

Newcomer Information on Housing

Living in Bremen – General Information

Please note that in order to find accommodation, you usually need to be physically present in Bremen. German landlords or people living in shared apartments hardly ever accept someone as their new tenant or roommate unless they have met them in person.

Depending on the type of housing you are looking for, you should start looking for a residence about one to three months prior to your arrival at BIGSSS. The process of finding an apartment can be quite challenging and may take some time, but apartment hunting is a good way of getting to know Bremen.

A time-saving option is to start off with a temporary/interim accommodation (see below) first and then start looking for a more permanent place to stay once you have arrived in Bremen.

We also recommend having a German (native) speaker with you when looking at apartments or signing a contract.

The first decision you should make is which type of accommodation you are searching for. Your stipend should enable you to afford an apartment of your own, other options are to share an apartment or to live either in a private student hall on the University of Bremen campus or in one of the Colleges at Jacobs University (see University accommodation below).

Soon after you get accepted to BIGSSS, we will notify you on whether your office will be situated at the University of Bremen or at Jacobs University. We recommend that you wait for this information before deciding for a place to settle.

Excellent and English-speaking information on housing in Bremen can be found on the Jacobs University [Graduate Students Association website](#). We strongly recommend having a look at their website even if you are not going to be located at Jacobs University. They have a lot of experience in helping international students and provide excellent information. We particularly recommend their translations of [German housing terms and abbreviations](#).

The living costs of Bremen may come as a shock to some fellows accustomed to less expensive cities like Prague or Budapest, but come as a pleasant surprise to those Fellows hailing from Scandinavian countries. Bremen can be seen as a moderately priced European city in comparison with other cities in Germany. It is important to remember that living costs will differ depending on the lifestyle and spending habits of each individual. It is very possible to live on a modest budget, or to fully use your fellowship stipend depending on your taste in accommodation, entertainment, travel, and food.

Like most cities, living close to the city center is more expensive than living outside in one of the surrounding suburbs. Likewise, many Fellows find it less expensive to live in a “WG” (shared apartment) than to rent an entire apartment. Such living preferences will heavily impact your cost of living in Bremen. Another factor is how often you tend to eat out versus cook at home.

To get a better sense of the costs of living in Bremen follow this [link](#).

City Quarters – Where to Settle in Bremen

There are several wonderful places to live in Bremen. For general orientation, please differentiate between ‘Bremen’ and ‘Bremen-Nord’ (Jacobs University) although both are part of the city of Bremen.

No matter which part of Bremen you want to move to, we generally recommend having a look at the apartment and neighborhood before deciding for an apartment. The period of notice usually covers three months so your commitment to a location is of some duration. When sharing a flat, this is often handled more flexibly.

The city of Bremen has more than 500.000 inhabitants. It consists of a number of city quarters that vary in character, vivacity, infrastructure, demographic structure, and price of accommodation. To help you find out which quarter you would like to live in, we provide a short overview of the most popular quarters below:

Viertel

- The Viertel is the hippest of Bremen's downtown quarters and consists of two parts called Ostertor and Steintor (or Peterswerder which is a bit further down the road).
- If you would like to live in a lively, energizing and multicultural ambiance, this is the right place for you.
- Although Viertel has beautiful and quiet streets as well, it may not be the best choice if you need silence to fall asleep or do not want to live in the pub-area of a city.
- The Viertel is also one of the more expensive neighborhoods in Bremen.

Neustadt

- For many students, Neustadt, located south of the central station and across the river Weser, is a real alternative. Rents are a bit lower than in the Viertel.
- The most charming areas of ‘Neustadt’ are the so-called "river quarter" (Flüsseviertel) and the Buntentor quarter which is very close to the Werder See, one of the most beautiful recreational areas in Bremen.

Findorff

- Findorff is situated right beside the main train station, but a very green and friendly residential area.
- It is close to the University of Bremen and the natural reserve area Blockland by bike or bus.
- There are students, many young families and retired people living here.
- If you are looking for a quiet, not too expensive and convenient place to live, this might be the right place for you.

Schwachhausen

- Schwachhausen is located northeast of the central station, between train station and the University of Bremen.
- It is convenient for Fellows who have their offices at the University of Bremen, but also for those Jacobs Fellows who would like to live in the city center and commute to Jacobs via train.
- Here you will find many old town houses next to smart apartment buildings and city mansions.
- It's one of the more expensive neighborhoods in Bremen.

