



**A warm welcome
to the city of Münster!**

**The information brochure of the Foreigners'
Registration Office Münster for new residents**



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Table of contents

Preface.....	5
Part I	7
I. City portrait.....	8
1. Münster and the Münsterland	8
2. Diversity	9
3. Culture and leisure.....	9
4. Economy and science.....	10
5. Politics.....	11
6. Münster in numbers	11
Part II	13
II. Useful information.....	14
1. Start in Münster	14
2. Everyday life	16
3. Work.....	17
4. Living.....	19
5. Driving licence	21
6. Health.....	21
7. Integration	22
8. Children and teenagers	24
9. School.....	24
10. Family	25
11. Leisure	26
12. Insurance	27
13. Emergency numbers.....	27



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Preface

Dear newcomer,

on behalf of the City of Münster and especially on behalf of the Immigration Office, I would like to welcome you (and your family) to this wonderful city.

I am delighted that you have chosen to live in Münster.

Münster offers a variety of beautiful places and fascinating encounters that are sure to put a smile on your face. In this city, you have the opportunity to get to know new things and people and to gain new experiences every day. From cultural offerings to language courses to sporting leisure activities, all doors are open to you.



Source: Stadt Münster

To make your start as pleasant and easy as possible, you will find a compilation of interesting information about Münster and some of the things our liveable city has to offer you on the following pages.

I wish you a good start to your life in Münster!

Kind regards

Christine Zeller
(City Treasurer)



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Part I

City portrait Münster at a glance



Source: Stadt Münster

I. City portrait

1. Münster and the Münsterland

Münster is an independent city in Münsterland, in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia. It is located west in Germany and north-west in North Rhine-Westphalia. It is surrounded by the districts of Steinfurt, Warendorf and Coesfeld. With about 312,000 inhabitants, Münster is the largest city in Münsterland. About 34,500 inhabitants have moved to Münster from abroad or live in Münster with a foreign nationality.

Münster is surrounded by landscaped areas where farms are also located. In contrast, the city centre, with its narrow, historically grown buildings, offers a

nice contrast. In Münster, many things can be reached on foot. Or the bicycle is used - a flagship of the city of Münster.



Source: Stadt Münster

2. Diversity

People from around 168 nations live in Münster. The influences of the different nations and lifestyles also shape the city of Münster and ensure that Münster can develop in a diverse way in the future.

For every life situation, Münster offers the opportunity to develop and unfold freely. Münster offers good living and working conditions and, due to the different cultural, social and religious orientations, many opportunities to integrate socially.

3. Culture and leisure

Münster is characterised by a wide range of cultural and sporting leisure activities. As the centre of Münsterland, the city centre offers many shopping opportunities. In particular, Münster's market is a special highlight for many residents and gives them the opportunity to buy fresh and regional products. There are also numerous restaurants where pleasant hours can be spent. Münster also has a cinema with various locations as well as a distinct nightlife that can show you Münster from a different perspective.



Source: Stadt Münster



4. Economy and science

Münster is an important business location - also due to its internationally active companies. With many companies looking for international employees, Münster offers many opportunities for gainful employment. Due to its diversity and population structure, Münster also offers start-ups the opportunity to develop new business ideas here.

In addition to the economic aspect, the university culture is a flagship of Münster. With over 60,000 students, Münster is one of the most sought-after university cities in Germany. The students are divided between the University of Applied Sciences Münster, the Westphalian Wilhelms University, the Music Academy, the Art Academy and the Philosophical-Theological University. A wide variety of degree programmes can be chosen at the universities (some with admission restrictions), offering all those interested the opportunity to study their respective dream subject and to further their education according to their personal interests. At the Westphalian Wilhelms University there is also the possibility of continuing your studies after the Master's degree with a doctorate and thus gaining initial experience in research.

As a research location, the Westphalian Wilhelms University and the Max Planck Institute in particular offer diverse opportunities to work in research and gain experience in this field.

5. Politics

People who are registered with their main residence in Münster and have German citizenship have the right to vote for the city council and the Lord Mayor every five years. The city council consists of 60 councillors (with a population of 300,001 to 400,000). In order to achieve a proportional balance between the elected parties, additional councillors may be appointed, provided that the council subsequently consists of an even number. The Council is headed by the Lord Mayor. This is also elected every five years.

