Welcome Guide
DEAR STUDENT,

Congratulations on your successful admission to the University of Tartu. I welcome you to join our international student community and enjoy the academic excellence of the University of Tartu. Becoming an international student is one of the greatest challenges for a young person. It is a chance to learn, explore and face the challenges of new environment and culture.

English-taught programmes have a long history at the University of Tartu. We believe that international students contribute greatly to the university’s learning culture as well as scientific research, and enrich our cultural atmosphere. Our goal is to maintain the centuries old traditions of the university while developing as a highly ranked modern international university. We have put a lot of effort into ensuring you receive quality education, modern study environment, comfortable living conditions and student-friendly help services.

We hope the information provided in this guide will help you discover the university and become one of our proud students.

I look forward to welcoming you at the University of Tartu.

Volli Kalm
Rector
University of Tartu (UT) is one of the oldest universities in northeastern Europe. It was founded in 1632 by King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. The university, modelled after the University of Uppsala in Sweden, was established to pursue research and advance learning in a wide variety of disciplines.

**HISTORICAL UNIVERSITY**

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**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

UT is the leading centre of research and training and the only classical university in Estonia. One of the university's aims is to preserve the culture and language of the Estonian people.

**HIGHLY RANKED UNIVERSITY**

UT belongs to the top 3% of world's best universities (QS World University Rankings 2014-15) and is in the top 5 of the best universities in the Eastern region (QS Emerging Europe Rankings 2014-15). It is the highest ranked university in the Baltics.

**RESEARCH UNIVERSITY**

UT is the leading research university in Estonia. It is the only Baltic university that has been invited to join the Coimbra Group, a prestigious club of renowned research universities, and it also belongs to the Utrecht network.

**LARGE UNIVERSITY**

UT is the biggest university in Estonia with more than 14,000 students. More than 1000 international students from around 70 countries study at UT every year.

**INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITY**

Researchers at UT have patented numerous inventions of practical application, such as a glass of changing transparency and a linked manipulator operating as an actuator in artificial muscles. Satellite EstCube-1, developed by UT staff and students, made Estonia the 41st space nation in the world. IdeaLab of UT connects students from different faculties to develop innovative solutions to complex problems.

**INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

Internationalisation is an important part of the university's strategic plan. UT has many partner universities all around the world; it cooperates with international companies (e.g. Mercedes-Benz, ImmoQure) and participates in various student exchange networks (Erasmus+, ISEP AEN).

**MULTI-CAMPUS UNIVERSITY**

UT includes 9 faculties and 4 colleges. Most of UT is located in Tartu; however, it also has colleges in Pärnu, Narva and Viljandi and a representation in Tallinn.

**MOST POPULAR ESTONIAN UNIVERSITY**

UT is the most reputable university in Estonia. The basis of the reputation is believed to be the high level of education, value of diploma in the labour market and the reliability of the university. 67% of Estonian high school graduates choose UT as their alma mater.

**VIBRANT UNIVERSITY**

UT has developed an active student life over four centuries. There are various faculty-based clubs, international student organisations, an orchestra, choirs and a theatre for students to join.

**APPRECIATED UNIVERSITY**

Estonia has been voted as the #1 place to stay by Erasmus Student Network and the average level of satisfaction with experience in Estonia is 89% (I-Graduate ISB).
More PhD degrees are defended at UT than in all other Estonian universities in total: in 2014, 108 PhD degrees were defended at UT (96 at other Estonian universities)

Half of the publications of Estonian universities come from UT: 1063 out of 2105 in 2014

UT belongs to the top 1% of the world’s most-cited universities and research institutions in the fields of Clinical Medicine, Chemistry, Environment & Ecology, Plant & Animal Science, Social Sciences (general), Molecular Biology & Genetics, Biology and Biochemistry, Neuroscience and Behavior, Psychiatry and Psychology (ISI Web of Science 2015)

A total of 31 UT scientists belong to the top 1% of most quoted scientists in the world (ISI Web of Science 2015), including the programme manager of MSc in Software Engineering Professor Marlon Dumas

UT’s Estonian Genome Centre holds anonymous data on 5% of the country’s adult population – the data is analysed to help scientists understand how genetic and epigenetic information affect individuals, their development, aging etc.

