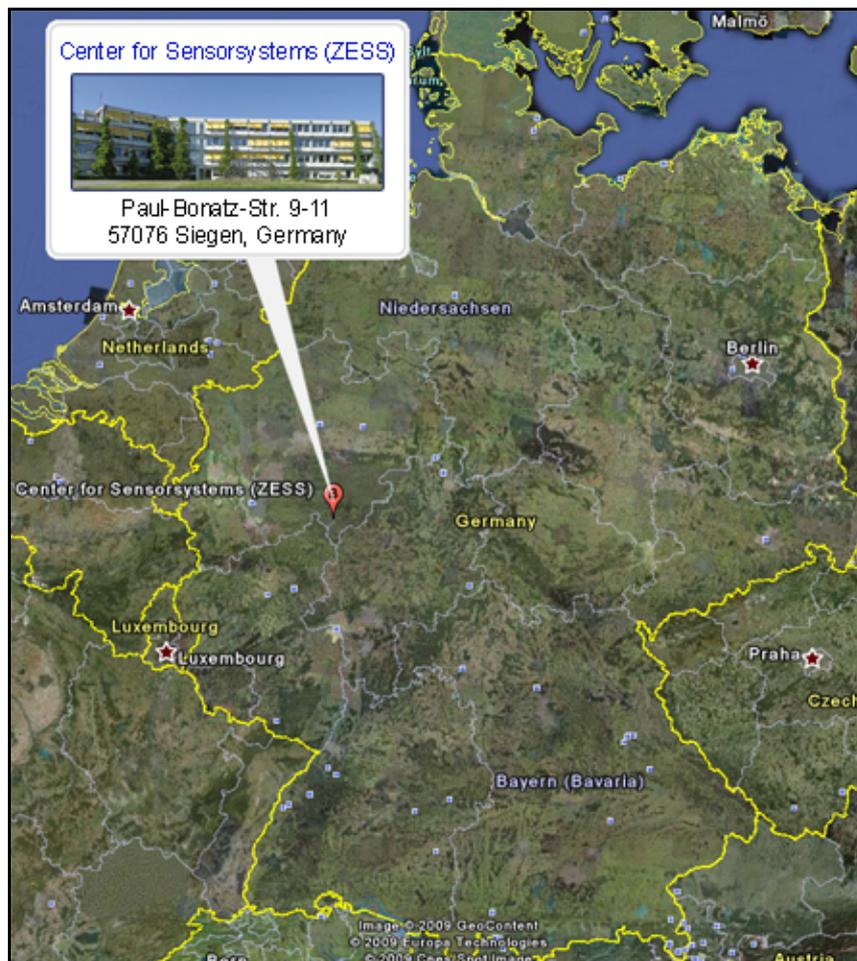


Dear future Graduate Student,

Welcome to the University of Siegen!

In order to facilitate your stay in Siegen, we have arranged herewith some information to give you important tips and advices to keep in mind before you start your journey and especially for the first days. Right after landing at the airport, your life in Germany begins and within a short period of time you will have a lot of “to do’s” that should be carried out in the exact order that is presented on the following pages. Please read these indications carefully and keep them in mind before starting your trip.

The ZESS – Your Future Home



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1. Getting yourself from the airport to Siegen

- All the German airports are very well connected with their corresponding cities, this means, they all have a train station (in German, *Bahnhof*). There are no bus lines between the different airports and Siegen; therefore, taking a train is the only way of getting yourself to your new home.
 - Tip: In order to know where the train station is, you can check the website of the corresponding airport: [Cologne-Bonn Airport](#), [Frankfurt Airport](#), etc.
- Once at the train station, you have to go to the traveller's center (in German, *Reisezentrum*) and buy a train ticket to Siegen (the central station of Siegen is called *Siegen Hauptbahnhof*):
 - Tip 1: You have to make clear while buying the ticket that you want to travel only with regional and local trains (in Germany, *Regionalbahn* and *S-Bahn*), since the high-speed trains (in Germany, *IC* and *ICE*) are faster but much more expensive.
 - Tip 2: There is no direct connection between any airport and the city of Siegen. This means, you will have to change train at least once. Therefore, it is highly recommended to ask at the time of buying the ticket for a travel summary (in German, *Fahrplanübersicht*), so you will know the exact departure time and platform of each train you must take. The train timetables can be also checked at the website of [Deutsche Bahn](#), the German railway company (when you enter the data of your trip on the website, don't forget to exclude the high-speed trains by clicking on the "Local transport" box).
- Once in Siegen, and depending of where you need to go (your new flat, a hotel, the house of a friend, etc) you can take a bus (bus timetables are available at the bus stops and also at the website of [ZWS](#)) or a taxi which, of course, will be more expensive but is also much more comfortable, considering that you will arrive with a lot of luggage.