6. Münster in numbers

Resident population (main residence, February 2021)	312 861
Proportion of foreign resident population	10,99 % (34 407)
Largest foreign group	Syrien (3 402)
Second largest foreign group	Polen (2 296)
Third largest foreign group	Serbien (1 756)
Persons with a permanent residence title	5 671
Persons with a temporary residence title	9 903
Persons in the asylum procedure	382
Persons obliged to leave the country	1 715



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Part II

Useful information about everyday life in Münster



II. Useful information

1. Start in Münster

Once you have arrived in Münster and moved into your new flat, there are a few things you should think about:

- a. Registration at the Bürgeramt: if you move to Münster, you must register at the Bürgeramt within 14 days. For registration, you need your identification document (passport/ID card) and a confirmation of accommodation. You have the possibility to make an appointment for the registration online.



Source: Stadt Münster

- b. Health insurance: If you are employed, it is possible that you are covered by health insurance through your work. If this is not the case, you will have to arrange health insurance privately.



- c. Foreigners Registration Office: If you have entered Germany with a long-stay visa, a notification of stay from you is sufficient for the time being. Please note, however, that you should contact us before your visa expires in order to extend your visa. If you entered Germany without a visa and are planning a long-term stay, please contact us regarding the issuance of a residence permit (unless you are a citizen of an EU country).

- d. School: If you have a child between the ages of sehcs and 18, please contact the [Office for Schools and Further Education](#), for clarification on your child's school attendance.



Source: Stadt Münster

- e. Kindergarten: If you have a child under the age of six and would like childcare, please contact the [Office for Children, Youths and Families](#) regarding the allocation of a kindergarten place or a place in a day care centre.



Source: Stadt Münster



2. Everyday life

The Foreigners' Registration Office Münster is open during the following times:

Mondays	8 am - 12.30 pm and 1.30 pm - 4 pm
Tuesdays	8 am - 12.30 pm and 1.30 pm - 4 pm
Wednesdays	8 am - 12.30 pm
Thursdays	8 am - 12.30 pm and 1.30 pm - 6 pm
Fridays	8 am - 12.30 pm

The municipal offices are open at similar times. You can find the exact opening hours on the [websites of the offices](#) or on the notice boards in front of the offices. The Citizens' Registration Office also offers its services on Saturdays.

The many shops are usually open from Monday to Saturday. The market always takes place on Wednesday and Saturday in Münster's city centre. There are also [other markets](#) in some parts of Münster.



Source: Stadt Münster



Source: Stadt Münster

Many Münster residents use bicycles to get around. For this reason, there are over 500,000 bicycles in Münster. In addition to the bicycle, public transport is also a good way to get from A to B in Münster. [Numerous bus and train lines](#) run regularly in Münster and the surrounding area.

The waste management company “Abfallwirtschaftsbetriebe Münster” ensures that Münster stays clean and regularly collects household waste. Four different bins are available for this purpose: the yellow bin (recyclables bin), the blue bin (paper), the brown bin (organic waste) and the black bin (residual waste). The waste management companies provide information about which waste belongs in which bin [online](#) and in their brochure. Information on collection dates can be found in the waste disposal calendar and in the münster:app.



3. Work

If you are a national of an EU member state, you do not need a work permit to take up gainful employment. You can start working directly.

If you are not a national of an EU member state, you have two options:

- a. You entered the country with a long-stay visa (D visa) You are allowed to work within the framework set out on your visa.
- b. You entered the country without a visa or with a tourist visa (C visa) You may only work after you have received a work permit from the local foreigners authority.



There are different possibilities for issuing the work permit:

- a. the work permit is issued for a specific job - any change of job must be checked by the foreigners authority before taking up the new job.
- b. the work permit entitles the holder to 120 days or 240 half days of employment per year, as well as to carry out part-time student work. Employment is possible within this limit, beyond which it is not permitted to no employment may be pursued so that the success of the studies is not jeopardised.
- c. the work permit entitles the holder to pursue an occupation. All occupations may be pursued without restriction. Only self-employment is not possible.
- d. the work permit entitles the holder to pursue gainful employment. In this case, any form of gainful employment may be taken up (in an employment relationship and self-employed). A separate work permit is not required.

