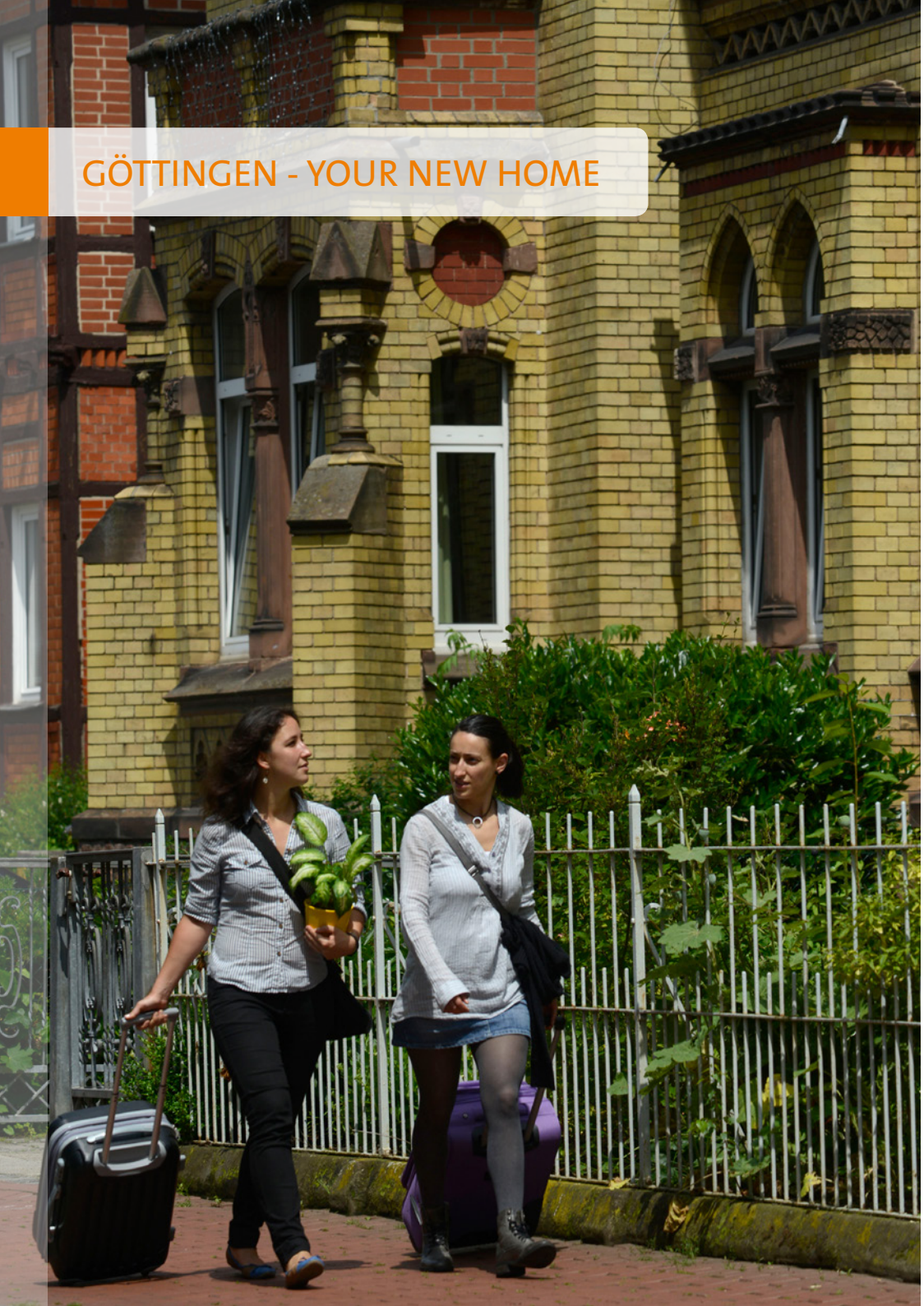
# ACCOMMODATION GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

GEORG-AUGUST-UNIVERSITÄT
GÖTTINGEN



# GÖTTINGEN - YOUR NEW HOME

Göttingen offers many types of accommodation. However, it is advisable to start searching for a place to stay as early as possible, since the accommodation market will be inundated with a large number of new students also seeking to find accommodation at the start of the semester.

Different types of accommodation for students include: rooms in a student hall of residence, rooms in a private student hall of residence, small apartments, or rooms in a privately shared apartment.

**Accommodation Service for International Students**

In contrast to some other countries, students at German universities do not automatically receive dorm rooms when accepted by the university. Students have to find accommodation by themselves.

