



Welcome to Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf

Guide for international researchers

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Guide for international researchers



Dear International Scientists,

Welcome to Heinrich Heine University!

We are delighted that you have decided to come to our university for research. I promise that we will do everything to make your professional stay as pleasant as possible and support you in any which way we can.

Coming to HHU was a smart choice. Heinrich Heine University is a young and dynamic institution of higher education and research and is located in the capital of North Rhine-Westphalia. With its 35,000 students, it is the largest higher education establishment in the Düsseldorf area.

HHU has an outstanding reputation for excellent research. Researchers from all over the world enjoy optimal working conditions, thereby contributing greatly to the success of our key research areas of life sciences, natural sciences, humanities, and law and economics.

Heinrich Heine University is located in the economically vibrant and truly European yet international city of Düsseldorf. You will soon find out that Düsseldorf has much to offer in terms of culture, sports, and leisure-time activities. And you will certainly encounter the characteristic spirit of the Rhineland with its openness, tolerance, and vitality.

I wish you great success with your research project and a wonderful stay here at HHU. I am sure that it won't be long before you are feeling right at home here in Düsseldorf.

Prof. Dr. Stefan Marschall
Vice President for International Relations and Science Communications



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Welcome Center for international researchers



Photo: Ivo Mayr

Finding yourself in a new country can be difficult. The Junior Scientist and International Researcher Center (JUNO) would like to help you in planning your research stay and getting a smooth start at Heinrich Heine University.

JUNO is the central contact point for all international researchers – and their accompanying families – to get support and advice regarding their stay at HHU. The Tutor Service offered by JUNO will support you in all administrative issues regarding your research stay at HHU, e.g. helping with visa issues, finding accommodation, applying for a residence permit.

The Tutor Service includes:

- individual advice by a tutor concerning all administrative questions before and after your arrival
- assistance in finding accommodation
- assistance in the enrolment process at the university (for doctoral researchers)
- assistance in paper work for the employment contract at the university
- assistance in making appointments with the authorities
- a tutor accompanying you to the various German authorities after your arrival (e.g. Residents' Registration Office, Immigration Office, opening a German bank account)

JUNO is also part of Heine Research Academies, a joint academic institution formed by the graduate academies of the faculties (iGRAD, medRSD and philGRAD) and JUNO. Heine Research Academies are supporting your research work by a complementary programme of transferable skills and workshops. Heine Research Academies wants to advance your career and training as an early career researcher. The educational programme offered by Heine Research Academies is open to doctoral students, postdocs and junior research group leaders as well as supervisors of graduate students at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf. ([Chapter 7](#))



 JUNO is part of

Heine
Research
Academies

Online registration for
Tutor Service

www.juno.hhu.de/en/welcome-center



Please contact us

in good time before your arrival and we would be happy to assist you and your family.

Email: juno-international@hhu.de

Checklist for planning your research stay at HHU

Before arrival:

- Discuss the time of your research stay with your host institute well in advance
- Check visa requirements & (if applicable) apply for a visa ([Chapter 3.1](#))
- Arrange accommodation in Düsseldorf well in advance ([Chapter 4.1](#))
- Arrange health insurance coverage ([Chapter 4.2](#))
- Put together the most important documents ([Chapter 2.2](#))
- Start admission & enrolment process at university – doctoral researchers ([Chapter 6](#))
- Check & sign up for German language courses – if applicable ([Chapter 8](#))
- Make use of our “Good to know – Germany” online seminars ([Chapter 8](#))

After arrival:

- Visit your host institute
- Enrol at university – doctoral researchers ([Chapter 6](#))
- Register at the local Residents’ Registration Office ([Chapter 3.2](#))
- Extend your visa / residence title at the Immigration Office ([Chapter 3.3](#))
- Open a German bank account ([Chapter 4.3](#))
- Inform yourself about the qualification programme offered by Heine Research Academies (Chapter 7)

planning
planning
planning

Please find an updated checklist at www.juno.hhu.de/en/checklist



Photo: Ivo Mayr

Important documents

You and your family members will need the following valid documents when entering Germany and starting to work at Heinrich Heine University. These documents are necessary for your residence permit application at the immigration office, your registration at the Residents' Registration Office, signing your employment contract or your enrolment at the university. It is important to have original documents and certified translations into English or German.

- Passport
- Visa ([Chapter 3.1](#))
- Letter of invitation from the university and/or scholarship award letter
- Birth certificate
- Marriage certificate (if applicable)
- Proof of health insurance ([Chapter 4.2](#))
- Curriculum vitae
- Certificates of school education
- Certificates and transcripts of your university degrees (including content of study; focus areas, individual marks obtained during studies)
- Certificates of employment since master's degree
- Driver's license
- Biometric passport photos
- For doctoral researchers: Language certificates depending on field of doctoral studies German or English ([Chapter 6](#))

documents
documents
documents

Photo: Nomad_Soul / Shutterstock.com





VISA AND RESIDENCY

Visas to enter Germany

Entry without a visa

Citizens of EU member states as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland are allowed to enter and stay in Germany without a visa. They only require a valid passport.

Citizens of Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and USA may also enter Germany without a visa for a period of 90 days. For longer stays, they must apply for a residence permit at the Immigration Office after entering the country.

In case you will be taking up paid employment at HHU it is advisory to apply for a visa with working allowance before leaving your home country. Otherwise you would need to apply for a residence permit with working allowance at the Immigration Office in Germany before you can sign your contract at HHU. There may be waiting times for appointments at the Immigration Office, so this can be very time consuming.

