

MILENG COE INFORMATION BOOKLET



“INTEROPERABILITY IS A QUESTION OF ATTITUDE”



Military Engineering Centre of Excellence

Kaserne Auf der Schanz, Manchinger Str. 1, 85053 Ingolstadt, Germany

www.milengcoe.org

WELCOME TO THE MILENG COE

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Important things to know about Germany

Germany or officially the Federal Republic of Germany (*Bundesrepublik Deutschland*) is a country in Western Central Europe. It is bordered to the north by the North Sea, Denmark, and the Baltic Sea; to the east by Poland and the Czech Republic; to the south by Austria and Switzerland; and to the west by France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The territory of Germany covers an area of 357,021 km² and with 81.8 million inhabitants it is the most populous member state of the European Union and home to the third-largest number of international migrants worldwide.



Germany is a federal parliamentary republic of sixteen states. The capital and largest city is Berlin. Germany is a member of the United Nations, NATO, G8, G20, and OECD and assumed a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the 2011–12 term. It is a major power with the world's fourth largest economy in terms of nominal GDP and the fifth largest in terms of purchasing power parity. It is the second largest exporter and third largest importer of goods. In absolute terms, Germany allocates the third-largest annual development aid budget in the world, while its military expenditure is ranked seventh. The country has developed a very high standard of living and a comprehensive system of social security. It holds a key position in European affairs and maintains a multitude of close partnerships at a global level. Germany is recognized as a scientific and technological leader in several fields. Further information can be found at <https://www.deutschland.de/en>

Important things to know about Ingolstadt

The MILENG COE is located in the Pionierkaserne A.d. Schanz at Ingolstadt, about 70 km north of Munich. Ingolstadt is a city of approx. 130.000 citizens with a long history as a fortress, where soldiers have always been welcomed and appreciated as an integral part of the society.

INGOLSTADT is one of the most prosperous cities in Germany and is home of a university, of some refineries and famous to all car owners of Audi. Except for an international school, it offers all the installations needed for an attractive home of the multinational staff and the visitors of the MILENG COE. Further information you can be found at

[Ingolstadt Tourismus: Home](#)

Introduction

This Handbook intends to provide some answers and guidance prior to your arrival in INGOLSTADT and during your stay here. The information is for staff members and their families. There may be differences between the local procedures in Germany and your home country. You can avoid misunderstandings by making advance preparations or asking for assistance.

The MILENG COE reviews the Handbook every year or as required due to any changes to regulations. The MILENG COE is doing its best to keep all information updated on a regular basis.

However, it may occur that the information and regulations reflected in the Handbook have been overruled by new legislation or are interpreted differently by local authorities. Neither the MILENG COE nor the National Support Elements can be held accountable or liable for any information provided herein or the use made of the information provided.

Please inform the CSM if your personal experience deviates substantially from the information provided herein.

The CSM and the Staff Assistant Personnel will help you get settled and navigate in the local community. **The choice of an institution or a company rests with you. The MILENG COE is not associated with or do not recommend any specific, private companies or public institutions, and cannot be held accountable or liable for the quality of services or actions that you may receive.**

Specific and detailed information on more issues, for example Consumer Protection in Germany, Housing Services for Staff Members, Medical Assistance or other practical guides, is provided to staff members on MILENG COE SharePoint: "In-processing".

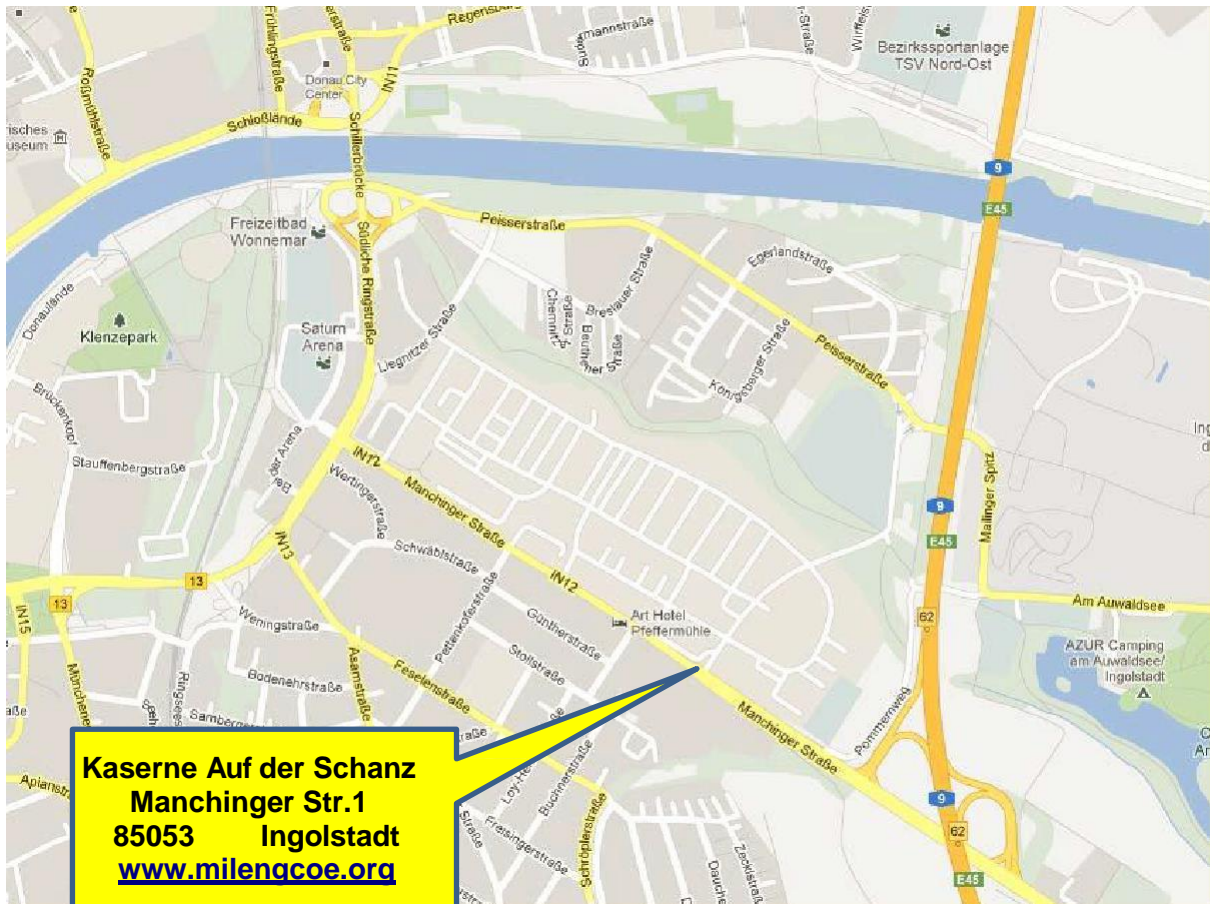
More information will also be provided during the MILENG COE In-processing briefings.

The following MILENG COE Points of Contact are referred to in the Handbook:

MILENG COE Command Sergeant Major: +49 84188660 5100 (e-mail: csm@milengcoe.org)

MILENG COE Staff Coordination and Support Branch: +49 84188660 5200 (e-mail: pcsbcb@milengcoe.org)