Other most known innovations by UT include “Fits Me” robotics application, Lactobacillus ME-3 dairy products, myoton muscle diagnostics, smart glass, Haine laces etc.

UT operates a science portal (novaator.err.ee) in collaboration with Estonian Public Broadcasting
TARTU  city of good thoughts

- **First mentioned:** 1030
- **Location:** South Estonia
- **Area:** 38.86 square km
- **Population (2015):** 97,005
- **Ethnicity:** 80% Estonians, 15% Russians, 5% other
- **Known as:** intellectual capital of Estonia, city of youth, national centre of science and research
- **Titles:** “Child-Friendly City” (UNICEF 2004)

Tartu is the second largest city in Estonia lying on the banks of the river Emajõgi. It is a historic university city, where every fifth inhabitant is a student. Since the establishment of the University of Tartu in 1632, the city has been a centre of academic research, and home to professors, scientists, and students from Estonia and abroad. The city is famous for its colourful cultural performances, concerts and festivals held throughout the year. English is widely spoken and used for communication in academic circles, cafes, restaurants, public offices, taxis, buses, etc. Here you will find more than 20 museums, botanical garden, exceptional traditions and feel the unforgettable spirit of student life.

PÄRNU  try it yourself

- **Other names:** Pernau (German), Parnawa (Polish), Pērnava (Latvian)
- **Founded:** ca. 1251
- **Location:** Southwestern Estonia, on the coast of Pärnu Bay
- **Area:** 32.22 square km
- **Population (2014):** 41,500
- **Ethnicity:** 83% Estonians, 12% Russians, 5% other
- **Titles:** Summer Capital of Estonia (since 1996), Child- and Youth-Friendly City (UNICEF 2004)

Pärnu is an internationally recognized health tourism destination. The city focuses on promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring good health for its residents and visitors. Pärnu has been a member of European Spa Association since 2000. In 2006 the World Health Organization designated Pärnu as a full member of phase IV of the Healthy Cities Network. Pärnu is a former Hanseatic town and it hosted the 30th International Hanseatic Days medieval festival in 2010.

Pärnu is a popular travel destination for Estonians in the summer. Since 1996, Pärnu holds the title of Estonia’s Summer Capital and in 2006 the new beach promenade was opened to grandly celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Summer Capital. Beautiful nature and sandy beaches can be found throughout Pärnu county, which boasts a 242 km coastline.
Viljandi is an ancient hilly town in Central Estonia topped by the ruins of a once-powerful Livonian Order castle. Viljandi is the 6th largest city in Estonia, centre of the county and an independent unit of local authority. A visit to Viljandi means greenery, ancient trees, impressive hilltop ruins of a Hanseatic castle, winding cobbled streets and a beautiful lake.

For many people Viljandi conjures up images of the Viljandi Folk Music Festival and University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy. This small city is the “capital of folk music” for most Estonians. The Viljandi Folk Music Festival, the largest annual music festival in Estonia, runs for 4 days on the last weekend in July. More than 100 concerts take place in Viljandi castle’s ruins, churches, and other venues throughout Viljandi County. Viljandi also hosts many other events and several international festivals throughout the year: The Early Music Festival, Hanseatic Days, Young Dance Festival, Mulgi Rally, Winter Folk Dance Festival, the “Theatre in Suitcase” puppet theatre festival etc.

**FACULTIES**

**HUMANITIES**
- Faculty of Theology
- Faculty of Philosophy

**SOCIAL SCIENCES**
- Faculty of Social Sciences & Education
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Economics & Business Administration

**NATURAL SCIENCES**
- Faculty of Science & Technology
- Faculty of Mathematics & Computer Science

**MEDICINE**
- Faculty of Medicine
- Faculty of Exercise & Sport Sciences

**COLLEGES**
- European College
- Narva College
- Pärnu College
- Viljandi Culture Academy

* The structure of the University of Tartu will change in January 2016 as a result of a structural reform.
HIGHER EDUCATION IN ESTONIA

Estonia is home to 25 universities and professional higher education institutions. Approximately 70,000 students are enrolled in 6 public universities. The Bologna Process was implemented in 2002/2013 introducing a three-cycle model (bachelor-master-PhD). Bachelor’s studies last 3 years, master’s 2 years and doctoral 4 years.