AUSTRALIA
CANADA
ISRAEL
JAPAN
NEW ZEALAND
SOUTH KOREA
USA

EU member states
Iceland
Liechtenstein
Norway
Switzerland

Entry with a visa

Citizens of all other countries require a visa to enter Germany. You will need to apply for a visa at the German Embassy in your home country or place of residence in advance. For a short-term stay (up to 3 months) you need to apply for a Schengen Visa (C-Visa). When applying for the Schengen Visa please state “scientific work” or “research” as the purpose of your stay. Holding a Schengen Visa allows you to travel freely within the Schengen states, but you will have to leave the Schengen-States at the end of the three-month period. This visa cannot be extended.

For a long-term research stay (over 3 months) you will need to apply for National Visa (D-Visa). It is not sufficient to apply for a Schengen Visa, since changing the visa status after entering Germany is not possible.

In general, to apply for a visa you require an invitation from your supervisor or the university as well as proof of your financial resources during your stay. Please enquire in good time at the German Embassy in your home country about the relevant requirements and regulations.

You can find a general overview about visa requirements/waivers when entering Germany as well as the regulations concerning residence permits on the German Foreign Office's website.



German foreign office

www.auswaertiges-amt.de

Visa requirements for different countries

www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/einreiseundaufenthalt/-/231148

Registration at the Residents' Registration Office

In Germany everyone is obliged to register in the city as soon as moving into an apartment or house. For information about how to find accommodation, please see [Chapter 4.1](#). You have to register yourself and your family members at the Residents' Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeamt) responsible for the area you live. For this registration you will need your passport and a confirmation form

APPROVED

*you need your passport
and a confirmation form
of your rental agreement*

of your rental agreement signed by your landlord. You will receive a certificate of registration (Meldebescheinigung), which you will need to extend your visa, receiving your residents permit or to open a bank account. After registration you will automatically receive your German tax ID number by regular mail within 8-10 days. Please make sure your name is clearly marked on your mail box, otherwise the letter with your tax ID will not be delivered. If you are employed at the university, please submit your tax ID as soon as possible to the HR department in order to put you in the correct tax class.

Please contact us

We would be pleased to arrange for a tutor to accompany you to the Residents' Registration Office in Düsseldorf.

Email: juno-international@hhu.de

Residents' Registration Offices Düsseldorf

www.duesseldorf.de/einwohnerangelegenheiten.html

Appointments at the Residents' Registration Office can be arranged online:

www.duesseldorf.de/einwohnerangelegenheiten/terminvereinbarung-in-den-duesseldorfer-buergerbueros/online-terminvereinbarung.html

Confirmation form of rental agreement:

<https://formulare.duesseldorf.de/servlet/de.formolutions.FillServlet?sid=NDXZrng-PPjt96pNH7Tjfjz3c3Z91rgD&n=z.pdf>



Extending your visa and applying for residence and working permits

Citizens of EU or EWR Member States do not require a visa to enter Germany and do not require a residence or work permit. They are only obliged to register their place of residence at the Residents' Registration Office. Within the first three months after entering Germany you have the right of unrestricted residence. After this you need to meet the criteria of Freedom of Movement (Freizügigkeitsvoraussetzung).

Freedom of Movement applies to:

- Individuals in employment (employed or self-employed)
- Individuals not in employment (e.g. doctoral researchers)
- Family members (also from non-EU/-EWR states)
- Long-term residents (more than 5 years of residence)

If the requirements for Freedom of Movement are fulfilled, the right of residence exists by law. There is no specific certificate from the Immigration Office needed. Further information on the criteria of Freedom of Movement can be found at the website of the Immigration Office.

freedom
right of movement
of residence

Please contact us

We would be pleased to arrange for a tutor, to accompany you to the Immigration Office in Düsseldorf.

Email: juno-international@hhu.de

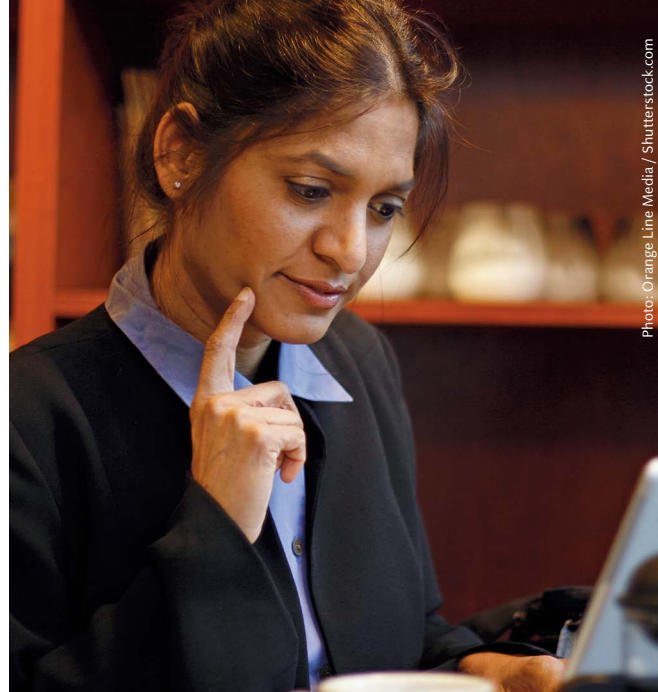


Photo: Orange Line Media / Shutterstock.com

Residents' Registration Office Düsseldorf

www.duesseldorf.de/einwohnerangelegenheiten.html

Freedom of Movement for citizens of EU/EWR member states

www.duesseldorf.de/auslaenderamt/eu-service.html

Immigration Office Düsseldorf

www.duesseldorf.de/auslaenderamt.html

Citizens of all other countries must apply for a residence permit at the Immigration Office, even if they have entered Germany without a visa. Doctoral researchers who are financing their stay either themselves or through a scholarship must apply for a residence permit for study purposes. If you enter into an employment contract with the university, you require a residence permit coupled with a work permit. The following types of residence titles are normally available for international researchers:

- §16 for higher education studies – for doctoral researchers with a scholarship, working allowance is limited
- §18b EU Blue Card - for researchers with a yearly gross income above a certain level (€55.200 in 2020).