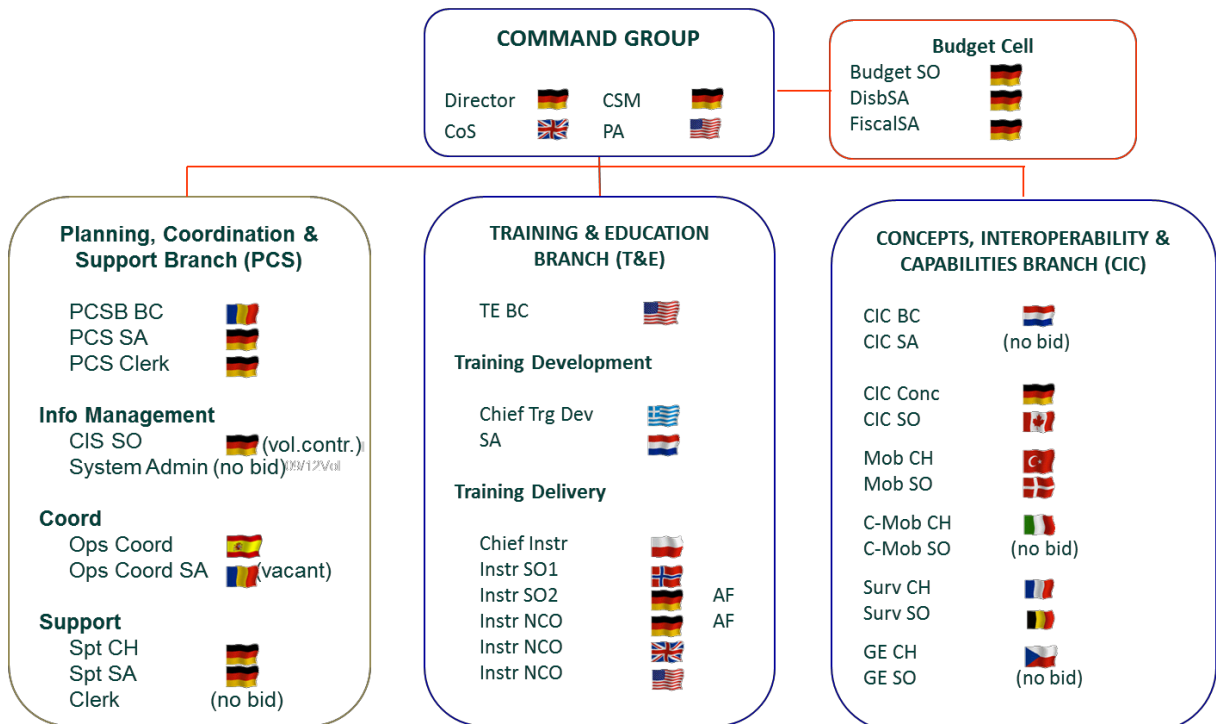
MILENG COE Location



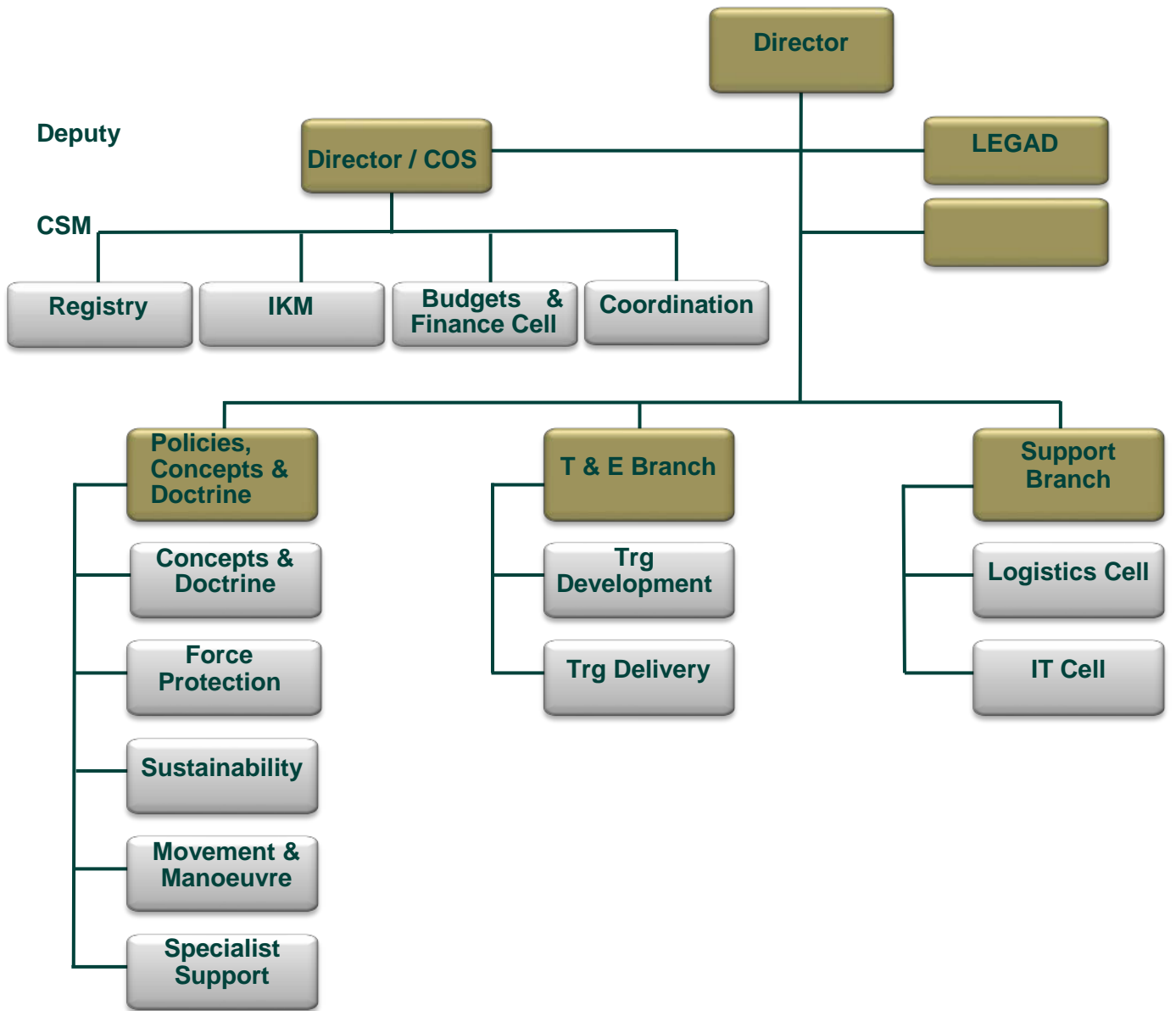
Contributing Nations



Current Organisation



Future Organisation



Barracks Pionierkaserne Auf der Schanz

Casino

Opening Hours:

Monday – Thursday: 07.30 -13.30; 15.00 - 23.00
Friday: 07.30 – 21.00
Saturday – Sunday: 10.00 – 21.00

Dining Facility

Opening Hours:

| | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| Mo. – Fr. | Sa. – Su. / Holidays |
| 06.00 – 07.30 | 07.30 – 08.15 |
| 11.15 – 12.45* | 11.30 – 12.30 |
| 16.15 – 17.30 | Closed |

*Fr. Closed from 12.00 (Lunch package)

Canteen

Opening Hours:

| | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Mo. – Do. | Sa. – Su. / Holidays |
| 06.00 – 13.00 | Closed |
| 16.15 – 19.00 | Closed |
| Fr. 6.00 – 11.00 | Closed |

Gymnasium

Opening Hours:

Monday – Thursday: 07.00 – 21.00
Friday: 12.00 – 17.00
Saturday – Sunday: Closed
Running routes (available in the Coffee room of Building 8).

Accommodation

MILENG COE owns its own accommodation of 26 rooms with 2 rooms sharing a bathroom/shower; these are contained within Building 33. Newcomers are allowed to stay for a maximum of 4 weeks in the Barracks if required. Within the Barracks there is an Officer/ NCOs Club, as well as a Canteen for messing both are available 6/7 days a week.

Hotels

As far as hotels are concerned, there is generally no problem with finding accommodation in Ingolstadt. There are several hotels of varying standards. If you need temporary accommodation for the family, there are some hotels/private houses that offer rooms with private or shared kitchens. For more information, please visit the Web page: http://www.hotel.de/de.hotels/Ingolstadt_35891/hotels.aspx.

Civil Emergency Information

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| General Emergency Number by Mobile | 112 |
| Ambulance | 112 |
| Police | 110 |
| Medical service | 116 117 |
| Telephone counselling | 0800 1 11 01 11 |
| | 0800 1 11 02 22 |
| Children and Youth phone | 0800 1 11 03 33 |
| Lock-emergency (electronic cards & permissions) | 116 116 |

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Behördenruf | 115 |
| Parents Phone | 0800 1 11 05 50 |
| Automobile Club ADAC | 0180 2 22 22 22 |

Medical care

For the MILENG COE members there is an ambulance and medical facilities available in the Pionierkaserne Barracks during working hours, this treatment is at no cost. More detailed information relating the procedures and opening hours can be obtained from the CSM. Citizens from EU benefit from the regulations for transfer of the member state`s health insurance coverage within the European Union, unless the Sending State has other rules for health insurance coverage for personnel abroad.

- In general, the EU-regulations require that MILENG COE personnel (EU citizens) must request the relevant authorities in their respective countries to issue an EU form called E-106 (in two original) stating the date of the beginning of the tour of duty and the date of ending the tour of duty. The document is valid for one year and has to be renewed every year. When filling in the E-106 your national authorities are required to state your address in Germany.
- If your spouse and/or children (EU citizens) are staying in Germany with you, you should make sure to have them included in this form, as this is a requirement for the German authorities to include them in the health insurance coverage.
- The E-106 form has to be presented to the AOK for the registration in the German System together with the marriage certificate to get insurance for your spouse.

For more detailed information how to get the German insurance please see the web pages <http://www.howtogermy.com/pages/healthinsurance.html> and <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/forms/2009/ca8421a.pdf>.

All information relating to the Ingolstadt hospital can be found on the web page at:

<http://www.klinikum-ingolstadt.de/>.

There are many pharmacies (in German Apotheke) in Ingolstadt, and some of them operate 24 hours a day. Please have a look at <http://www.bingo-ev.de/~am119/apotheke/>.

Kindergarten/Child Care Centres

In Germany, the preschool is named Kindergarten (plural Kindergärten) or Kita which is the short form for Kindertagesstätte (meaning childrens'daycare centre). Children from 3 – 6 years attend the Kindergarten. They are not part of the school system and these are often run by city or town administrations, churches, or registered societies of which many follow an educational approach like, e.g. Montessori. Attending the Kindergarten is neither mandatory nor free of charge, but can be partly or wholly funded, depending on the local authority and the income of the parents:

http://www.ingolstadt.de/kita_docs/

Kindergärten can be open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Or longer and may also house a Kinderkrippe, for children between the ages of six months (or still younger) and three years, and possibly an afternoon Hort (often associated with a primary school) for school-age children aged 6 to 10 who spend the time after their lessons there. The term Vorschule, meaning preschool, is used both for educational efforts in Kindergärten and for a mandatory class that is usually connected to a primary school. Both systems are handled differently in each German state. The Schulkindergarten is a type of Vorschule. For the different possibilities in Ingolstadt, please visit the webpage of the city: http://www.ingolstadt.de/kita_docs/kitas.php?sort=&ang=2

Schools/ Education

In accordance with the German Constitution, competence for school and culture has been given to the 16 states of the Federal Republic of Germany. The organisation and the educational aims of all school-forms are committed to school-laws of these 16 federal states. Each school describes its own aims, main focuses and types of organisation for its educational work based on its education-order and existing frames and curricula in a school-program. The school-program is the basis for the common work.

