paid if one parent works between 25 and 30 hours per week concurrently for four consecutive months.

Eligibility:

 Mothers and fathers are eligible for parental allowance if
  ■ They care for and educate their children themselves after birth,
  ■ They are unemployed for more than 30 hours per week,
  ■ They live together with their children in one household,
  ■ They are resident or have their habitual place of residence in Germany.

Under certain circumstances, parental allowance may also be paid in respect of employment abroad.

In Bonn: Contacts for Questions Relating to Child Benefit

The responsible Family Office for employees at the University of Bonn is the "Landesamt für Besoldung und Versorgung NRW" (NRW Salaries and Pensions Office, LBV). If you have a settlement permit or a residence permit, you are entitled to child benefit. The responsible Family Office for persons who do not draw their salary from LBV is the "Familienkasse Nordrhein-Westfalen Rheinland-Pfalz".

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Relating to Child Benefit

Parental Allowance

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  ■ They live together with their children in one household,
  ■ They are resident or have their habitual place of residence in Germany.
Employment Opportunities for Partners

Job Offers
You will find job offers in the weekend editions of newspapers, online, on notice boards or through the employment agencies belonging to the "Bundesagentur für Arbeit" (Federal Employment Agency).

EU / EEA / Swiss Nationals:
If you are a national of a Member State of the European Union, the European Economic Area or Switzerland you are usually eligible for parental allowance if you are employed in Germany or, if you are unemployed, but live in Germany.

Other Nationals:
Other foreign parents are eligible to receive parental allowance if they have a valid settlement permit or residence permit entitling them to pursue gainful employment.

Employment Law Regulations
If you are accompanying your husband or wife to Germany and intend to search for a job, please take note of the employment law regulations (see Chapter 5.4). Enquire at the German foreign mission or the local "Ausländeramt" (Immigration Office) whether as a marital partner you are eligible to engage in gainful employment and what documents may be required to do so.

Information and Advisory Points:
EURES – The European Job Mobility Portal:  
http://ec.europa.eu/eures
Bundesagentur für Arbeit (Federal Employment Agency)  
www.arbeitsagentur.de
Useful Online Job Portals:  
www.euraxess.eu  > Jobs & Funding > Search Jobs
www.zeit.de/jobs
www.academics.de
www.monster.de
www.kalaydo.de
www.stepstone.de

For public service positions:  
www.bund.de
www.stellenmarkt.nrw.de

In Bonn:  
Employment Agency Bonn  
Villemombler Straße 101  
53104 Bonn  
0 800 / 4555500  
Bonn@arbeitsagentur.de

10.4 Employment Opportunities for Partners

Application and Deadlines: 
Applications for "Elterngeld" (parental allowance) must be made in writing to the office responsible for parental allowance in the Federal States. Any parent may apply for parental allowance for him- or herself. The application does not necessarily have to be submitted immediately after birth. Retrospective payments are, however, only made for the previous three months prior to the month in which the application for parental allowance was received.

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EU / EEA / Swiss Nationals: 
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Information and Advisory Points:
EURES – The European Job Mobility Portal:  
http://ec.europa.eu/eures
Bundesagentur für Arbeit (Federal Employment Agency)  
www.arbeitsagentur.de
Useful Online Job Portals:  
www.euraxess.eu  > Jobs & Funding > Search Jobs
www.zeit.de/jobs
www.academics.de
www.monster.de
www.kalaydo.de
www.stepstone.de

For public service positions:  
www.bund.de
www.stellenmarkt.nrw.de

In Bonn:  
Employment Agency Bonn  
Villemombler Straße 101  
53104 Bonn  
0 800 / 4555500  
Bonn@arbeitsagentur.de

www.arbeitsagentur.de
11.1 Doctors and Health

If you need to consult a doctor in Germany, you can ask your colleagues or friends for a recommendation. You will find a list of all the doctors, listed according to field of specialization, in your local classified directory, “Gelbe Seiten” (Yellow Pages). It is often advisable to consult a general practitioner, known as a “Hausarzt”, who will transfer you to a specialist if necessary.

