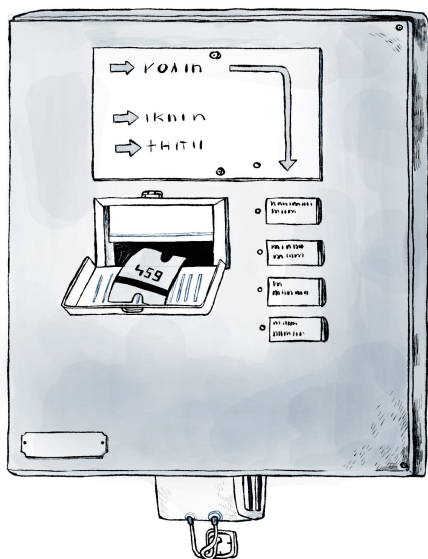




Österreichische
Hochschüler_innenschaft

Residence in Austria

for foreign
Students



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STUDENTS' UNION (ÖH)

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Residence in Austria

for foreign students

February 2026

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Dear Student,

Congratulations for your decision to study in Austria.

Before taking up those studies, you have to cope with requirements regarding university admission, residence permit, (including financing your studies, or access to labour market. To make life easier, the department for foreign students prepared four brochures, covering

- › University admission
- › Residence permit
- › Access to labour market
- › Hints how to handle administrative proceedings

You will find all information necessary to deal with those issues in those booklets. If there are additional questions or specific requests for information, please check the homepage www.oeh.ac.at or contact our department either via e-mail: ar@oeh.ac.at or via phone: +43/1/310 88 80 - 65 (-67 for legal counselling)

The actual counselling hours are published at www.oeh.ac.at/beratung

All the best for your studies

The Team of the department for foreign students



f.l.t.r.: Viktoria Kudrna, Selina Wienerroither, Umut Ovat

Hello,

student life can sometimes be quite turbulent. Each semester brings new challenges: an updated curriculum, searching for support services and financial aid, or keeping track of your rights and responsibilities as a student toward your university.

We, the Austrian Students' Union (ÖH), support students in a wide variety of situations. We advise, accompany, and assist wherever it is possible and necessary – via email, phone, video call, or in person. We inform you about your rights in your studies, at your university, and in everyday life. We do this through individual consultations, our advisory brochures, our website www.oeh.ac.at, our regular newsletter and of course on our social media channels.

These services are a central part of our work as a student representative body. However, it is equally important to clearly address existing problems and work together to find concrete solutions. That is why we advocate for you politically. As ÖH, we are actively engaged in advocacy and negotiate with political decision-makers to gradually improve your study conditions.

Studying. Changes.

For sustainable change to be possible, a strong ÖH is needed – one that clearly articulates students' concerns and openly addresses grievances. The ÖH Federal Representation has set itself the goal of being critical, outspoken, and above all visible. This brochure is a contribution toward that goal.

Enjoy reading!

Selina Wienerroither, Viktoria Kudrna, Umut Ovat

Residence in Austria for foreign students

The regulations of Residence in Austria are based on the following laws:

- › Aliens' police act 2005 (FPG)
- › Settlement and Residence act (NAG)
- › Settlement and Residence act - implementing regulation (NAG-DV)

Depending on citizenship, there different regulations apply. We deal with the regulations for EEA- and Swiss nationals first, then proceed to initial and renewal applications of third country nationals.

1. Registration Certificate for EU/EEA Citizens

Students from EU/EEA countries or Swiss nationals are allowed to enter and study in Austria when in possession of a valid passport or ID card for up to three months without any further visa. If you plan to stay for more than three months, you have to apply for a registration certificate at the local immigration authority (city magistrate or district authority)

The following documents are necessary:

- › valid passport or ID
- › confirmation of a sufficient health insurance (e.g. the European health insurance - see backside of e-card) or a students' insurance
- › credible explanation of sufficient financial means
- › confirmation of admission from a higher education institution

If you do not register within four months, there will be an administrative fine (most likely).

2. Initial Application for third Country Nationals

If you are a third country national, the student residence permit is based on an admission decision by a higher education institution. The initial application can be submitted either via the Austrian embassy or general consulate in your home country (or the embassy responsible for your home country) or during legal stay in Austria directly at the immigration authority. It's legal to do so during any legal short-term visit (with or without visa), but you must not remain just by submitting the application: If the period of your legal stay expires, you have to leave.