Generally, the academic year consists of 40 weeks of lectures, seminars, practical trainings, independent assignments, research and an examination period.

Students’ course load is measured in credits according to European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). One ECTS credit equals 26 hours of work. The course load of one academic year is 1560 hours or 60 ECTS credits. Students must accomplish at least 51% in order to pass a course. UT uses letter grades: A, B, C, D, E and F.

Along with compulsory courses defined by curricula, students can choose additional courses from various faculties (e.g. learn a language).

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Academic year at UT is split into two semesters: autumn semester and spring semester. Autumn semester begins in the beginning of September and ends at the end of January, but students are usually done with their exams by mid-January. There is a winter break in the first week of February. Spring semester begins in the second week of February and ends at the end of June, but students are usually done with their exams by mid-June.

Public holidays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Holiday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1</td>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 24</td>
<td>Independence Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>Native Language Day*</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 15-17</td>
<td>Good Friday &amp; Easter Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Spring Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 23</td>
<td>Mother’s Day*</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>National Flag Day*</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 23</td>
<td>Victory Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 24</td>
<td>St John’s Day or Midsummer Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 20</td>
<td>Day of Restoration of Independence</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 22</td>
<td>Father’s Day*</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 24</td>
<td>Christmas Eve</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 25</td>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 26</td>
<td>Boxing Day</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* No day off.
+ During public holidays shops might have shorter opening hours and public transportation operates according to the Sunday schedule.
Things to do before you come to Estonia

- Check your funds: do you have enough to cover your tuition fee, living and travelling expenses during your whole study period? Don’t start without knowing whether you will survive the second semester or year.
- Apply for your residence permit (non-EU students)
- Book a flight to Estonia
- Buy bus or train tickets to your final destination
- Book a room in the dormitory or rent a private flat
- Become a member of the Facebook group “Degree Students of the University of Tartu” to get to know your fellow students
- Exchange money to Euros – opening a bank account is easy, but have some euros with you just in case
- Pack your bag (include warm clothes)
- Don’t forget your passport and documents requested by the university. Make copies of all the documents
- Check the curriculum and be ready to study hard
- Check the schedule of the orientation course
- Check Google Maps for walking or driving routes to your housing
- Check the virtual tour of the University of Tartu to get know the surroundings
- Take your flight, bus or ferry
- Be happy - new adventures are ahead!

PRACTICAL INFO

RESIDENCE PERMITS

There is no student visa as such for studying in Estonia.

EU citizens (member states of the European Union and the European Economic Area and the Swiss Confederation) should obtain a temporary right of residence in Estonia, which is granted for a period of 5 years. This can be done in Estonia.

All non-EU citizens coming to Estonia for more than 3 months need a temporary residence permit for study purposes. How and where you can apply for residence permit depends on your citizenship and study level. Residence permit is valid for maximum one year and it can be prolonged in Estonia. All non-EU nationals can travel inside the Schengen area freely with an Estonian ID card or national passport.

HEALTHCARE

All students are required to have health insurance in Estonia:

- EU/EEA citizens have the same social welfare benefits as residents of Estonia and should obtain an EU health insurance card prior to arrival in Estonia.
- Non-EU/EEA citizens must purchase private health insurance, which is a requirement for obtaining a residence permit for study purposes. The Estonian Migration Board accepts the following insurance companies:
  - AON Student Insurance
  - ERGO Insurance
  - SwissCare International Student Health Insurance
  - Crystal Studies Insurance

If you need to visit a doctor, take your ID and European Health Insurance card or private insurance document and go to any clinic.

UT runs the biggest hospital in Southern Estonia and several clinics throughout Tartu. UT also provides a professional psychologist for students.
International students usually live in dormitories; however, it is not mandatory. It is cheaper to live in a dormitory in Estonia than to rent an apartment.