You should always ring the doctor’s surgery in advance to make an appointment. In case of accident or emergency you will be given an appointment immediately or on the same day. Otherwise you will probably have to wait a couple of days or even weeks for an appointment, particularly with dentists or specialists.

Opening hours at doctors’ surgeries vary considerably. At the weekends surgeries are usually shut but emergency and stand-by services are available at night and during the weekend.

Emergency Services

If you urgently need a doctor at night, during the weekend or on a public holiday, you will have to turn to the “ärztlicher Notdienst” or “ärztlicher Bereitschaftsdienst” (emergency services). You can find the telephone numbers in the column on the right or online. You can also ring a doctor: usually the answering machine will contain a message telling you which doctor is currently on stand-by duty.

Pharmacy Service

If you need medication at night or out of hours during the weekend you should enquire about the “Apotheken-Notdienst” (pharmacies that are open all night). You can discover which pharmacy is open all night on which specific day in the local daily newspaper or online. Furthermore, every pharmacy has a list on its door informing you which pharmacies are open through the night.

In Bonn: Bonn Health Portal:
www.bonn.de > English
> Environment & Health | Planning, Building & Living | Health

Emergency Services at night and Weekends:

Emergency Doctor – Call Center
116117 (nationwide)
Emergency Dental Services
018 05 / 986700
Children’s Emergency Room
Robert-Koch-Str. 1
(at St. Marien-Hospital)
0228 / 2425444
Poison Emergency Service
0228 / 19240
All-Night Pharmacies:
0800 / 0222833 (nationwide)
www.aknr.de/notdienst
> Notdienstsuche
> Postleitzahl eingeben
Costs of Medical Treatment

Statutory Health Insurance
If you are not a private patient your doctor will invoice your statutory health insurance provider directly. All you need to do is to present your health insurance card at the surgery. However, for some treatment and services, such as certain dental fillings, dentures, spectacles, contact lenses and particular medications, you have to pay an additional fee even if you are not a private patient.

Private Health Insurance
If you have a contract with a private health insurance provider you will usually have to pay the costs for treatment and medication yourself and then submit the invoices to the insurance provider for reimbursement. Take careful note of the conditions of your health insurance which stipulate whether the provider will reimburse your costs and at what level. Depending on your insurance premium, certain treatment may be excluded, or you may be required to pay part of the costs yourself.

11.2 Emergency Telephone Numbers

Important Emergency Telephone Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency/Ambulance</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poisoning</td>
<td>0228 / 19240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Advice Service</td>
<td>0 800 / 1110111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In case of emergency, please be prepared to answer the following questions:

- Who are you?
- Where has the emergency occurred (address, floor ...)?
- What has happened?
- How many people are involved?
- What are the injuries / what is the illness?
- Wait for further inquiries!
11.3 Banks and “Sparkassen”

If you are staying in Germany for an extended period, are receiving a regular salary or fellowship and have to pay rent, it is a good idea to open a current account at a bank at the earliest opportunity. You can open a current account at a bank or “Sparkasse” (savings bank). To do so, you will need to present your passport or identity card and confirmation from the “Einwohnermeldeamt” (Residents’ Registration Office) that you are registered. Some banks will also require you to present your residence permit from the “Ausländeramt” (local Immigration Office).

There are hardly any differences between the banks in respect of the services they offer, but there are differences in the charges you have to pay, so you should be sure to check in advance. You will be issued with a debit card called a “Euronachrück-Karte” (EC card) for your current account which will allow you to draw cash from a cashpoint (ATM). This service is free if you use cashpoints belonging to your own bank but incurs charges if the cashpoints are maintained by other banks. Most banks are open from Monday to Friday between 8.30 a.m. and 4 p.m., with some opening later on Thursdays.

Transferring money abroad can be expensive. You should inquire about the conditions at your own bank at home in advance and possibly choose a bank in Germany that cooperates with your bank at home.