To find the current income threshold please check: www.bamf.de/bluecard
The EU Blue Card is especially beneficial, if you are planning to apply for permanent settlement in Germany.

- §18d for research – for international researchers with an employment contract or a scholarship. In order to apply for a §18d residence title the university needs to sign a hosting agreement. Please contact us for further information.

Accommodation

The city of Düsseldorf and its suburbs offer many nice places to live, but the housing situation is tight. When preparing for your stay in Düsseldorf, make sure to look for appropriate accommodation as soon as possible, ideally before leaving your home town or country. When coming from abroad it might be easier to look for short-term accommodation first (3 months). There are various platforms for hostels, furnished and unfurnished apartments as well as offers for shared apartments. In shared apartments, you usually have your own room but the kitchen and bathroom are used jointly. In general you should expect

to spend € 400 - € 600 for a 1 bedroom apartment.

University housing

In order to simplify your search for a permanent apartment, it might be possible to get an apartment at university housing for 3 months. Unfortunately, the university housing situation is very tight and so there are no guarantees.

The cost of living in Düsseldorf of course depends on your needs and your lifestyle. In general, you should expect costs between € 750 and € 900 per month and person.

furnished apartments
shared apartments
Düsseldorf
University housing



Average monthly costs per person in Düsseldorf:

Rent (including utilities)	400 - 600 €
Food	100 - 150 €
Public transportation (free for enrolled students)	40 - 100 €
Phone / Internet / Broadcasting fees	45 €

Please contact us

well before your arrival and we will be happy to assist you with finding accommodation

Email: juno-international@hhu.de

TIP

Useful link for your apartment search:

- search engines for accommodation
 - information on the different residential districts in Düsseldorf
 - a glossary for common German phrases in apartment advertisements
- www.juno.hhu.de/en/accommodation

Health insurance

In Germany health insurance is compulsory, i.e. all international researchers with their place of residence in Germany must have health insurance coverage. Proof of health insurance coverage is required, for example, for enrolment at the university or when applying for or extending your residence permit.

Health insurance for international researchers with an employment contract

If, during your research activities, you have an employment contract at HHU, you must take out health insurance coverage with a statutory health insurer of your choice. If you do not take out health insurance yourself, HHU will register you with the *AOK* (local statutory health insurer). You can change insurers within 3 months of the start of your employment contract. *AOK* and *Techniker Krankenkasse* are statutory health insurance organizations which each have a branch office on our campus. Your statutory health insurance premium is deducted directly from your gross salary. Bills for medical treatment and medication are paid directly by the insurer, i.e. you do not need to pay for them in advance.



Health insurance for international researchers who are self-financed or receive a scholarship

Health insurance is still compulsory if you are financing your stay yourself or are in receipt of a scholarship. This also applies for shorter stays such as exchange semesters and internships.

For citizens of EU member states as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Macedonia, Norway and Switzerland, insurance coverage in their home country is generally also valid in Germany. In order for your health insurance to be recognized, please bring the *European Health Insurance Card* with you – this can be obtained free of charge from your health insurer in your home country.

All other citizens must take out private health insurance. The premium for private health insurance depends on the age and medical condition of the policy holder. In contrast to statutory health insurance, with private health insurance you pay the invoices for medical treatment and medication yourself first and are then later reimbursed by your insurer. Please note that there can be considerable differences in private health

AOK on campus

www.juno.hhu.de/en/aok

Techniker Krankenkasse on campus

www.tk.de/service/app/2025530/filiale/sprechtag.app

Further Information on Health insurance

www.euraxess.de/germany/information-assistance/social-security

insurers' tariffs. Before taking out coverage, you should therefore examine in detail what is covered by which tariff. In addition, there are special rates for doctoral researchers or young researchers from abroad.

Private and European health insurances must be recognized by a branch of a German statutory health insurer. The branch office of the *AOK* (a statutory health insurer) is located on campus right next to the canteen (Mensa). This office will issue a corresponding certificate for you; such a certificate is also needed to enrol at the university.

Opening a bank account

When travelling to Germany make sure to bring enough money for the first period of time as you will have to pay for registration processes, accommodation, transportation and so forth. Information on the cost of living can be found in [\(Chapter 4.1\)](#).

In case you are staying in Germany for an extended period of time it is advisory to open a 'chequing account' at a German bank. Your monthly scholarship payment or salary will normally be transferred directly to this account. You will be issued a debit card with which you can withdraw money from your

account at ATM machines or pay cashless in most of the stores in Germany. Additionally you can arrange for standing orders for regular payments such as your rent, telephone etc. In order to open a bank account you will need the certificate of registration from the Residents' Registration Office [\(Chapter 3.2\)](#) and your passport. Some banks will also require your residence permit. As many institutions do not charge PhD students any banking fees, do not forget to bring your student ID card if you are enrolled at HHU.

Transferring money from abroad can be expensive, so you should enquire about the conditions at your bank at home in advance.