The University's International Office supports international students in finding accommodation. All international students are advised to get in touch with the Accommodation Service of the International Office as soon as possible and we will gladly assist you in finding the right place for your needs.

Web: www.uni-goettingen.de/accommodation-service

# STUDENT DORMS

In Germany, student dorms are usually not owned by the universities. Most dorms are run by an independent organisation called *Studentenwerk*. There is a close cooperation between the University and the *Studentenwerk* here in Göttingen, and the *Studentenwerk* offers 4,500 affordable rooms, apartments and flats for students in Göttingen. The residential buildings are spread all over the town, ranging from historic sites to modern complexes. The room types also vary. Most of the rooms are single rooms which are unfurnished; they are usually arranged either in groups (in a flat-share like way) or in corridor communities which means all rooms on one corridor share facilities such as a kitchen, bathrooms and other communal areas. Moreover, the *Studentenwerk* also provides single and double apartments and family flats.

To give you a rough idea about rents in Göttingen: The rooms in the student dormitories cost about 170 – 270 euro per month, while a room on the private housing market would be more expensive and costs about 250 – 400 euro per month. Single apartments/studios will be even more expensive and probably cost between 400 and 500 euro per month.

Due to the very high demand, we highly recommend filling in an application as soon as possible. You can add your name to the waiting list of students seeking to obtain accommodation in one of the halls of residence at any moment, without any obligation to then take up this offer. It is not necessary to have already applied or be enrolled at the University of Göttingen at this stage.

You can apply online on the following website:
www.studentenwerk-goettingen.de/onlinebewerbung.html



# PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION MARKET

There are also rooms and apartments offered for rent on the private market. Most of the rooms are not furnished, so please always double check if any furniture is included. The exception to this rule would be sublet rooms (*Zwischenmiete*).

Shared apartments (*Wohngemeinschaft*, or *WG*) are especially popular among students. A *WG* is a living arrangement in which several people share the lease costs for a flat. Each person has his/her own bedroom, whereas the kitchen and bathroom are shared.

There are basically two types of *WG*s: A rather functional flatshare of practical sense which focuses on the shared lease costs and excludes most social aspects - in Germany known as "*Zweck-WG*". And a more socially motivated flatshare where the roommates are looking for an active social life within the *WG*. So don't be surprised if your potential future roommates ask you lots of questions. They are just trying to get to know you and find out if you could fit into their *WG* life.

**Zwischenmiete**

Zwischenmiete is a good option when you arrive in Germany. It is a short-term accommodation possibility, with fixed start and end dates. The most important advantage is that these rooms are usually furnished. Since the person who offers the room plans to come back, he/she leaves their furniture in the room. And, although subletting is for a limited period only, it will give you enough time to have a look around for more permanent accommodation once you have arrived in Göttingen.

# LOOKING FOR A ROOM ON THE PRIVATE MARKET

If you decide to search for a room in a *WG* (shared apartment), the following websites might be useful for finding offers of accommodation:

www.wg-gesucht.de/en/ (in English)

www.studenten-wg.de

www.zwischenmiete.de

www.goettinger-tageblatt.de/Anzeigen/Immonet

www.facebook.com/Wohnungen.frei.in.Goettingen (partially English)

www.studenten-wg.de/partner/studentenwerkgoettingen.php

www.ebay-kleinanzeigen.de/s-wohnung-mieten/goettingen/wohnungen/koc203l3130

www.goettinger-tageblatt.de/Anzeigen/Immonet

It might also be a good idea to check if your department or study programme runs a Facebook group. Facebook groups are a good opportunity to get in touch with people who are already in Göttingen or who have been there. They may be able to give you some hints regarding accommodation, or may even have heard about a room which is available.

If you are already in Göttingen, then you can find further offers in the weekend issue of the local newspaper (*Göttinger Tageblatt*) and on notice boards in the university buildings.

You could also reach out to a *Hausverwaltung* (property management). It is basically an office which communicates and negotiates between the landlord of an apartment/a house and the tenant. It closes tenancy agreements and offers various services to the tenants, like caretaking services. In contrast to an agent, a *Hausverwaltung* does not charge money for its services (*Provision*). The most frequented by students is:

→ **Göttinger Hausverwaltung GmbH**
Maschmühlenweg 2
37073 Göttingen

Tel.: 0551 4959 – 0
info@goehv.de
www.goehv.de

| | |
|---|---|
| Mon – Thu: | 9am – 12pm; 2pm – 5pm |
| Fri: | 9am – 1pm |
| Sat: | 10am – 1pm |

You can also consult a local real estate agent (*Immobilienmakler*). However, it is important to know that they will charge a commission fee (*Provision*) of up to 2.38 times the monthly rent (excluding utilities; *Kaltmiete*), for their services.