Apart from cash, most shops, restaurants and firms accept debit and credit cards. Smaller sums, in cafés, for example, are usually paid in cash.

Insider Info: What is a “Sparkasse”?

“Sparkassen” or savings banks are public financial institutions. Their profits are not distributed to their shareholders but are designated to be used for the general good. One of the tasks of the “Sparkassen” is to promote medium-size enterprises by granting them credit just like private banks. “Sparkassen” offer the full portfolio of banking and other financial services.

11.4 Public Libraries

Most places in Germany have a “Stadtbibliothek” or “Stadtbücherei”, local or municipal library. These public libraries which are usually operated by the municipal or local authorities. They serve a general educational purpose, provide information and are a cultural facility for local residents. As a result, they cover a very broad spectrum of interest. Apart from specialist and non-fiction works, they usually have a comprehensive collection of light reading as well as books for children and young people. They often also stock literature in foreign languages. Most libraries lend films, CDs, DVDs and games as well as books and magazines. In order to use the library and borrow books and other media you will need a library card. You can register at the library by presenting your passport and proof that you are registered in the city. Registration itself is free of charge; libraries often charge a modest fee for borrowing books and other media.
Deutsche Bahn

“Deutsche Bahn” (German Rail) connects all the larger and many of the smaller cities locally, regionally and long distance. Deutsche Bahn has a lot of special offers and deals. With the “BahnCard 50” and the “BahnCard 25” you can save 50% or 25% on the standard price of any ticket for a whole year. Furthermore, there are special discounts for groups and advance bookings.

Buy your ticket before you get on the train. You can purchase tickets online, or there are ticket machines or ticket offices at the station. If you are in a hurry you can buy your ticket from the ticket collector on long-distance trains. But this is more expensive. Please note: on local, regional and “S-Bahn” trains you have to buy your ticket before you enter the train. Make sure you always have a valid ticket. There are ticket inspections on trains and buses, and travelling without a valid ticket (“Schwarzfahren” – fare dodging) might prove expensive.

If you are embarking on a longer journey, particularly at the weekend, you should reserve a seat. On some routes the trains get very full.

Local Transport System

There is plenty of local transport – buses, streetcars and subway – in Germany. Particularly in the larger cities, during the day it is often quicker and easier to travel by bus or streetcar than by car.

You can buy tickets at ticket machines on the platform or inside the streetcars and subway trains, in buses the driver often sells tickets, too. However, what is true for one city is not necessarily true for another; so you should enquire locally. “Mehrfahrtenkarten” (multi-trip tickets) are cheaper than individual tickets and can usually be purchased at ticket machines. If you are staying in one place for a longer period and intend using public transport regularly, it may well be worth buying a weekly or monthly season ticket. They are available at the local transport company’s ticket offices which are usually situated near the rail station.

University of Bonn JobTicket

Employees at the University of Bonn are eligible for a so-called JobTicket. The only prerequisite is that you have signed an employment contract with the university. You pay a reduced monthly rate for this ticket which entitles you to use the entire VRS regional public transport network as often and as long as you like, even in your spare time. The VRS region includes Cologne as well as Bonn and some of the smaller cities in the vicinity. On weekday evenings after 7 p.m., at weekends and on public holidays, the job ticket holder is allowed to take along one adult, three children between the ages of 6 and 14 and a bicycle all on the one ticket at no extra charge. Children under the age of 6 can always be taken along.

Information on the JobTicket:

www.welcome-center.uni-bonn.de

11.5 Mobility and Transport

Germany has a good public transport system. You can easily get almost everywhere you want to go by train or bus, streetcar or subway.

Many cities also have a sophisticated network of bicycle lanes – if you enjoy cycling it can be a useful alternative to public transport.

Deutsche Bahn

Journey Planner, Prices and Online Booking:

www.bahn.de/international

In Bonn: Buses, Streetcars and Subway

Bonn has an excellent local transport system comprising buses, streetcars and subway. You can get information on timetables and prices from the local transport company “Verkehrsverbund Rhein-Sieg (VRS)” and its Bonn partner “Stadtwerke Bonn (SWB)”. You will find a service center near Bonn main station.