If you prefer to rent an apartment, then check [www.kv.ee](http://www.kv.ee) and [www.city24.ee](http://www.city24.ee). Expect to pay one month’s rent, one month’s rent as a deposit and one month’s rent as a broker’s fee before you can move in. Some apartments are also offered directly by the owner (no broker’s fee) - you need to be quick to react, because the demand for such apartments is very high.

**PÄRNU**

Pärnu College has a contract with the guesthouse Vesiroosi Hotel (Esplanaadi 42, [www.hotellvesiroos.com](http://www.hotellvesiroos.com)), which is located close to the main building of Pärnu College. However, there will be other accommodation options available, too. Keep an eye on your emails and the webpage of Pärnu College ([www.pc.ut.ee](http://www.pc.ut.ee)) for the latest updates.

Students may rent private flats in the city for about 150-250 EUR/month (1-2 rooms, [www.kv.ee](http://www.kv.ee), [www.yyr.ee](http://www.yyr.ee)). Apartment prices can be misleading in summer because prices are a lot higher in summer (rent can be up to 80 EUR/day). Contact the owner to enquire about the real price of the apartment.

**TARTU**

International students are accommodated in modern residence halls located about a 5 min walk from Tartu’s main square and 10 min from the university’s main building ([www.campus.ee](http://www.campus.ee)).

Each apartment in the residence halls consists of 2-3 twin bedrooms with a shared kitchen and bathroom. Kitchens are furnished with a refrigerator and a stove. Students need to have their own pillows, bed linen, cookware and utensils. Admitted students will receive information about the housing application right away. A place in a twin room costs up to 120 EUR/month. The residence halls also provide:

- Internet connection
- Laundry facilities
- Car and bicycle parking

Private apartments in the city can be found from 200 EUR/month.

**VIĻJANDI**

International students are housed in the “Oma Kodu” dormitory (Väike 6, [www.kultuur.ut.ee/en/studies/housing-viljandi](http://www.kultuur.ut.ee/en/studies/housing-viljandi)), which is short walking distance from the study buildings located in the centre of Viljandi. Rent is around 77 EUR/month for one person in a shared room. Only basic cookware is provided. Fridges, electric ovens, microwaves and kettles are for general use.

As rent prices in Viljandi are very affordable, many students prefer to rent their own apartment. Students may rent private flats in the city for about 150-200 EUR/month (1-2 rooms).
Transportation is not provided by the university and all travel arrangements are a student’s responsibility. Estonia connects to the world through Tallinn Airport, Port of Tallinn, Riga Airport, Tartu Airport and Tallinn, Tartu and Pärnu bus stations.

Tallinn Airport ([www.tallinn-airport.ee](http://www.tallinn-airport.ee)) has direct flights to more than 25 countries. Ferries run from Helsinki and Stockholm to Tallinn and are operated by Tallink ([www.tallink.ee](http://www.tallink.ee)), Viking Line ([www.vikingline.ee](http://www.vikingline.ee)) and Lindaline ([www.lindaline.ee](http://www.lindaline.ee)).

Tallinn Bus Station has connections to all cities in Estonia. You can get to the bus station:

- **From Tallinn Airport**: Tallinn Bus Station is about 10 min drive from the airport. You can take a taxi (approx. 5 EUR) or bus No.2 (stop “Autobussijaam”, ticket 1.6 EUR is sold by bus driver) to the bus terminal.

- **From Port of Tallinn**: Tallinn Bus Station is about 15 min drive from the port. The easiest is to take a taxi to the bus station (approx. 5 EUR).

The Baltic Station (Balti Jaam, the main train station in Tallinn) has connections to Pärnu, Viljandi and Tartu. The station is located near the port, but far from the airport and bus station. Therefore it makes more sense to take a train if you are travelling by ferry. The easiest way to get to the Baltic Station is by taxi (approx. 4 EUR) as there are no direct buses or trams from the port to the train station. It is also possible to walk since the distance is only 1.4 km.

If it is your first time in Estonia, it is better to take a taxi to your final destination. Once you get comfortable with Tartu, Pärnu or Viljandi, you will learn how to get to places by public transport, by bike or on foot. Taxi prices consist of start price and price per kilometre. All taxis must have their price list available for you to view on their window. Price negotiation is not common in Estonia – taxis have fixed rates. You can ask for a receipt after arriving at your destination. It is also mandatory to fasten your seat belt while seated in a taxi.

