

# HERE'S TO A GOOD NEIGHBORHOOD!

*“The way people  
think and live, that is how  
they build and reside.”*

Johann Gottfried von Herder

**LIVING TOGETHER IN FRANKFURT (ODER)**

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### design & layout

Anja Millow  
anja.millow@gmx.net

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Antony Clark: <http://printart.ch>, <http://flaticon.com>, <http://de.freepik.com/>

### translation

Polnisch:  
Adam Wojtkowski  
Englisch:  
Joel Hirsch  
Arabisch:  
Majida EL - Mohamad  
Russisch:  
Slavena Korsun,  
Anna Nufer

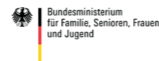
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Demokratie und Integration Brandenburg e. V.  
RAA Brandenburg  
Niederlassung Frankfurt (Oder)  
Wieckestraße 1a  
15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

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# 1. First Steps in Frankfurt (Oder)

## Registration



### 1. Registration

At City Hall - Citizens' Registration Office (Bürgeramt), Marktplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder). To register you need valid personal documents and a rental agreement.

### 2. Giro/Bank Account

Look for a bank either in the city itself or online and open a bank account. A valid ID and residence permit (Aufenthaltstitel) are required for non-EU citizens.

### 3. Utility provider

The landlord determines which heating, sewage, water and garbage disposal companies to use. You can choose which electric and gas company to use. However, to do so, you first have to register at the public utility company (Stadtwerke) and fill out an application as a new customer. You can also ask your neighbors which gas and electric companies they use. You can also find information, for example, at [www.check24.de](http://www.check24.de). Do not choose a provider that asks for money beforehand.

### 4. Radio/TV broadcast fees

Application form (registration) can be filled out at the Citizens' Registration Office (Bürgeramt), Marktplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder), or filled and printed out online at [www.rundfunkbeitrag.de](http://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de). You can then sign it and send it to: ARD ZDF Deutschlandradio Beitragsservice 50656 Köln.

Those receiving benefits from the Job Center or the Welfare Office and those with a low income are eligible for a waiver. A waiver form, including proof of income, should be send along application form to the address above. Asylum seekers receiving benefits in accordance with the asylum seeker social welfare law can pick up this confirmation at the Welfare Office.



# 1. First Steps in Frankfurt (Oder)

## 5. TV and Internet

Satellite antennas are not allowed in most buildings you're your rental agreement for information). Regarding Cable TV, your landlord has already signed a contract with a provider; ask your landlord about it. WOWI, for example, has a contract with FAKS GmbH from Frankfurt (Oder). Therefore, you cannot choose a different cable network provider. You can receive Internet through a variety of providers.

## 6. Insurance

A variety of insurance policies are available in Germany that can be closed on voluntary basis. In cases of emergencies they can be of great use and only cost a few Euro per month (compare prices and see that the benefits are worth it).

**Contents insurance:** covers your own belongings, such as furnishings and movable property, for fire or water damage, or for break-ins.

**Liability insurance:** this type of insurance kicks in whenever you unwittingly cause damage to another person's property, or when someone gets directly harmed through your actions.

## Residency



### 1. EU citizens

only need the registration form at the Citizens' Registration Office (Bürgeramt), Marktplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder).

### 2. Non-EU citizens

must also apply for a residence permit at the Foreigners' Registration Office, Marktplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder).



# 1. First Steps in Frankfurt (Oder)

## Education



### 1. Children must be enrolled in school for 10 years at least

- Elementary School (grades 1-6): children age 6 and above
- High School/Gymnasium (grade 7 and above)

Tip: please note the specific features of the school and their locations (travel costs). More information is available through the public School Board, Gerhard-Naumann-Straße 3, 15236 Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335/52 10 410 or at [www.schulen-ffo.de](http://www.schulen-ffo.de).

### 2. Integration Courses/German Language Courses

Register at:

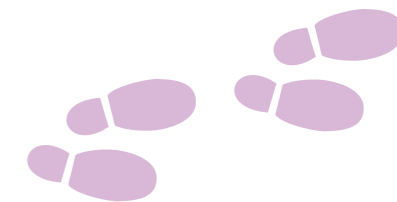
Nestor Bildungsinstitut, Carthausplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335/50080984  
Volkshochschule, Gartenstr. 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335/542025.  
Fortbildungsakademie der Wirtschaft FAW GmbH Fürstenwalder Straße 46  
0335/401 52711 (free courses).

