



PRE-Departure Guide, Winter University 2026

Please read the entire Pre-Departure Guide carefully and thoroughly for complete comprehension

Organizational Information

The Winter University is held by the University of Stuttgart.

Please contact:

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First steps:

In case you need to apply for a visa – this will be the very first step to take. You either already have or will receive a document that is required for your application at the German embassy.

After approval of your application, you will receive an official letter of acceptance and an invoice with exact instructions on how and when to pay the participation fee of 1400 EUR. Please note that we will ask for a late fee in case we don't receive any payment in due time. If we don't receive any payment at all the coordinator at your home institution will be informed that your participation has been withdrawn from the program.

Deposit:

We ask that you provide us with a deposit of 200 EUR in cash upon arrival. This deposit is completely refundable and will be held until your departure to ensure that you leave your room tidy and in good standing. It is to be paid upon registration which will take place on Wednesday, January 7 in the classroom (detailed information will follow before your departure).

The deposit will be returned to you on the last day of the Winter University in cash.



E-mails:

In general, you will receive quite a number of e-mails from us giving you vital information about the program, your living situation, etc. Therefore, it is crucial that you check your e-mails at least once a week.

Fee:

The course fee includes the following:

- Accommodation during the Winter University (host family, including breakfast)
- Unlimited [public transportation](#) (bus, subway, tram) within the greater Stuttgart area
- Excursions during subject courses (entrance fee to museums, galleries, guided tours, etc.)
- Weekend excursions (bus, train, lunch, guided tours, entrance fees; except a 20 EUR registration fee and spending money)
- Program administrative costs

The fee does not include:

- Tuition from your own university
- A fee your own university might need to charge to cover their costs
- Transportation to Stuttgart
- Transportation to the university before registration
- Meals
- Medical/accident insurance
- German class textbooks*
- Personal expenses

*For German language class you will need to buy a textbook which costs approx. 25 EUR. During your first class the teacher will tell you which book to purchase. You do not need to bring your own textbooks.



Arrival and Departure

Official arrival: January 5 or 6 (please do NOT arrive earlier, see below)

Official departure: February 13 (if you decide to stay longer, you will need to find your own accommodation!)

When you plan to come to the Winter University you should try to fly directly to Stuttgart: The three-letter code for its airport is STR.

Another possibility is to arrive in Frankfurt (FRA) or Munich (MUC) and to take a train to Stuttgart (approx. 2 hours).

For train schedules, please check this [website](#).

We have a set arrival and departure date (January 5 /6 and February 13, 2026). This is the day to arrive and the day to depart. Please do NOT arrive before the set date. Although we understand that sometimes it is easier to book a flight a few days earlier or leave a few days later, we cannot accommodate you before or after the set dates. If you choose to arrive earlier or leave later, you will have to make your own housing arrangements for these days. The host families do not have to accommodate you before then. The same goes for staying later. You are welcome to stay in Germany after the Winter University is over but you will have to make your own housing arrangements. In addition, we ask the participants to not leave before the official departure date. Although classes often end earlier, the certificates of attendance won't be ready before the official Farewell party, as your teachers need the extra day to mark your papers.

You will be picked up from the airport in Stuttgart by your host family (if you fly into Stuttgart) or at the train station in Stuttgart (if you fly into Frankfurt or Munich). Make sure that you have some small Euro bills or even coins to buy a ticket for public transportation. If the host family is not available for some reason, please let us know so we can organize an alternative pick-up service.

Academic Information

Absence Policy:

We have a very strict absence policy. Daily participation is mandatory in order to get a certificate for the class. Please keep in mind that Winter University is very intensive (135 hours = 13 ECTS) and you will also be able to get a lot of credits during a very short period of time. If you must miss a class, please inform your instructor and/or the course coordinator. In addition, you will need to bring a medical note from a doctor in case you are ill. Please note that attendance, homework, daily preparation, and in-class participation are vital to your success in this course.

Alcohol is strictly prohibited on the premises of the Winter University. Violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action which could result in suspension or expulsion.



Classes:

Here is a typical day at the Winter University:

The first thing you have to get to is the German language class. It starts at 8:45 am SHARP! and ends at 12:15 pm. Of course, you will have a half hour break in between. There will also be a lunch break from 12:15 pm – lunch can be taken in either the “Mensa” (cafeteria of the university) or in one of the many shops nearby.

Starting around 1:30 pm you will attend your Subject Course, the schedules may differ for each day and course. And please remember: although we definitely want you to have a great time while in Germany, we also expect you to take your studies seriously. This includes attending all your classes regularly, participating in class actively, and doing your homework diligently.

The classes of the Winter University 2026 will be held in the Böblinger Straße. Our university building on Böblinger Street is conveniently located within walking distance to little shops and bakeries close to downtown Stuttgart. Further information about the locations will be provided in the program, which will be available online by Mid-December. You will also receive a print version upon arrival.

Credits:

Most participating institutions will give 9 ECTS for the German Language Course and 4 ECTS for the Subject Course. You are responsible for obtaining credit transfer yourself so please consult your Study Abroad and/or Faculty Advisor in good time.

The University of Stuttgart will supply your institution with a Confirmation of Academic Performance at the end of the program.

Excursions:

We offer single-day excursions for you during the Winter University. These excursions will take place on Saturdays only and will cost 25 EUR each. If you booked the same trip at a travel agency, the amount you paid would be at least double our price. Since we try to always update our excursions to include the most current events, we are not able to tell you in advance where they will go to. You will find out and can register for them during the first week of classes. Please note that the excursions are for WU participants only as the field trips are sponsored by the university.

Of course you are free to arrange your own excursions and trips throughout Germany and Europe on the weekends.

Internet access:

Wifi on campus is available with your personal Eduroam account issued by your **home university**, as you will not be officially enrolled at the University of Stuttgart.



General Information

Health Insurance:

You will have to get health insurance on your own at home. If you have to visit a doctor in Germany you will have to pay cash up front (some but not all doctors will accept credit cards!) and then are reimbursed by your health insurance back home. The University of Stuttgart does not provide you with health insurance.

Public Transportation:

During your stay, you will be provided with a public transportation pass from the [Stuttgart bus and train system](#) (covered area) which allows you to travel freely in and around Stuttgart at any time.

The Böblingerstraße, is conveniently located at the Erwin-Schöttle Platz (tram station) in the city. Depending on your host family's location, you have different travel routes. Please check out this app for more information: [Unsere VVS-App – schneller Einstieg, Tipps & Tricks](#)

Weather:

All information offered here is based on average data. The operative terms are "normally" and "generally". Of course, we cannot guarantee the weather. 😊

The winters in Stuttgart are normally mild but high in precipitation. Temperatures during the day are mostly between -5° C (23° F) and 10° C (50° F) and often a bit colder during the night. In previous winters, the temperature went down to -15° C (5° F), so you should be prepared in any case.

Snow is common but not guaranteed. Expect some rainy and/or snowy days so you will really need a warm, waterproof coat. There are of course sunny days as well but they can be blistering cold. Therefore, you will need warm clothes and many clothes so you can layer yourself up to maximum protection. Bring a warm cap, a scarf, gloves (snowball fights are no fun with bare hands!) and waterproof shoes.

Online orientation:

The online orientation will be on Friday, December 12 at 9 am (German time). We will talk about all the remaining questions.