German schools' vacation dates are determined at the state level. The individual German states are responsible for their education systems. The vacation days will usually differ from state to state. There may be some overlap. Different beginning and ending days ensure that the German highways, rail system and airports are not overwhelmed with vacationing families at the same time.

The mandatory attendance starts at age 6 and ends at age 18. All children attend elementary school (Grundschule) till grade 4. After that they can take one of three school paths (Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium) based on their school performance at the elementary level. In some of the federal states grade 5 and 6 are combined to form educational units, called —Orientierungsstufe or —Förderstufe, prior to beginning one of the three above mentioned school paths in grade 7. In Berlin and Brandenburg elementary school goes up to the end of grade 6. In comprehensive schools (grade 5 – 9/10) the traditional school paths exist integrated or cooperatively. Special education schools accommodate all students, who do not fit into the traditional paths, due to various handicaps. Graduation for Hauptschule/ Mittelschule can be achieved in grade 9 or 10 and for Realschule in grade 10. Students of comprehensive schools can achieve their —Hauptschul- / Mittelschulgraduation in grade 9 or 10, their —Realschulgraduation or the permission to attend a gymnasium in grade 10.

While Hauptschul- and Realschulgraduates begin a cooperative program (work and school) or attend various Fachoberschulen, gymnasium students continue attending the gymnasium for two or three years, where upon they receive their Abitur-level degree enabling them to apply for a university or college. The above mentioned cooperative program, called Duales System, is a combination of work in the field and parallel schooling.

Private schools are an alternative to all public schools, but are – still – less established than they are in other European states.

In evening schools or colleges students who already have learnt a profession make up for grades which they were not able to achieve when going to school in the age of 15 – 18. 13 Elementary schools (Grundschule) - according with their education order - have to arrange that the children learn reading, writing and mathematical skills. There are other subjects of creative and technical character like music, sports, painting and practical work, which complete the time-table. Last but not least, it is very important that the students are enforced in social skills. Grundschule teachers recommend their students to a particular school based on such things as academic achievement, self-confidence and ability to work independently. However, in most states, parents have the final say as to which school their child attends following the fourth grade.

The Hauptschule (grades 5-9 in most German states) teaches the same subjects as the Realschule and Gymnasium, but at a slower pace and with some vocational-oriented courses. It leads to part-time enrolment in a vocational school combined with apprenticeship training until the age of 18. Hauptschule is supposed to prepare mainly practically oriented students for craft professions. Hauptschule meanwhile - more or less - has become a haven for socially disadvantaged children and immigrant students.

The Realschule (grades 5-10 in most states) leads to part-time vocational schools and higher vocational schools. It is now possible for students with high academic achievement at the Realschule to switch to a Gymnasium on graduation. Realschule is supposed to prepare mainly practically and theoretically oriented students for trade, technical and administrative professions.

The Gymnasium leads to a diploma called the Abitur which prepares students for university study or for a dual academic and vocational credential. The most common education tracks offered by the standard Gymnasium are classical language, modern language, and mathematics-natural science. In recent years many States have changed the curriculum so students can get the "Abitur" at the the end of the 12th grade. Other States are making the transition but may still require a 13th grade for the next couple of years. Gymnasium caters mainly to theoretically oriented students, who are to be prepared for various studies at universities. In fact, only 50% actually go on to start university.

The Gesamtschule, or comprehensive school, is a more recent development and is only found in some of the states. It takes the place of both the Hauptschule and Realschule and arose out of the egalitarian movements in the 1960s. It enrolls students of all ability levels in the 5th through the 10th grades. Students who satisfactorily complete the Gesamtschule through the 9th grade receive the Hauptschule certificate, while those who satisfactorily complete schooling through the 10th grade receive the Realschule certificate.

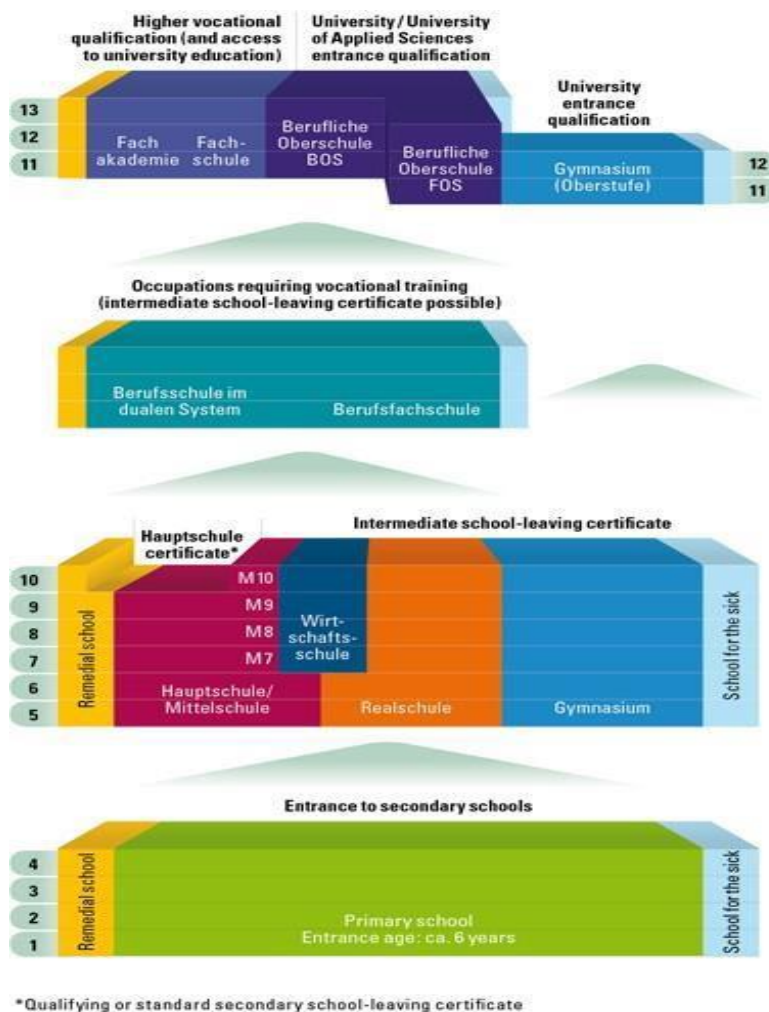
No matter what kind of school a student attends, he/she must complete at least nine years of education. A student dropping out of a Gymnasium, for example, must enroll in a Realschule or Hauptschule until nine years have been completed

Beyond the Hauptschule and Realschule lies the *Berufsschule*, combining part-time academic study and apprenticeship. The successful completion of an apprenticeship program leads to certification in a particular trade or field of work. These schools differ from the other ones 14 mentioned in that control rests not with the local and regional school authorities, but with the federal government, industry and the trade unions.

German children only attend school in the morning. There is no provision for serving lunch...

The whole German education system, including the universities, is available to the children of bona fide expatriates. The catch, of course, is that the classes are conducted in German, which is usually all right for school beginners but can become more and more of a problem as the children get older.

<http://www.km.bayern.de/education-in-bavaria.html>



Schools in Ingolstadt: <http://www.schulen-vergleich.de/ort/Ingolstadt/09161000.html>

Volkshochschule

Ingolstadt:

<http://www.ingolstadt.de/vhs/>

Language Schools Ingolstadt: http://www.inlingua-ingolstadt.de/inlingua_ingolstadt-sprachkurse.html?&L=1

<http://www.euro-ingolstadt.de/index.php>

How to choose an international school

In many cities in Germany, there may be a choice of several international school options. The following hints may help you make the choice that is right for your family:

1. Visit the school. This is of critical importance. You can learn so much about a school by walking through the halls, visiting the classrooms and watching how students interact with each other and with parents.
2. Learn about the curriculum programs it offers. You need to be sure that your child is assured an easy transfer to the next international school, back into your home country curriculum, or to university. If the program on offer is not familiar to you, learn all you can about it before making your decision.
3. If the company transferring you already has families in that city, talk to them. They are in a good position to tell you about the differences between the different schools.
4. Ask about parent involvement. A good international school should serve as the center of the expat community. Volunteering at the school is an excellent way for a non-working parent to integrate into a new community. Make sure you can talk to your child's teacher whenever you need to.
5. Ask about sports and after-school activities. If your child does not speak German, the school may be the only source of recreational activities.
6. Check if the school is for-profit or not.
7. Above all, look for a place that will be your family's school (rather than your child's school). Look for a school that is a community, where you, your children and the teachers can all work together to ensure that your German adventure is happy, rewarding and fulfilling.

Swiss International School, Ingolstadt:

http://www.swissinternationalschool.de/Schulstandorte/Ingolstadt.aspx?sc_lang=en-GB

Bavarian International School, 85778 Haimhausen: <http://www.bis-school.com/>

German Banks

If you have to pay German bills such as utilities and rent, you need a German bank account. You can have monthly payments automatically deducted from your account, which you authorize in advance and in person by signing a standing order (*Dauerauftrag*) or make regular withdrawals. The bank staff will help you to fill in the necessary form. You can use your ATM (automated teller machine) card in European ATM machines, but you may incur a large processing fee. To avoid that you should have a German bank account and use the EC card, which acts as a debit card.