Public transport

Rail

The most important service provider for long-distance travel in Germany is the German railway company “Deutsche Bahn”. Booking early is recommended in order to save money. For frequent travellers, a “BahnCard 25” or “BahnCard 50” (discount rail card) is a worthwhile investment, since you save 25% or 50% on all rail travel. There are other offers as well, such as the “Weekend Ticket” (Schönes-Wochenende-Ticket), with which up to five people can travel throughout Germany at the weekend (except on express services such as the Eurocity (EC), Intercity (IC), Intercity Express (ICE), Eurostar and Thalys).

Air

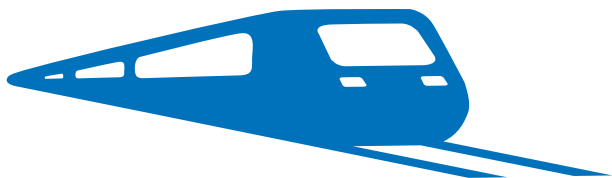
In Düsseldorf you are well connected with the whole world thanks to the Düsseldorf airport as well as by neighbouring airports like the Cologne/Bonn and Weeze airports. Some airlines offer budget tickets on many routes within Germany and Europe. As the number of cheap seats is limited, you should book well in advance. Extra charges often apply for luggage, meals and beverages and other services. Make sure your passport is valid.

Coach

It is possible to travel by coach to a great number of destinations throughout Germany and Europe at reasonable prices.

Car sharing

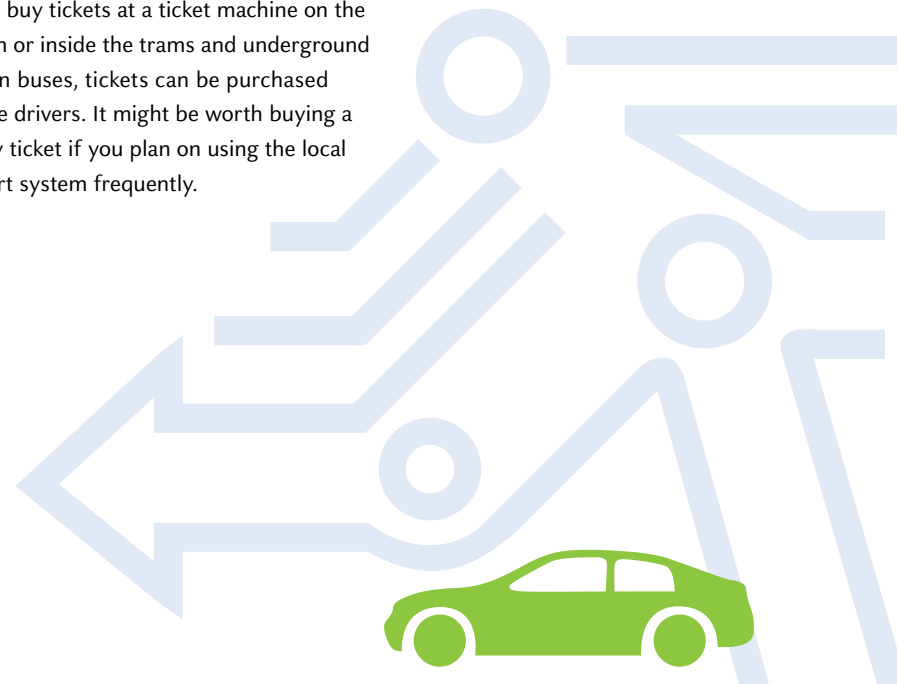
Anyone looking for a cheap alternative to bus, train or plane can use car sharing as an option (Mitfahrgelegenheit). Drivers who have room in their cars offer these spaces to other travellers who share the fuel costs. Car sharing opportunities to travel from Düsseldorf to other German cities are always available on short notice. It is worthwhile checking the Internet for more information on car sharing.



Local transport system

Düsseldorf has an excellent local transport system – buses, trams and underground – to travel in and around Düsseldorf or to neighbouring cities. During the day it is often quicker and easier to travel by public transport than by car.

You can buy tickets at a ticket machine on the platform or inside the trams and underground trains; in buses, tickets can be purchased from the drivers. It might be worth buying a monthly ticket if you plan on using the local transport system frequently.



Deutsche Bahn

www.bahn.de

Airport Düsseldorf

www.dus.com

Airport Cologne/Bonn

www.koeln-bonn-airport.de

Airport Weeze

www.airport-weeze.de

Local transport Düsseldorf

www.vrr.de

TIP

- Doctoral students can use their student ID card for free use of local transport and slower trains in the entire NRW region.
- HHU employees are eligible for a discount on monthly tickets for local transport in Düsseldorf.

www.juno.hhu.de/en/public-transport

Good to know (A - Z)

Doctors and medication

Doctors' offices have different opening times and are generally closed on Wednesday afternoons. Appointments are usually made by telephone - if you simply show up during opening hours you might have to wait quite a long time. You may want to ask your colleagues or acquaintances to recommend a specific doctor or you can find a list of all doctors in your area in the yellow pages (Gelbe Seiten).

Should you have a non-life-threatening emergency outside opening hours, you can contact a doctor on emergency duty. Available doctors and times can be found out for example on the Internet, in daily newspapers and at the pharmacists on emergency duty. Prescription medication can only be obtained by presenting a prescription from a doctor at the pharmacy. Health insurance generally pays for such medication but you will usually have to pay an additional pharmacy charge of between three and ten euro yourself. Pharmacies are usually open from Monday to Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. and on Saturday mornings. Some pharmacies are closed over lunchtime. Outside of these opening hours, there are pharmacies which stay open in case of emergencies.

