Willkommen
Bienvenue
Welcome

Living in Germany
A Guide for Guest Researchers and Foreign Employees
Impressum

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Physikalisch-Technischen Bundesanstalt
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Dear guests,

Your start in Germany will hopefully be without any problems with this brochure at hand. PTB appreciates your presence and cordially welcomes you.

Yours faithfully,

Prof. Dr. Ernst O. Göbel
President of PTB
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1. Willkommen, bienvenue, welcome...

Welcome to the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt, in short PTB, the National Metrology Institute of Germany. If you intend to stay at PTB as a guest researcher or as a foreign employee, we hope to make life a little bit easier for you with this brochure. Its intention is to give you a smooth start in Germany. This brochure will provide you with all necessary information to get things organized.

PTB, as the National Metrology Institute of Germany, is concerned with the fundamentals of metrology, metrology for economy, metrology for society and international affairs within the context of metrology.

On its campuses in Braunschweig and in Berlin, PTB conducts research and development in the field of metrology as a basis for all the tasks entrusted to it. This concerns the determination of fundamental constants, the realization, maintenance and dissemination of the units of the International System of Units (SI), safety engineering, services and metrology for issues regulated by law and for industry, as well as technology transfer. Only cutting-edge research conducted by PTB itself and using the latest technologies will, on a long-term basis, enable it to ensure its metrological competence recognized at the international level, and to extend it further.

The use of modern management tools enables PTB to operate efficiently and thoroughly. Apart from servicing the current needs, PTB’s work program has been adapted to the long-term requirements of its clients - trade and industry, science and society - also within the European framework. In addition, flexible targeted projects can be initiated when problems need to be solved on a short-term basis.

As a result of its close cooperation with universities, other research institutes and industry, PTB has become a member of the community of all those pursuing research in Germany, and makes use of these
links for the benefit of all involved. The comparison of standards and procedures with the national metrology institutes of other countries provides an avenue for constant critical assessment at the highest level of metrology. Together with our partners in the projects implemented within the scope of international cooperation, PTB ensures the comparability and reliability of measurement results everywhere in the world.

Staying at PTB as a guest scientist or as a foreign employee gives you the opportunity to conduct research and perform services at the forefront of metrology. You will be sharing and advancing your knowledge, to the mutual benefit of yourself and your colleagues in the team. Whether you will be working in Braunschweig or in Berlin, life outside the laboratory will have its attractions, too. Braunschweig, one of Northern Germany’s oldest towns, offers the full complement of cultural attractions and lies at the center of one of Europe’s most dynamic science and technology regions. Berlin is Germany’s vibrant capital and its largest city - and has it all!

The information in this brochure has been put together to the best of our knowledge on the basis of the current law codes and information leaflets of the responsible ministries and the EU. The information given here will regularly be checked, updated and supplemented. We would therefore be very grateful if you let us know your practical experience. Please feel free to send us suggestions, comments and corrections. Please also note that some information is only relevant for guest scientists and other information only for foreign employees.

The story of PTB’s international cooperation is a long and successful one. Please become a friend and colleague in our community and enjoy your stay.

Welcome to PTB!
2. The Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt
A short chronology

1887: The Physikalisch-Technische Reichsanstalt PTR (Imperial Physical and Technical Institute) is founded in Berlin on the joint initiative and following the concept of Werner von Siemens and Hermann von Helmholtz. Helmholtz becomes its first president.

1898: First legal tasks: realization and maintenance of the electrical units, testing of measuring instruments for electrical quantities.

1923: Incorporation of the Reichsanstalt für Maß und Gewicht (Imperial Weights and Measures Office), supervising technical authority of the verification and testing offices, responsible for establishing and safeguarding all legal units.

1943-1945: Heavy war damage, relocation of many laboratories of PTR.

1946: Reconstruction of PTR in Berlin as an agency for the Senate of West Berlin.

1950: The Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) in Braunschweig is founded.

1953: Incorporation of PTR in Berlin-Charlottenburg into PTB under the name of “Institut Berlin der PTB”.

1977: State and industry set up the “Deutscher Kalibrierdienst” (DKD) (German Calibration Service) for the official authorization of the certified calibration of standards and measuring devices, under the supervision of PTB.

1990: Assumption of tasks in the metrology sector of the “Amt für Standardisierung, Meßwesen und Warenprüfung” (ASMW) (Agency for Standardization, Metrology and Quality Control) of the German Democratic Republic (GDR).

2002: Evaluation of PTB by an international commission—with excellent results.

2007: Evaluation of PTB by the German Council of Science and Humanities by order of the German Federal Government—once again with excellent results.
PTB today stands for progress and reliability in metrology for society, industry and science, and is the highest technical authority of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi). With more than 1900 employees, it is Europe’s largest national metrology institute. A core budget of approximately 145 million euros allows PTB to fulfill the tasks assigned to it in about thirty laws and directives. Some of PTB’s research work and technology transfer activities are supported by third-party funds obtained on a competitive basis. PTB is also very active in the development and execution of the European Metrology Research Programme (EMRP), a program co-funded by the European Union and designed to strengthen the European metrological infrastructure on a sustainable basis.

PTB has three major premises: the main campus on the north-western boundary of the city of Braunschweig (pages 15-17), the campus of its historic origin in Berlin-Charlottenburg, not too far from the center of the German capital (pages 20-21), and the site in Berlin-Adlershof (south-east of Berlin), dedicated to metrology using synchrotron radiation (pages 25-27).
PTB campus in Braunschweig

Since 1947, PTB laboratories have been located in Braunschweig. About 1400 employees in eight divisions work on an area of 1 km²; the Presidential Board of PTB as well as most of the administration division are located in Braunschweig.

The address is:

Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt
Bundesallee 100
38116 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 592-0

Geographical coordinates (WGS 84):
52°17'43'' N    10°27'49'' E
You have the choice between two different bus lines taking you to PTB. You can either take line 433 from downtown (Hamburger Straße), destination “Völkenrode”, and get off at the bus stop “PTB”, or line 461 from the main train station, with the destination/terminal stop “PTB”.

Visitors travelling by train arrive at Braunschweig central station. Bus line 461 leaves from in front of the station with the destination/terminal stop “PTB”.
PTB campus in Berlin-Charlottenburg

The traditional site of PTB in Berlin, with its divisions “Temperature and Synchrotron Radiation” and “Medical Physics and Metrological Information Technology”, is situated in the district of Charlottenburg. The address is:

Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt

Abbestraße 2-12
10587 Berlin-Charlottenburg

Phone: +49 (0)30 3481-0

Geographical coordinates (WGS 84):
52°30’57,5” N 13°19’14” E

PTB in Berlin-Charlottenburg is not far from the train and subway station “Zoologischer Garten” (walking distance: 15 minutes). It is a three-minute walk from the subway station “Ernst-Reuter-Platz”.

From the main train station “Berlin Hauptbahnhof”, where long-distance trains stop, take any S-Bahn going west (destination “Potsdam Hauptbahnhof” or “Spandau”).

From “Berlin Zoologischer Garten”, either walk along “Hardenbergstraße”, passing some university buildings on your right-hand side, or take subway U2 (destination “Theodor-Heuss-Platz”) for one stop (“Ernst-Reuter-Platz”) and walk the rest from there. In the subway station, take the exit marked “Physikalisch-Tech. Bundesanstalt” and follow the route indicated on the map.

Berlin has two major airports. Airport “Berlin-Tegel” is connected to “Ernst-Reuter-Platz” and to the train station “Berlin Zoologischer Garten” by express bus X9. Airport “Berlin-Schönefeld” is connected to the train station “Berlin Zoologischer Garten” by railway (Express train RE) and by the S-Bahn No. S 9.

The best access by car is via Autobahn 100.
PTB campus in Berlin-Adlershof

For the handling of fundamental and applied metrology tasks focused on radiometry, the PTB laboratory at the electron storage ring BESSY II makes use of synchrotron radiation from the ultraviolet to the X-ray range.

Immediately adjacent to BESSY II, PTB has a newly established additional synchrotron radiation source for the spectral range from terahertz frequencies to the extreme ultraviolet with special development potential for the future semiconductor technology: the Metrology Light Source (MLS). It is designed especially for metrological purposes, but may also be used by other interested parties. The addresses are:

**Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt**

**BESSY II**

Albert-Einstein-Str. 15
12489 Berlin

Phone: +49 (0)30 3481-0

Geographical coordinates (WGS 84):
52°25’40” N   13°31’57” E

**Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt**

**Willy-Wien-Laboratorium**

Magnusstraße 9
12489 Berlin

Phone: +49 (0)30 3481-0

Geographical coordinates (WGS 84):
52°25’43” N   13°32’02” E
If you arrive by car, please take the “Berliner Ring A 10” and turn at the “Schönefelder Kreuz” onto the “A 113” in the direction “Flughafen Schönefeld”, take the exit “Dreieck Treptow” and follow the “B 96a” to the city center and take a left into “Köpenicker Straße”.