There are several ways to effect payments in Germany:

Transfer (*Überweisung*) is used to transfer money from one account to another. You fill in a transfer form (*Überweisungsformular*) and hand it in. This can be done online or with a paper form.

Standing order (*Dauerauftrag*) is used if you have regularly recurring payments of a set sum, such as rent, insurance premiums, television fees, etc. This sum is deducted automatically from your account on an agreed date and transferred to the account of the recipient. The necessary forms can be filled out online or at the bank.

Direct debit (*Lastschrift*): This is a practical method if you have recurring payments that vary in size, such as the telephone, gas and electric bills. You give the recipient a direct debit authorization (*Einzugsermächtigung*) which authorizes them to deduct the respective amounts from your account. Of course, you can always cancel the authorization and stop the direct debit. As a safeguard against abuse you also have the unrestricted right for 90 days to recall any sum that was deducted in this manner. You can recall it even if it was proper, though this would give it the status of an unpaid bill.

As a rule German banks are open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Thursdays to 5:30 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. Some smaller branches shut at lunchtime. Most allow access to the *Geldautomat* and the statement printers in their foyer around the clock.

Exchanging Money

You can exchange money at most banks. Some even have special windows marked "Change". After hours and at weekends and official holidays, you can find exchange offices at railway stations or at the airports. You also have the possibility to withdraw foreign currency at an ATM using your credit card or EC card.



Tax Exemption

Almost everything sold in German stores comes with a 19% value added tax (VAT). Some products are taxed at only 7% VAT such as groceries, food, books and magazines. However this can vary from case to case as German Tax Legislation is very complicated.

Deutsche Post

That's the present name for the postal service, a piece of the former government monopoly - Deutsche Bundespost - that went public in 2000. Deutsche Post AG, Germany's only universal provider of postal services, is part of Deutsche Post DHL, the world's leading mail and logistics group. As the name "Deutsche Post DHL" implies, the new company is a major world player in the growing field of logistics. It has streamlined its operations in an effort to give the American giants, UPS and FedEx, a run for their money. German post usually takes one or two days within Germany, express services are also available

Office hours vary from town to town and depend on the size of the post office. Some smaller post offices close for lunch. In general, office hours in Ingolstadt are from 08.00 to 18.00 hrs Mondays to Fridays and 08.00 to 12.00 hrs on Saturdays. In smaller towns like Schwetzingen, post offices are open from 09.00 to 18.00 hrs. (with a lunch break from 12.30 to 14.00 hrs.) Mondays to Fridays and 09.30 to 12.30 hrs. on Saturdays. The German postal system offers several services; including banking services and now also electronic mail services like the E-Postbrief. For further info, please visit the webpage:

<http://www.deutschepost.de/dpag?lang=de EN&xmlFile=828>

Telephone

Germany has a wide selection of telephone, internet and mobile options available, but you may also find that most German carriers are best equipped at serving their native, German-speaking population, leaving somewhat of a gap in the area of English-language support.

German telephone service is also available through Telekom stores located in most towns and cities throughout the country. Your bills, correspondence and customer care will of course be in German. It's important to be aware of the terms and conditions of your service agreement. Many German phone and Internet plans are only available for example with a 2-year minimum, and also require that you cancel months in advance in order to avoid an automatic (and binding) contract extension.

Public telephones are also widely available however most of them are no longer coin operated; you will need a phone card. The cards are available in various denominations at post offices, filling stations, supermarkets, and most newsstands.

There are two general types of phone service in Germany: a "standard" analog phone service, and ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network). Each type of phone service has similar tariffs that allow you to choose the best plan for your type of use. DSL is possible with either an analog or ISDN line enabling you to surf the web and use the phone at the same time. Analog telephones, answering and fax machines from other countries can normally be used when coupled with a compatible German TAE (telephone jack) adapter. It is illegal to use most North American cordless telephone products in Germany because of the radio signal used by those devices. If you buy a cordless phone in Germany you'll be assured that it complies with local radio-frequency regulations and electrical safety guidelines. Also note that German cordless phones designated 'CT1' and 'CT2' can no longer be used as of 2009. It is often best to buy a cordless phone in Germany to be assured that it complies with radio-frequency regulations and electrical safety guidelines. Phone bills are sent monthly and are typically due within seven business days of the date of issuance. Cash payments can usually be made at any German post office or bank, a nominal fee for the *Überweisung* (bank transfer) may apply.

The default and preferred payment method is to have your monthly bills automatically debited directly from your bank account through a *Lastschriftverfahren*.

ISDN phone service utilises digital network technology to add more features and flexibility with two digital phone lines and a total of three different telephone numbers. This allows two separate phone conversations at the same time, which may be ideal for larger households or a home office that needs a dedicated line and number. On the other hand, the basic monthly fee is typically higher, and ISDN telephones and modems are somewhat more costly than their analog counterparts.

Before selecting either analog or ISDN, you may want to first check with the homeowner to find out how the house or apartment is wired and if there are any special requirements that could lead to additional costs. Many German homes only have only one telephone outlet! Cordless telephones or routers may be the best solution, offering the greatest flexibility in nearly any housing situation.

Mobile Phones

International roaming through your home carrier can be expensive. Germany has many mobile phone providers that offer a wide range of devices that are available both prepaid (pay-as-you-go) and with a contract. Mobile Internet connectivity is also widely available, but be sure to find out the rates in advance; the best deal is usually available with an extra add-on web option. Inbound mobile calls while in Germany are free of charge. As a result, calling a mobile is more expensive than a landline since the caller pays for the cost of the connection, not the receiver. In Germany it is against the law to use a mobile phone while driving, be sure to use some sort of 'hands-free' device.

The **country code** for Germany is 49. When dialing a German number from abroad, drop the initial 0 from the local area code.

The **emergency telephone numbers** in Germany are 110 for police and 112 for ambulance and fire.

Phone and mobile phone contracts

In fact, there are so many plans and options available that it can be quite hard to compare and choose one that suits you. There are a few things to know before you commit yourself to a contract that could save you being locked into a plan that doesn't work for you, or receiving a high bill you didn't expect. Remember contracts are legal agreements. Be careful to check the terms and conditions - understand your rights and obligations before you agree to it. Don't buy on impulse or sign the first contract you are given. Take your time and check things out carefully, especially hidden costs. If you rush into a deal you may regret it later! Understanding the contract is crucial. Always read mobile phone contracts thoroughly and don't sign anything unless you fully understand what you are getting for your money and your obligations in the contract. Be careful about 'going guarantor' on a phone for someone under 18 years of age as you will be responsible for paying the bills if they can't pay. Choosing the right mobile phone contract is just as important as getting the right phone - if not more so. When choosing a contract you need to remember that different companies will have similar deals for different prices, so using a price comparison tool can help you find cheap 24 month phone contracts.

First of all, you need to make sure you know exactly what you're getting with your contract. This might sound obvious but it's important to know just how many minutes you'll get a month, but also how many texts and MBs of internet download. There's no point getting a great contract that comes with many free minutes if it doesn't give you enough texts or other add-ons to go with it. You will be surprised at how quickly these extras can add up on your monthly bill. The next thing you need to look at is what additional charges are made for using roaming features of the phone. If you do a lot of travelling then this is especially important, but everyone should check this when buying 24 month phone contracts.

When buying any sort of contract you always need to make sure you know what happens when you want to get out of it. Each service provider will have their own rules and regulations when it comes to cancelling a contract and may also have different cancellation fees. The fee for cancellation can even vary between contracts so it's a good idea to know what it is before you buy to avoid any nasty surprises if you need to cancel your contract in the future. This will help you to decide whether cancelling in the future is worth it also - if you're on a cheap monthly contract and the fee is much more than this to cancel then it may be worth waiting for the contract to expire if you have a 24 month one.

It could therefore be that you have to cancel the contract already before the end of the minimum expiry period, for instance because you have to move or start a new course of studies or change your job. We asked the main companies how they would deal with such cases and their answer was basically always the same. If customers are able to present objective, sensible and plausible grounds, prior cancellation of a contract is very often possible as a gesture of goodwill. The contract terms will often use the term cancellation on "important grounds". That being said, it remains an important legal principle that contracts must be adhered to. This also applies to telephone or internet contracts that run for 24 months. After all, both contract partners have voluntarily committed to the contract and must be able to rely on each other. Therefore there is no legal right as such to rescind from a contract, although in practice many issues are and remain a matter of negotiation.

Television

In Germany there are many English programs available, but you will need cable or satellite reception to get most of it.

The first thing to check before deciding anything is your TV. The broadcast standard in Germany is "PAL" (B/G), which isn't compatible with the North American "NTSC system". So if you have a U.S. bought TV that is not a multi-system capable of processing both types of signal then you would need to obtain either a PAL/multi-system TV or a PAL/NTSC converter. Another benefit from having a multi-system is that they are usually dual voltage and anyone who has ever had to deal with voltage transformers will know what a valuable feature that is. The television stations that can be received without cable or satellite are the ARD, ZDF, the Secondary Programs and, in some areas, RTL, all of which broadcast entirely in German.

The Deutsche Telekom monopoly on German cable TV has been broken down in recent years into several smaller companies, the largest of which is Kabel Deutschland. Their offerings (often also including Broadband services) are very similar to each other and whom you choose to go with, will depend largely on which one a network has in your area.

There are about 40 channels on the cable (again, depending on where you're located). Most of them broadcast in German, but you usually get the likes of CNN, CNBC, MTV and BBC World and some cable providers offer a choice of language on certain programs.