Equality

In Germany, the dignity of all people is protected by the constitution. Men and women are equal and have the same rights and duties. This means that representatives of both genders must be treated with the same respect both in private and in public. Germany is home to people from many different countries with different religious and cultural backgrounds. It is important that everyone shows consideration and tolerance towards each other.

Festivities and public holidays in Germany

The end of the year (31st of December, Silvester) and the beginning of the New Year (1st of January, Neujahr) are often celebrated with family or friends. At midnight people traditionally welcome in the New Year with Champagne and fireworks. At Christmas (25th and 26th of December), Christians in Germany celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Non-religious or less religious people also generally spend time at Christmas with family and friends. Traditionally, on Christmas Eve (24th of December, Heiligabend) everyone gathers around the Christmas tree and exchanges presents. Four weeks beforehand, during Advent, Christmas markets are set up in the cities and homes are decorated. In springtime, carnival is celebrated in Düsseldorf. During carnival - Women's Carnival Thursday (Altweiberdonnerstag), Carnation Saturday (Nelkensamstag), Rose Monday

(Rosenmontag) and Violet Tuesday (Veilchendienstag), people dress up in costumes and party on the streets and in the pubs. Decorated wagons drive through the city on parade (Karnevalsumzug).

At Easter, Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Easter is also a family feast which is a lot of fun for children in particular. Traditionally, children hunt for Easter eggs which have been hidden for them.

Doctors and medication

www.gelbeseiten.de
www.rp-online.de/app/notdienste
www.dasoertliche.de/notapotheken

Public holidays and school holidays dates:

www.schulferien.org/Feiertage/feiertage



Public Holidays in the German federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW):

New Years' Day (Neujahr)	1 st of January
Good Friday (Karfreitag)	Friday before Easter
Easter Monday (Ostermontag)	End of March / Beginning of April
Labour Day (Tag der Arbeit)	1 st of May
Ascension Day (Christi Himmelfahrt)	10 days before Whitsuntide
Whit Monday (Pfingstmontag)	in June
Corpus Christi (Fronleichnam)	2 nd Thursday after Whitsuntide
German Unification Day (Tag der deutschen Einheit)	3 rd of October
All Saints Day (Allerheiligen)	1 st of November
Christmas and Boxing Day (Weihnachten)	25 th and 26 th of December

TIP Heinrich Heine University gives its staff an **extra holiday at Rose Monday** (Rosenmontag)

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Deutsche Post
www.deutschepost.de

Postal charges
www.portokalkulator.de

DHL
www.dhl.de/packstation

Opening hours

Most shops are generally open from Monday to Friday between 10.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m. Some supermarkets are open longer, for example between 7.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. Smaller shops on the other hand often close during the week between 6.00 and 7.00 p.m. and around lunchtime on Saturday. There are however some kiosks, small food stores and shops in main railway stations which are also open on Sundays and public holidays. Many bakeries sell fresh rolls on Sunday mornings. At night and at the week-ends, a selection of food, newspapers and other articles is available at petrol stations.

Post office

You can send both small and large letters and parcels within Germany and abroad with the Deutsche Post and DHL. You can recognize the post office by its yellow sign

with a black horn. Letters which already have a stamp can also be posted in the yellow post boxes. There are different postal charges for domestic and international mail. Please enquire about postal charges in the post office or on the Internet. Packets and parcels can also be sent and collected via automated booths (DHL-Packstationen). Prior registration is necessary. There is a post box and a Packstation on campus, right next to the bridge by the canteen (Mensa). There are other providers for sending packets and parcels, e.g. Deutscher Paketdienst (DPD), United Parcel Service (UPS) and Hermes. It is worth comparing postal charges on the Internet, particularly for international shipments.

Punctuality

In Germany, it is often regarded as impolite to arrive late for an appointment or meeting, i.e. failing to be there at exactly the agreed or

appointed time. It is also expected that you keep to office hours or consultation times. If you can see in advance of your meeting or appointment that you are going to be late, you should always phone to let them know.

Recycling and deposit

In Germany, waste is sorted according to types of materials. There are bins for separating different types of waste. The following types of waste must be sorted: Paper (blue bin), packaging (with the “Green Dot” symbol; this is collected in yellow sacks or yellow bins) and other waste (grey or black bin). In addition, there are collection points throughout the city for glass. You can dispose of dead batteries in special containers in supermarkets. In Germany, a deposit of between 8 and 25 cents is charged for most beverages sold in bottles and cans. When purchasing beverages in returnable bottles you therefore also pay a

small additional charge which is reimbursed when you return the empty cans and bottles to the shop.

“Sie” and “Du”

Strangers and older persons as well as persons in official positions (e.g. in administrative and other offices, clinics and shops) are addressed in Germany using the polite form of “Sie” and their surname. The offer to change the form of address from “Sie” to “Du” must come from the older person or the person “of higher rank” in the given situation. The “Du” form is used in the case of children and young people. Younger people and students generally always use the informal “Du” from the first meeting onwards.





Smoking ban

Smoking is forbidden in all public buildings, railway stations, airports, pubs and restaurants and on public transport. Smoking outside is generally permitted, for example outside pubs or in street cafés. Smoking is strictly prohibited in all buildings at HHU.