You can also take the Autobahn A100/A113 going south in the direction “Flughafen Schönefeld”. Please take the exit “Adlershof”.

If you are starting from downtown Berlin (e.g. Alexanderplatz) by car, please follow the “B 96a” in the direction “Flughafen Schönefeld”. Please take a right into “Köpenicker Straße”.

If you arrive at the airport “Schönefeld” and you choose public transportation to get to “Adlershof”, please take the S-Bahn line S9 or S45 and get off three stations later. If you fly in to “Berlin Tegel”, please take the bus X9 and get off at the S-Bahn station “Jungfernheide”. Then switch to S-Bahn line 42 and change trains again at “Hermannstraße” into S-Bahn line 45 until you reach the “Adlershof” stop. From the “Ostbahnhof” and the “Zoologischer Garten”, please take S-Bahn line S9.

Using public transportation you reach our Adlershof campus from the city center by taking S-Bahn lines S5, S7, S75 or S3 to “Ostkreuz”, switch there to S8 (direction “Grünau” or “Zeuthen”) or S9 (direction “Schönefeld Flughafen”), and get off at the “Adlershof” stop. From there, it is a 15 minute walk or a short bus ride (see map on next page).
Note: Not all U, S or BUS stops are shown
3. What to do at home

We are looking forward to welcoming you to PTB. We hope you will have a pleasant stay. First, however, there are a few things you will need to do before coming to Germany. Please note that the following information comes in three parts. Some information is important for guest researchers, some for foreign employees, and some for both. Please read this brochure carefully. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time you wish. We will be pleased to help.

Britta Wedekind

Phone: +49 (0)531 592-3091
Email: Britta.Wedekind@ptb.de

Regina Sederstroem

Phone: +49 (0)30 3481-7231
Email: Regina.Sederstroem@ptb.de

As a guest researcher

• If you are a guest researcher and you are an EU national, you do not need a visa to enter the Federal Republic of Germany. Only a valid identity card or passport is required.

• All other foreigners require a visa for stays in Germany except for semi-annual visits of up to three months for nationals of those countries for which the European Community has waived the visa requirements. To find out whether your country is included in the visa waiver program or not, please take a look at the homepage of the “Auswärtiges Amt” (Federal Foreign Office).

• If you found out that you will need a visa, please contact a German embassy or a consulate general regarding the current entry regulations. Please note that usually, it takes several weeks for a visa to be issued, and therefore you should apply for it well in advance. It is important

http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/
> English
> Welcome to Germany
> Coming to Germany or staying in Germany
> Visa regulations
If you are a foreign employee, the procedure is almost the same as the one mentioned above. Having gone through the job interview with a positive result you will get a letter stating that you will be hired by PTB. Please contact a German embassy or a consulate general with this letter to find out the current entry regulations (visa, working permit). Normally, scientists do not need a working permit for Germany, but as usual, there are some exceptions. You will find detailed information if you take a look at the homepage of the “Auswärtiges Amt”.

Please make sure you apply for a multiple entry visa well ahead of time, because it may take several weeks to be processed. If you are staying for more than three months, you must apply for a residence permit from the Agency for Foreign Nationals after arriving in Germany and register with the local authorities. See chapter 4 for details.

The staff from the Human Resources Department will also get in touch with you regarding any specific documents they might need from you to complete your employment contract. They usually ask for a certified German translation of your documents.
If, after your arrival at PTB, you require official documents to be translated which pertain to your work at PTB, PTB’s Translation Office can assist you.

PTB’s Translation Office is available to all PTB employees.

The following services are offered:

• Translation of specialized texts of all types pertaining to your work at PTB e.g. publications, websites, test and calibration certificates, documents (degree certificates, certificates of employment, other certificates, certification of documents, etc.).

• Revision of manuscripts written in English (scientific publications, articles for conference volumes, etc.) as to style/grammar/orthography/punctuation.

The languages offered are:

• German
• English
• French
• Spanish

PTB’s Translation Office is located in Braunschweig, in the Vieweg Building (Vieweg-Bau).
For further information, please get in touch with:

**Ms. Undine Baier-Blott**

phone: +49 (0)531 592-9332  
Vieweg-Bau, Room 142

or, in her absence, with:

**Ms. Gabriele Froetel**

phone: 9333  
Vieweg-Bau, Room 141

or send an e-mail to:  
sprachendienst@ptb.de  
(only possible from within PTB).

If you want to talk to us in person, you can turn to each of the translators in the corridor between Rooms 142 and 138

Specialist areas:

**Ms. Ella Jones** (British English)  
Room 138

**Ms. Alice Graumann** (American English)  
Room 140

**Ms. Gabriele Froetel** (Spanish)  
Room 141

**Ms. Cécile Charvieux** (French)  
Ms. Charvieux does not have an office at PTB; she can only be reached by e-mail at: Cecile.Charvieux@ptb.de
4. What to do first in Braunschweig or in Berlin

So, now that you are here, what’s next on the agenda of the most important things you should do after your arrival?

Well, first of all, if you have not already done it, make sure you have a place to stay for at least a couple of nights. In Braunschweig we recommend the guest house on the PTB campus. In Berlin-Charlottenburg there is no PTB guest house, but instead a large diversity of hotels. If you are planning to visit Berlin-Adlershof, you might stay at the BESSY Guest House. If not, you might want to take a look at HRS, a commercial hotel reservation service. There is more information about housing and renting in the next chapter.

The PTB guest house in Braunschweig comprises 13 rooms and two fully equipped common kitchens. The rooms are equipped as follows:

- Shower, toilet, washing basin in a bathroom module
- Bed (2.1 m x 1.4 m)
- Cupboard
- Desk with swivel chair
- Side table with two armchairs
- TV, telephone, ethernet LAN connection.

In the whole area of the guest house you have internet access by WLAN. Rooms with access for handicapped persons are available.

The guest house is located opposite of the Von Laue Building, close to “Bundesallee”, the main road. Access is via the main gate of PTB or via a small gate (pedestrians only) next to the guest house.
Price list for PTB’s guest house

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stay</th>
<th>Single Room</th>
<th>Double Room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Night</td>
<td>€ 33</td>
<td>€ 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Nights</td>
<td>€ 231</td>
<td>€ 294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nights</td>
<td>€ 462</td>
<td>€ 588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14+N Nights</td>
<td>€ 462 + N x € 15</td>
<td>€ 588 + N x € 19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After you have got this settled, the next steps should be the following:

**As a guest researcher**

On your first day at PTB you need to take care of a couple of administrative matters; your host scientist will be able to assist you in these tasks.

- You will need to sign your “Guest Scientist Agreement” at the Human Resources Department. Please hand in a copy of your flight or train ticket, a certificate stating your housing expenses, and a certificate stating that you have health insurance covering your medical expenses in Germany.

- In Braunschweig you will receive a parking permit and an office key. In Berlin you will also get a chip to open the entrance doors.

- You can pick up your allowance at the paying office.

Mr. Söhlig (Braunschweig) and Ms. Kahle (Berlin) from the Human Resources Department will also be pleased to assist you. If you have questions, please contact them:
As a foreign employee

If you have decided to center your life in Germany and to work at PTB for a longer period of time, there are also a couple of administrative matters which have to be addressed before you can dive down into the depths of research or the intricacies of calibrations.

• First of all, you need to sign your working contract at the Human Resources Department. You will also be asked to hand in a statement of wage tax deduction (please see also chapter 8: Tax and social security) and a German police certificate of good conduct.

• Then you need to get the key to your office, a chip card to clock in and out and a parking permit for your car.

• There will also be an appointment made for your medical check-up and an introduction to the safety officers.

Your new colleagues will be happy to assist you and to show you around. If you would like to have more information about administration, meetings and seminars, email addresses and phone numbers, please take a look at our Intranet pages or at the brochure “Inside PTB” that you received upon arrival.
Registration

For Braunschweig employees it is mandatory that you register at the Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeamt) of the city of Braunschweig if you plan to stay in Germany for more than three months. Please make sure that you do this within a week after your arrival. The contact address in Braunschweig is:

**Einwohnermeldeamt Braunschweig**

Fallersleber Str. 1  
38100 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 470-1  
Fax: +49 (0)531 470-6099  
Email: buergerangelegenheiten@braunschweig.de

In Berlin, it is a bit more complicated. You have to register yourself at the Citizen Center (Bürgeramt). You can choose between a couple of them and - depending on the district you work or you found an apartment in - you may take the closest one.