Currently the most popular method to receive a large number of high-quality, English-language programs is to have a satellite dish installed. It is relatively inexpensive to buy the dish, LNB and receiver and there are a lot of package deals available in the German retail outlets. You should consider having a professional installer mount and align your satellite dish, as precision work is required and without the right tools and experience, you could well spend more time and effort getting nowhere, as opposed to spending a little bit on having it done properly and having it not last past the first big storm. Make sure you have your landlord's permission to put up a dish, or to adjust the existing one to the appropriate satellite. You are required to register and pay a monthly user fee (referred to as "Rundfunkbeitrag"), and there are heavy penalties if caught not paying it. For one house or flat you will have to pay € 17,98 monthly (off April 2015: € 17,50). Applications to register your TV or radio can be picked up at any German post office and many banks, or often you will automatically receive an application in the post after registering at your address with the local authorities. Payment is made by transfer after receiving the bill or you can sign up for payment by Lastschriftverfahren (direct debit). The regulating authority for these payments is the "GEZ" (Gebühreneinzugszentrale), Freimersdorfer Weg 6, 50829 Köln. The public corporations ARD, ZDF and 3rd Programmes are financed primarily by the "Rundfunkbeitrag" fees collected. **(Be aware that you most probably do not have to pay "Rundfunkbeitrag" fees due to the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), Protocol on the Status of International Military Headquarters (Paris Protocol), and/or respectivet he MOU.**

Pets

Germany has a lot of rules concerning pets, nevertheless, the Germans love pets like any other people.

If you wish to bring a cat or dog into Germany, the animal must have been vaccinated for rabies at least 30 days but no more than 12 months prior to its entry. Proof of examination must be presented at the border.

It is a European Union requirement that dogs and cats have an identification number, either on a clearly visible tattoo or as a microchip, and that this number corresponds to one on the proof of examination. (For travel between European Union countries, the pets must now have a *passport*, issued by a licensed veterinarian.)

If you live in rented quarters you must have the permission of the landlord before keeping a pet, and, as in the U.S., dogs must be licensed. Cats need no license. Check with the authorities for rules regarding other pets.

Certain breeds of dogs present special problems. The rules vary from state to state in Germany, but most consider Pit Bulls, Staffordshire Bull Terriers and American Staffordshire Terriers too dangerous. Their import is banned. Several of the states, including Bavaria, Brandenburg and North Rhine-Westphalia, also have what they consider a Category 2 *Kampfhund*, and this includes the *Rottweiler*.



There is no outright ban on the import of Rottweilers, but they must be submitted to a viciousness test. If they pass the test they are treated like any other dog. But if they fail they are subject to the same rules as the Pit Bulls and Terriers. If they are not outright banned from the state they face a high licensing fee, must be neutered and must be muzzled and kept on a leash whenever they are off the owner's property.

For more detailed information on which breeds may be banned and in which states the ban is effective it would be wise to contact a specialist in importing pets. You can also visit the following website for a detailed list of banned breeds and other information about restrictions on dangerous dogs:

http://www.zoll.de/EN/Home/home_node.html

With these and all pets, the owner is legally responsible for anything the animal does. They are subject to huge lawsuits if, for instance, a dog runs a motorcyclist off the road and he is disabled for life. A personal liability policy arising out of ownership of a dog costs about €70 a year in Germany. It's a good idea to obtain this insurance.

Dogs are not allowed in grocery stores, butcher shops and other shops where fresh food is sold. Some *Konditoreien*, or cafes, don't allow them either. Establishments that don't want you to bring your dog inside will have a small sign affixed on the window. It usually shows a picture of a dog and will read something like: "*Wir müssen leider draussen warten*" (unfortunately, we must wait outside).



You can take your dog or cat with you when traveling. Train tickets in Germany can be purchased for them at about half the regular fare. Rules for air transport of animals vary from airline to airline, but, in response to customer demand, they are usually friendly about it. The airline should be notified when you book the flight if you plan to take a pet. It's almost always required that the traveling animal be in a shipping crate that is sturdy, properly ventilated and large enough so that the pet may freely stand, turn around and lie down. Prescribed crates are available at pet stores and from most airlines. Remember to check with the airline when in doubt.



The crate usually goes in a pressurized cargo bay, though some airlines allow passengers to carry their pets in the cabin if the crate can fit under a seat.

There are pet travel services that can be useful, especially if the animal won't be accompanied by the owner. They also can advise on pitfalls to shipment such as a quarantine period at the destination.

Shopping

Mid to large-size towns all have their classic 'Marktstrassen' or market streets, often charming pedestrian zones with stores running on either side of the street. Good public transportation systems make it less necessary to shop by car, and many cities have revamped their downtown shopping areas and made them pleasant places to stroll and shop. Outdoor cafés, sidewalk musicians, benches, fountains, trees and shrubbery, weekly fruit, flower and vegetable market stands, make shopping a very pleasant experience

"The mall," however, which you may be used to, is not nearly as well-developed in Germany. But more and more of them have been opening over the last couple of years, including a variety of "Outlet Malls".

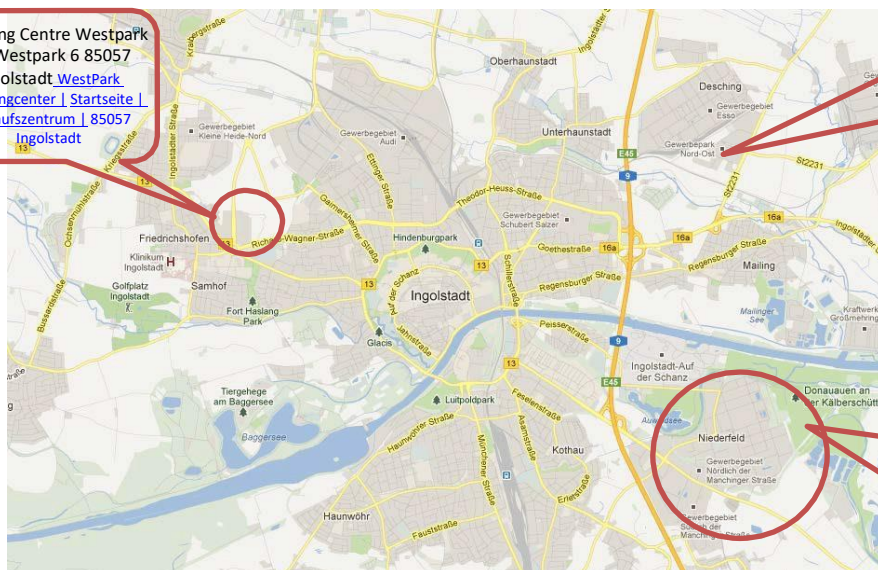
You can find a number of "Big Box" stores in many city suburbs, and even in some city centers. *Bauhaus* and *Hornbach*, for example, are do-it-yourself stores. *MediaMarkt* and *Saturn*, on the other hand, offer appliances, home electronics, music and video as well as computers and telephones. *Ikea* and *MoebelMartin* have their own outlets.

There are also the "hyper-stores" such as *Real*, *Kaufland* which offer a wide range of products including groceries, household goods, beverages, pet supplies, clothing etc. These hyper-stores are housed within shopping centers and often coupled with a few other large specialty stores.

Then there are the German "discounters" such as *Aldi* and *Lidl*, which enjoy an almost cult following and specialize in groceries and a weekly rotation of items ranging from textiles to toys or office supplies at unbeatable prices.



Shopping Centre Westpark
Am Westpark 6 85057
Ingolstadt [WestPark Shoppingcenter | Startseite | Einkaufszentrum | 85057 Ingolstadt](#)



Ingolstadt Village
Otto-Hahn-Str. 1
85055 Ingolstadt
Telephone: +49 (0)841-88 63
[Designer Outlet | Outlet Shopping • Ingolstadt Village](#)

Industry Park
Manching Str.
85053 Ingolstadt
[McDonald's](#)
<http://www.saturn.de/>
[Elektronik, Trends & Technik](#)

Once you get away from the department stores and discounters, though, specialization is the word. Many small shops offer a wide selection of items within a limited product line, such as fashions, china, glassware, leather goods, shoes, handicrafts, toys, electrical goods, musical instruments, optical instruments, books, flowers, spices, oriental carpets, sports equipment, tobacco products, antiques, candles, maps to name just a few. These niche shops, however, are often forced to charge higher prices to stay competitive.

Specialization is particularly noticeable in food stores. The *Metzgerei* (butcher), *Bäckerei* (bakery) and *Konditorei* (pastry shop) are run by masters of their profession. The product is good and these places are often set up so that you can enjoy a fresh roll, hot sausage or piece of cake right on the premises. Another very special kind of food store is the *Reformhaus* (health food store), where you can get your organic yogurt, whole grain breads, tofu and vitamins.

Sometimes savings are also possible by ordering online. You can eliminate the travel agent's fee when booking airline tickets or hotel rooms, and many online retailers have saved themselves the expense of a bricks and mortar store. The big mail-order companies like *Otto* and *Neckermann* have put their entire catalogs online, accessible 24/7.

Another advantage of online shopping is variety. Expatriates can turn to the web to get items from home that is not normally available in German stores. While there are some British and American stores in the larger German cities, many expats don't have easy access to them. To the delight of many customers, enterprising store-owners are now offering their products online with convenient English language websites. Large variety, ease and security of payment, and efficient shipping combine to make on-line shopping a great alternative. Personal checks as Americans know them are virtually non-existent in Germany. Non-cash transactions are usually by fund transfer or with debit cards from the customer's bank or with an EC card. Credit cards are not as well established as in some other countries, but are becoming more and more popular.