Telephone and internet

You can obtain a cell phone number either by signing a contract with a mobile phone provider or by purchasing a pre-paid card. A contract with a mobile phone provider usually lasts 24 months. It is possible to pay off a new cell phone together with the monthly standard charge. A prepaid card means more freedom and flexibility but the connection rates are usually higher compared to the contract option. Doctoral researchers should enquire about special offers for students. In order to have a landline at home, you need to sign a

contract with a telephone company. You can compare the prices and services of various providers on the Internet by entering search terms such as “Handytarife” or “Telefontarife vergleichen”. Before you sign a contract please enquire whether it accepts the use of call-by-call prefixes with which you can make international calls at particularly cheap rates. You can check on the Internet which provider of call-by-call prefixes is currently the cheapest. If you do not have a landline, you can use public telephone booths or telephone cafés. In telephone cafés you can phone abroad at relatively cheap rates or alternatively purchase special telephone cards. You can access the Internet either through a telephone line or the cable network. Please look up providers on the Internet for the area where you live and compare their conditions. The contract usually lasts 24 months. The period of notice is often three months to the

end of the contract period. By purchasing a mobile Internet stick you are not bound by any contract and can go online anywhere; however the rates are considerably more expensive than with a landline or cable network connection.

TV and radio licence

All households in Germany are obliged to pay a TV and radio licence fee for radio, television and Internet services made available by public broadcasting companies. This fee is a fixed sum regardless of how many persons live in the household or how many receivers are used. It is usually collected by a fee-collecting agency known as the “Gebühreneinzugszentrale” (GEZ).

Weather and clothing

The weather in Germany tends to be moderate. In the winter it can get very cold with

temperatures as low as -10°C. The summer months are generally warm, but with temperatures over 30°C it can sometimes get very hot. Overall, the weather can be is rather unpredictable.

Childcare (5 years of age or younger)

In case your family accompanies you during your research stay it is advised to arrange childcare in good time before arrival, since the spots for day-care are limited. In Germany you have the choice between two kinds of childcare. You can make use of in-home day-care providers or day-care centres (Kindergarten).

In-home day-care providers (»Tagesmütter« or »Tagesväter«) and babysitters:

In general in-home day-care providers take care of children under the age of 3 in their homes. Often they care for additional (3-5) children as well, so your child has contact to peers. Fees are charged based on parental income. Qualified in-home day-care providers can be found via the Youth Welfare Office in Düsseldorf.

Babysitters take care of your children for a few hours or in the evening. The Family Support Centre of HHU would be happy to assist you in finding qualified babysitters. Please contact the Family Support Centre per email at: babysitting@hhu.de

Day-care centres:

Day-care centres are for children between the ages of 3 months and 6 years (school-age). In general care is provided from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m.. If possible, please contact the day-care centres before arriving in Düsseldorf to reserve a place for your child. Fees are charged based on parental income and the number of hours your child will spend in the day-care centre per week.

An overview of all day-care centres in Düsseldorf can be found at the KiTA-Navigator in the Youth Welfare Office.

Further assistance will also be provided by the Family Support Centre at HHU.



Photo: Pavel Krutichkov / Shutterstock.com

Youth Welfare Office in Düsseldorf ("Jugendamt Düsseldorf"): www.duesseldorf.de/jugendamt.html

KiTA navigator: duesseldorf.kita-navigator.org/suche/

Family Support Centre: www.hhu.de/familienberatung

TIP For support and advice when looking for the best childcare and schooling solution, HHU has set up the Family Support Centre. Family Support Centre: www.hhu.de/familienberatung

Schools (starting at the age of 6)

School attendance is compulsory for all children living in Germany between the ages of 6 and 15. There are a large variety of schools in Germany – public schools, private schools, church-run schools and boys or girl's schools. Attendance at state schools is free of charge. Normally, six-year-olds start with primary school, which includes first grade through to fourth grade.

After primary school your child's teachers will recommend a school where your child will enter fifth grade. The most common types of secondary schools are:

- Hauptschule (non-academic secondary school for grades five through nine or ten)
- Realschule (mid-level secondary school for grades five through ten)
- Gymnasium (academic secondary school for grades five through twelve/thirteen)
- Gesamtschule (comprehensive schools, which combine various types of schools under one roof)

The choice of the school is made after a personal visit to the school and after a consultation with the school directory board. The academic year starts after the summer holidays in August or September. Most classes are held during the morning hours; primary schools in particular offer child-care (Offene Ganztagschule) until the afternoon. Here kids will get lunch, can do their homework and just play together.

Schule!
Yippiieh!

For international and bilingual schools in the Düsseldorf:

www.juno.hhu.de/en/schools

Overview of all schools in Düsseldorf:

www.duesseldorf.de/schulen.html

Further information about the German School System can be found at:

www.make-it-in-germany.com



Doctoral studies at HHU

At HHU doctoral researchers are provided with an excellent research environment - its five faculties being nationally and internationally renowned for outstanding research, offering young researchers ideal starting conditions for a future career in academia or industry. The Heine Research Academies (HeRA) with the graduate academies of the Faculty of Arts & Humanities (PhilGRAD), the Faculty of Mathematics & Natural Sciences (iGRAD) and the Faculty of Medicine (MedRSD) support the research work of doctoral researchers through a complementary program in transferable skills and key qualification workshops (Chapter 7).

Admission for doctoral studies

If you have found a supervisor for your doctorate, the university must nevertheless check whether your university qualification is equivalent to a qualification from HHU and, if necessary, the Examining Board or the Doctoral Commission must initiate a recognition procedure. This applies particularly often to university qualifications from abroad but may also be necessary for special qualifications from study programmes at higher education institutions in Germany as well. In general, such a recognition procedure must take place if the candidate:

- holds a German qualification from a study programme which is not offered at HHU
- holds a qualification which does not correspond to the doctoral subject
- holds a foreign qualification

Additionally, most faculties require a good command of either English or German for starting doctoral studies. Applicants not native in German or English will need to prove their language skills to their faculty's Dean's Office. The time period for recognition procedures varies depending on the department; candidates should generally plan for 2-4 weeks. Please consult your faculty's Dean's Office or the relevant Doctorate Regulations regarding the exact requirements and rules regarding the procedure for admission to doctoral studies.