SWB-ServiceCenter

Müllerstraße 18 (Cassius Bastien)

53111 Bonn

www.en.swb-busundbahn.de

Mon.–Fri.: 6:30 a.m.–7:00 p.m.
Sat.: 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

11 Everyday Life and Useful Information

University of Bonn JobTicket
Taxis in Germany are relatively expensive and many people only use them in special situations – at night, for example, or when they have a lot of luggage. Prices are regulated. You are charged a basic price plus a charge per kilometer. All taxis have a taxi meter which runs during the entire journey and registers the price at the end. It is usual to give the taxi driver a tip by rounding up the amount.

Carpooling is one alternative to public transport, especially for long journeys. Drivers who are going on long journeys often register their journeys at car sharing agencies and offer to take passengers. These offers are sorted according to destination and date, and you can find out about them online or by telephone. You pay a fixed sum based on distance to the driver directly. Please note that you use car sharing agencies at your own risk. The agencies themselves cannot usually guarantee the quality or reliability of the arrangement or accept liability.

Air Travel

Some airlines offer special rates on certain routes. You may well be able to fly to other European countries very reasonably, and even within Germany air travel may be cheaper than rail travel. However, on domestic routes you may not save time if you add the time spent getting to the airport and waiting for the flight. Most large cities have good connections to the nearest airports by public transport.

Would you like to drive your own vehicle in Germany?

You will find information on the Welcome Center website:

www.welcome-center.uni-bonn.de
Service and Advice > Mobility and Transport

Comparing Telephone and Internet Charges

Using the following links you can compare the current charges levied by the various providers. As the charges change constantly it is worth taking a look every so often.

www.billigertelefonieren.de
www.biliger-surfen.de

Radio and Television Licensing Fees

Just as in other European countries, the state charges a fee (“Rundfunkbeitrag”) for the use of radios and televisions which finance the public broadcasting stations. This licensing fee is charged per unit of accommodation, irrespective of how many people live there and how many devices (radio, television, computer) are in use. When you move to Germany or within Germany, you can register your apartment online on the website of the "Rundfunkbeitrag".

Telephone and Internet

The telephone service in Germany is operated by various providers. Most firms offer various options and services, for example different telephone, mobile and broadband packages. It is worth comparing. You can register or cancel a landline in the outlets of the various providers which can be found in nearly every city.

There are also a number of mobile providers offering different options and services. Most firms have outlets in the majority of large cities, as well. Apart from concluding a binding contract (please take note of the length of the contract), you can opt for a prepaid tariff. You are then not bound by a fixed term and can reload your cell when you need to.

You may want to check out the offers at discount supermarkets which now also offer cheap tariffs.
11.7 Religion

There is no state church in Germany. The state and the churches or religious communities are not allowed to enter into institutional association; they are, however, allowed to cooperate provided that the principles of neutrality and non-discrimination are upheld. This means that churches are expected to make statements on social issues and be involved in bodies and commissions like ethics councils. The state and the churches have also come to agreements on religious instruction in state schools and the collection of church tax by state financial authorities (see Chapter 9.5). As a result, there is not a strict division of church and state in the secular sense in Germany.

Today, some 30 percent of the population in Germany are Roman Catholics, another 30 percent are Protestants. Roughly 5 percent of the population are Muslims, just under 2 percent belong to other religious communities and roughly 34 percent are not affiliated to any religious group. Altogether, there are more than 160 different religious communities in Germany which contribute to the religious diversity of the country.

Article 4 of the German “Grundgesetz” (Basic Law) guarantees the freedom of belief, everyone is free to choose and practice his or her own religion. Equally, every person has the freedom not to choose or practice a religion, to leave a religious community or to join another religious community.

