

## Information Letter PEP Newcomers 2018

Dear student,

First of all, we would like to welcome you to our **Postgraduate Programme Environmental Physics** at the University of Bremen. Presumably, you have a lot of questions regarding your preparations for your arrival in Bremen. We hope, we may answer as many as possible of them with this information letter.

### Visa

#### **Please apply as early as possible for an appointment for a visa interview!**

The German Embassy or Consulate in your home country will provide you with the information you need for your visa application procedure. For studying in Germany, you will definitely need a “study visa” which can only be issued by your local German Embassy! If you enter Germany with any other visa than a “study visa”, the German authorities will send you back to your home country to apply for the appropriate visa there!

Make sure that you may provide a proof of adequate financial means for your study visit in Germany if requested.

Furthermore, you will need a health insurance for the visa. In the first step, a travel insurance might be sufficient because you will have to join a German health insurance provider for your enrolment at our University.

If you have problems to get the visa because of objections due to the form of the Admission Letter from the University of Bremen, please contact us. We will inform the German Embassy that it is the usual document.

## Living Costs + Semester Fees

Germany is not particularly expensive compared to other European countries. However, if you want to study successfully, you will have to estimate the costs as correct as possible and ensure that you can cover them.

Living costs are the expenses for leading a normal life, i.e. for accommodation, food, clothing and recreational activities. On average, international students have to spend between € 725,00 - € 800,00 per month to live on a student's level. This sum comprises the expenses for rent, travel expenses, expenditures for food, clothing, learning materials, health insurance, telephone, internet, radio and TV licence fees and recreational activities. In addition, students have to pay semester fees (twice a year). Amongst other things this payment is for a semester ticket that allows you to use the public transportation system in the region. At present, semester fees are around 332,00 € per semester.

Furthermore, please be prepared for some initial expenses (i.e. winter clothes). In Germany, it is customary to pay a deposit of two or three monthly rents for the room/apartment you want to rent. This sum will be refunded when your tenancy agreement ends (unless you have caused damage to your room/apartment).

**Please be aware that our university – apart from offering the lectures free of tuition fee – does not offer regular scholarships** (further information about [scholarships](#)). Your study visa will allow you to work for 120 full days or 240 half days a year, but it will be very difficult to find a job on the labour market that will not affect your study performance, as lectures and example classes are challenging. For almost all jobs you need to speak German on an advanced level.

## Accommodation

Although finding a room from abroad is not easy, we recommend to start looking for one even before you arrive in Bremen. Here are a few options:

- check this webpage of our university: <https://www.uni-bremen.de/en/university/campus/housing.html>
- apply for a room at the “Studentenwerk”, the local organization that manages the dormitories in Bremen: <http://www.stw-bremen.de/en/wohnen/student-accommodation> / send them your completed application form in case you are interested / their waiting list is very long, however, it is always worth trying
- local newspaper “Weser Kurier” <http://www.weser-kurier.de/verlag/anzeigenmarkt/immobilien-2.html>
- online platform of the [City of Bremen](#) (look for “Wohngemeinschaftsangebote + Wohnungs/Mietangebote”)
- estate agencies, private landlords or flat communities / i.e. ([www.wg-gesucht.de](http://www.wg-gesucht.de), [www.immowelt.de](http://www.immowelt.de), [www.immobilienscout24.de](http://www.immobilienscout24.de), [www.immopool.de](http://www.immopool.de), [www.immonet.de](http://www.immonet.de))

In case you are not successful in finding a room before you come to Bremen, you should at least book a room in a hostel for the first days (around 15 - 30 € per day). Please check:

<http://www.jugendherberge.de/en/youth-hostels/bremen578/portrait>  
[www.southendhostel-bremen.de](http://www.southendhostel-bremen.de)  
[www.townside.de](http://www.townside.de)  
[www.bremen-hostel.com](http://www.bremen-hostel.com)  
[www.bremer-backpacker-hostel.de/](http://www.bremer-backpacker-hostel.de/)

## Health Insurance

For your enrolment at a German university you have to provide a proof that you have a German health insurance contract.

Students who are younger than 30 years (and have not finished their 14<sup>th</sup> university semester in Germany) may join one of the many German compulsory health insurances. Membership is slightly more than € 70,00 per month (close family members (wife, children) who live in Germany are included).

In case you do not want to join the compulsory health insurance scheme, you can ask to be released from your compulsory membership. Please note that you cannot switch back to the compulsory health insurance scheme as long as you remain a student.

Students who are 30 years plus or have finished their 14<sup>th</sup> semester may join a compulsory health insurance only under certain conditions. Notwithstanding, there are many private insurance companies that provide a big portion of the services of a compulsory health insurance. The prices for a membership vary and family members have to be insured separately. Accident insurance, liability insurance and luggage insurance are sometimes included.

Please make sure that you choose the insurance most suitable for you. We highly recommend a compulsory health insurance. Private insurances do not cover all of the services of a compulsory insurance and usually ask you to pay “minor” bills (up to € 200) in cash in advance. It might take up to 2 months until you get your money refunded.

If applicable, please check with your local insurance company for an interim (travel) insurance.

It is also advisable to have a personal liability insurance. Insurance fee is about € 80 a year. The insurance will pay for any unintended damage you cause to other persons or things.

## Your Arrival in Bremen

Please come to Bremen as early as possible to ensure yourself a smooth start (enough time for the enrolment procedure and for finding a place to stay). The best option would be to arrive in time before our introductory classes will start (usually at the beginning of October) or – at least – before the start of our lectures. Please contact us if you will not be in a position to arrive before the start of the lectures (mid of October).

**We appreciate if you keep us informed about the status of your visa process, date of arrival etc. (by e-mail to [pep@uni-bremen.de](mailto:pep@uni-bremen.de)).**

If you do not receive the original admission letter by post mail within the next 2-3 weeks, please contact our International Admission Office and ask them to send out a new one. If you have a reliable contact person in Germany they can send it to their address and this person can send it with courier to your place. This is faster than waiting for the regular mail.

Please do not hesitate to contact us via [pep@uni-bremen.de](mailto:pep@uni-bremen.de) whenever you have any further questions. We are looking forward to meeting you in September/October.  
Best regards

Your PEP team  
*Postgraduate Programme Environmental Physics*