You can only officially enrol for doctoral studies at the Student and Examination Office after the admission to doctoral studies by the Dean's Office.

Enrolling for doctoral studies

You can only enrol after admission for doctoral studies by the respective Dean's Office. Doctoral researchers may enrol at HHU at any time and are not bound by the semester closing dates.

If you are enrolled as a doctoral researcher, you automatically have student status, accident insurance coverage during your working hours at HHU and are entitled to the NRW Travel Card, with which you can use all the local transport buses, trams and trains in North Rhine-Westphalia – free of charge. You will receive a university identifier which

allows you to access IT services at HHU (email account, literature databases etc.), you can use the specialist libraries and pay reduced student prices in the canteen (Mensa). You will need to pay a semester fee of approx. €340 per semester for enrolment.

TIP To benefit from HHU's qualification programme for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers become a member of the graduate academies (Chapter 7).



Doctoral studies at HHU:

www.juno.hhu.de/en/doctoral-studies

Language Requirements:

www.juno.hhu.de/en/language-requirements



Heine Research Academies

Heine Research Academies are the alliance of the faculties' own graduate academies – iGRAD of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, medRSD of the Faculty of Medicine and philGRAD of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and JUNO. Together, the academies and JUNO bundle their long-standing experience and expertise in the area of education and training for young academics in order to support the careers of national and international early stage researchers at HHU. Heine Research Academies' dedicated team comprises instructors qualified in the field of university didactics, professional coaches and science managers.

Services:

- Comprehensive qualification programmes in core competencies and transferable skills for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers
- Counselling on developing an academic profile
- Employment and career counselling
- Individual coaching for early stage researchers
- Confidential conflict counselling
- Regular networking events and symposia
- Information sessions on financing and administration of research projects
- Advice on research visits abroad
- Travel subsidies for participation in scientific conferences abroad

To participate in the qualification programme all doctoral researchers can become a member in their faculty's graduate academy. For information about membership and the full qualification programme please contact the Heine Research Academies or the corresponding faculty's graduate academy. All postdoctoral researchers can participate in the qualification programme offered by JUNO.



Postdoctoral Qualification

Junior Scientist and International Researcher Center (JUNO)
www.juno.hhu.de
juno-international@hhu.de



Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences:

Interdisciplinary Graduate and Research Academy Düsseldorf (iGRAD)
www.igrad.hhu.de
igrad@hhu.de



Faculty of Medicine:

Medical Research School Düsseldorf (medRSD)
www.medrsd.hhu.de
medrsd@hhu.de



Faculty of Arts and Humanities:

Faculty of Arts and Humanities Graduate Academy Düsseldorf (philGRAD)
www.philgrad.hhu.de
philgrad@hhu.de

Language courses and events for international researchers



Photo: Lucky Business / Shutterstock.com

Language courses at JUNO

JUNO in co-operation with the Department of German as a Foreign Language, offer German language courses specifically for international researchers and their families – free of charge. The courses offered are on Elementary Level 1 and 2, allowing international researchers with no or only limited German knowledge to participate. The courses are held in the evening hours twice a week, thus researchers are able to take classes without interfering with their scientific research. JUNO also offers an English course for junior scientist.

German language courses at the Department of German as a Foreign Language

In addition, the Department of German as a Foreign Language provides an extensive German language programme for international members of the university – free of charge. The courses level range from elementary (Grundstufe) to advanced (Oberstufe) and include grammar, phonetics and listening, speaking and writing skills. Courses on the history and culture of the city of Düsseldorf complete the programme of German courses. There is a placement test at the beginning of every semester to give you an idea of the level of your German.

Foreign language courses

HHU's language centre offers a broad programme of language courses in about 20 foreign languages. In addition, internationally recognized tests in the world languages of English, Spanish and Chinese have also been organised. The courses are free of charge. If you are enrolled at Heinrich Heine University and need to learn a foreign language or improve your existing knowledge, please contact the Language Centre.

Information Sessions “Good to Know – Germany”

Finding yourself in a new country can be difficult. With the “Good to Know – Germany” information sessions JUNO would like to assist you in better understanding important aspects of the daily life in Germany.

We offer information session on:

- The German Academic Landscape
- The German Social Security System
- Pension rights for international researchers
- German Taxes
- Rights of Residence for international researchers

Language courses at JUNO:

www.juno.hhu.de/en/language-courses

Department for German as a Foreign Language:

www.deutschkurse.de/en

HHU Language Centre

www.spz.hhu.de

Events for international Researchers

www.juno.hhu.de/en/getconnected



Please contact us

to find the right language class for you and your family!

Email: juno-international@hhu.de



Campus life



University orchestra

In December 1987 a small group of student music enthusiasts came together for a first rehearsal under the direction of Silke Löhrr. A good six month later, on July 7th 1988, the University Orchestra of the Heinrich Heine University performed on the campus for the first time in public. Today the orchestra plays a meaningful role in the city's cultural landscape. The ensemble performs regularly at the Tonhalle Düsseldorf as well as in numerous churches - also in collaboration with the UNICHOR (university choir).