The work permit specifies the scope of the gainful employment that may be carried out. If changes to the work permit are desired, permission must be obtained from the Foreigners' Registration Office before the new activity is taken up.

The district government is responsible for the recognition of foreign professional qualifications. Here you can also obtain further information on the recognition procedure and the requirements necessary for recognition. You can also obtain further information on the recognition of your foreign qualification from the [Federal Ministry of Education and Research](#).

When looking for a suitable job, the Federal Employment Agency can provide information. There are also [job offers](#) here. In addition, current job offers can be accessed on various online platforms.

If you want to start your own business, both the [Chamber of Crafts](#) and the [Chamber of Industry and Commerce](#) offer support in setting up a business.

4. Living

Münster is a very popular city due to its high quality of life. For this reason, it is sometimes difficult to find a suitable flat. It is therefore advisable to search carefully for a suitable flat. Here, numerous search portals offer a possibility in addition to newspaper advertisements. However, it is also possible to find a flat through acquaintances or relatives.

The Office for Housing and Neighbourhood Development advises contacting the following providers in case of an acute flat search:

- Wohn + Stadtbau GmbH
E-mail: service@wohnstadtbau.de
Tel: 02 51/70 08 – 0
- LEG Wohnen NRW GmbH
E-mail: service@leg-wohnen.de
Tel: 02 11/74 07 40-0
- Sahle Baubetreuungsgesellschaft mbH
E-mail: kontakt@sahle.de
Tel: 0 25 71/81 – 0



- Bauverein Ketteler e.G.
E-mail: info@bauverein-ketteler.de
Tel: 02 51/4 82 10 – 0
- Wohnungsverein Münster von 1893 e.G.
E-mail: info@wohnungsverein-muenster.de
Tel: 02 51/28 98 5 – 0
- Vivawest Wohnen GmbH
E-mail: info@vivawest.de
Tel: 02 09/3 80 – 0

Low-income families also have the option of applying for a housing entitlement certificate at the Office for Housing and Neighbourhood Development. With the [„Wohnberechtigungsschein“](#), you can be actively supported in your search for housing.

In Germany there is a broadcasting fee that every household must pay in order to receive public broadcasting (radio, internet, television). The contribution of €17.50 per month must be paid regardless of your actual use. If you receive public benefits or have health restrictions, a reduction/exemption may be possible. The [contribution service](#) will inform you about this.

5. Driving licence

If you hold a driving licence from an EU member state, you can also use it in Germany until it expires.

If you have a driving licence from a non-EU country, you can use it for up to six months after your arrival in Germany. You can obtain information on this from the [Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure](#).

To obtain a German driving licence, you must apply for it at the [„Führerscheinstelle“](#).

Please apply for the issue of a German driving licence in good time. For some countries, the driving tests must be taken again in Germany (theoretical test and / or practical test). The driving licence office can inform you about this. If you drive a motor vehicle in Germany without a valid or recognised driving licence, this can be punished as driving without a licence.



6. Health

The city of Münster has an excellent range of health services. The basis for this is provided by the many general practitioners in private practice who provide primary care and are thus the first point of contact for basic health issues.



In addition to the many general practitioners, Münster also offers a wide range of specialists. An overview of the doctors based in Münster can be found at the [Kassenärztliche Vereinigung Westfalen-Lippe](#).

Health care in Münster is rounded off by numerous pharmacies and hospitals, including Münster University Hospital. You can get an overview of pharmacies in Münster online in the [pharmacy directory](#).

If your GP is not available or you are looking for a specialist, you can get information from the patient service (on tel. [116 117](#)).

7. Integration

For integration in Germany, it is helpful to learn the German language and to get to know the basics of politics and culture in Germany. This is what the [integration course](#) is for. Here, German language skills up to a B1 level and general information about living conditions in Germany are taught.

If you are looking for a language course in your area or need advice, you can find out about offers on the [interactive city map](#).