Shopping at American Military Bases at Hohenfels or Grafenwoehr

The US Military Bases in Hohenfels or Grafenwoehr offer some shopping opportunities. There are PX and Commissaries, where you can buy food and groceries. There are cash machines available on the US bases. You may use your debit cards to withdraw US cash if it has the corresponding sign on the back of your card. German bank card does not work?

Hohenfels: <http://www.hohenfels.army.mil/>

Grafenwoehr: <http://www.grafenwoehr.army.mil/>



You will require ID (installation pass) to access the compound. There is the Main **AAFES PX** with clothing, baby items, make-up, jewelry, and collectible tourist items. The **PX Annex** carries household goods, pet supplies, sporting goods, office supplies, and toys. There is also a bookstore. The **Power Zone** sells electronics. The **Car Care Centre** sells auto parts (including first aid kits and safety items needed for the vehicle inspection). There is a food court and some other smaller shops.

Privileges

All military personnel and their dependents are granted certain privileges based on the SOFA *, MOUs *, MOAs *, and the Protocol on NATO Headquarters and supplemental Agreements. This Individual Logistic Support (ILS) is provided by the US and governed by the Army in Europe Regulation 600-700. If you have any doubts about your privileges, please contact the Budget and Finance Office!

* SOFA (taken from Wikipedia)

A status of forces agreement (SOFA) is an [agreement](#) between a host country and a foreign nation stationing forces in that country. SOFAs are often included, along with other types of Military agreements, as part of a comprehensive security arrangement. A SOFA does not constitute a security arrangement; it establishes the rights and privileges of foreign personnel present in a host country in support of the larger security arrangement. The SOFA is intended to clarify the terms under which the foreign military is allowed to operate. Typically, purely military issues such as the locations of bases and access to facilities are covered by separate agreements. The SOFA is more concerned with the legal issues associated with military individuals and property. This may include issues like entry and exit into the country, tax liabilities, postal services, or employment terms for host-country nationals, but the most contentious issues are civil and criminal jurisdiction over the bases. For civil matters, SOFAs provide for how civil damages caused by the forces will be determined and paid.

* MOU (taken from Wikipedia)

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is a [document](#) describing a [bilateral](#) or [multilateral](#) agreement between parties. It expresses a convergence of will between the parties, indicating an intended common line of action. It is often used in cases where parties either do not imply a legal commitment or in situations where the parties cannot create a legally enforceable agreement. It is a more formal alternative to a [gentlemen's agreement](#).

* MOA (taken from Wikipedia)

A memorandum of agreement (MOA) or cooperative agreement is a [document](#) written between parties to cooperatively work together on an agreed upon project or meet an Agreed objective. The purpose of an MOA is to have a written understanding of the agreement between parties.

Driving in Germany

Your own driver's license is valid in Germany, at least at the outset. If it was issued by a European Union country, you will not need to exchange it for a German one. If it was issued by a country outside the EU, you can only use it for six months from your date of arrival. If you will be residing in Germany for longer than six months but less than one year, you can obtain a six-month extension to use your existing license.

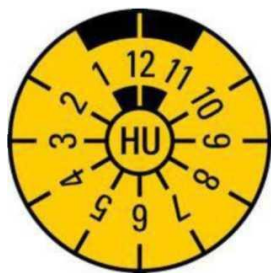
A national of a non-EU country who will be living in Germany longer than a year will need a German driver's license (*Führerschein*). In many cases this is a simple matter of exchanging the license for a German one. In other cases it will be necessary to take a written exam, a driving test, or both. To find out the specific requirements for exchanging a license it is best to contact the local authorities. Non-EU Soldiers and family members are authorized the USAREUR Drivers license.

The written test, which covers such things as rules of the road and traffic signs, can be taken in a number of languages, including English. It's taken at a drivers' school (*Fahrschule*), so let them know in advance what language you prefer. Be warned, the test is tough, and 30% of the people who take it fail to pass it on the first try. So you should study for it. The test is multiple choice, but there isn't necessarily only one correct answer to each question. Some or all of the answers may be correct.

Vehicle Registration

When visiting the local motor vehicle registry (*Autozulassungsstelle*) a person needs proof of ownership, proof of insurance and, if the car was purchased in Germany, the *Kraftfahrzeugbrief*, a document that is supposed to accompany the car through all owners from assembly line to scrap yard. The car dealer from whom the car was purchased will usually handle the registration.

The vehicle must also pass a safety inspection. Tests are conducted by the TÜV (*Technischer Überwachungsverein*) nationwide. New cars must be inspected after three years, and thereafter all cars must be inspected at two-year intervals. Laws governing the condition of cars and motorcycles are strict. The basic rule is that if an item is mounted on the vehicle, it must function and be completely serviceable even if not essential to operation.



Car Insurance

Before a person can register a car in Germany he or she must have proof of third party liability coverage for all damage or injury to another person, car or object. While collision or comprehensive insurance isn't required by law, most institutions financing the purchase of a vehicle do require it. This can raise the insurance bill considerably, and insurance is not cheap in Germany.

There are numerous factors in addition to coverage that influence the insurance price. Beginning drivers pay more than experienced drivers; those driving big, powerful cars pay more than those with more modest vehicles; those living in urban areas pay more than those in rural areas, and those who have been found liable in accidents pay more than those who haven't. If you have a good driving record in your home country you can get credit for it here. Get a letter from your insurance agent back home. If the German agent says you can't get this credit try another agent. Some insurance agents in Germany are geared to getting the expatriate through these complexities.

Traffic Laws

Don't be mistaken by the high speeds on German roads believing that there are no reduced speed zones. There are, in fact, many sections of the German Autobahns that have speed limits. Usually, speeders will not be stopped at the time of the offense but will get a speeding ticket through the mail. This may be as long as two or three months after the incident. The German police use special cameras to catch speeders. Persons exceeding the limits by more than 30 kilometers an hour can count on losing licenses for a period of up to three months, plus a high fine.

A computerised point system is used to get dangerous drivers off the road. Increasingly strict penalties are the order of the day especially where drugs or alcohol are involved, and especially if there was an accident. Except where posted because of construction or traffic problems, there are no speed limits on the autobahns, although the recommended maximum is 130 kph (about 80 mph). Accidents occurring at speeds of over 130 kph on the autobahns can result in insurance payment claims being annulled regardless of who was at fault.

All vehicles in Germany are required to have serviceable seat belts for all persons in the car, including those riding in the back seat. And the law requires that they be worn. There is a €30 on-the-spot fine for each person in a car not using a seat belt. Children under 12 are not allowed to ride in the front seat of a car and must use car seats certified by the German government. In Germany, a driver can be forced to submit to a blood test. The blood alcohol limit is 0.5 milligrams of alcohol per milliliter of whole blood. Persons exceeding this limit will be fined and face a license suspension of up to three months for the first offense.

German law requires that all automobiles have a portable red reflective triangle and a first aid kit in their trunk. If a car is stopped for any reason, the triangle must be placed 200 meters behind it if on the autobahn and 100 meters behind it on all other roads. The cars emergency flashers should also be turned on. You can only pass vehicles on the left. There's a high fine for passing on the right.

Driving with parking lights alone is prohibited. You must use your headlights (low-beam) at night and during inclement weather. You must stop for anyone using, or preparing to use, a white-striped „zebra“pedestrian crossing. Some fines may be collected on the spot, provided the driver has enough ready cash on hand; otherwise, your name and address will be taken and a ticket will be mailed to you later with an accompanying payment slip.

Driving on snow-covered roads is permitted only if your car is equipped with the proper tires. There are dedicated winter tires as well as all-weather tires that may be acceptable.

Germany's mandatory winter tire law started on 04 December 2010. Winter tires are compulsory when driving in wintry conditions and a fine of EURO 40 will be levied for a first Offence. If, however, the free flow of traffic has been affected due to a car not being equipped with winter tires then the fine is EURO 80 and the driver's license will incur a penalty point at the Central Register in Flensburg. In the event of a car fitted with summer

tires being responsible for a road accident then the fine will be further increased and 3 penalty points attributed to the license. However, if your car fitted with summer tires is only parked, you will not receive a fine. The user of a vehicle without winter tires may well find the motor insurance to be invalidated. Also all-season tires count as winter tires, if they have the letters M + S (= mud and snow) on it or even more important to be absolutely on the safe side, the Alpine Symbol (snowflake with the mountain) as even some summer tires manufactured in China or US can carry the letters M+S!

Fuel

Since February 2011, Germany has also introduced the so-called E10, which is a fuel mixture of 10% Ethanol (that's where the abbreviation E10 comes from) and 90% gasoline. Before it was only 5% of ethanol blend. This E10 mixture can be used in the internal combustion engines of most modern automobiles and light-duty vehicles without need for any modification on the engine or fuel system. E10 is already used in various countries - in some countries it is optional and in others it is mandatory - due to economic and environmental reasons. Approximately 90% of all vehicles are able to use E10. New vehicles mostly can use it, older ones might have a problem and some modifications of the engine will eventually become necessary. However, the normal fuel with 5% will be still available at the fueling stations. But to make absolutely sure if your vehicle is fit to use E10, you can consult the following websites:

http://www.dat.de/7e_10liste/e_10vertraeglichkeit.pdf
<http://www.adac.de/infotestrat/tanken-kraftstoffe-und-antrieb/benzin-und-diesel/e10/default.aspx>

Traffic signs

<http://www.transchool.lee.army.mil/adso/documents/zeichen.pdf>

Traffic Conditions

Before departing on trips requiring travel on the Autobahn, it's a good idea to get a traffic report with current road conditions. Delays during holidays, ski season and for accidents are frequent.