11.8 Public Holidays

The Following Public Holidays Are Observed in the Whole of Germany:

- New Year’s Day ........................................................................................................................................... January 1
- Good Friday ...........................................................................................................................................................
- Easter Sunday / Monday ........................................................................................................................................
- International Labor Day ..................................................................................................................................... May 1
- Ascension Day ......................................................................................................................................................
- Pentecost Sunday / Monday .................................................................................................................................
- German Unification Day ..................................................................................................................................... October 3
- Christmas Eve ....................................................................................................................................................... December 24 (afternoon)
- Christmas ............................................................................................................................................................. December 25 and 26
- New Year’s Eve ..................................................................................................................................................... December 31 (afternoon)

The Following Public Holidays Are Only Observed in Certain Federal States:

- Epiphany .............................................................................................................................................................. January 6
- Corpus Christi ...................................................................................................................................................... 2nd Thursday after Pentecost (June)
- Assumption Day ..................................................................................................................................................... August 15
- Reformation Day .................................................................................................................................................. October 31
- All Hallows’ Day .................................................................................................................................................... October 31
- Repeption Day ...................................................................................................................................................... 3rd Wednesday in November

Carnival

In the Rhineland, February or March are known as the “fifth season”. This is when “Karneval” is celebrated. In the stronghold of carnival most employers give their staff a couple of extra days’ holiday. “Weiberfastnacht” (Women’s Carnival Day) warrants an afternoon and “Rosenmontag” (Carnival Monday) an entire day.
Addressing People: “Du” and “Sie”
The polite form “Sie” plus surname is the way you address people you do not know in Germany – officially all those over the age of 15. Many Germans who work together in offices every day still use this form. In order to move on to the more personal “Du” you usually wait for a suitable occasion. The “Du” is “offered” by one person to another. Traditionally, the older or more senior person makes the offer. However, younger people (up to about the age of 30) are less formal. They often use the “Du” plus first name from the very first meeting.

If you are unsure, we recommend you to wait until the person you are talking to has addressed you and react accordingly.

Cinema
In Germany, foreign movies and television series are often dubbed. If there is no reference to the language in the program you can assume that the movie will be in German. However, quite a few of the smaller independent cinemas show movies in the original language (OV) or in the original language with subtitles (DmU).

Electricity
German electrical power points use 220 V and 50 Hz alternating current. Euronorm plugs fit all power points. Depending on where you come from you may have to use an adapter or transformer.

No Smoking
In Germany, smoking is generally prohibited in all official buildings and other public buildings, in restaurants, as well as in cultural, leisure and sports facilities. An exception is made for separate areas in restaurants which are specifically designated.

Purchase Tax
Purchase tax, often referred to as value added tax ("Mehrwertsteuer"), has to be paid to the financial authorities on the sale of goods or services. In Germany, the rate is 19 percent; the reduced rate 7 percent. The reduced rate is valid for groceries, magazines and books as well as for artistic services. Value added tax is included in all stated prices and invoices.

Separating Waste/Recycling
Environmental consciousness in Germany is comparatively acute. One of the ways it expresses itself is in the separation and recycling of waste. In most cities you have individual, color-coded garbage bins or containers for paper (blue), plastics/composites (yellow) and compost/garden waste (green or brown). In addition, there are also public containers for glass, batteries and electrical waste. Many drinks bottles are refundable: if you take the bottles back to the supermarket you will be given a refund. Non-refundable bottles, like wine bottles, belong in the glass container.

Shopping
Generally, shops are open in Germany from Monday to Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Supermarkets and large shopping malls sometimes have longer opening hours. Smaller shops, on the other hand, often shut during the week between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. and around lunchtime on Saturdays. All shops are shut on Sundays and public holidays. Bakeries are an exception. They often open in the mornings on these days. At gas stations and kiosks, you can usually find a modest selection of groceries and other articles during the night and the entire weekend.

Tipping
It is usual to leave a tip in restaurants and cafés. Hairdressers and taxi drivers as well as others who provide a service usually receive a tip, too, in recognition of good service. The standard sum is about 10 percent; usually you round up the sum owed. If you pay in cash and do not have the right amount plus tip it is quite normal to ask the waiter or taxi driver to round the sum up to the amount you wish to pay. You can either state the amount or say how much change you want back. When you go out to restaurants or cafés with friends or acquaintances it is quite usual to ask for separate bills in Germany.