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**TRANSPORTATION**

**From Tallinn Airport and Tallinn Bus Station**: direct buses ([www.tpilet.ee](http://www.tpilet.ee)) to Tartu Bus Station leave hourly from 5 am - 12 am. Tickets cost 9.70-12 EUR and discounts are available for young people up to age 26 (incl.). It takes 2.5 hours to get to Tartu by bus.

**From the Baltic Station**: trains depart 6 times a day to Tartu ([www.elron.ee](http://www.elron.ee)). Tartu Train Station is not in the city centre and the easiest is to take a taxi to your final destination. Taxi stop is located in front of the station.

**From Riga International Airport**: direct buses run between Riga International Airport and Tartu Bus Station ([www.luxexpress.ee](http://www.luxexpress.ee), [www.ecolines.ee](http://www.ecolines.ee)).

**By international bus**: buses connect Tartu with many other European cities. The closest cities are Riga (4 hours), Vilnius (8 hours), Warsaw (10 hours), St. Petersburg (6 hours), Pskov (3 hours), etc. ([www.luxexpress.ee](http://www.luxexpress.ee), [www.ecolines.ee](http://www.ecolines.ee)).

The biggest taxi operators in Tartu are Elektritakso ([www.elektritakso.ee](http://www.elektritakso.ee)) and Tartu Taksopark ([www.gotaksopark.ee](http://www.gotaksopark.ee)).

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**How to get to Tartu?**

- **From Tallinn**: the distance between Tallinn and Pärnu is 128 kilometers. Express buses leave from Tallinn Bus station to Pärnu almost every hour from 7 am to 10:30 pm ([www.tpilet.ee](http://www.tpilet.ee)). Tickets cost 6-11 EUR and discounts are available to students if you have a valid student card to show. Tickets can be purchased from a ticket office inside the bus station or from the bus driver.

- **From Riga**: the distance between Pärnu and Riga is 180 km. There are direct buses from Riga Bus Station and Riga Airport to Pärnu Bus Station ([www.luxexpress.ee](http://www.luxexpress.ee), [www.ecolines.ee](http://www.ecolines.ee)).

- **Pärnu Bus Station** is situated in the centre of the city and is in 20-minute walk or a short taxi drive from Pärnu College building. You can walk from the bus station to the dorm (about 300 m).

- The biggest taxi operators in Pärnu are E-Takso ([www.etakso.ee](http://www.etakso.ee)) and Pärnu Takso ([www.parnutakso.ee](http://www.parnutakso.ee)).
How to get to Viljandi?

- **From Tallinn**: The distance between Tallinn and Viljandi is 160 km. Buses to Viljandi leave from Tallinn Bus station almost every hour from 7 am until 8.30 pm (www.tpilet.ee). Tickets cost 6 - 11 EUR and discounts are available for students if you have a valid student card to show. Tickets can be purchased from a ticket office inside the bus station or from the bus driver. You can also travel to Viljandi from Tallinn by train. Trains to Viljandi leave several times during the day from 7.30 am until 7 pm (www.elron.ee). Train tickets cost 7.5 EUR and can be purchased online or on the train.

- In Viljandi, everything is within a 15-minute walking distance. The bus station is located in the city centre and is just 500 meters from the main building of UT Viljandi Culture Academy (Posti 1). If you want to take a taxi to your final destination, then there are taxis parked next to the bus station. There is public transport in Viljandi, you can buy tickets from Viljandi Tourist Information Centre.

### Phones

- Estonia’s country code is +372 followed by the subscriber’s number. Local mobile SIM cards and mobile plans are operated by Smart, Simpel, Pop, Zen, Dili and Ultra.
- You will receive an Estonian SIM card at the orientation course during the first week.
- If you have a smart phone, 3G internet is very fast and reliable, and can be accessed widely in Estonia.

### Emergency contact

112 calls are answered within 6 seconds and the location of the caller is detected within 2 seconds. The calls can be answered in Estonian, Russian, English and sometimes in Finnish and German.