2. Signing the rental contract of your flat

- It is the most important "to do", since you will need to show your rental contract while carrying out the rest of "to do's": bank, mobile phone, university, etc.
- Depending on the accommodation you have arranged, you will have to contact the responsible person and inform about the date and time of your arrival. In order to sign the rental contract of your flat (and therefore, obtaining the keys), normally you need to make an appointment with the landlord (in German, *Hausmeister*) of the apartments. In most of the cases, this person will show you the room, explain you the "what to do's" and "what not to do's" and after getting the rental contract signed by you, will give you the keys.
 - Tip: It is very important to inform about your arrival to the responsible person of your accommodation before starting your trip (and not after your arrival) so you can be sure that they will have time for you and, therefore, getting quickly installed in your new house after a long and exhausting journey.

3. Opening a student bank account

- Recommended: [Sparkasse](#). Students under 30 years-old can get a MasterCard for free for 1 year.
- Some other well-known banks are [Commerzbank](#) and [Deutsche Bank](#). Good offers are also applicable to students under 30 years-old (including credit card).
 - Tip: Although it may take up to 2 weeks till you get by post your bank cards (and therefore, the possibility of withdrawing money from the cash dispensers), your account is fully active from the very first moment, and it is highly recommended that right after opening it, you credit your account with some money (at least 200 €), so you can prove that your account is not empty when you sign further contracts, e.g. your mobile phone contract.

4. Getting a German mobile telephone

- Recommended: [o2](#). It provides 2 phone numbers on the same terminal: one with a mobile network tariff (called *Mobilfunknetz*) and one with a fixed network tariff within a perimeter of not less than 500 m (called *Homezone*). Most of the students choose o2 as their mobile provider.
- Some other well-known companies are [Vodafone](#) and [T-Mobile](#).

5. Registering with a health insurance Company

- There are 2 kinds of health insurance: public and private. In order to find more information about requirements and exceptions for public insurance click [here](#).
- Public insurance (free of cost).
 - Recommended: [AOK](#).

Place:

AOK Siegen-Studenten-Service
Adolf-Reichwein-Str. 10
57076 Siegen

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday 9:00 – 16:00

Even if you don't fulfill the requirements to get insured by the AOK, it is necessary to go there and obtain an exemption form (this is a paper that says that you can't get insured by them) in order to attach it to the private insurance proof later on when you enroll at the University of Siegen.

- Private insurance (requires a monthly fee).
 - Recommended: [Care Concept](#), and more precisely, the package named as "Care College Basic". The application can be done online and the proof is obtained immediately.

6. Matriculation at the University of Siegen (I)

- Payment (in cash) of the semester fees. The amount to pay is around 185 € (on the SS 2009 it was 186,95 €, but every new semester the amount may increase slightly):

Place:

[Studentenwerk Siegen](#) (Student services)
Herrengarten 5
57072 Siegen
Office AH-117 (Mrs. Hartmann)

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday 9:00 – 11:00

- Tip: While paying the fees, you have to insist in the point that you are a PhD student, since the PhDs are exempt from paying the tuition fees (in German, *Studiengebühren*), which increase 500 € the amount to pay.

7. Matriculation at the University of Siegen (II)

Place:

[Akademisches Auslandsamt](#) (Intern. Office)
Unteres Schloß 1
57068 Siegen
Studierendensekretariat (Mrs.Solbach)

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday 8:30 – 11:30
Tuesday & Thursday 13:30 – 15:00

Required documents

- Original university diploma. A copy of the diploma is also required to be brought by you.
- Valid passport with visa or residence permit.
- Proof of health insurance (and, if applies, certificate of exemption).
- 2 passport-sized photos (biometrical).
- Letter of admission from the University of Siegen or, in your case, from the IPP/MOSES Program.
- Rental contract which you received from your landlord at either your student dormitory or your private accommodation.
- Receipt verifying that you have paid the semester fees.

- Once the matriculation is complete, you will receive within a few days a letter containing your student identification, as well as a semester ticket that enables you to travel on public transports within the whole state of Nordrhein-Westfalen. Keep both always with you in your wallet, since you will need them every time you enter a bus, a train, etc.

8. Registering with the Local Authorities

- Last but not least, all people coming to live in a city of Germany must register with the local authorities. Officially, you should do it within a week after your arrival or, more precisely, after signing your rental contract. Extra-officially, you can do it after getting the rest of the “to do’s” completed, no matter whether it takes less than a week or longer. It is important to do it as soon as possible, but only if you have completed the previous steps.

Place:

[Rathaus Siegen](#) (City Hall Siegen)
Am Markt 2
57072 Siegen
Ausländerbehörde (foreigner's registration office)
Einwohnermeldeamt (local residents' registration office)

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday	8:30 – 12:00
Tuesday	14:00-16:00
Thursday	14:00-18:00

Required documents

- Valid passport with visa or residence permit.
- Proof of health insurance (and, if applies, certificate of exemption).
- 2 passport-sized photos (biometrical).
- Matriculation certificate which you receive at the AAA when you enroll, as well as the semester ticket.
- Rental contract which you received from your landlord at either your student dormitory or private accommodation.
- Proof that you will be able to finance your stay in Germany. If you are getting a scholarship, the letter which specifies the amount will be sufficient.
- Depending on the length of your stay in Germany, you may need to pay up to 50 € in fees.