If you have further questions about integration in Germany, the following migration advice centres can support you:

- Caritas Münster
E-mail: andja.boro@caritas-ms.de
Tel: 02 51/36 33 50
- DRK-Zentrum Münster
E-mail: mark.gebauer@drk-muenster.de
Tel: 0171/54 00 108
- Diakonie Münster
E-mail: b.krueger@diakonie-muenster.de
Tel: 02 51/4 90 15 – 70
- GGUA-Flüchtlingshilfe
E-mail: info@ggua.de
Tel: 02 51/1 44 86 – 0
- Arbeiterwohlfahrt Unterbezirk Münsterland-Recklinghausen
E-mail: i.rosin@awo-ms-re.de
Tel: 01 76/19 00 35 30

If you are a permanent resident in Germany and have integrated into the living conditions in Germany, you can have the [naturalisation office](#) (Office for Citizens and Council Services) examine the acquisition of German citizenship. The Naturalisation Office can inform you about the requirements for naturalisation and whether you can retain your previous nationality.

You can find an overview of the municipal contact points at the [Office for Schools and Further Education](#).

You can also get involved in intercultural activities at the [FreiwilligenAgentur Münster](#).

8. Children and teenagers

For children and teenagers, numerous [youth centres](#) throughout the city offer the opportunity to make social contacts and to exchange ideas with young people who have similar interests and to do something with them.

For children of infant age, there is the possibility of day care in Germany. This is possible in [day care centres](#) or [with child minders](#). Due to the limited number of childcare places, it is advisable to apply for a place early. You can find out about available childcare places at the Office for Children, Youths and Families.



Source: Stadt Münster

9. School

According to the North Rhine-Westphalia School Act, children who are resident in North Rhine-Westphalia are obliged to attend school. Full-time compulsory schooling covers primary and lower secondary education. This refers to grades 1 - 10. Subsequently, compulsory schooling exists in the upper secondary level. For young people in training, this means that compulsory schooling applies until the end of training. If no training is completed, compulsory schooling



Source: Stadt Münster

continues until the end of the school year in which the pupil reaches the age of 18. If you need help choosing the right school, the [educational counselling service of the Office for Schools and Further Education](#) will be happy to assist you.

In addition to compulsory schooling, there is also the possibility in Münster to have children cared for in an open all-day programme after school. For more information, please contact the [Office for Children, Youths and Families](#).

10. Family

Das [Standesamt](#) der Stadt Münster bietet in vielen wichtigen Lebensabschnitten Dienstleistungen an. Bei der Geburt eines Kindes wird diese durch das Standesamt beurkundet. Ebenfalls werden beim Standesamt die Eheschließung angemeldet und Ehen geschlossen.



Im Falle eines Todes wird durch das Standesamt eine Sterbeurkunde ausgestellt. Die Beisetzung des Verstorbenen kann auf einem städtischen Friedhof erfolgen. Hierzu gibt es bei der Friedhofsverwaltung im Amt für Grünflächen, Umwelt und Nachhaltigkeit weitere Informationen.

11. Leisure

In addition to the youth clubs, numerous associations in Münster also offer the opportunity to organise one's free time according to one's own ideas. There is a suitable offer for every age group and every interest. The sports sector in particular is wide-ranging - from canoeing to playing football to aikido - you are sure to find the right offer for you here.



Source: Stadt Münster

On the [interactive city map](#) you can easily find out about sports facilities in your area.

If you are studying in Münster, the university sports centre also offers a wide range of sports.

If you don't (only) want to do sports, the religious communities also offer recreational activities. In addition, the Münster public library offers the opportunity to view and borrow literature at various locations.

12. Insurance

In Germany there are social insurances for employees, which are supposed to protect the employee against essential life risks. These include:

- Health insurance
- unemployment insurance
- pension insurance
- nursing care insurance
- accident insurance

Insurance is usually taken out automatically through the employer when you are employed. The contributions are paid (partly by the employer and partly by the employee) and the employee's share is deducted directly from your gross salary.

In addition to social insurances, other insurances can be useful for your everyday life in Germany, such as liability insurance or household insurance. These insurances must be taken out through an insurance provider.

13. Emergency numbers

Fire department	112
Ambulance service	0251 / 19 222
Poison Control	0228 / 19 240
Police	110
Doctors' patient service	116 117
Public authority number	115