If you need a visa type C to travel to Austria, the application at home is much easier. Using a visa type C from another Schengen member state, this may trigger a police investigation if you made false claims to get this visa.

The following documents are necessary:

- › completely filled and signed form of application for a residence permit
- › recent photo (not older than 6 months)
- › valid passport
- › birth certificate
- › admission letter
- › police record that is not older than three months
- › particulars on the financial means for your stay, which is € 722,58 per month up to 24 years of age, or € 1.308,39 if older (figures for 2026, adapted annually). This can be a bank account statement, savings book, proof of income or a declaration of liability respectively a binding contract with a third person (residing within the EEA) for a certain financial support issued by a notary.
- › Explanation regarding the source of money if not obvious
- › Proof of a valid health insurance equivalent with the Austrian state-run system and valid in Austria for the period of the residence permit. Applying abroad, a travel health insurance is accepted in most cases as the full-scale insurance is to be presented when receiving the residence permit (card) in Austria.
- › proof of an initial accommodation (can be short-term)
- › If staying in Austria already: registration form

Amount of financial means (2026):

- › For students **up to 24 years** of age: € 722,58 net per month
- › For students **older than 24 years** of age: € 1.308,39 net per month
- › **Couples** have to show € 2.064,12 together, for minor children there are € 201,88 added per child. The total sum will cover regular expenses like rent, loan instalments, health insurance, etc up to € 386,43. If those regular payments are higher, the amount over € 386,43 is to be added to the required financial means. If savings or bank accounts are shown, the period the residence permit is applied for has to be covered (standard: 12 months).

CAUTION!

If someone is applying for the residence permit for a joint study degree within Erasmus, issued for two years, the full period of 24 months has to be covered.

All document originals are to be shown, copies submitted with the application form. Non-German language documents need translation (most likely, sometimes English language documents are accepted, but there is no formal rule) and diplomatic legalisation: Apostile from the country of origin of those documents is compulsory, if the final legalisation of the Austria embassy is required will depend on the country's international treaties.

CAUTION!

If you want to apply within Austria, please keep the visa- or visa-waiver-regulations in mind.

› You may be subject of the **Schengen regulations** for a visa waiver: Then the allowed period of stay is 90 days within the last 180 days, the calculation will shift forward each day.

› If there are older **bilateral** agreements, those treaties mention either 90 days or three months. Theoretically, leaving Austria for one day to trigger a new 90-days period is sufficient, but keep in mind that there is high court jurisdiction stating more than being in Austria for more than 180 days a year is seen as circumvention of immigration regulations. This leads to an allowed stay of two times 90 days and just the interruption between those two periods is up to your planning. After an expiry of a residence permit, you may add the bilateral 90 days seamlessly

- › There is a bilateral agreement with Japan allowing for 180 days a year in a single instalment.

Immigration authorities have up to 90 days to decide (and they go over this limit for some weeks very often): If the 90 days of legal stay are over, you have to leave and return to your home country or the application will be rejected outright” for overstaying”. If you paid fees e.g. for the language course already, there is no reimbursement.

Visa free countries/persons:

- › All EU/EEA countries and Switzerland
- › Other countries with a bilateral agreement with Austria
- › Other countries with an agreement with the Schengen zone
- › Third-country nationals holding a residence permit in any other Schengen country

3. Compulsory Registration

Due to the federal law concerning the system of registration, all persons are obliged to report to and register at an official registration authority after entering Austria or changing residence within Austria. Foreign students who temporarily lodge in hostels, hotels or pensions are registered by the respective host. The deadline is three days (only business days count). The registration authority is either city magistrate or the municipal office.

4. Health Insurance

There are treaties on social insurance with certain states (e.g. EEA-member states or West Balkans). If you come from one of these states, all you need is to present either

- › European insurance card, or form SI/E 109
- › A confirmation of the health insurance from your home country

Having this confirmation, it is not necessary that you sign an additional insurance in Austria. All others need a health insurance equivalent to Austrian health insurance (the state-run system). There are several options (see next page).

4.1. STUDENTS' HEALTH INSURANCE

The students' health insurance with the state-run insurance system (Österreichische Gesundheitskasse, ÖGK) provides the possibility to get a rather cheap insurance, if there is no other insurance cover.