### 3. Preschool children (0-6 years of age)

Look for a day care center (Kita) and register your children yourself. You can find more information on specific focus areas, legal rights, registration, etc. at the Office for Youth and Social Affairs, Logenstraße 8, Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335/552 5108.

### 4. Additional instruction in your native language for children and youth

RAA Brandenburg, Wieckestraße 1a, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335/500 96 63 oder 0331/74780-0



# 1. First Steps in Frankfurt (Oder)

## Financial Security

Entitlement for public benefits can be checked at:



- Agentur für Arbeit, Heinrich-von-Stephan-Straße 2, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)  
Unemployment benefits, child benefits, supplementary child allowance
- Jobcenter, Gartenstraße 5, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)  
Unemployment benefits (Arbeitslosengeld II), Education and Participation Package (Teilhabepaket) for Children and Youth
- Amt für Jugend und Soziales, Logenstr. 8, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)  
Basic security for people unable to work due to disability; parental allowance (for the first 12 months of a child's life); housing benefits (Wohngeldstelle) due to low-income, without ALG II (unemployment benefits) benefits; educational benefits for Students (Office for Promotion of Education Training).

## Advising



### 1. Youth Migration Service - JMD (for children and youth ages 12 to 27)

Internationaler Bund e. V.

Große Scharrnstraße 18, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335/28 49 680

- Advising, supporting and caring of children and youth and parents
- Accompaniment during your search for an educational and a vocational training

# 1. First Steps in Frankfurt (Oder)

## 2. Migration advising for adult immigrants

Caritashaus St. Josef, Leipziger Str. 39, 15232 Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335/56 54 150

- Advice on social and foreign legal questions
- Integration help
- Asylum advice

## 3. Integration representative

Marktplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt(Oder), Tel. 0335/552 13 30

- Advice on residence-related legal questions and social questions
- Putting you in touch with facilities and authorities

## 4. Democratic Women's Association e. V.

Leipziger Str. 39a, 15232 Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335/52 33 97

- Advising, accompanying and language support in Polish and Russian

## 5. Office for Youth and Social Affairs

Logenstraße 8, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335 /552-5075, 552-5020 und 552-5021

- Advising and benefits for the social security of citizens in need

## 2. Tips for Being a Good Neighbor



Life in an apartment building is influenced by the behavior of every individual person living there. With the right behavior, a comfortable living situation and a pleasant neighborhood are possible. This guide to good neighborliness should be of support in that regard.

Are you moving into a new apartment and don't know exactly what to do next? Very simple - ring your neighbor's bell and introduce yourself. If you take this first step, you eliminate any sense of insecurity your neighbors might have. You show that you are a pleasant neighbor and desire a friendly community. Excuse yourself for any possible disturbances and noise due to your moving in and ask for understanding. This way, your neighbors won't take offense if you have to drill or hammer.

It is good for all parties involved to know one another and to maintain a neighborly and friendly atmosphere. Greet your neighbors when you see them. During your daily encounters, the following rule applies: whoever comes first also greets first. With a friendly greeting, a smile and a few nice words, things should work out well with your neighbors.

Foster your neighborly network. Are you looking for a pediatrician, an electrician or a tailor? Your neighbors know such people and can certainly help you find someone. You can also be helpful and, for example, help elderly people carry their shopping bags, garbage or other things. Neighborly help also means that your neighbor will watch your apartment while you're gone, or that they will accept a package for you from the postman.



### Noise

If the music connoisseur fills the entire building with sound, or if the neighbor's children play soccer in their apartment, it is mostly not due to meanness, but due to not knowing how loud the noise is. Speak about the problem with your neighbor, but in a friendly and unemotional manner; describe your point of view and ask for consideration. If the situation is severe, behave in an understanding manner.

## 2. Tips for Being a Good Neighbor

Think about your neighbors. Avoid noise especially during afternoons and evenings as well as on the weekends. Often, one doesn't actually notice how loud it can get when guests are visiting or when the family spends time together and talks.

Inform your neighbors in advance of scheduled renovation or celebrations/parties and ask for understanding. This way, they can make the necessary adjustments and perhaps avoid the disturbance. Either way, starting at 10pm noise must be kept to a minimum.



### Conflicts? Solutions in Sight

Assume that your neighbor doesn't want to intentionally negatively affect your quality of life and that s/he is also interested in good relations. Always make sure that your own behavior doesn't become another's burden.

If you have a conflict with your neighbor, try at first to talk with him/her calmly and pleasantly to solve the problem. It is sometimes also helpful to write him/her a letter. An exchange of views can help you both to be more considerate with one another and to find a good solution.