By the way, you have to notify the Registration Office or, the Citizen Center whenever you change your address or you end your stay in Germany.

One more administrative step and you are done: depending on your personal circumstances (EU citizen, non-EU citizen, length of stay, marital status) you have to apply for a residence permit. This time, the easier way to do that is in Berlin, because Ms. Kahle or Ms. Sederstroem from PTB’s Human Resources Department will take care of the whole procedure. To supply them with the necessary information, you can contact them as follows:

**Simone Kahle**

Phone: +49 (0)30 3481-7222  
Email: Simone.Kahle@ptb.de
Regina Sederstroem

Phone:  +49 (0)30 3481-7231
Email:  Regina.Sederstroem@ptb.de

Their office is in room 201 in the Chemie-Gebäude in Berlin-Charlottenburg.

The Agency for Foreign Nationals can also be contacted directly:

**Landeseinwohneramt Berlin**
**Abteilung Ausländerangelegenheiten**
Firmenpassstelle, Zi. 21
Friedrich-Krause-Ufer 24
13353 Berlin/Wedding

If you want to give them a call, please use the following phone number:  +49 (0)30 90269-0

But note that they can only be reached by phone on Wednesdays and Fridays between 09:00 and 12:00 a.m.

In order to receive a residence permit (Aufenthaltsgenehmigung) in Braunschweig, you have to show up at the Agency for Foreign Nationals in person:

**Australänderbehörde**
Fallersleber Straße 1
38100 Braunschweig

Phone:  +49 (0)531 470-6062, -6063,
Fax:  +49 (0)531 470-6008
Email:  auslaenderbehoerde@braunschweig.de

Please note that you will need official translations of all documents requested. Detailed questions will be answered at your local Agency for Foreign Nationals.

If you need assistance, please call or send an email to:

**Britta Wedekind**

Phone:  +49 (0)531 592-3091
Email:  Britta.Wedekind@ptb.de
5. Accommodation

As promised above, we will now try to give you some understanding of the housing situation in Germany. If you do not have the opportunity to look for accommodation before you start your fellowship or your employment, you might want to contact a real estate agency directly via the Internet or you can take a look at the homepages listed on the right-hand side.

You can also put an ad in the local newspaper for Braunschweig and for Berlin. In addition to that, there are special ads offering furnished flats or rooms in shared flats (Wohngemeinschaft – WG) for a limited time span. Those ads are mostly placed by young people on notice boards (“Schwarze Bretter”) at the universities, usually to be found in university cafeterias (“Mensa”), at highly frequented locations and in the institutes. They are accessible to all students and employees and you can look for or post notes. Or try to find a “WG” via the Internet.

In “shared flats”, several people live together in one flat, which means that everybody has his or her own room, but the bathroom and kitchen are shared. Shared flats are mostly inhabited by young people and students and they provide a good opportunity to socialize and to get to know Germans. The “WGs” normally choose their flatmates themselves.

Authorizing a real estate agent is the most expensive way to find a flat or a house because you have to pay up to two months’ rent (plus 19% tax) as agent’s fees, usually not a worthwhile investment for a short stay. You should, in any case, only choose agents affiliated with a professional association.

Instead of renting an apartment or an expensive hotel room, your hosts could also be the owners of a small family-run inn, a country inn or a holiday apartment. An interesting option, particularly for guest researchers, is to live with a family having
an extra room to spare—typically the now-unused room of a grown-up child who has moved to live his/her life away from the parents’ home. Such rooms are sub-let, furnished with bed, desk, and wardrobe, while you will be allowed to share the kitchen and the laundry facilities in the house; typically a separate bathroom is available, or is shared with another house guest. Usually, rent is significantly lower than for a proper apartment. Families renting out rooms like this typically take an active interest in their guests, wishing to make sure that everything is working out fine for you. This is perfect for helping you find your way in Germany and its culture, especially if it is your first time abroad. If you prefer complete privacy, you should take the other housing options into consideration.

Britta Wedekind can help you find such a room in a family’s home in Braunschweig:

Phone: +49 (0)531 592-3091
Email: Britta.Wedekind@ptb.de

**Finding and renting an apartment**

Generally, housing expenses are pretty high in Germany, especially in big cities. The information about the amount charged mostly refers to basic rent (Kaltmiete), which means that you have to pay extra for electricity, water, heating and waste disposal. In contrast, these additional costs (Nebenkosten) are normally included in the rent for furnished flats (Warmmiete). When you read descriptions of apartments, pay attention to whether the rent includes additional costs (Warmmiete/warm) or excludes additional costs (Kaltmiete/kalt), respectively.

In Germany you can rent furnished, partly furnished or empty flats. Empty flats have neither curtains nor lamps nor kitchen equipment, sometimes not even appliances. Partly furnished rooms have at least some furniture and kitchen equipment or appliances. Flats are rarely offered with furniture. Most
apartments for rent are in condos or other multi-story buildings.

Advertisements for accommodation are often difficult to understand because they are full of abbreviations. Here are the most important ones:

- **5ZKDB (5 Zimmer, Küche, Diele, Bad) = 5 rooms plus kitchen, corridor, bathroom**
- **ZH (Zentralheizung) = central heating**
- **EBK (Einbauküche) = built-in kitchen: typically appliances and cupboards, but no plates, pots or silverware**
- **400,- +NK (€ 400 Kaltmiete plus Nebenkosten) = € 400 basic rent plus additional costs**
- **KM or k (Kaltmiete) = basic rent**
- **WM or w (Warmmiete) = all-inclusive rent**
- **WFl. (Wohnfläche) = size of flat in square meters**
- **G-WC (Gästetoilette) = separate, additional toilet, e.g. for guests**
- **OG (Obergeschoss) = upper floor**
- **TG (Tiefgarage) = underground car park**
- **OH (Ofenheizung) = heating by oven/coal, i.e. no central heating**
- **GEH (Gasetagenheizung) = heating by natural gas**
- **KT (Kaution) = deposit**

If a phone number is given, you can call the landlord or estate agent directly. You should call as early as possible (7:30 a.m.) and make an appointment for looking at the flat. If only a box number is indi-
cated, you have to apply for the apartment by letter, addressed to the newspaper and indicating the box number. In case of language difficulties, ask a colleague of your working group for assistance.

When you rent a flat, you generally have to make a deposit of about 2 to 3 months’ rent. This sum will, however, be returned to you with interest when you move out, provided there is no damage to the apartment or its furniture when you leave, and provided there are no open bills. The tenancy becomes official only when both you and the landlord have signed the contract. Your signature legally binds you to the terms of rent. Therefore, it is essential to read the document very carefully before signing, including the small print. (Let your German friends help you!) The contract specifies, in particular, the amount of rent and additional costs payable, the period of notice to be given upon termination of the contract (usually three months), payment for any necessary repairs, and responsibility for renovation, length of rent and terms of rent increase.

Furthermore, the contract may contain additional arrangements (e.g. use of the garden, car parking facilities, etc.). Should you intend to keep pets or domestic animals, you must obtain permission from the landlord beforehand. The contract also lays down the general house rules which, among other things, typically might state that before 7 a.m., between 1 and 3 p.m. and after 10 p.m., all unnecessary noise must be avoided. They also regulate which jointly used areas (staircase, entrance area, and basement) have to be cleaned by each tenant and in what intervals the cleaning has to take place (Germans take cleaning duty very seriously). However, sometimes the landlord has hired someone to do the cleaning for everybody in the house; if so, you will find your share of the cost of this service on your bill for additional costs. If you do not understand parts of the contract or if you feel that unusual conditions are imposed, you should ask your German colleagues for assistance and advice before signing.
6. Money, money, money

In Germany it is still common to pay in cash for food or minor items. In department stores, clothes shops and restaurants or for larger amounts payment may be made by credit card. A cash card is generally accepted.

You need to open a bank account with a local bank, Sparkasse or post office as soon as possible to receive your income or the instalments of your grant and to carry out regular payments, such as rent, electricity bills, etc. The different banks (e.g. Landesbank Berlin, Braunschweiger Landessparkasse, Deutsche Bank, Postbank, Commerzbank, Dresdner Bank,...) offer more or less the same service, but as the fees vary considerably, a comparison is worthwhile. Meanwhile, there are many banks offering home banking. It is less expensive and allows you to handle your bank transactions by computer or phone.

To open an account with a bank, you will normally need your passport, an identification card or a similar piece of identification and the registration from the Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeamt). The only exception is with the “Deutsche Bank”. They offer the possibility to open an account without being registered at the Registration Office. You just have to identify yourself with your identity card. This makes it possible to open an account even if you are staying just for a short period of time. In Braunschweig Ms. Anja Genthe, customer consultant of the Deutsche Bank, will be pleased to assist you. She can be reached via
Phone: +49 (0)531 387 10-17 or via
Email: anja.genthe@db.com.