Requirements that entitle you to apply for this insurance are:

- › Residence in Austria
- › the minimum duration of the degree programme plus one semester and per stage of study must not be exceeded by more than one or two semesters (e.g. The duration of the bachelor programme is six semesters, means: 8 semesters)
- › the annual income must not be higher than € 15.000
- › no graduation in a degree programme save a masters' programme taken up following a bachelor or a PhD
- › not more than two changes of a degree programme

External students can only take insurance if they attend the courses of preparation for a degree programme, as required in the admission letter.

For this type of insurance you need

- › form of application
- › valid passport
- › confirmation of admission or the continuing of your studies
- › registration form
- › your 'Studienbuchblatt'
- › For external students: Eventually, the confirmation that you attend a university training course (Vorstudienlehrgang)

The insurance is valid one day after the application was conducted, even if there is not yet an e-card issued. A student's health insurance currently costs € 78,84 per month (2026).

The student's health insurance **is terminated**

- › if the requirements are no longer met
- › at the end of the month in which the quitting was declared
- › at the end of the third month after a degree programme was finished
- › as soon as two amounts were not paid. If this happens it is only possible to get an insurance six months later.

4.2. INSURANCE OPT-IN FOR MARGINAL EMPLOYMENT

Marginal employees (earning less than € 551,10 a month, as per 2026) get only sort of accident insurance cover due to the job. They may, however, opt into the standard insurance scheme for employed staff. This will create health and retirement insurance cover. Application as with ÖGK, the monthly rate is € 83,49 (2026).

If the salary is higher than € 551,10, there is automatic full-scale insurance. For details see the ÖH brochure from our social affairs department.

4.3. GENERAL SELF-INSURANCE

If a student's health insurance is not possible for you, a (voluntary) general self-insurance is available from ÖGK.

This kind of insurance currently costs € 565,25 per month. In the case of a low income, it is possible to apply for a reduction. The amount can be reduced by a separate application and the submission of the respective evidence (e.g. tax bill, wage, savings books, proof of alimony/legally binding financial support). A reduction is possible only if the applicant's economic situation will justify that. The reduction is granted from the very beginning of the period of insurance, if the application for reduction was simultaneously submitted with the application for insurance. Otherwise, the reduction is valid by the 1st of the month that follows the time of application for insurance. The reduction is valid until the end of the calendar year.

4.4. EQUIVALENT PRIVATE INSURANCE

Immigration authorities do a thorough check if a private health insurance is equivalent. If the general self-insurance is not viable, there are a few private insurance companies offering the "correct" type only.

Some of them are

- › Care concept
- › FeelSafe
- › Generali
- › Uniqua
- › Wiener Städtische
- › Allianz
- › DONAU-insurance company

For an actual listing please see oeht.at/221.

HINT:

Applying from abroad, you may start with a local travel insurance. After the "green light" from immigration authorities, you will probably enter Austria with a four-months visa to receive the residence permit, and then start with university registration, buying ÖGK student insurance and then presenting all documents to immigration. Applying from within Austria, you will have to show the full-scale insurance immediately.

CAUTION:

If you have to leave Austria (e.g. expiry of visa/visa-free stay) you have to de-register and subsequently cancel ÖGK insurance. The only valid insurance for further processing of your application is a private one.

5. Accommodation

- › **Temporary accommodation:** It is possible to rent a room in a pension in all Austrian cities that have universities. A list with hotels can be found at every airport and train station. However, it is also possible to stay at a youth hostel.
- › **Private flats and flat-sharing**

› **Students' hostels:** The respective addresses of all students' hostels can be found in the brochure 'Studying and Accommodation' by ÖH or at <https://www.oeh.ac.at/wohnheimguide/>

You can get the brochure at the Austrian National Union of Students, Taubstummengasse 7-9, 1040 Vienna, Tel.: 01/310 88 80 – 0 as well as at every Office of Social Affairs at every university or by download.

Flat sharing offers are available at <https://schwarzesbrett.oeh.ac.at/wohnen/>

Due to EU regulations, immigration authorities must not ask for a contract covering the full year or for a specific type of contract. They may, however, consider the (even short-term) rent calculating the required financial means.

