First steps in Leipzig

1. Finding an apartment

We strongly recommend to look for an apartment before coming to Leipzig at least for the first few days in order to then search for long-term accommodation when you get there. It would be a good idea to arrange appointments for a permanent apartment in advance. On our accommodation flyer, we have compiled different options for furnished housing. It is important to look for an apartment whose landlord can officially confirm that you live there (meaning they can issue what is known as a "Wohnungsgeberbestätigung") because proof of this is needed to officially register at the Resident Services Office (Bürgerbüro) in Leipzig. For your residence permit application, you will need your tenancy agreement containing the size of the apartment in square meters as well as the amount of the monthly rent.

Please note that in most cases the first month’s rent and two net cold rents must be paid as a deposit before arrival. Please plan for these costs when looking for an apartment.

2. Arrival and possible entry restrictions

An overview of current COVID-19 risk areas and possible entry restrictions can be found on the pages of the Robert-Koch-Institute. Please keep an eye on the latest regulations on the websites of the Welcome Centre and the City of Leipzig.

3. Registration at a Resident Services Office (Bürgerbüro) of the City of Leipzig

After arriving in Leipzig, you should first register at one of the ten Resident Services Offices within 14 days. Please book an appointment before you arrive in Leipzig, as appointments are usually fully booked well in advance. You can make an appointment online here. New appointments for the Resident Services Offices are released as follows: daily at 10:00 a.m. (daily appointments), at 5:00 p.m. (long-term appointments) and Friday at 11:00 a.m. (long-term appointments). In addition, from Monday to Friday, it is also possible to visit the office until 11:00 a.m. without an appointment. A limited number of waiting tags are available for spontaneous clients. There may be waiting times on site. (Please note that Otto-Schill-Straße, Wiedebach-Passage and Paunsdorf-Center Resident Services Offices do not open until 1:00 p.m. on Thursdays).

The main Resident Services Office is located in Otto-Schill-Straße in the city centre. Its office hours are the most convenient. When registering, please take your passports and the so-called "Wohnungsgeberbestätigung" with you and, if applicable, your marriage certificate and the birth certificates of your children in the form of apostilled/legalised German translations by a translator sworn in the EU. Make sure that your name is on the mailbox of the address you provide at the Resident Services Office as you will be sent your tax identification number within 14 days after your registration. (Please note that the name must be on the mailbox of the temporary address for a sufficiently long enough period of time.) If you move within Leipzig, you have to re-register at the Resident Services Office.
The Resident Services Office passes the details of your registration on to an organisation known as the Beitragsservice, which will contact you regarding your requirement to pay the country's broadcasting fee (Rundfunkbeitrag). All adults registered in Germany are obliged to pay this fee, which pays for the public radio and television stations (ARD, ZDF, Deutschlandradio). Each household is required to pay €17.50 per month. You will receive an invoice every three months. If you are staying in one of Leipzig University's guest houses, you are exempt from paying the Rundfunkbeitrag because it is already included in your rent.

4. Applying for a residence permit at the Leipzig Foreigners' Authority (if applicable)

After you have registered at the Resident Services Office, you will need to register with the Foreigners' Authority in Leipzig in order to apply for a residence permit. Please note that you can only apply for a residence permit for the entire period of your stay if you have a tenancy agreement covering this period of time. If you only have a provisional tenancy agreement and you are still looking for permanent housing, an application at the Foreigners' Authority is not recommended. However, if your visa (or the 90 visa free days) expires, please apply for a residence permit, in the knowledge that you will need to hand in your permanent tenancy agreement later. Please contact the Welcome Centre at your research institution to contact the AKZESS department of the Foreigners' Authority. Your contact person at the Foreigners' Authority will email you a list of documents that you need to submit. Please assemble your documents in a single PDF file, which will be sent to the Foreigners' Authority via the Welcome Centre. The Foreigners' Authority reserves the right to request additional paper documents. Please note that it may be necessary to have legalised/apostilled versions of your documents, especially for birth and marriage certificates as well as for diplomas.

5. Appointment at Leipzig Foreigners' Authority (if applicable)

After the Foreigners' Authority in Leipzig has received and checked all of your documents, you will be asked to come to the Foreigners' Authority for an appointment to have your biometric data (fingerprint) stored and to hand in your biometric passport photo. You will be informed as soon as the residence permit is ready and you can pick it up at the Foreigners' Authority. This is possible during opening hours at the service desk of the Foreigners' Authority. In the future, a machine will also be available for this purpose.

For further information, please consult our detailed guide “Welcome to Leipzig - Guidelines for Public Authorities A to Z” and our website www.welcome-to-leipzig.de.

Legal notice and disclaimer

This flyer has been compiled as part of the joint project of Leipzig University “Willkommen in Leipzig/Welcome to Leipzig”
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March 2023