Weather
The weather is often changeable. You have to be prepared for cold spells and rain even in summer. We therefore recommend you to bring at least a few warm clothes with you from home.

For additional information on life and culture in Germany, including links, visit the EURAXESS Germany website: www.euraxess.de

11.9 Good to Know – A to Z of Useful Information

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12.1 Checklist

Please bear in mind that you will have to deal with some organizational matters before you leave the country. It is usually advisable to start planning your move about three months in advance. The following timetable will help you to save time and nervous energy.

Three Months to Go:

■ Cancel your tenancy agreement in good time.
■ Cancel your contracts with local utilities providers (electricity, gas, water).
■ Cancel your telephone, broadband and mobile contracts, if applicable.
■ Discuss with your landlord whether you have to do any decorating before leaving your accommodation.
■ It may be advisable to consult a tax accountant about completing your tax declaration.
■ If you have been drawing a salary from the university and have paid social security contributions, arrange an appointment with an adviser at the "Deutsche Rentenversicherung" (German Statutory Pension Insurance Scheme) to discuss your pension entitlements (see Insider Info).
■ Check with the HR department/your fellowship provider well in advance whether you will receive your final salary/fellowship payment before you leave the country. The move and the final payment often cross.
■ Cancel your public transport season ticket (e.g. VRS-JobTicket).
■ Cancel any subscriptions to newspapers or journals.
■ Cancel your membership in any societies, associations, clubs etc.

If you are moving to another European country we recommend you to contact one of the EURAXESS Service Centers located there – they will be able to help you organize your research stay in your new target country.

Before You Leave Germany …

Before You Leave Germany …

EURAXESS Service Centers
www.euraxess.eu/euraxess
Information & Assistance
> Find Personalized Assistance

Insider Info: Deutsche Rentenversicherung
Service-Zentrum Bonn
Rabinstraße 6
53111 Bonn
0228 / 280801
service-zentrum.bonn@drv-rheinland.de
www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de > Services > Online Dienste > Beratungstermin buchen
One Month to Go:

- Cancel your registration at the “Einwohnermeldeamt” (Residents’ Registration Office). Don’t forget the de-registration form, the landlord’s confirmation and your identity documents.
- If you have children, inform the school or kindergarten that you are leaving.
- Inform your insurance companies that you are leaving.
- If you want to sell your car in Germany or take it to your own country, you must inform the “Kraftfahrzeugzulassungsstelle” (vehicle licensing authority) and the company providing your third-party liability insurance. Please take note of the formalities necessary to export a vehicle purchased in Germany (export declaration).
- Arrange for the rent deposit to be reimbursed including the interest and any compound interest accrued during the rental period.
- If required, activate a forwarding service with the post office so that your post can be forwarded to your new address.

Moving Day:

- Note down the meter readings for electricity, gas and water in the handover report and get your landlord to sign it.
- Check your accommodation and the staircase for damage.
- Depending on what you have arranged with your landlord, clean your accommodation.
- Hand over the accommodation empty and return the keys to the landlord or the property management.

Before You Leave Germany …

- Take borrowed books and journals back to the university library or departmental libraries.
- If you want to send luggage home by freight service, arrange an appointment with the freight carrier to pick up the parcels.
- As you will probably need to use your bank account right up to the last minute, we recommend you not to cancel it until shortly before the move.

Auf Wiedersehen

in Deutschland!

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Alumni Network of the University of Bonn
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As of: March 2017. All the information contained in this Guide has been carefully researched and checked, and every effort has been made to avoid errors. Factual or printing errors may however occur.

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Guide for International Researchers

Whether you are an international scientist or scholar, visiting researcher or university teacher taking up a new position at the University of Bonn, this Guide is designed to help you find your feet. No matter how long you are intending to stay or whether you will be receiving a salary or a fellowship, the Guide will ensure that you get off to a good start in Bonn.

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