



Information for prospective university students about Germany – Universities and Costs – Cost of Living

I. General information about Germany and



Germany is a country in Central Europe and, with around 84 million inhabitants, the most populous country in the European Union. It is known for its strong economy, its long history, its cultural diversity, and its high-quality education and research system.

Basic data

- ┌ Official name: Federal Republic of Germany
- ┌ Capital city: Berlin
- ┌ Area: approx. 357,600 km²
- ┌ Population: approx. 84 million
- ┌ Official language: German
- ┌ Currency: Euro (€)
- ┌ Form of government: Parliamentary federal republic
- ┌ Memberships: European Union, NATO, United Nations

Geography

Germany borders nine countries:

- ┌ Denmark
- ┌ Poland
- ┌ Czech Republic
- ┌ Austria
- ┌ Switzerland

-) France
-) Luxembourg
-) Belgium
-) Netherlands

Important landscapes:

-) North Sea and Baltic Sea coasts
-) Low mountain ranges (Harz Mountains, Black Forest)
-) Rhine and Danube valleys
-) Bavarian Alps

Famous cities



-) Berlin – capital city, politics, culture and start-ups
-) Hamburg – a major port city
-) Munich – Technology, Economy and Tradition
-) Frankfurt am Main – Europe's financial center
-) Cologne – Media, Culture and Famous Cathedral

Business

Germany has the largest economy in Europe and is one of the world's leading export nations.

Key industries:

-) automotive industry
-) Mechanical engineering
-) chemical industry
-) Electrical engineering
-) Information technology
-) Renewable energy

Well-known companies:

-) Volkswagen
-) BMW
-) Mercedes-Benz Group
-) Siemens
-) SAP

Education and Science

Germany has:

- ✓ Over 400 universities
- ✓ Numerous research institutes
- ✓ Many state universities with low tuition fees
- ✓ International study programs in English

Well-known universities:

- Technical University of Munich
- RWTH Aachen University
- Heidelberg University
- Humboldt University of Berlin

Culture

Germany has a rich cultural and intellectual history.

Famous people:

- J Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
- J Ludwig van Beethoven
- J Albert Einstein
- J Thomas Mann

Traditions:

-) Christmas markets
-) carnival
-) Oktoberfest
-) Regional festivals and customs

Policy

Germany is a federal state with 16 states. The most important political institutions are:

-) German Bundestag
-) Federal Council
-) Federal government
-) Federal Constitutional Court

The seat of government is in Berlin.

Quality of life

Germany regularly ranks among the countries with a high quality of life due to:

-) good infrastructure
 -) high security
 -) efficient healthcare system
 -) stable economy
 -) wide range of cultural and leisure activities
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Sightseeing features



Particularly well-known are:

-) Brandenburg Gate
-) Cologne cathedral
-) Neuschwanstein Castle
-) Black Forest
-) Bavarian Alps

Germany at a glance

Germany combines a strong economy, modern technology, high-quality education, cultural diversity, and a central location in Europe. This makes the country an attractive location for tourists, students, skilled workers, and businesses alike.

II. General information about universities and costs



Germany is among the most popular study destinations for Chinese students. German universities enjoy an excellent international reputation, particularly in engineering, computer science, natural sciences, economics, and medicine. Around 420,000 international students are currently enrolled at German universities.

The German higher education system

Universities

Focus on research and science.

Well-known universities:

-) Technical University of Munich
-) RWTH Aachen University
-) Heidelberg University
-) Humboldt University of Berlin
-) Dresden University of Technology

Universities of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschulen)

-) Practical training
-) Close collaboration with companies
-) Good opportunities for internships and career entry

Dual universities

-) Combination of studies and paid practical experience
 -) Particularly attractive for technically oriented students
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Tuition fees

State universities

Germany's biggest advantage: Most state universities do not charge regular tuition fees for Bachelor's and most Master's degree programs. Students only pay a semester fee.

Semester fee

The semester fee is usually between:

-) € 70 and € 430 per semester

It often contains:

-) Student Union
-) Administrative costs
-) Semester ticket for bus and train
-) University sports and student programs

Exceptions for international students

Baden-Württemberg

Students from non-EU countries (including China) usually pay:

-) € 1,500 per semester

at state universities.

Bavaria

Some universities may charge additional fees for international students. The amount depends on the university and the course of study.

Private universities

Private universities charge significantly higher fees:

-) usually € 3,000 – € 10,000 per semester
 -) Sometimes more so in MBA or specialized programs.
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Cost of living

In addition to tuition fees, international students must finance their living expenses.

The DAAD currently recommends approximately the following for studying in Germany:

) € 900 – €1,200 per month

depending on the city and lifestyle.

Typical monthly expenses

Type of cost	Average
Accommodation	€ 350 – € 800
Groceries	€ 200 – € 350
Health insurance	approx. € 140
Internet & Mobile Phone	€ 20-50
Leisure time	€ 50 – € 250
Learning materials	€ 20-50

Proof of financing and blocked account

Chinese applicants for a student visa must prove that they can finance their living expenses.

Since 2025, international students have been required to have at least € 992 available per month. This is often proven via a blocked account.

Popular subjects of study among Chinese students

-) Mechanical engineering
-) Electrical engineering
-) Computer science
-) Artificial intelligence
-) Data Science
-) Automotive engineering
-) Economics
-) Renewable energy
-) Chemistry
-) Physics

Scholarship opportunities

The most important funding organization is the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Possible funding opportunities:

-) DAAD scholarships
-) Germany Scholarship
-) Foundation scholarships
-) University-internal funding programs
-) China Scholarship Council (CSC) in cooperation with German universities

Example budget for a Chinese student

Cost	Month
Dormitory	400 €
Eat	300 €
Health insurance	140 €
Leisure & Clothing	120 €
Miscellaneous	100 €
In total	approx.1,060 €

For one academic year, you should therefore expect to pay between **€ 12,000 and € 15,000 for living expenses, depending on the city**. In addition, there may be semester fees and, in some federal states, tuition fees.