In general, please do not underestimate the time and effort it takes to find accommodation in Göttingen – especially at the beginning of the semester (in September/October and March/April)!

# GETTING A ROOM

Most of *WG*s want to get to know their future flatmate. For most flatmates it is very important that the people sharing the flat get along well.

Therefore, if you are searching for accommodation from abroad, you can contact the *WG* via email, introduce yourself and tell them a little bit about yourself (for example about your hobbies or why you are coming to Göttingen). A great way to communicate is via Skype. It enables you to view the room / apartment without being present. Furthermore, Skype offers the *WG* (or landlord) the opportunity to get to know you.

If you are already in Göttingen, please try to arrange viewings of the rooms, once you have found an offer you like. Since the housing market is very competitive, it is important to look for the most recent offers and react quickly.

### Temporary Accommodation

If you did not have any luck in finding suitable accommodation before you arrive, you can find temporary accommodation in one of the youth hostels in and around Göttingen, bed and breakfasts, or hotels. Please refer to this list of temporary accommodation offered by the Accommodation Service: www.uni-goettingen.de/Accommodation-General-Information

# UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS BEING OFFERED

To help you read and understand the advertisements, please refer to the list below:

| GERMAN | ENGLISH |
|---|---|
| **2 ZKB** | **a two-room** (**Z**. or Zi.=Zimmer) apartment, with a kitchen (**K**=Küche) and bathroom (**B**=Bad) |
| **Abstellraum** | storage room |
| **Blk.** (=Balkon) | balcony |
| **DG** (=Dachgeschoss) | attic floor (most likely directly under the roof) |
| **WC** | toilet |
| **Du** (=Dusche) | shower |
| **EG** (=Erdgeschoss) | ground floor |
| **Kaltmiete** (KM) | rent without utilities and heating |
| **Kaut.** (=Kaution) | security deposit (to be reimbursed when you move out) |
| **Möbliert** (mbl. or möbl.) | furnished |
| **NK** (=Nebenkosten) | additional costs (electricity, heating, staircase cleaning, garbage fee etc.) |
| **OG** (=Obergeschoss) | upper floor |
| **Ruhige Lage** | quiet area |
| **Sout.** (=Souterrain) | basement |
| **Warmmiete** (WM) | rent including heating and water |
| **Zwischenmiete** | sublet |

**STUDENTENWERK**

The Studentenwerk offers an illustrated dormitory dictionary in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Polish, Arabic and Chinese, where they explain how life in a dormitory/shared apartment works. It may be worth your while, so why not take a look! See: www.studentenwerk-goettingen.de/wwb.html

# HAVING FOUND A PLACE

Before moving in, please take the following into consideration:

### Contract

Contractual obligations are taken very seriously in Germany. Once you have signed a contract, your landlord expects you to fully comply with the duties. Make sure that you understand all the points of the contract (*Mietvertrag*), e.g. are you liable for cleaning the staircase or do you have to renovate the rooms when you move in or out? In case of doubt, it is advisable to have someone to help you understand the contract before you sign it.

### Deposits

All apartments require a security deposit of two to three monthly rents. This amount is to be refunded at the end of the leasing period, if you leave the place in good condition.

### Transferring your deposit - watch out!

Be cautious when it comes to transferring deposits.

Please be extremely cautious if:

- You are asked to arrange a payment through Western Union or make another international transfer. This usually means that it is not possible to find those who receive the money.
- The landlord offers to send the keys via mail. This is not a common practice in Germany.
- The landlord does not agree to arrange a viewing of the accommodation.

Only pay the deposit when:

- You have seen the accommodation;
- You have signed the rental contract;
- You have received the keys.

In case you cannot go to a viewing of the accommodation yourself, you could ask a friend or acquaintance to check the offered place for you.