In Berlin, any Deutsche Bank customer consultant will be happy to advise you. More information is available on the homepage www.deutsche-bank.de. Please note that as an employee of PTB, your salary can only be paid into a bank account. In contrast, as a visiting scientist you can pick up your monthly
allowance in cash, if you like.

If you expect frequent remittances from or to your account in your home country, it is worthwhile asking your home bank whether it cooperates with specific banks in Germany. This could shorten and cheapen the transfer of money to or from the bank abroad.

A checking account offers you the possibility to:

- Deposit and withdraw money at all times.
- Arrange a standing order (Dauerauftrag) for regular payments of a fixed amount (e.g. rent), at fixed dates.
- Transmit money to another account with a transfer form (Überweisung). In Germany, this is the usual way of paying bills or rent – you don’t normally mail checks.
- You can authorize someone to withdraw money from your account (Einzugsermächtigung); this is relevant for regular payments of differing amounts, such as electricity or telephone bills. In fact, sometimes this is the only mode of payment that the service provider will accept.

Generally, you will receive a customer card (EC-card, debit card) with which you can withdraw money at all cash departments of your bank. In addition, you may obtain a cash card. Many bigger shops offer direct payment by cash card. Moreover, you can use either card to withdraw money from all ATMs in Germany for a small fee and from your bank’s ATM without charge. The EC cash card can be used to withdraw money from ATMs in most European countries for a small fee.

Besides your checking account, you may want to open a savings account. In Germany, you hardly receive any interest on your checking account, so it is worthwhile opening an additional account for savings. Interest rates currently amount to 1-3 % per year, depending on the kind of account.
You have to be aware that you cannot pay with the EC cash card and the credit card in all the shops. In small shops like the butcher’s shop or the bakery you have to pay cash. It is important that you hide your password well away from the EC cash card and the credit card. If somebody knows your password, they can take all your money. Do not write your password on the EC cash card or the credit card.
7. Automobile and driving license

Driving licenses from other EU or EEA countries (Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein) as well as from Andorra, French Polynesia, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Israel, Japan, Jersey, Croatia, Monaco, New Caledonia, South Korea, San Marino, Switzerland, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan and a number of Canadian provinces or certain states of the USA are generally accepted in Germany, but you have to convert your license into a German driving license after six months at the latest. This is done without further examination at the local driving license office (Führerscheinstelle), which can usually be found in the town hall or district hall (Kreisverwaltung).

If you have obtained your driver’s licence in a country not listed above, please note that you have to pass a computer-based theoretical test and a driving test in order to be allowed to drive a car within Germany. The theoretical test can be taken in different languages. Note that you’ll need a separate license for larger motor bikes and all but the smallest trucks. Please contact a driving school of your choice for further information.

Driving license

The application for the German driving license is to be handed in ahead of time (at least 3 months before expiry of the set term of six months), because the processing will take some time. Otherwise you will violate German law for driving without a valid license - a serious offense. When applying for a German driving license, you have to present:

- your application (you will get the application form at the driving school),
- your passport or identity card,
• your valid foreign national driving license (not the international one),

• a certified translation of the valid foreign national driving license,

• a biometric photograph,

• a visual acuity test and a certificate that you have completed a basic first-aid training course (such courses are offered by a variety of institutions, for instance the local Red Cross, and they typically take a day or two).

Motor vehicle registration

If you brought your car along with you from home and if your stay in Germany is not just temporary - for example, a stay of more than one year - your car must be registered in Germany. Please note that you will have to take customs duty into consideration. If you are an EU citizen, there is nothing to take care of except the Certificate of Conformity for your car which has to be handed in. But if you are a non-EU citizen and bring your car to Germany, you have to prove that it has belonged to you for at least six months before your date of entry and that you will not sell the car within the next year. Otherwise 10% customs duty and 19% VAT fall due. For further information, please take a look at the homepage of the German customs (Zoll).

The next step is to make an appointment with the Technical Control Board (TÜV or DEKRA). They will check your car for roadworthiness and will do an exhaust emission test (Abgasuntersuchung – ASU).

The final step is the registration of your car with the local motor vehicle registration office (Kraftfahrzeugzulassung), where you can also obtain the necessary forms.
Contact details for Braunschweig:

Stadt Braunschweig
Straßenverkehrsamt

Kfz-Zulassung
Porschestr. 5
38112 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 470 750-0
Fax: +49 (0)531 470 749-9
Email: zulassungsstelle@braunschweig.de

Contact details for Berlin:

Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungsangelegenheiten
Referat Kraftfahrzeugzulassung

Ferdinand-Schultze-Str. 55
13055 Berlin

Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungsangelegenheiten
Referat Kraftfahrzeugzulassung

Jüterbogener Str. 3
10965 Berlin

Phone: +49 (0)30 90269-3300
Email: kfz-zulassung@labo.berlin.de

You will be asked to present:

• your passport or identity card and the certificate you received when you presented yourself at and registered with the city’s Einwohnermeldeamt (Registration Office)

• your driving license
• the car registration papers from your own country and your car’s old license plates

• an electronic cover note from the car insurance company of your choice. If you intend to take out German car liability insurance you should request proof of the period of your accident-free driving from the insurance agency in your home country. The longer you have driven without having had an accident, the lower the insurance premium will be

• the results of the check at the Technical Control Board and the exhaust emission test

• a standing order for a direct debit – authorizing the tax office to collect the annual car tax (the amount charged depends on the type of car and engine).

Once that’s done you will be handed a note indicating your car’s new German license number. Just outside the office building you will find a shop where they can emboss the new license plates - for a fee, of course. With those two plates you go back to the office where they will affix an official seal. Fix the plate with the TÜV or Dekra stamp to the back of your car and the other one to the front - and off you go!

Some non-obvious traffic rules and recommendations

In Germany traffic rules are very similar to those around the world - and people take them seriously. There are some differences, however, compared to some countries. Here is a small selection of things to be aware of:

• Only cars, trucks and heavier motorcycles are allowed on motorways/freeways ("Autobahn").

• Right-of-way rules make no distinction between cars, trucks, bikes, etc. (except streetcars/
trams, which - for practical purposes - always have the right of way).

• Except when otherwise posted, the vehicle coming from the right has the right of way. This is a typical situation in purely residential quarters.

• When making a right or left turn with your car, bicycles continuing straight on have the right of way, as have pedestrians crossing the road that you intend to turn into. This also applies at traffic lights, even though it might show green for you!

• Seat belts must be worn at all times, both in the front and the back seats. Children under the age of 12 must be sitting in special child seats affixed onto the normal seats.

• Motorcyclists must wear a helmet.

• Helmets are not (yet) mandatory for bicyclists, but the younger generation and more and more of the older generation wear one, too. Please wear a helmet in the interest of your own safety.

• Pedestrians have the right-of-way on cross-roads marked by broad white “zebra stripes”. All vehicles must stop to let them cross there.

• There is no general “right turn on red” at traffic lights. Only in a few places, marked by a special green arrow, are you allowed to make a right turn at a traffic light, provided you have come to a complete stop first and you have let pass safely all other vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

• There is a general speed limit of 50 km/h within cities and other built-up areas, and 100 km/h outside. On the “Autobahn”, the recommended maximum speed for passenger cars is 130 km/h. Cars towing trailers and trucks must obey lower speed limits (80 km/h, typically).
• A particular hazard of driving in Europe in the winter time is the danger of “black ice” or “Glätteis”. The best way to recognize black ice is by surface reflection, but that dull patch just ahead might be ice also. Be especially cautious in the early morning or late evening and near or on bridges. If you see the patch, take your foot off the gas quickly. Once on an icy section, do not accelerate, brake, gear down or make any sudden change in direction. Keep a large distance from the car in front of you. If starting to lose control, carefully steer toward the edge of the road where residues of sand and salt might help to regain traction.

• Snow chains can be rented from gas stations midway through your journey and then dropped off at another station further down the road. Sometimes membership in the German automobile club “ADAC” is necessary for this service, but not always. The cost is low and is based on the distance travelled. Stop as soon as you think you may need the chains, because supplies are limited at each station.

• When you have or witness an accident:

1. Stop immediately.

2. Take steps to provide for traffic safety. Warn other traffic by setting up your warning triangle, switch on the emergency flashing lights of your car and in case of minor damage, move your vehicle to the side of the road without delay.