5.1. PROTECTION AGAINST UNFAIR TENANCY

If there is unfair treatment when you are still looking for accommodation, regarding a rental contract or later, you may get counselling and support at various institutions. The following offices and institutions provide help in connection with landlords/ladies, tenancy agreement (periods of termination etc.):

- › Federation for the Protection of Tenants
- › Union of Tenants
- › Federation of Tenants and Settlers
- › Chamber of Workers and Employees
- › Society of Consumer's Information
- › Mediation Agency

You may ask any question about rent, operating costs, tenancy agreement, arbitration proceedings, as well as other legal issues concerning accommodation via e-mail to wohnrecht@oeh.ac.at. This offer especially addresses students of teacher training colleges and smaller universities where no detailed advice is provided by the local ÖH.

HINT:

Some institutions only provide advice for paying members. The Office of Social Affairs of ÖH offers advice free of charge. The office hours can be found at: www.oeh.at/48 or under 01/310 88 80.

6. Renewal Application

Renewal applications are to be submitted in the last three months before expiry of the actual residence permit. The documents required are similar to the initial application evidence:

1. application form for renewal of the student residence permit
2. valid passport
3. confirmation that you are continuing your studies in Austria
4. photo not older than 6 months
5. registration form
6. accommodation & evidence of the rent paid (e.g. bank transfer data)
7. sufficient health insurance
8. financial means (study grant, savings, bank account, proof of regular support, preferably via bank transfer)
9. explanation regarding the source of financial means if there are doubts by the authority (e.g. signed declaration of your parents)
10. confirmation that you have successfully completed course in the scope of eight semester-hours or 16 ECTS-Credits (list of passed exams, re-enrolment confirmation, Studienbuch) from the last completed academic year (running from October 1 to September 30). If you are still attending the preparation courses: Passing all exams within four semesters/enrolling the regular study programme in the fifth semester.
11. If there is an individual nostrification study without ECTS-Credits or you are writing your PhD thesis: confirmation from university/supervisor
12. Confirmation from a creditor protection agency (e.g. KSV1870-Kreditschutzverband)
13. A sponsorship declaration regarding the financial means is possible any time, the guarantor has to show the ability to cover the required sum after deduction of his individual cost of living
14. If there is a student exchange programme: Confirmation from participating universities/OeAD
15. If applicable:
 - › Marriage certificate/confirmation of registered partnership
 - › Divorce decree/dissolution of partnership confirmation
 - › Adoption documents
 - › Family status (other family members)

HINTS!

- › *Original documents to be shown /copies submitted*
- › *Authorities may ask for further evidence in a specific situation*
- › *If the passport expires in the following year, the permit will be issued until expiry date only*
- › *For forms, please check <https://www.bmi.gv.at/312/start.aspx>*
There might be changes: Please investigate each year before applying

7. Short-Term Visits in Austria (up to 6 Months)

For a short term-visit (longer than a visa free stay), third country nationals will need a national visa (likely type D).

Visa types are:

- › Visa C/visa-waiver: Up to 90 days
- › Visa D: up to 180 days

Visa are required for business activities, even if a tourist or family visit is visa-free.

8. Exchange Programmes

If you attend an exchange programme organised between universities on a bi-lateral or multi-lateral level, EU legislation supersedes national regulations. A residence permit can be issued for 2 years, and such a residence permit will allow for up to 360 days staying in the second or other participating countries.

CAUTION!

If completion of the study programme is delayed - maybe the master thesis will take more time - a national-legislation based residence permit in the "last" country is required. Please apply early to avoid a break between the residence permits not becoming an "overstayer": It's an initial application in the second country.

Impressum

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This brochure is based of regulations as per February 1, 2026. Please be aware even after a thorough check errors might occur and no liability can be accepted by the authors.



Österreichische Hochschüler_innenschaft



MEHR FÜR DICH!

Jetzt Studienbeihilfe beantragen.

Alle Infos und Unterstützung zur Antragsstellung:

www.oeh.ac.at/studienbeihilfe



Insurance

Within the context of your studies and as an ÖH-member, you have the advantage of automatically having an extensive accident and liability insurance by the Generali Insurance AG.

More Information via:
oeh.ac.at/service/oeh-versicherung/

Do you still have questions?
Write us an E-Mail via: wiref@oeh.ac.at