### Confirmation of Landlord/Provider of Housing

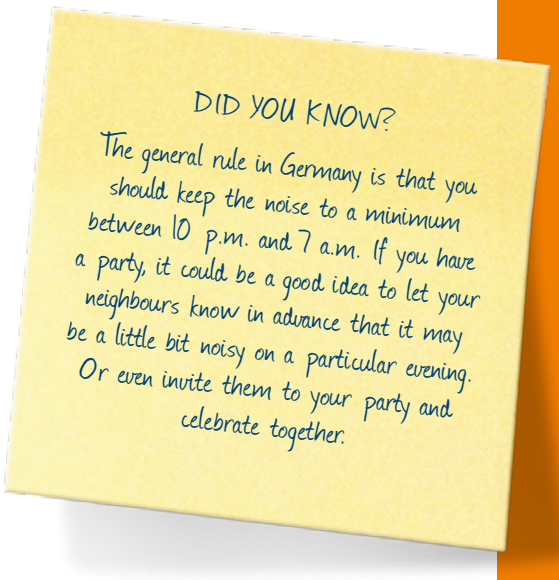
Since November 1, 2015, everyone who registers at the local Residents' Registration Office (in order to stay more than three months in Germany) needs a **confirmation of the landlord/provider of housing** (*Wohnungsgeberbestätigung*). The latter could either be your landlord, a person that is authorized by your landlord or the main tenant (in case you are the subtenant). Without this document you won't be able to register at the Registration Office.

### Official link to the confirmation form:

https://www.bus.formularservice.niedersachsen.de/cpa/cfs/eject/pdf/8.pdf?FORMUID=NI-BMG-003-DE-FL&MANDANTUID=BUS&INFO-DIENSTE_FORM_ID=325168266&

### Legal Housing Issues

In case you have any questions concerning tenancy law (leasing contracts, deposits, cancellation periods etc.) the General Students' Committee AStA provides legal consultation. Appointments for this complimentary advice you can either arrange at the social work department or at the AStA administration office (contact details below):




→ **OFFICE HOURS**

10:15 a.m. – 1 p.m. (Mon.-Fri.)
Email: astasek@asta.uni-goettingen.de
Phone: 0551 39-4564

## Moving in

When you move into your new apartment or room, take a good look around and write down all small damages, if there are any. Have your landlord sign this list. It will be added as an addendum to your rental contract. In this way, when you move out, you will not be held responsible for damages you did not cause. Your landlord can deduct money from your deposit to fix any damages that occurred during your stay.

## Furniture

Most of the rooms offered for rent in shared apartments will be unfurnished. Kitchen and common areas will normally be furnished. Furnished rooms are marked as *möbliert*.

If you decide to rent an apartment for yourself, please note that most apartments available for rent will be unfurnished as well. Even the kitchen will often not be equipped with appliances like a fridge, etc. unless specifically indicated. Therefore, please always double check what furniture is included.

There are several shops in Göttingen where you can buy second-hand furniture (*gebrauchte Möbel*):

### → MÖBELINO

**Address:**
Groner Landstraße 48

**Opening hours:**
Mon-Fri 9 am – 7 pm
Sat: 9 am – 4 pm

**Contact:**
Tel: 0551 387 01 42
info@moebelino.de
www.moebelino.de

### → NEUE ARBEIT BROCKENSAMMLUNG

**Address:**
Levinstraße 1

**Opening hours:**
Mon-Fri 9 am – 7 pm
Sat: 10 am – 2 pm

**Contact:**
Tel: 0551 506730
gmk@neue-arbeit-brockensammlung.de
www.neue-arbeit-brockensammlung.de

## Online platforms where you can find second hand-furniture:

Ebay Kleinanzeigen:
www.ebay-kleinanzeigen.de/stadt/goettingen

Markt.de:
www.markt.de/goettingen/Marktplatz/M%C3%B6bel,+Wohnen/categoryId,1014000000/suche.htm

Dhd24.de:
www.dhd24.com/azl/index.php?classid=84503&plz=g%F6ttingen

## Buying New Furniture

In the northern part of Göttingen (Lutteranger / Große Breite) you will find several large furniture stores, where you can buy all necessary furniture. There is also an IKEA in Kassel, which is about 50 km away from Göttingen.

# MOVING OUT

Keep in mind that rental contracts have deadlines for regular and early contract termination. To avoid extra costs you should pay close attention to the deadlines of your contract. If you want to terminate your contract earlier than originally agreed upon, you usually have to find a new tenant before moving out. Also do not forget to remove all your belongings from the apartment and try to leave it clean and tidy. Make sure that all walls are clean and painted the same color as before you moved in.

**Checklist: Steps which you can take from home to start finding suitable accommodation**

- ☐ Contact the Accommodation Service for international students
- ☐ Apply for a room in a student dorm
- ☐ Check online flat advertisements and arrange skype interviews with your potential flat mates
- ☐ Organise accommodation for your first nights in Göttingen



# QUESTIONS? CONTACT US!

**(Ms.) Christin Leistner**

Support for international degree-seeking & PhD students

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## NOTES



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All the information contained in this guide has been carefully researched and all reasonable efforts have been made to avoid errors. Please let us know should you have any comments.