3. Assist the injured. Call or have someone call the police and, if necessary, an ambulance.

4. Cooperate with the police; show them and those involved in the accident your identification card (Ausweis), automobile registration (Fahrzeugschein), driver’s license (Führerschein) and insurance card.
DO NOT LEAVE THE SCENE FOR ANY REASON

• Remember that causing any damage whatsoever to another vehicle is considered as an accident and you should not leave the scene until the owner or a policeman has shown up. If you should leave the scene, you might be charged with a “hit and run” offense - which carries a heavy penalty. It is a matter of frequent disputes in court for how long you have to wait by an unattended vehicle you have damaged before it is considered justified to finally drive off. If you do so eventually, it's best if your first stop is at a police station to report the incident. Just leaving a note on the windshield of the damaged car with your name and phone number is not enough: you will still be charged with “hit-and-run”.

• An increasing number of German cities are introducing special zones in the city center (“Umweltzone”) into which only cars meeting specific environmental standards (mostly regarding the amount of soot in the exhaust fumes) are allowed in. You need to affix a sticker to your windshield to show compliance of your vehicle with one of the four classes: green, yellow, red, or - worst of all - not eligible for a sticker at all. These stickers are available from the city or your local workshop/garage and are valid for any “Umweltzone” in Germany. Unless you have the correspondingly colored sticker, don’t enter the zone - there’s a stiff penalty.

Please drive safely!
8. Tax and social security

“Entgelt”, “Verdienst”, “Einkommen”, “Gehalt” and “Lohn” are quite a number of terms for the remuneration a person receives for working - with fine legal distinctions. In our brochure we will use the terms “Einkommen” (income) and “Gehalt” (salary), disregarding those fine details.

Employment contracts generally stipulate a gross income. In the case of PTB, the contract will not state a specific amount, but will instead refer to a salary group in a collective labor agreement. As soon as you have registered yourself and your family at the Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeamt), the Registration Office will inform the Federal Central Tax Office (Bundeszentrale für Steuern) that a new potential tax payer has been registered (no matter what age). The Federal Central Tax Office will send out a so-called “taxpayer identification number” to each person registered in Germany. The “taxpayer identification number” is not comparable with a national identification number. It is only relevant for tax reasons, but please keep it in a safe place, because it is valid until further notice. As soon as you have received the number via mail, please fill out a “Request for issuing a statement of wage tax deduction” (Antrag auf Ausstellung einer Bescheinigung für den Lohnsteuerabzug). You will find the template for the request on the homepage.

Please take your “Taxpayer Identification Number”, your completed “Request for issuing a statement of wage tax deduction” and your identity card or passport to your local tax office in order to receive your wage tax classification. Please provide your employer with your payroll tax data, because in Germany, the employer withholds the tax that the employee is required to pay and transmits the money directly to the tax authority (Finanzamt). Social security contributions (health insurance, compulsory long-term nursing care insurance, pension schemes, unemployment insurance and accident
insurance) are also withheld by the employer after calculation of the gross wage and transmitted to the employee’s health insurance company. So what you actually receive in your bank account is your net income - which is substantially less than the gross income. Gross and net income are listed on the salary slip.

The employer pays roughly half of the premiums due for pension schemes and health insurance (no matter whether it’s the compulsory or the private scheme, see below), and a smaller part for your nursing care insurance. So in that sense your gross salary is even larger than what is stated on your pay slip - although the net pay-out remains unaffected. Please note that there is no way of not paying the above mentioned premiums. The details of the load sharing between employer and employee change rather frequently, depending on political responses to economic and demographic developments. And finally, some rules are altogether different if you are employed as a “Beamter” - which is an employee having the special status of a “Civil Servant”. However, as a visiting scientist you will not have this status, and as a foreign employee having your first job with PTB it is unlikely that you will be employed as a “Beamter”. If so, you will have already been told by now, and our Human Resources Department will contact you about the special rules well ahead of time.

As a guest researcher

As a guest researcher you will not receive a “salary” in the legal sense by PTB. This also means that there will be no deductions for social security or pension schemes. Instead, you will receive an allowance which will either be handed out to you in cash or transmitted to your bank account in Germany. The allowance is meant to cover your additional expenditures due to your temporary stay in Germany. It is assumed that your normal salary payments at your home institution are continued while you are at PTB.

In addition, please make sure that you have a
health insurance coverage which covers all injuries and diseases that might occur while you are staying in Germany. In case you need one, please take a look at the homepage of the ADAC for an offer tailored to the needs of a visitor to Germany.

As a foreign employee

As a foreign employee you have to pay the full tax and social security fees. As soon as you sign your working contract you will be asked to sign up with a German health insurance company. Depending on your income, you will have to choose between the compulsory and the private system.

Health care

The health care system in Germany is of a very high standard. However, the rules for getting health insurance (to help cover the cost of medical treatment) are somewhat complicated.

There is a two-tiered system of health insurance companies, consisting of the so-called “compulsory” sector and the so-called “private” sector. Several rules specify who can or must enroll in which system. Let’s try to explain!

Compulsory health insurance

Every person living in Germany whose gross annual salary lies below € 49,500.00 (as of November 2010) has to be enrolled with one of the insurance companies of the compulsory sector. Examples are Techniker Krankenkasse (TK), Allgemeine Ortskrankenkasse (AOK), Barmer Ersatzkasse (GEK). The monthly premium is fixed by law to currently 15.5% of your gross salary. As mentioned before, roughly half of this amount is actually contributed by the employer, the rest taken from the salary stated in your work contract. Due to the rising cost of health care, most insurance companies need to charge an
An additional fee of a few euros per month. It varies from company to company, so this can be one criterion to choose between companies.

The insurance contract covers most of the cost for all necessary medical treatment with a doctor or in hospitals, including childbirth-related expenses, dental treatment, medicines, bandages, eyeglasses, etc. In general you have a free choice of doctors and hospitals, although you might save a little by agreeing to see a specialist first in case of illness. In most cases the insurance does not cover 100% of all costs. For instance, for the first visit in each quarter to a doctor or a dentist, every adult above the age of 18 must pay the so-called “Praxisgebühr” (medical treatment fee) of € 10.00 directly at the counter of the doctor’s office.

Also, for hospital stays one has to pay € 10.00 per day (but not more than € 280.00 per year in total). For dentures, eyeglasses and hearing aids a substantial part of the cost has to be borne by the recipient.

Insurance contracts in the compulsory sector differ in the degree to which they cover optional medical services. This is another criterion to help you make the choice between companies. When you ask your colleagues for advice you will find that many of them are enrolled with Techniker Krankenkasse (TK) because up until 2009, when companies were still allowed to set their own premiums, TK typically offered the lowest rates for people with a technical training.

An important feature of insurance contracts in the compulsory sector is that they are family contracts. At no extra charge, non-working spouses (up to a monthly salary of € 400.00) and children are covered as well.

Within the EU and some other countries, the insurance is also valid during short stays outside of Germany. This does not apply to all countries, e.g. not to Israel, Liechtenstein, USA and Canada.
Private health insurance:

In contrast to the compulsory health insurance, contributions to private insurance contracts and what they cover are not legally regulated. The insurance premium does not depend on your salary, but on your current age, your age when you signed the contract and your personal risk factor for illness. In addition, the coverage of the insurance plan is determined individually and contributions depend on the choice of services you wish to incorporate. Normally, the minimum standard corresponds to the coverage of the compulsory health insurance. Often the coverage of private health insurance is more comprehensive than that of the compulsory insurance plans.

As a rule of thumb, for people in their forties or fifties and younger, private health insurance premiums are substantially lower than those for compulsory health insurance. However, unlike compulsory health insurance, each member of a family, including each child, will need their own separate contract with a separate monthly premium. If you have several children and a non-working spouse, or if there are pre-existing medical conditions for any one of them, it might be better to opt for compulsory health insurance. Also, you are allowed into the private system only if your annual gross income is above € 49,950.00.

Please note that some of the insurance companies demand a health certificate from a German doctor. Without this certificate you will have to wait for some months after signing the contract until all or some parts of the coverage, e.g. artificial teeth/dentures or childbirth-related cost, come into effect.

As with the compulsory system, the employer pays roughly half of the monthly premiums. Unlike the private system, however, the employer pays that amount directly to you, and it is your own responsibility to make sure your full insurance premium arrives in the company’s account in time.
You can choose between a number of private insurance companies. When you ask your colleagues, you might find that many of them have chosen the Debeka insurance company - it usually comes out at or near the top in consumer rankings in terms of value for money.

**Nursing care insurance (only for employees with a work contract)**

The long-term nursing insurance takes effect when you need regular nursing care (because of age or handicap). It is compulsory for everyone and is typically concluded in combination with the health insurance. The contribution is about 1.95% of the gross salary.