University choir (UNICHOR)

UNICHOR is a group of young people passionate about singing, and consists of both students and staff from all departments of Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf. Each semester, a musical programme is rehearsed once every week. At the end of the semester the programme is performed in a concert hall in Düsseldorf. UNICHOR is also conducted by Silke Löhrr, the Musical Director at the university.

choir
 choir
 orchestra
 sports
 sports
 sports



University orchestra
www.uniorchester.hhu.de/en.html

University choir
www.unichor.hhu.de/en.html

University sports
www.hochschulsport-duesseldorf.de



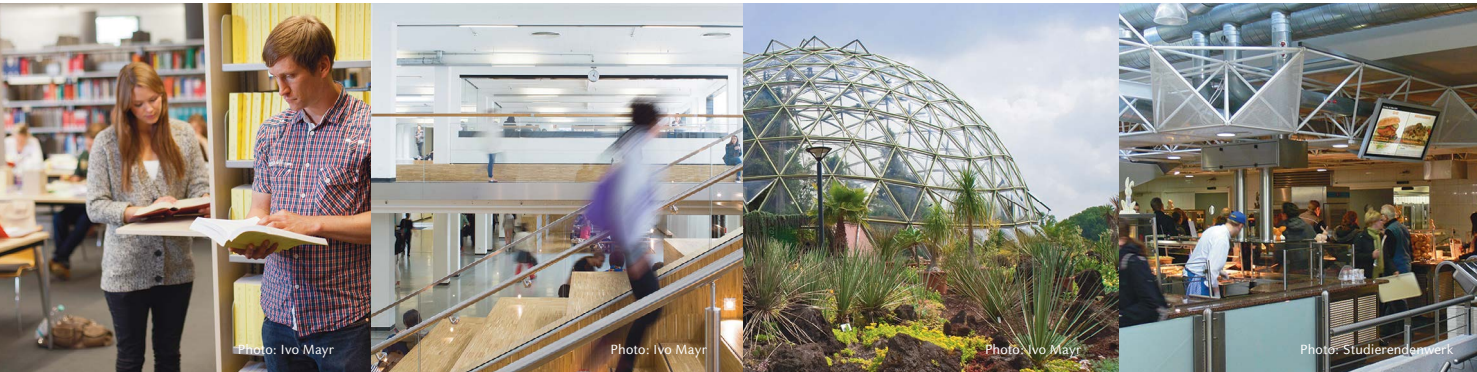
University sports

Under the motto "active campus" all students and employees are welcome to take part in the sporting activities organised by the university sports unit. It offers the opportunity to test, learn and practice more than 50 types of sports and to provide you contact with others. These include aikido, dance, soccer, fitness, yoga and many more.

In general, all courses for HHU students are free of charge (some exceptions include riding, sailing, tennis, etc.). Just remember to take your Student ID card with you. Staff members and guest researchers have to pay a fee (currently 60 € for two semesters) to obtain an identification card necessary for attendance.

Photo: mimagephotography / Shutterstock.com

University facilities



University library

www.ulb.hhu.de/en.html

ZIM

www.zim.hhu.de

Botanical Garden

www.botanischergarten.hhu.de

Canteens and MensaCard

www.juno.hhu.de/en/canteens

TIP

Doctoral students pay reduced prices in HHU canteens (Mensa).

University library

As a central service institution of Heinrich Heine University, the University and State Library (ULB) provides literature, scientific information and service infrastructure for academic research, teaching, and study. With its more than 2,400 study spaces, several group workrooms, and many other services, the ULB is a great place for studying and working. Because high availability of media and information is very important, you can have access to the wide range of media in the stock almost around the clock. Furthermore, catalogues, databases, e-books and e-journals are available throughout the whole university as well as world-wide via VPN.

Centre of Information and Media Technology (ZIM)

Doctoral students and HHU staff have access to the diverse services offered by the Centre of Information and Media Technology (ZIM), which uses an identity management system (IDM). Most of the services are available using the so-called "Uni-Kennung" which is a personal ID (=user name + (initial) password). Doctoral students will receive their personal ID automatically upon enrolment. Staff will receive it by a personal letter from the university administration. Guest researchers or postdocs with their own fellowships can get a personal ID through the respected faculty's Dean's Office.

Botanical Garden

The Botanical Garden not only serves research and teaching purposes, it is also open to visitors throughout the year and offers a varied programme of exhibitions, tours and lectures. The garden's impressive centrepiece is an 18m tall geodesic dome. This is a 1,000m² cold greenhouse accommodating plant species from regions with warm, dry summers and rainy winters. There are plants from Chile, Australia, New Zealand, Asia and California on show here along with the characteristic vegetation of the Mediterranean and the Canary Islands. The dome is supplemented by an ensemble of modern greenhouses. The outdoor grounds present a large meadow of wild flowers and geographical, ecological and systematic sections on the peripheries. The cottage garden provides a setting for repose, while the pollination biology section and the apothecary garden calls for careful observation. Most impressive is the new section with the domesticated plants.

Canteens and MensaCard

Having a meal and taking a break is an important part of university life. On campus you will find various places to eat and relax. Whereas the conventional canteens focus on providing lunchtime food and beverages, the cafeterias offer a wide assortment of sweet and savoury snacks, light meals and a good choice of warm and refreshing drinks. There are canteens and cafeterias spread all over the campus. The main Mensa is located in the middle of the campus and offers a wide range of various meals, e.g. meat and fish dishes, vegetarian food, fresh salads, warm snacks and international specialities. Students, staff and guests can purchase a "MensaCard" (€2.50) at the checkout of any cafeteria to pay cashless and at reduced prices.

facilities
facilities
facilities

Junior Scientist and International Researcher Center

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