Some of the main quarters in 'Bremen-Nord' are listed here in growing distance from the main train station. All of them have train stations; additional quarters in Bremen-Nord are connected with them via bus lines:

- Walle
- Gröpelingen
- Burg
- Lesum
- St. Magnus
- Schönebeck / Grohn: Jacobs University is located in Schönebeck
- Vegesack

Like in Bremen, the character of quarters in Bremen-Nord ranges from very bourgeois areas with small town flair to run-down city areas with multi-story apartment buildings. For more information on these quarters, visit the Jacobs University website on [Bremen city areas](#).

Finding an Apartment in Bremen

If you are looking for an apartment, please note that in Germany apartments are usually unfurnished, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

There are several options to find one. Please find below a list of some channels you might want to use. The biggest hindrance for most of you will probably be if you do not speak German since many private landlords might not speak English at all. We will do our best to help you solve this problem, i.e. by translating housing offers. Please do not hesitate to contact us for assistance.

Useful websites:

- The [black board on www.bremen.de](http://www.bremen.de) and the [black board on ww.wg-gesucht.de](http://www.wg-gesucht.de) – these are very similar to craigslist. Unfortunately, offers are usually in German only. However, you can always also post an ad yourself in English.
- Public housing agency [GEWOBA](#) (probably the biggest choice in accommodation, but website in German only),
- Public housing agency [BREBAU](#) (website in German only),
- Public housing agency [Gewosie](#) (website in German only, primarily offers accommodation in Bremen-Nord),
- Ads in Bremen's local newspaper [Weser Kurier](#) (website in German only) and transregional newspaper [AbisZ](#) (website in German only).

Finding a Room or Shared Apartment in Bremen

In Germany, it is common for students and young adults to share apartments. We call this a Wohngemeinschaft or WG. WGs are often not merely founded to reduce costs. Many people decide to share apartments because they like the company of their roommates. Adverts for this kind of shared apartment might stress the importance of 'WG-Leben' (time spent with your roommates) or explicitly tell you that they are not a 'Zweck-WG' (meaning that they are not looking for people who merely want to share an apartment without participating in any social life). Usually, there is a shared kitchen and/or living room, a shared bathroom, and one room for each roommate. Sharing rooms is uncommon in Germany.

If you are new to Bremen or even to Germany and looking for social integration or if you simply like the idea of a shared apartment, this might be a good option for you. To find a WG, you can either browse ads put up by WGs searching for new roommates or you can publish an ad yourself. The most useful websites for finding a WG are:

- The [black board on www.bremen.de](http://www.bremen.de) and the [black board on ww.wg-gesucht.de](http://www.wg-gesucht.de) – these are very similar to craigslist. Unfortunately, offers are

usually in German only. However, you can always also post an ad yourself in English under "Gesuche".

- www.studenten-wg.de is another option (again in German only). You need to type in Bremen and can find offers under "Angebote lesen" or publish your own ad under "Gesuch aufgeben".

The accommodation service of the student union at the University of Bremen ('Zimmervermittlung des Studentenwerks') will also help you to find accommodation outside the student dorms. It is located on the first floor of the Studentenhaus (StH). You can call them (+49 421 2201 10129) or send them an email (wohnraumvermittlung@stw-bremen.de).

University Accommodation at the University of Bremen and Jacobs University

Since the student union only offers accommodation for students with a low income, you are not eligible for regular student hall accommodation. One option, though, is the private student hall Galileo Residenz:

Galileo Residenz is a private student hall that offers 2-bedroom and 9-bedroom apartments. Every apartment has a shared kitchen and living room area. The kitchen is equipped with a fridge, freezer, hotplate with oven, electric kettle, microwave, toaster, sufficient cutlery, crockery and other cooking utensils. All rooms are furnished (bed, closet, desk, bookshelves, mirror). Internet access is available in every room. Furthermore, there are different room categories (separate or shared bathroom, balcony etc.). In order to get the preferred room, it is important to apply as early as possible. The building also has a storeroom in the basement, and a laundry room with modern washing machines and dryers. Limited parking space is also available. For more information and application procedures, please visit the [Galileo Residenz website](#).

Jacobs University is a residential university and thus offers student accommodation in four colleges. For more information, please visit their [website](#). In order to get a room, it is important to apply as early as possible.

Finding a Temporary/Interim Accommodation upon Arrival

The Goethe Institute may help you to find furnished rooms for the first weeks. You can call them (+49 421 360 8112) or send them an email (zimmerverwaltung_bre@goethe.de).

Other short-term accommodation options are the [Townside Hostel Bremen](#) in the Viertel or the [Youth Hostel Bremen](#) in the city center.

Another option is to temporarily move into a shared apartment (see above). Look out for rooms indicated as "Zwischenmiete". These are rooms that are temporarily vacant and thus usually also furnished.