Employees without children who use the compulsory insurance scheme and have reached the age of 23 must make an additional contribution to nursing care insurance. Currently, this amounts to 0.25 per cent of their monthly gross income. The total employer’s contribution amounts to 0.975 per cent. Furthermore, all PTB employees are requested to provide documentation of the birth of their child/children (birth certificate, acknowledgement of paternity, adoption certificate).

As with health insurance premiums, PTB deducts the monthly premium for nursing care insurance automatically from your salary if you have opted for the compulsory system, or pays the employer’s contribution directly to you if you have opted for the private system.
9. Emergencies, hospitals, doctors

In case of emergency there are two in-house emergency call numbers which will connect you with the PTB fire brigade or with the guard house at the main gate:

- for Braunschweig: 9999 (24h)
- for Berlin: 7777 (24h)

It is important for you to know the respective number!

In case of a fire alarm in your building, leave the building immediately, take only personal belongings (jacket, bag, key, car key) with you, leave the doors closed but unlocked. There are gathering places outside all buildings posted with this sign (right). Please meet there with the other people from the building and contact your host or a member of the respective group.

Please ask your host where this gathering place is for your specific building, and ask him/her about any other safety regulations applying to your work.

General emergency numbers in Germany:

Police (24h)
- 110

Fire, emergency medical care (24h)
- 112
In case of acute poisoning:

Braunschweig:
Giftinformationszentrum Nord
Robert-Koch-Str. 40
Zentrum für Pharmakologie und
Toxikologie der Universität Göttingen
37075 Göttingen

Emergency Call: +49 (0)551 19240

Berlin:
Vergiftungszentrale im Virchow-Klinikum
Nephrologie und Intensivmedizin
Augustenburger Platz 1

Emergency Call: +49 (0)30 19240

What to do when you are ill

When you need to see a doctor because you are feeling ill you just go to a doctor’s office. If you have opted for the compulsory health insurance plan you will absolutely need to present the small chip card issued by the insurance company to receive treatment. Within the private insurance plan, no such chip card is needed.

In case of a life-threatening emergency, please call 112 (day or night) and an emergency system will spring into action. A doctor will come to see you and/or an ambulance or helicopter will take you to the next hospital. As you can imagine, this system really is for life-threatening emergencies only. For other acute medical problems occurring outside normal working hours, please use the Emergency Medical Service. In Braunschweig, this is called “Ärztlicher Notdienst”, in Berlin it is called “Ärztlicher Bereitschaftsdienst”; see below for details.

For non-acute situations, like getting a routine dental or eye check, it is best to make an appointment with
In case of harmful accidents on the grounds of PTB or while on your way to or from work, you are covered by statutory accident insurance. Damages to a private vehicle are not included. The same holds for business travel if the travel was approved by PTB. If the accident happens on the grounds of PTB, an in-house doctor will treat you. Otherwise, you might be in for a long wait in the waiting room, or be rejected altogether.

If you need medication, the doctor will sign a prescription that you take to a pharmacy, where they will hand you the medicine. Complicated rules apply as to whether you have to pay nothing, something or all of the medication and whether you will be reimbursed by the insurance company - it depends on the type of medication and, to some degree, on the insurance contract. We cannot explain it all here, but anyway you’ll have no choice but to pay what they ask you at the pharmacy because, well, you need the medication! Don’t be alarmed, though, because the overall system of regulations ensures that nobody is overly burdened by health-care expenses.

In case the doctor finds that you are unfit for work in your current state, she/he will sign a note on a small yellow form. The note will state for how long you will be unable to work, but it will not say anything about the nature of your illness at all. Your employer must receive this note by the fourth day of your illness at the very latest - send it by mail or ask someone to deliver it for you. Of course, you will have to tell your employer as soon as possible that you cannot show up for work or need to leave work because of an acute medical problem.

If you are unable to work because of illness, you will still receive your full wage (“Lohnfortzahlung”) for up to six weeks. From the seventh week onwards, you will receive an illness benefit from your health insurance company, amounting to 70% of your gross salary, but not more than 90% of your net income.

Accidents:

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A paramedic will take care of you. If necessary, further appropriate measures will be taken by the in-house paramedic. If you need to see a doctor, you have to go to a so-called “Durchgangsarzt” (accident insurance consultant). The findings recorded in the accident insurance consultant's report must be documented in a clearly arranged format after a careful examination.

Accidents not directly related to your work at PTB are not covered. These are, e.g., taking part in visiting programs after hours or going somewhere with the private car of a colleague, etc.

Guests are liable for property damage during their stay if caused by acting intentionally or grossly negligently. It is advisable to take out liability insurance if your home institution does not cover such liability. PTB, in turn, is also only liable for damages due to intentional or grossly negligent acts.

In addition, guests are liable for damage caused by acting against contracted regulations, occupational safety or security regulations (the same applies to IT).

**Doctors and chemists on duty at night / on weekends**

If outside normal working hours you do not feel well and you need to see a doctor, please use the Emergency Medical Service. In Braunschweig, this is called “Ärztlicher Notdienst”, in Berlin it is called “Ärztlicher Bereitschaftsdienst”; see below for details.

**Braunschweig:**

**Ärztlicher Notdienst Braunschweig**

An der Petrikirche 1
38100 Braunschweig

**Phone:** +49 (0)531 44033
Opening hours:
Mon. / Tue. / Thur.: 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.
Wed. 1:00 p.m. to Thur. 7:00 a.m.
Weekends: Fri. 5:00 p.m. to Mon. 7:00 a.m.
(round-the-clock)

Berlin:

Kassenärztliche Vereinigung Berlin
Ärztlicher Bereitschaftsdienst

Phone: +49 (0)30 310031
(24 hours)

Hospitals

Compulsory insurance covers hospital costs only for “medically indicated care” but not for optional services (choice of doctors, single or two-bed room, etc.). Stays in hospitals in Germany can be very expensive. You should obtain detailed advice from your insurance company on the necessary formalities and refundable costs. Within the compulsory insurance plan, if you go to a hospital as an outpatient for medical attendance (e.g. at weekends or after hours) you have to pay € 10.00 up front - even if you have already paid the “Praxisgebühr” (Medical Treatment Fee) for the quarterly period at another doctor’s office.

Hospitals in Braunschweig:

Städtisches Klinikum Braunschweig

Freisestraße 9/10
38118 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 595-0
Fax: +49 (0)531 595-1322
Email: info@klinikum-braunschweig.de
HEH Kliniken Herzogin-Elisabeth-Heim

Leipziger Str. 24
38124 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 699-0

Städt. Krankenhaus Wolfenbüttel

Alter Weg 80
38302 Wolfenbüttel

Phone: +49 (0)5331 934-0

Hospitals in Berlin:

Since there is such a big variety of hospitals in each district of Berlin and also with different specializations, please take a look at the homepage.

Pharmacies

In Germany, doctors normally give you a prescription for the medicine you need. It can be bought at the pharmacies. In addition to that, the pharmacies will also sell you medicines (e.g. headache tablets) without prescription. There are many pharmacies in every town and they take turns in being open round the clock. Every pharmacy posts a list on its door so you get a quick overview of which pharmacy is on duty during that particular night.
10. Telecommunication and broadcasting/TV

There are public telephones which take coins, but some phones take telephone cards. Telephone cards can be obtained from the post office, gas stations and selected other locations.

To find out rates for calls to foreign countries, take a look at the homepage.

Calling cards are an option for calling abroad. If you have a calling card you can call world-wide from any telephone. The cost is deducted from your current account. The different companies can tell you how much international calls cost. It is advisable to compare a number of different companies and look for any “hidden costs”. With landline or mobile suppliers it is pretty much the same. Please compare the “discounters” like simyo or easymobile and the service of providers like Vodafone, Telekom, O2 or eplus.

Germany is served by a wide variety of TV and radio stations. On so-called “private stations” the program is frequently interrupted by advertisements. However, a strong point of Germany’s media landscape is the existence of a system of public broadcasting stations. Their programming is mostly free of advertising, and some programs cater to the more intellectually inclined. The public system is supported financially by a fee that everybody who owns a radio or TV set must pay. This is regardless of whether they actually use the set or whether they actually listen to or watch the public programs! Therefore, if you own a radio (or a car radio!) you must register with the “Gebühreneinzugszentrale” (GEZ). There is a monthly fee of currently € 5.76 for having one or more radios in your home ready for use. For a TV set the fee is € 17.98, which also covers any radio receivers you might have in your household (including car radio). Note that this fee does not cover any radio sets in your office or laboratory - you need to pay the fee again for those sets! Note that even if you do not own a
radio or TV set but own a computer with Internet access or a smartphone, you need to pay the “radio” fee because you might be listening or watching via Internet.