<http://www.bayerninfo.de/>

Environmental Zones (Umweltzonen)

German cities, under a law passed in 2006, are acquiring environmental zones (Umweltzonen); areas into which you can't drive your car unless it bears a windshield sticker certifying that it has an acceptable emission level.

There are three different stickers: a green one certifying that the vehicle is environmentally acceptable; a yellow one for less acceptable vehicles and a red one for those that are still less acceptable. Yellow and red stickers will soon be phased out, after which all vehicles permitted in the environmental zones will need a green sticker. The stickers are hard to counterfeit and would be destroyed in any effort to remove them from the windshield.

The areas are marked as environmental green zones with the sign 270.1. The obligatory additional sign then regulates which vehicles with which colour of environmental badges are allowed access into this area. The sign 270.2 rescinds the environmental green zone.





Stickers are numbered and color coded and includes your license plate number

The first environmental zones were established on 01 January 2008 in Berlin, Cologne and Hannover. Many others have since been established like e.g. in Dusseldorf, Stuttgart and Bonn. Mannheim established the zone already beginning of 2008 and Heidelberg on 01 January 2010. Foreign plated cars, and those of the US forces in Europe, are also required to have the stickers. They can be bought, for €5, at vehicle registration offices and vehicle inspection stations (*TUVs*) on presentation of your car's registration, which usually has data on its pollution level. Authorized garages also supply them, but possibly will charge more than €5. It's also possible to order one online, e.g.:

<http://www.environmental-badge.co.uk/en/shop.html>

Vehicles without environmental badge may not pass through the green zone, otherwise a penalty of €40,00 and a penalty point in Flensburg impend, even if the vehicle would be allowed to pass through the zone based on its emission value. This is also valid for all vehicles registered in foreign countries, like cars, trucks, and busses, as well as for business travellers and for tourists. For this reason it is recommended that all drivers to inform themselves about the environmental badges and to purchase it on time, if they wish to enter one of the increasing number of green zones in Germany.

A good site in English with an extensive FAQ section on the Environmental Zones can be found at: [TÜV NORD | Making our world safer.](#)

Parking

You will need to buy a blue parking display disk available at gas stations.



In some areas you will see a large blue sign with a white 'P' which means you may park in the designated area for free for the set amount of time on the sign i.e., 2 Stunden (2 hours). Set the parking display disc to your arrival time to the nearest half hour. Display it on your dashboard.



Not all parking areas are free so you must pay at the parking machine and obtain a ticket which you must display on the dashboard.

In underground car parks you have to take a ticket to enter. Keep the ticket with you and pay at the machine when you are leaving. Retrieve the ticket from the machine and insert in the machine at the exit barrier.



Parking in Ingolstadt

The Parkleitsystem is a parking guidance system using a series of electric signs around the central area of a city. These blue-and-white signs indicate the occupancy of various nearby parking garages. Next to the name of the parking garage is the word "frei" (spots available) or "besetzt" (full).



Here is a link to a general online parking system overview of the various car parks in the city, with all the necessary details and the actual number of spaces available to the excellent website of the city of Ingolstadt:

<http://www2.ingolstadt.de/Wirtschaft/Parken/>

Housing

The housing market in Ingolstadt is varied and it will require a time to find the appropriate house or flat. The average prices for houses you can find on <http://www.miet-check.de/mietspiegel Ingolstadt.php>. The housing standard is good but you have to remember that there will be no kitchen in the rental houses normally and the deposit is normally 2-3 monthly rent rate.

German practices and terminology are essential when you need to find a house or apartment. If you want one bedroom with a living room and dining room, you will actually be looking for a 3 *Zimmer* (three-room) home in Germany. Bathrooms, WCs, kitchens and halls aren't included in the number of rooms. Furnished apartments are rare, and will cost a great deal more than an unfurnished place.

Unfurnished apartments here are just that: completely unfurnished. They don't have built-in cabinets, closets or even lighting fixtures. Stoves, refrigerators, kitchen cabinets, wardrobes, bookshelves, tables, beds, chairs, curtains, curtain rods, lights and everything else are your problem.



There are several ways of finding a place to live in Germany. The first and probably quickest is through an *Immobilienmakler*, a real estate agent. The disadvantage to this method is the high cost: these firms usually charge between two and three months' rent plus tax for the place they find you. Their fee is completely separate from the deposit you'll have to pay the landlord, which will amount to another two to three months' rent, not including the first month's rent.



Another method of finding a place is through the newspaper. The disadvantage is that a good place may be already taken before your call gets through. There also may be a language problem, as there are a lot of abbreviations in newspaper or internet ads, here are a few that might be of help to you:

Qm / m² = square meters
Zi = Zimmer = rooms
BJ = Baujahr = year built
WC = water closet Bad = bath
Du = Dusche = shower
EG = Erdgeschoss = 1st floor
OG = Obergeschoss = upper floor
DG = Dachgeschoss = attic
Ka = Kaution = security deposit
NK = Nebenkosten = utility charges
ZH = Zentralheizung = central heating plant
EBK = Einbauküche = built-in kitchen

A third method, and sometimes the best is finding a place through word of mouth. Your friends and colleagues often know of places in their own area, or one being vacated by a departing colleague.

You may also be interested in finding a place through any number of dedicated real estate websites. You may even find some that have information and listings in English. Most of the real estate websites allow you to browse listings selected by price, location, size and other criteria. Most listings have many photographs that allow you the opportunity to take a "virtual tour".

The security deposits are normally two to three months' rent, which is in addition to your first month's rent. However, the deposit will be returned with interest when you leave, provided your quarters are in good order.

The following webpages are another good source for finding a place.

[Immobilien, Wohnungen und Häuser bei ImmobilienScout24](#)

get the other webpages.



A few hints for living in German rented quarters:

- It's useful to have an inventory of anything that is in your home and any deficiencies that are seen should be noted. This is simply protection for you and your landlord.
- Avoid loud noises between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. and from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. Monday through Saturday and all day on Sundays and official German Holidays.
- Most cities require that trash be separated in a number of ways. There will usually be separate receptacles (mainly on the landlord's property but sometimes community ones on a nearby sidewalk) - one for metal and plastic, one for paper, one each for green, brown and white glass, and one for all else. If you want to get rid of something such as a piece of furniture that's too big for the trash containers, you can call the sanitation office and request its removal. This will usually be done on a Sperrmüll (large trash) day.
- Wash and dry laundry only in the areas or rooms provided by the landlord.
- Leave cars, bicycles, baby carriages, etc., only in areas provided by the landlord. The cleaning of rugs, blankets and the like should be done only in designated areas.
- Obtain the landlord's written permission if you wish to get a pet.
- Lock entrance doors from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. if more than one family lives in the building.
- Close and lock all doors and windows in your apartment during periods of extended absence.
- Install satellite dishes and television or radio antennas only with the permission of the landlord and in compliance with local laws.
- Inform the landlord immediately of any damage to gas, water or electrical lines.
- Find out from the rental agreement who is responsible for the cleaning of halls, stairways, front walk, etc. It could be you!
- Never grill, barbecue or make an open fire on a balcony.
- Never pour or shake anything from windows or balconies. Make sure flowerpots or boxes on windows or balconies are secure and that watering them doesn't create a nuisance to neighbors below.

The payment to the landlord must be effected monthly, normally at the beginning of each month and is in two parts: the rent, and the Nebenkosten - utility costs. The latter can include such things as a share of the landlord's property tax, heat, stairwell cleaning, trash collection and water. If the price of one of these is raised during the period covered by the lease, your utility charges can be increased accordingly. You generally pay separately for your electricity and gas, though these can be included in the Nebenkosten.



It's advisable to employ the services of a lawyer or legal advisor before signing a rental contract. Even if you speak excellent German, the contract may be too long and packed with too much legalese for a layman to understand. It might even contain a pitfall like an annual rent increase. On the other hand, you may be responsible for some things that aren't spelled out in the contract. The main parts of the landlord-tenant relationship are specified by law. There may be nothing in the rental contract dealing with notice periods, renovations required or actions in the event of non-payment of the rent, but these things are still covered due to the German Law. But probably even better than a lawyer and cheaper are the so-called tenants' associations throughout Germany:

| Name | Phone-Nr | Email-address | Website | Address |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|---|---|
| FECHNER IMMOBILIEN | (08 41) 4 93 60 08 | info@fechner-immobilien.com | http://www.fechner-immobilien.com/ | Manchinger Str. 54, 85053 Ingolstadt |
| Csallner Immobilien OHG | 0841 / 97 55 99 | m.floegerhoefer@csallner-immobilien.de | www.csallner-immobilien.de | Unterlettenweg 1, 85051 Ingolstadt |
| Dirr Immobilien GmbH | 0841- 77365 | info@dih-immo.de | www.dih-immo.de | Sperlingstr. 6, 85051 Ingolstadt |
| DONAU IMMOBILIEN GMBH | 0841 / 85770 | info@donau-immo.de | www.donau-immo.de | Arbostr. 28, 85055 Ingolstadt |
| GEISS IMMOBILIEN | 0841- 62031 | fg@immobilien-geiss.de | www.immobilien-geiss.de | Peisserstr. 62, 85053 Ingolstadt |
| ICE Immobilien & Finanzierungen | 0841 - 88 15 444 | info@ice-immobilien.net | www.ice-immobilien.net | Am Nordbahnhof 27, 85049 Ingolstadt |
| Immobilien Wenzel | 0841 56204 | franz.wenzel@immobilienwenzel.de | www.immobilienwenzel.de | Kreuzstr. 14, 85049 Ingolstadt |
| Paul Hickl Immobilien | 0841- 87616 | paulhickl@immo-in-bayern.de | www.immo-in-bayern.de | Langgässerstr. 26 a, 85049 Ingolstadt |
| Sparkassen Immobilien | | | http://www.s-immobilien.de/index.html | |

Energies Providers

Relating the energies supply you have to visit the **Stadtwerke Ingolstadt – Energie GmbH, Ringerlstrasse 28, 85057 Ingolstadt** to get all necessary forms for supply of water, gas and electricity. In accordance with your bilateral national agreement, as the NATO member, you could ask for tax free cost. You can also use the Web page: <http://www.sw-i.de/>. It is not necessary to use only the Stadtwerke Ingolstadt, the private firms for gas, oil and electricity are also possible. Please note that in Germany you are charged for water and sewer off your water meter so water your grass can be quite expensive unless you have a separate meter.