In case you can't settle things with your neighbor by yourself, it may in the end be best to involve a mediator, such as house management representative or a neutral third party.

### *You can also find support at:*

- Mediationsstelle Frankfurt (Oder) Stubice e. V., Tel. 0335/553 442 18,
- Beratungsstelle des Mietervereins Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder), Halbe Stadt 21, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder) at 0335/685 02 60,
- Office for Social Support for Benefit Recipients in accordance with the Social Welfare Law for Asylum Seekers at Tel. 0335/552 50-21 and 50-22.

### 3. Rental Agreement and House Rules

#### Rental agreement



The rental agreement is an important document that you should carefully store. It regulates all the details of the tenancy - for example, the amount of rent, utility costs and the security deposit. The rental agreement also states when your rent is due. It is usually due in advance and must, at the latest, be on the landlord's bank account on the third weekday of the month.

Your duties as a tenant are established in this agreement, for example, how to go about decorative repairs, or repairing minor damage (up to €100 per individual repair). Everything that gets worn out in the course of normal living, as well as painting or wallpapering the walls, is covered in it. Major damage must be reported to the landlord. Building alterations must receive prior approval.

Keeping small animals is allowed in most rental agreements. If you plan on keeping bigger animals, such as dogs, the landlord must approve beforehand. That's why you should first ask in writing before acquiring a big animal. In the case of dogs, you must pay dog tax to city hall.

If you would like to move, please note the (mostly) three month cancellation deadline. If you'd like to be moved out till the end of April, you have till the end of January to cancel your rental agreement.

#### Rent

Total rent is comprised of:

- basic rent without utilities. This depends on the size of the living space, in square meters, in the apartment,
- heating and hot water costs,
- overhead, that is, the running costs the landlord has to pay for the use of the house/apartment (e.g., garbage disposal, sewage and water, elevator, property tax, street cleaning, janitor, insurance).

### 3. Rental Agreement and House Rules

You can also find the amount of your total rent due monthly in your rental agreement. It should be paid monthly.

Heating costs, warm water and overhead are included as advance payment. In the following year, your actual usage of these items are calculated and deducted. You might be refunded some of the utility costs, but only if you are very frugal with water or energy, for example. It could also happen that you have to pay an additional sum afterward.

We advise you to review your utility costs or let them be audited. If you have any questions, contact your rental agreement representative or the information center of the tenant association.

#### House rules



House rules are a part of the rental agreement and are binding to all tenants. They establish rules that are intended to facilitate a friendly environment amongst neighbors, as well as building cleanliness and security rules. If you do not adhere to the house rules, you are liable for any damages you may have caused. Therefore, it is worth to follow them, as they promote a friendly and respectful neighborhood.

*Rest periods are laid out in the house rules, and are mostly valid:*

- Afternoon rest from 1-3pm
- Night's rest from 10pm-7am
- Daylong rest on Sundays and public holidays

The house rules also state if and when the building should be locked in the evening, so as to prevent, for security reasons, unknown persons from gaining access to the building. Usually, doors are locked daily from 8pm-7am. Building doors with electronic doors openers are not allowed to be locked for fire safety reasons.

### 3. Rental Agreement and House Rules

So that neighbors aren't bothered through strong food odors, you are asked to open your kitchen window and to turn on your exhaust during cooking. If you are on a balcony, please keep in mind that somebody (mostly) also lives beneath you. Make sure that trash or liquids do not mistakenly make their way down to your neighbor's.

To decrease fire hazards, smoking is not allowed in hallways, entrance rooms and common areas; grilling on the balcony or roof terrace is also not allowed. So that no one trips or gets hurt, do not place items in hallways and in staircases. In case of fire, congestion-free passage is vital.

If there are special drying rooms available in the building, drying clothes in the apartment is not allowed. If available, you can use the balcony for clothes drying. Clotheslines may only be attached below the railing, or a drying rack should be used. In any case, clothes may not be dried on the radiator.

#### Heating and Ventilation



You can save a lot of money if you consciously and sparingly use heating and ventilation. Turn down your thermostat valve if a window is open and don't turn it up more than necessary. During cold winter months, thermostat valves should not be turned down completely to "0". It shouldn't get below 19 degrees in your apartment, as health-damaging mold can form.

Thoroughly air the rooms at least three times a day. To do so, open the windows and doors wide and, if possible, create a draft. This way, spent and moist indoor air is replaced with fresh and dry air. In doing so, only little heat escapes.