This GEZ and public station system is highly controversial in parts of the population but it offers the great advantage of having available a source of information free of commercial interests. Also, when looking for high-quality content, the public stations are where you should look first.

Aerial reception of programming coded in the DVB-T standard is free, but for cable reception you need to pay the cable company. This fee might be included in the additional cost you have to pay to your landlord - ask him/her whether there is a cable connection or not.
11. Public transportation

Public transportation prices vary, depending on how often you want to travel and whether you buy a single ticket or a monthly ticket. Guests who stay longer than a month in Braunschweig or Berlin are advised to purchase a monthly ticket (Monatskarte), because it is less expensive than buying single tickets. With this ticket you can use all of the public transportation options without limitations. For an overview of bus/tram routes, prices and times please refer to:

- Public transportation in Braunschweig
- Public transportation in Berlin

http://www.verkehrs-ag.de
http://www.efa.de
http://bvg.de
> English
> Journey Planner
12. Connecting your electrical devices

All European countries use a power supply that is within 10% of 230 V at a frequency of 50 Hz. In Germany, you will find CEE 7/4 wall sockets (also called “Schuko” connection system). A “Schuko” plug features two round pins 4.8 mm in diameter for the live and neutral contacts, plus two flat contact areas at the top and bottom of the plug for protective earth (ground). The so-called “Europlug” is also compatible (it is designed to fit the sockets of nearly all EU member states).

Some countries use a lower voltage mains supply (USA: 120 V, Taiwan: 110 V, Japan: 100 V …) or a 60 Hz line frequency. TVs, radio sets and home appliances built for these countries need a voltage converter to run on the German power supply system - don’t try to connect them directly! However, modern “switching power supplies” (mainly used for laptops, PDAs and cell phones) normally work properly in a voltage range from 100 to 240 V and for both line frequencies, therefore you only need a simple adapter to connect them to the German power net. The voltage range is usually printed on the power supply case. Check this before trying!

Important safety warning:

Please read and understand the following carefully when you are planning to use electrical devices brought along with you from outside of Germany.

In Germany, wall plugs fit into a wall socket in two different ways (rotated 180° with respect to each other). Furthermore, there is no standard order in which the live and the neutral contacts are connected to the two round contacts of the socket. As a consequence, electrical devices sold in Germany are designed to operate safely with the live contact connected to either of the two round wall plug pins. This is, however, not necessarily the case with devices designed for other countries. In Switzerland, for instance, wall plugs and
sockets fit together in only one orientation, and it’s always the same contact inside the socket that is “live”. Some designers of electrical devices for these countries internally connect the neutral pin to the case of the device - absolutely safe in Switzerland, but potentially deadly in Germany! When you connect a device with, say, a Swiss connector to a German wall socket using a “travel adapter” you must make sure that you know which connector in that particular socket is live! The only way to find out is to use a voltmeter. Even worse, you must make sure that nobody can unplug the device and re-insert the plug the other way round! There is even more potential for a fatal error when using extension cords.

The German CEE 7/4 (Schuko) connecting system.

The CEE 7/16 “Europlug” can be connected directly to German wall sockets.
13. The German education system

In Germany children from 3 to 6 years of age normally attend a “Kindergarten”. Attendance is voluntary and comparable to American day care centers or all-day nursery schools. The situation with the “Kindergarten” varies considerably between the old and the new federal states. In the old federal states the number of places for children is insufficient, especially in big cities, so that you may have to wait for some time before your child is accepted. You will also find a different system in every federal state.

Day nannies, who care for your child individually, can be found through newspaper ads or the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt). Babysitters, who care for your child for a few hours during the day or in the evening, can best be found upon recommendation. You should ask both neighbors and colleagues whether they know a trustworthy person.

Information about your local “Kindergarten” can be obtained from the Youth Welfare Office at the local administrative authority of the respective city district.

For Braunschweig, it is:

**Stadt Braunschweig**  
**Fachbereich Kinder, Jugend und Familie**

Eiermarkt 4-5  
38100 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 470-8415  
Fax: +49 (0)531 470-8404

The city of Braunschweig has prepared a brochure with more information.¹

There is also a listing of all child care facilities in Braunschweig.²

¹[http://www.braunschweig.de](http://www.braunschweig.de)  
> Politik & Verwaltung  
> Fachbereiche & Institutionen  
> Fachbereiche & Referate  
> Kinder, Jugend und Familie  
> Verwaltung  
> Broschüre Kinder- und familienfreundliche Stadt Braunschweig PDF

²[http://www.braunschweig.de](http://www.braunschweig.de)  
> Leben in Braunschweig  
> Soziales  
> Kinderbetreuung  
> Kinderbetreuungseinrichtungen
In Berlin, the child care situation is again different from that in Braunschweig. The Senate of the city has published a brochure in English with all necessary information.¹

In case you would like to make use of some vacancy on short notice you have to register your child at the Youth Welfare Office in the district you live in. You can find an application form here.²

PTB has established a day care center (age group: 8 months to 3 years) on its premises in Braunschweig. The equal opportunity commissioner for PTB Braunschweig is:

**Ms. Birgit Behrens**

Phone: +49 (0)531 592-9133  
Email: gleichstellungsbeauftragte@ptb.de  
Central Building, room 308.

If she cannot be reached, please contact the deputy equal opportunity commissioner for PTB Braunschweig:

**Ms. Britta Wedekind**

Phone: +49 (0)531 592-3091,  
Email: britta.wedekind@ptb.de  
Central Building, room 418.

The deputy equal opportunity commissioner for PTB Berlin is:

**Ms. Gabriele Binder**

Phone: +49 (0)30 3481-7552  
Email: gabriele.binder@ptb.de  
“Gerätebau” building in Charlottenburg, room 305.

**Compulsory education**

All children living in Germany have to attend school from the ages of six to fifteen. First they are enrolled at the “Grundschule” or elementary school (grades
1 to 4 in Braunschweig, grades 1 to 6 in Berlin). After the fourth or sixth grade, respectively, pupils change to one of the following secondary schools:

- “Hauptschule”, where they can obtain the basic school leaving certificate (up to grade nine or ten),
- “Realschule”, with the intermediate school leaving certificate at the end of grade 10,
- “Gymnasium”, which leads to the “Abitur”, the university entrance qualification, at the end of grade 12 or 13, depending on the school, and
- “Gesamtschule” (comprehensive school), which combines the various types of schools.

As a rule, school hours are mornings only for elementary school, with some schools offering lunch and afternoon supervision programs. Most secondary schools offer classes in the morning only, but an increasing number of them are being upgraded to serve lunch and supervise or teach in the afternoons as well (“Ganztagsschule”).

The choice between the comprehensive school, on the one hand, and the three-tiered system of “Hauptschule”, “Realschule” and “Gymnasium”, on the other hand, is surrounded by quite some controversy and ideology. Some say that only the “Gesamtschule” can develop the potential of each child by not “sorting” them too early according to their scholastic achievements and potential as displayed at age 10 (Braunschweig) or 12 (Berlin). Others say that it is frustrating for less-gifted children to be schooled together with more talented ones, and that the better achievers are slowed down or cannot achieve their full potential within the allegedly lower standards of the “Gesamtschule”. This controversy has been raging for at least four decades now, and no end is in sight.

Schools in Germany are generally co-educational, i.e. boys and girls are educated together. The vast majority of schools are “public”, being financed with tax money. Unlike some other countries, the public school sys-
The school system in Germany is fully accepted and of a very high standard: everybody - from professor to simple worker - puts their children in public schools. All teachers have formal training (even a university degree in secondary school), are well respected in the community, and are well paid.

There are private schools as well, but in general they charge tuition fees. Among private schools, you can find some which are run by the Catholic Church (for instance, girls-only or boys-only schools; usually they also take non-Catholic or non-Christian pupils), some run by special-interest groups (Waldorf schools), or schools with a special focus on particularly gifted students (for instance, the Christophorus-Schule in Braunschweig).

Internationale Schule in Braunschweig
(instruction given in English)

Helmstedter Straße 37
38104 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 889210-0
Fax: +49 (0)531 889210-15
Email: is@cjd-braunschweig.de

Information about schooling can be obtained from the Supervisory School Authority in Braunschweig:

Schulamt Standort Braunschweig

Wilhelmstr. 62-69
38100 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 484-0
Email: poststelle@lschb-bs.niedersachsen.de

Since the Commissioner for Integration and Migration of Berlin has published a brochure with all necessary information concerning the Berlin school system, we will keep it simple at this point and refer directly to the brochure.
14. How to say it in German?

• **Sprachenzentrum (Language Center) of the Technical University Braunschweig (TU)**

You can learn German at the TU-Sprachenzentrum. If you are enrolled as a student at TU, it is rather inexpensive. Please find more information on the homepage.