Advantages of Germany for Chinese students

-) Internationally recognized university degrees
-) Low or no tuition fees at state universities
-) High quality in research and teaching
-) Good career opportunities in Germany and Europe
-) Large international student community
-) Numerous English-language Master's programs
-) Good opportunities for internships and starting a career

For foreign students interested in higher education, the technical universities in Munich, Aachen, Berlin, Dresden and Karlsruhe are particularly attractive, as they offer close contacts with industry and excellent employment prospects.

III. General information on the cost of living in Germany

Cost of living in Germany for 1 person (as of 2026)

The actual costs depend heavily on the place of residence. Cities like Munich, Frankfurt am Main or Hamburg are significantly more expensive than smaller university towns like Chemnitz, Ilmenau or Greifswald.

Average monthly costs

Expenditure area	Cheap	Average	Expensive
Food & Drinks	€ 200-300	€ 300 – € 450	€ 450 – € 600
Clothing	€ 30–70	50 – 100 €	100 – 200 €
Leisure & Sport	50 – 100 €	100 – 250 €	€ 250 – € 500
Mobile Phone & Internet	€ 20-40	30 – 50 €	50 – 80 €
Health insurance*	approx. € 140	approx. € 140	approx. € 140

* For students under certain conditions.

1. Food and drinks

Affordable lifestyle

-) Cooking for yourself
-) Shopping at discount stores (Aldi, Lidl, Netto)

Cost:

-) Approximately € 200-300 per month

Average lifestyle

-) A mix of home cooking and occasional restaurant visits

Cost:

-) Approximately € 300–450 per month

Comfortable lifestyle

-) Frequent eating out
-) Delivery services
-) Regular restaurant visits

Cost:

) € 450–€ 600 or more per month

Typical prices

Product	Price
Bread	2 – 4 €
Milk (1 l)	1 – 1.50 €
Rice (1 kg)	2 – 4 €
Chicken breast (1 kg)	€ 8 – € 14
Cafeteria food	3 – 6 €
Restaurant lunch	12 – 20 €
Coffee	3 – 5 €

2. Clothing costs

Germany offers fashion in all price ranges, from affordable to high-quality.

Garment	Price
T-shirt	10 – 30 €
Jeans	€ 30 – € 100
Sneakers	€ 50 – € 150
Winter jacket	€ 80 – € 300

On average, many students spend around €50-100 per month on clothing, with expenses often fluctuating seasonally.

3. Leisure expenses

Activity	Price
Cinema	10 – 18 €
Gym	€ 20–60 per month
Swimming pool	4 – 8 €

Activity	Price
Museum	€ 5 – € 20
Concert	€ 30 – € 150
Club / Party	10 –30 € Admission

Students often spend € 100-250 per month on leisure activities.

Housing costs

Rent is usually the biggest expense.

4. University dormitory



Advantages:

- ⌋ Cheapest form of housing
- ⌋ Many international students
- ⌋ Often furnished

Monthly costs:

- ⌋ € 250 – € 450

In major cities:

- ⌋ up to € 550
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5. Shared apartment (WG)



Advantages:

-) Cheaper than owning your own apartment
-) Social contacts
-) Popular with students

Monthly costs:

City size	Rent
Small university town	€ 300 – € 500
Medium-sized city	€ 450 – € 700
Metropolis	€ 600 – € 1,000

6. Own apartment (1-room apartment)



Monthly rent including utilities:

City size	Rent
Small town	€ 450 – € 700
Medium-sized city	700 – 1,000 €
Munich/Berlin/Hamburg	€ 900 – € 1,600

Additional charges may apply:

-) Electricity
-) Internet

-) Broadcasting fee
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7. Accommodation for fitters



Accommodation for tradespeople is actually intended for craftsmen and commuters, but is sometimes also used by students or newcomers.

Cost:

-) € 400 – € 900 per month

Advantages:

-) Available at short notice
-) Mostly furnished

Disadvantages:

-) Often simple equipment
 -) Little privacy
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8. Small guesthouse or bed and breakfast

Cost:

-) Approximately € 25–70 per night

For longer stays:

-) Approximately € 700–€ 2,000 per month

Suitable:

-) For the first few weeks after arrival
-) For apartment search

Not suitable as a long-term housing solution due to the high costs.

Total budget per month

Frugal student in the dormitory

Cost	Amount
Reside	350 €
Eat	€250
Insurance	140 €
Leisure/Clothing	100 €
Miscellaneous	100 €
In total	approx. € 940

Average student in a shared apartment

Cost	Amount
Reside	650 €
Eat	350 €
Insurance	140 €
Leisure/Clothing	200 €
Miscellaneous	150 €
In total	approx. € 1,490

Private apartment in a major city

Cost	Amount
Reside	€ 1,100
Eat	450 €
Insurance	140 €
Leisure/Clothing	€ 300
Miscellaneous	200 €
In total	approx. € 2,190

Recommendation for Chinese prospective university students

For financial planning, you should currently expect to spend at least **€ 1,000–€ 1,200 per month** in smaller university towns and **€ 1,400–€ 2,000 per month** in larger cities. A place in

a university dormitory or shared apartment significantly reduces costs and is usually the most economical solution for international students.