The constantly opening of windows costs a lot of energy and should, therefore, not be done while the heat is on. Also ventilate after showering and cooking.

### 4. Garbage Disposal

#### Garbage is separated in Germany

In Frankfurt (Oder), there are three types of containers in front of your building door. These are emptied either weekly or every 14 days:



#### Miscellaneous waste

Examples: baby diapers, cigarette butts, dirty towels, rags



#### Recyclables

Examples: plastic, cans, aseptic packages, packaging with a green dot



#### Organic waste (compost)

Examples: kitchen waste, leftover and spoiled food, plants

*Additional waste containers for glass and paper are located in central locations nearby:*

**Blue container:** newspapers, paper and cardboard

**Glass container:** differentiated by the color of the bottles and glasses  
(Tip: To reduce noise, only deposit bottles at designated dumping times)

**Special waste:** After being announced in the local press, a toxic substance collection vehicle will drive around to central locations in your neighborhood and toxic waste can be disposed of there. Disposal for a charge is also possible via: Becker + Armbrust GmbH, Tobias-Magirus-Straße 100, Tel. 0335/52 18 90. Examples: Batteries, paint, chemicals.

**Bulk waste:** Disposal of bulk waste, scrap, cooling appliances and electronic waste can be self-delivered to: Abfallentsorgungsanlage Seefichten-Wertstoffhof, Grubenstraße 10, Tel. 0335/400 20 64. You can also for it to be picked up by filling out the yellow bulk waste card. You can pick this up at the Town Hall (Stadthaus) at Goepelstraße 38, at City Hall (Rathaus) at Marktplatz 1, at the public utilities company and at many janitor offices. You will be informed in advance of the pick-up date via mail. Make sure all items to be picked up are placed in an accident-proof manner at the curb no later than 7am on this day.



### You can get power-saving advice at Caritas:



Caritas Stromspar-Check  
Leipziger Straße 39  
Frankfurt (Oder), Tel. 0335/56 54 173

### Power-saving made easy:



#### Lighting:

Use energy-saving bulbs in lamps/fixtures that are on longer than one hour a day. Ceiling-facing lamps (Deckenfluter) and halogen spotlights are very energy wasting. Also make sure that lights in common areas, such as hallways, staircases and basements, are only on when needed. If all tenants pay attention, expenses can be saved.



#### Refrigerators and freezers:

A light frost coating on the inside walls of the appliances is quite usual. However, if a layer of ice forms, energy consumption increases. In that case, let the appliance thaw. Cooling appliances should be placed in a cool place and not next a radiator or stove.



#### Cooking:

Cook with the lid on the pot. Without the lid, about three times as much energy is needed to cook the food. Pressure cookers save energy up to 50 percent when used for food with longer cooking time. The pot size should match the size of the burner and don't forget to turn down or off the stove after the food is cooked.



#### Washing and drying:

Use the energy-saving mode and forgo the prewash or the hot wash cycle - with modern washing methods, these are no longer necessary these days. 60 degrees is sufficient. Always fill the machine entirely (don't overload). Forgo an electric clothes dryer - and especially in the summer this will only be a small sacrifice on comfort.



#### Standby:

Unplug cellphone, shaver, electric toothbrush and laptop chargers after charging has completed. Turn off the TV with the on/off switch and not with the remote. Older TVs are, however, still not fully turned off. In such cases, it is advisable to use a switchable power strip.



#### Drinking water:

It is possible to save lots of money through thoughtful use of hot water:

- to shower instead of bathing
- while soaping, turn off the water in the shower
- use a water-saving shower head
- use the toilet's water-saving flush, or have the landlord install it
- don't wash dishes under running water



## 6. In Case of Emergency



If you or your neighbor are in direct danger or need medical assistance, call the fire department or the police:

Ambulance: 112

Fire department: 112

Police: 110



This won't cost you anything. You can also do this without having credit on your cellphone.

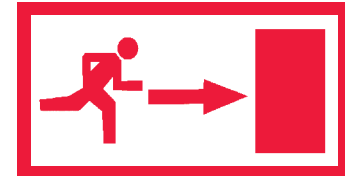
If you see a fire in the building, call 112 without delay.

Stay calm, but notify your neighbors either by shouting or knocking.

It is better not to ring.

Leave the building quickly and help children and elderly neighbors.

Don't use the elevator and follow the exit sign:



### *Emergency Medical Service*

You can get a paramedic by calling the following number:  
116 117

You can also find current phone numbers for doctors, dentists and pharmacies offering emergency medical service in freely-distributed newspapers.