• **Goethe Institutes**

Acting on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany, Goethe-Institut e. V. promotes various issues of foreign cultural and educational policy. According to its statute, the three principal objectives of the institute are:

- promoting the study of the German language abroad
- encouraging international cultural cooperation
- conveying an all-round image of Germany by providing information on its culture, society and politics. There is more information on their homepage.

• **Volkshochschule Braunschweig or Volkshochschule Berlin**

You can learn German as a foreign language in an intensive evening course taking place two or three times a week for a moderate fee. Alternatively, you can choose individual training with a private language institute. However, this might turn out to be a more expensive option.
Braunschweig, the city of Henry the Lion, has some 246,000 inhabitants and is the biggest city located between Hannover and Berlin. It can be reached by the international traveler either by train (the German train system is very fast and efficient), by car via Autobahn 2, or by air via the international airports in Frankfurt (airport code FRA), Hannover (HAJ), Berlin-Tegel (TXL) or Berlin-Schönefeld (BER, SXF).

Braunschweig has a varied and fine selection of museums to offer its visitors. The themes of the museums range from the cultural history and development of the region, to the fine arts, literary collections and photography. Most remarkable is the Duke Anton Ulrich Museum, which is the oldest museum on the European continent. It houses an incredible collection of paintings by the Dutch masters, including Rembrandt, Rubens and Vermeer van Delft.

Do you like it classical, special or culinary? Every Sunday at 10.00 a.m. Braunschweig invites you to discover its history on a guided city tour. Whilst admiring the historical buildings you will be provided with interesting facts. The tour is offered in English and German and is a perfect introduction if you are new in town. There are tours of various characters. The classical tour and the tour through Richmond palace show the historical side of Braunschweig. The special tours like “Braunschweig Curiosities” have more extravagant focuses. And last but by no means least, the culinary tours tasting offers a speciality of the region at the end of each tour. For more information, please contact the Tourist Office.

You can find churches of many denominations in Braunschweig; their services are in German. At the Independent Evangelical Church (Freikirche) in Braunschweig there is a church service with simultaneous translation into English, French and Spanish every Sunday at 11:30 a.m.
Ev. Freikirchliche Gemeinde
Braunschweiger Friedenskirche

Kälberwiese 1
38118 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 25687-0

As befits a city the size of Braunschweig, there is almost nothing that you cannot buy. Most of the shops in the city are open from Monday through Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Several shops outside the city center have shorter opening hours. The main shopping area in Braunschweig is located in the pedestrian zone near to the Bohlweg. There are shoe shops, boutiques, jeweler's, and more, offering everything you could wish for. If you don’t find what you are looking for you can try in the “Schlossarkaden”, Braunschweig’s consumer temple No. 1. The biggest supermarkets are: real,-, ALDI, Lidl. In Germany, there is a 19% sales tax (Value Added Tax), which is already included in the price you see on the price tag.

Attention: In Braunschweig all shops are closed on Sundays!

If you need everyday supplies after closing time or on Sundays or public holidays, you can try the small shops in gas stations or in the main train station.

Berlin

Berlin is Germany’s capital and its largest city. On the one hand, you can hear the buzz of a big city, you will find representative buildings and quarters, specialized shops for just about anything, a comprehensive array of cultural events and institutions, and, on the other hand, you will find rural charm.

Berlin can be reached by air via its own airports Berlin-Tegel (airport code TXL) or Berlin-Schönefeld.
(BER, SXF) or by train from other German airports, for instance Frankfurt (FRA) or Hannover (HAJ). There are several freeways (Autobahn) connecting Berlin by road.

The city’s sights are mainly a reflection of German history, from Prussian and imperial times to the “Third Reich” and to the Communist regime. Sightseeing here is often a sombre and thought-provoking experience, but modern Berlin isn’t trapped in its past. The Jewish Museum, for example, focuses on all aspects of Jewish life and culture in Berlin and the new Daniel Libeskind building is worth a visit for the architecture alone.

Due to Berlin’s scale and the size of the city center it is difficult to cover the main sights on foot. The Berlin Welcome Card offers a great way to get around the city and see many of the highlights; it includes unlimited travel on the underground, metro, and tram systems and 50% discounts on most museum entrance fees. Another good way to experience central attractions like the Reichstag (the restored parliament) and its Norman Foster glass dome is to board a sightseeing boat on the Spree river.

Those seeking a cultural experience should head for the famous “Berlin Museumsinsel”. The six world-class museums on a small island focus on classical antiquities, prehistory and early history, Islamic art, and sculpture, and they house Egyptian and numismatic collections. The museum complex itself was made a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999.

A new generation of young Germans has migrated to the capital in recent years from all over the country, filling the bars and cafés in Prenzlauer Berg, Kreuzberg, and Mitte. Bars and clubs in the central district are mostly open late, into the small hours. Expect the unexpected - wine bars that only charge what you want to pay (Weinerei at Zionskirche Square) or a drinking joint in a circus tent (Bar Jeder Vernunft, Schaper Street).

Berlin has no equivalent to the West End or Broad-
way, but a number of British shows have established themselves here over the years - including Blue Man Group.

It’s worth venturing to nearby Potsdam and Park Sanssouci (which freely translates as “carefree”). The vast royal gardens are often compared to Versailles, which they try to copy in parts, and resemble a showroom for medium-sized palaces. Allow for at least two hours to explore and choose your favorite from residences such as Frederic the Great’s Palace Sanssouci, which gave the park its name, and later additions, such as Neues Palais.
16. Eating out

Besides a wide variety of ethnic food and international cuisine, Braunschweig and Berlin offer outstanding restaurants located throughout the city. For more information, please visit the homepage.

If you are staying in Berlin, please make sure that you try the “Original Berliner Currywurst” (a sausage with a special ketchup-like sauce, seasoned with curry powder). According to the information we got from our colleagues in Berlin, the restaurant “Curry 36” (Mehringdamm 36/Yorkstraße) is the best place to try it out.

In Braunschweig, a local specialty is the “Mumme”, a beer-like concoction full of calories; there are varieties with and without alcohol. Try it to see whether you like it!
17. Sports and other activities

PTB’s staff sports groups offer you the opportunity to participate in various types of sports with your new colleagues. On the four tennis courts of PTB’s tennis club in Braunschweig, Tennis Club PTB e. V., you can complete a trial training free of charge. The staff football group competes in the league of Braunschweig’s staff teams and in international tournaments as well. If you enjoy running outdoors in nature, PTB’s running group is the right choice for you. In Berlin, you have the possibility to join a group playing table tennis (they even won the city championship), a group doing fitness training and a group learning self-defense. In Braunschweig, there are even two clubs for sailing enthusiasts currently available.

To contact a staff sports group and for information on additional sports offered by PTB, see the Intranet.

PTB Braunschweig cooperates with TU Braunschweig’s sports program. All staff members from PTB can use the sports facilities at TU Braunschweig. There are many sports programs without fees, and you can join any of them. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Lutz Stöter:

Lutz Stöter

Franz-Liszt-Str. 34, 38106 Braunschweig

Phone: +49 (0)531 391-3659  
Fax: +49 (0)531 391-8102  
Email: sportzentrum@tu-bs.de

There is also a cooperation with the MTV Braunschweig, which is one of the biggest sports clubs in the region, and anyone can become a member. They offer a wide variety of different sports, for example soccer, handball, field hockey, Pilates, cycling....
If you are interested, Ms. Meike Lahrsen will be happy to assist you. Her phone number is +49 (0)531 43633.

And last but by no means least, you can enter the world of music. The members of the Big Band - mostly PTB-Braunschweig staff members of all ages and regardless of hierarchy - have been meeting regularly to play music together in their leisure time, already since 1988.

Every year in January/February, the Big Band holds an annual public concert and also provides musical entertainment for open house days in Braunschweig and Berlin and for many other internal and external festivities.

If you play a Big Band instrument, feel free to come to the next rehearsal. New members are always welcome.
Phone numbers:

- Guest House Issues: 9238, 9236 (Braunschweig)
- Keys: 9293 (Braunschweig), 7217 (Berlin)
- Lost and Found: 9261 (Braunschweig), 7554 (Berlin)
- Main Gate: 9000 (Braunschweig), 7271 (Berlin)
- Tourist Information: +49 (0)531 470-2040 (Braunschweig)
  +49 (0)30 250025 (Berlin)
- Operator Services (Telekom):
  - National 11833
  - International 11834
  - International, English Language 11837
Willkommen
Bienvenue
Welcome

Living in Germany - A Guide for Guest Researchers and Foreign Employees

Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt
Braunschweig und Berlin