Tenants' Association

If you need to rent a house or a flat here in Germany and especially in Ingolstadt and its surroundings, you will most probably find yourself in a weaker position than your landlord, as you are not familiar with German legislation and customs and the German language is not your mother tongue. Whilst the one party owns an apartment or even an entire apartment building, the other party is dependent on goodwill to rent somewhere to live. Generally speaking there are too few apartments and those with fewer financial means or who come from a socially disadvantaged background have particular difficulties in finding suitable accommodation. Once you do have an apartment new problems may arise such as.:

- Are the annual utility charges calculated correctly?
- Am I allowed to reduce the rent due to deficiencies like defective heating, plumbing etc.?
- Do I have to pay all increases in rental costs?
- Do I have protection against unwarranted eviction?
- What do I have the right to use (e.g. the garden, the garage)?
- When is it my turn to clean (e.g. the hallway, the stairs)?

In those cases, you have the possibility to get help from the Tenants' Association for Ingolstadt and the Surrounding Area - Mieterverein Ingolstadt. (For more detailed information please visit their webpage: <http://www.mieterverein-ingolstadt.de/>). The Tenants' Association for Ingolstadt and the surrounding area provides advice and assistance to its 2.900 members with the help of lawyers specialised in tenants' law. These lawyers are located in the main office in Ingolstadt.

Why join? It is often difficult to deal with such problems on your own as an individual. The Ingolstadt Tenants' Association However it does not offer advice to its members - it also has a public role in defending the interests of tenants. Through press releases, mailings and personal appeals, the Association strives to ensure that tenant-friendly laws are passed, that enough apartments are built and that rents remain affordable. In addition, the Association tries to establish contacts with politicians and administrators at federal, state and local level. Whether this is successful or not depends on the number of members and their involvement. Anyone who acknowledges the constitution of the Association can become a member. As a member, you are entitled to use the legal advice services offered, by appointment. You can benefit from the service for € 75 per year. Should a lawsuit become necessary, you can either be represented by a lawyer of your own choice, or you can choose one of the Association's contract lawyers. Possible court costs will, however, be your responsibility!

How to join: Membership will come into effect after signing an application to join. <http://www.mieterverein-ingolstadt.de/online-beitritt/>

Please provide your address and the Association will be happy to send you the necessary forms.

The first full annual membership fee (€ 75) and the one-time admission fee (€ 20) should be paid together (€ 95) upon joining. By signing the application form you automatically recognised the Association's constitution, which may be obtained from the office upon request. Membership fees are calculated on a quarterly basis and you will receive an annual invoice.

Additional hints for domestic appliances:

Shutters - these roll-down shades serve as protection from the cold and sun, give privacy, and offer more security. Most Germans put their shutters down in the evening, or when they are away from their homes for an extended period. Shutters are easy to use. Just pull or release the strap inside the window. On older windows, you can lock the Rolladen in place for extra security by releasing a small lever found on the window frame or doorframe.

Water- the water in this area is considered hard water with a grade of 3. This accounts for a considerable amount of calcium. Care needs to be taken with dishwashers and washing machines. Also, note that there is no fluoride added to German water.

Dishwashers - due to the high concentration of calcium, you should use the "5 in 1" dishwasher tablets, powder or so-called "Anti-Kalk" tablets. In addition, it is very important to add dishwasher salt to the compartment in the base of the dishwasher every one to two months. Do not use regular table salt. You may purchase a red box of dishwasher salt crystals (e.g. Somat Spezial Salz) at German supermarkets and at the Commissary. Use a readily available dishwasher cleaner on an empty cycle every 2/3 months to clear away hard water deposits.

Stove - many German stoves often work like a convection oven because there is always a fan blowing. Food seems to cook faster in these ovens. You may have to shorten the cooking time and/or turn down the temperature. Remember that the temperature is in Celsius.



Washing Machine - again, due to the high concentration of calcium, you must add water-softening salt or tablets to your washing machine. This is sold at German grocery stores (for example: Calgon in tablet, powder, or liquid form). Try to use a German detergent. German washing machines are different from North American machines in that their cycle is very long. This is because hot water does not enter the machine directly. Instead, cold water is heated in the washing machine, therefore extending the cycle. Another difference is that you must clean the filter a few times a year. It is usually located in the front panel of the machine. Refer to the owner's manual for instructions, or look up the make of your machine on the internet and download the instructions. Use a washing machine cleaner on an empty cycle every 2/3 months to clear away hard- water deposits.

Dryer - German dryers are smaller than North American dryers and seem to take much longer. They do not often have an exhaust hose, and therefore you must attach the water outlet pipe to your main water outlet pipe, or you must empty the "water drawer." You must clean the lint filter after every load. In addition, you should clean the main dryer filter every 2-3 months, or when you notice that your clothes are not getting dry enough. You will be surprised how much wet lint accumulates in this filter. It is located on the lower panel of your dryer. Refer to the owner's manual or download the manual from the internet.

Irons - You will need to use distilled water in your iron due to hard water build-up. Distilled water can be bought at most grocery stores.

Coffee makers and Kettles - again, you should use distilled water. Due to the hard water in the area you can clean coffee makers with a special citrus cleaner called "Bio-Entkalker". Kettles clean well with vinegar. Be sure to rinse very well.



Airing your house- since German houses do not have forced air furnaces, there is very little exchange of air, meaning that the air in your house can become stale very quickly. You should therefore fully open several windows every morning for at least 10 minutes to create a new flow of air. You will notice many open windows with bedding hanging out to air.

Radiators - most German houses use hot water radiators, located in each room. The average temperature to keep these on is "3" but they can be turned down at night. If you hear a lot of excess water "tinkling," or if only half the radiator seems to heat it is time to let some air out of the radiator. Ask your property owner or a neighbour to show you how to do this the first time with a special radiator key which you can buy at a hardware store.

Window Washing - it is you who is responsible for cleaning windows, not your landlord.

Garbage and Recycling - garbage and recycling receptacles are provided by your property owner. The green bin is for recycling and the black/grey bin is for garbage (Restmüll). Ensure that you have an appropriate size of bin for your family size. Garbage and recycling waste are collected every two weeks on a weekly rotating basis. You should put out the garbage or recycling waste the night before to avoid missing an early morning pick-up. If you have excess garbage or miss a week, you can buy "Restmüll bags" at some stores and in other communities. These large blue bags cost about € 3 and can be put out at the same time as the black bin. If you have excess recycling waste, which you most likely will have you can take it to the Recycling Depot at BUECHL Robert-Bosch-Straße 1 Ingolstadt 0841 9646-63. The hours are 08:00 -16:00 Monday to Friday, Saturday 08:00 -12:00. The depot is closed on German holidays. This is a place to drop off unwanted items such as dishes, bikes, computers, toys, or cleaning products that you no longer need. You can help yourself to any items you would like to take home.

Airport:

The MUNICH International Airport Franz Josef Strauss, named after the former Bavarian Ministerpraesident, is approx. 65 km away and can be reached by car within 30 minutes or by Bus, Airport Express X109 depart from ZOB Ingolstadt.

For more information see: [Munich Airport - Passengers and Visitors](#)

Railway Connections

Ingolstadt has direct connections to many cities of Germany. The German Railways (Deutsche Bahn) offer regional, express, and intercity connections. It is recommended to travel by express or intercity as most trains have dining cars.

It is advisable to pay the extra fee to reserve your seat. A large number of travelers use railway services on all days. Also note, the DB will accept the VAT form at the station when

purchasing tickets.

For more information see: <http://www.bahn.de/i/view/GBR/en/index.shtml>

Buses

The city of Ingolstadt is providing a lot of Bus transportation in the City and the surrounding of Ingolstadt.

For more information see: <http://www.invg.de/>

Taxis:

There are a lot of taxis in Ingolstadt. In general use taxis that clearly show a telephone number on the side. The price for a taxi depends on the company. First kilometer costs approximately 1.75 € and every additional kilometer approximately 1.60 €. The cheapest and easiest way to order a taxi is by phone or by SMS. For trips at night you will have to expect a 0.10 € p. Km. It is not mandatory to tip German taxi drivers.

For more information see: <http://www.taxi-ingolstadt.de/home.html>