

Tips for Moving to Cottbus

(or Berlin/Germany in general)

Transportation

- Your BTU student card gets you free transportation throughout Berlin & Brandenburg. You won't get this until 1-2 weeks into the semester, so plan accordingly. You can get an official temporary pass through BTU, although it is a bit complicated (but worth it!).
- Berlin is ~1.5 hours by train. There is one train every hour. RE 2 is the one you want. RE 1 also goes to Cottbus, but is indirect and will take ~2.5 hours. Important note: don't miss the last train! Last direct train from Berlin HBF at 0:36, from Cottbus HBF at 23:01.
- It takes about 30 mins to walk from the Cottbus Hauptbahnhof to the BTU campus or a 10 min bus ride from the TU Mensa bus stop.
- Flixbus - cheap bus used throughout Europe.
- If you travel by local or regional train outside of Brandenburg/Berlin, you only have to pay the ticket from the last station inside Brandenburg with your student card.
- Download the VBB Bus & Bahn application for your phone to see train, bus and tram times throughout Brandenburg & Berlin.
- Deutsche Bahn also has an application, but it only shows train times.
- You might wanna get a bike? Check out [Kleineanzeigen](#) or ask in the international student groups.

Housing

- Off campus housing resources:
 - [WG Gesucht](#)
 - [GWC Cottbus](#)
 - [EG Wohnen](#)
 - Facebook groups (see below)
- On Campus:
 - [Studentenwerk Frankfurt \(Oder\)](#)
 - Private dorms:
 - [Guest House](#) - Uni Service & Hüfa GmbH
 - [T1 Campus Cottbus](#)
 - Check Inn Zimmervermietung Cottbus UG

Food & Drink

- [Campus Options](#)
 - **Mensa:** cheap and balanced meals, from 1,5 €. Veggie options everyday, but not always vegan (but you can always have salad)
 - **Cafeteria:** best options for takeaway coffee and snacks
 - **Pizza Corner:** just takeaway pizza, you can eat it upstairs in Mensa
 - **Brasserie:** nice and cozy, perfect to have a coffee while working on your essays
- Variety of [options](#) available in the Altmarkt, Cottbus

Mandatory Steps After Arrival

- Health Insurance (providers will be stationed at the Welcome Point)
- Registering at the City Office (*Stadtbüro*)
 - Requirements for registration- Your confirmation by your landlord (*Wohnungsgeberbestätigung*), your passport or ID
- Bank Account
- Residence & Work Permits
- This part is stressful, but don't be afraid to ask any of us who have had to do it! It seems like you'll never get all the steps completed, but just know that German bureaucracy is painful for everyone and you will survive!

Student/Mini Jobs Sources

- [Jobmensa](#) by Studitemps (Berlin)
- Facebook groups such as [English Jobs in Berlin](#) could also be helpful
- Effektiv Studentische Arbeitsvermittlung (Student employment agency)
 - There is a [branch through Frei Universität in Berlin](#) where you can sign up for their services in person.
 - Helpful tip: Any jobs labeled "CCC" mean that knowing German is not a requirement.
- [BTU Job Openings](#)
 - Most of these job openings require German language skills

BTU

- The semester starts in the 2nd week of October. You won't get the class schedule until a few days before the semester starts at the introduction meeting for your program. Don't stress - you don't need to do anything

before this meeting. It can be stressful, but don't worry, all will be explained at the first meeting!

Things to do/try

- Currywurst! It's famous in Berlin (there are even veggie versions!)
- Spreewald Gurken (speciality of the area)
- Lubbenau/Spreewald Paddling (canoeing)
- Museums of Berlin - your student ID gets you a reduced annual membership!
- [dwlk](#) (Art Museum in Cottbus)
- Branitz Park (famous & quirky park in the region)
- [Film Festival Cottbus](#): east european film festival (November)
- Gubin, Poland. Can be reached by a 20-40 minute ride by train to Guben, Germany, and a 10-15 minute walk from the station in Germany to the Polish side. Some goods and groceries are cheaper there due to exchange rate. Haircuts are much cheaper (4-10€).

Useful stores/resources/etc.

- DM: toiletries, cleaning supplies, & health products
- Grocery: Lidl (€), Aldi (€), Penny (€), Netto (€), Edeka (€€), Rewe (€€)
- [Kostnixladen](#) - shop in Cottbus where everything is free!
- Cottbus Flea Market (periodic) near the Lidl at Karl-Liebknecht-Straße 47a
- Kitchen goods, room accessories, and other items can often be found second-hand at very discount prices at a flea market which opens periodically.
- Banks: Commerzbank, Deutsche Bank, Post Bank, Sparkasse
 - N26 (online & a tech savvy - a bit quicker than traditional banks)
- Health Insurance options
 - State Insurance (-30) TK, AoK, Barmer
 - Private Insurance (+30) Mawista
- Translation help: <https://www.deepl.com/translator>
- SIM Cards: ALDI Talk (can be purchased at Aldi), O2, Telekom, Vodafone, Fonix, etc. SIM cards are available at some corner markets (Späti), electronics stores, etc.
- If you need cheap winter clothes to survive the German winter, have a shopping trip to Berlin and check the thrift stores there!

Good to know:

- Stores & offices are closed on Sundays & holidays in Germany. However, restaurants will be open and shops within train stations (in Berlin).
- 3 October (Unification Day) is a public holiday, so most shops will be closed

General Helpful Resources:

- Facebook:
 - [Current BTU Heritage Studies Students](#) (for all current HS programs at BTU)
 - [World Heritage Studies Cottbus](#) (general)
 - [International Students in Cottbus](#)
 - [Berlin Housing](#)
 - [English Jobs in Berlin](#)
- City Administration Office (Stadtbüro) - [online appointments](#)
- [Cottbus](#)
- [After your arrival](#)
- [Welcome centre BTU](#)
- Insurance companies:
 - [TK](#)
 - [Aok](#)
 - [Barmer](#)
 - [Mawista](#)
- [VBB Bus & Bahn App](#)
- [Deutsche Bahn App](#)
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