### Working in Estonia

EU citizens may work in Estonia without a work permit, but it is the responsibility of the student to make sure that working does not interfere with studies. Non-EU students who have been issued a residence permit for studies are allowed to work when it does not interfere with their studies. Students holding a temporary residence permit must study full-time (at least 22.5 ECTS per semester). Whether it is possible to find a job depends on your area of specialty and language skills. For example, it is common for international students to work in the field of IT. However, most jobs require you to speak at least basic Estonian. You should be prepared that you are unable to find a job in Estonia. The university does not provide on campus jobs.

When you extend your residence permit for the last academic year, you may apply for a period up to 6 months longer than the official end of your studies and look for a job in Estonia. You are usually required to apply online and then you will be contacted by the employer by phone or e-mail for an interview.

Check www.cv.ee or www.cvkeskus.ee for vacancies ads.
Money
The official currency of Estonia is Euro (EUR). Most foreign currencies can easily be exchanged in Estonian banks and exchange bureaus. Cash can be withdrawn from ATMs. Visa, MasterCard and many other international credit and debit cards are accepted in most restaurants, bars and shops.

Cost of living

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dormitory rent per month</td>
<td>80-120 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat rent (one bedroom apartment)</td>
<td>150-300 EUR + utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly budget for food</td>
<td>200-250 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily lunch specials</td>
<td>2-4 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loaf of black bread</td>
<td>0.65 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk (1 l)</td>
<td>0.57 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coca-Cola (0.5 l)</td>
<td>0.79 EUR + 0.10 for plastic bottle (refundable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Mac</td>
<td>2.85 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly student ticket for public transport</td>
<td>under 10 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre ticket</td>
<td>10 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinema ticket</td>
<td>5.5 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amateur sport per academic year</td>
<td>120 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness club per month</td>
<td>35 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightclub ticket</td>
<td>Free with ESN card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer at a pub (0.5 l)</td>
<td>2.5 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly mobile phone</td>
<td>10 EUR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opening a bank account
It is easy to open a bank account in Estonia. Banks that offer credit and debit cards in Estonia are SEB, Swedbank, LHV, Krediidipank and Nordea. SEB and Swedbank offer ISIC card. You need your personal identification document (passport or ID card) to open a bank account. Internet banking comes for free with your account. ATMs can be found everywhere and most places accept card payments.

Shopping
It's easy and comfortable to do grocery shopping in Estonia, as there are many local and international hyper- and supermarkets (Prisma, Rimi, Konsum, Selver, Comarket, Maxima, etc.). Fresh vegetables and meat can also be purchased at open markets. Several modern shopping malls have international clothing shops (Guess, Jack & Jones, ECCO, Levi’s, Mango, Puma, New Yorker, Reserved, etc.) and provide leisure and entertainment. The supermarkets and shopping malls operate from Monday to Sunday from 09:00 to 22:00/23:00.

Internet
- Internet access is available almost everywhere in Estonia. Wi-Fi can be found in most pubs, cafés, libraries, hotels, parks, and public buildings.
- UT has two Wi-Fi networks: ut-public and eduroam. Ut-public is available to everybody. Eduroam requires UT username and password.
- Most of the university buildings are equipped with computer centres available for all students free of charge.
Discounts for students

Students get many discounts in shops, bars, restaurants, and on buses, trains, and ferries. Entrance to concerts and museums is commonly discounted for students. The following cards give discounts to students:

- Estonian Student Card - you can apply for one at www.minukool.ee (Estonian internet bank or ID card is required) or in your faculty’s administration office
- International Student Identification Card (ISIC) - you can apply for one at www.minukool.ee, SEB and Swedbank
- ESN card - contact ESN Tartu (esn.ee/tartu)

Climate

Estonia is as cold as you think it might be, however, once you get used to it, it is not that bad and the key is to wear enough warm clothes. The average annual temperature is around 5℃. The average daytime temperature in winter is -2℃ (gets as low as -25℃) and there is a lot of snow which is perfect for skiing, skating and sledding or even building a snowman. Estonia might be a flat country, but there are plenty of options to snowboard or ski in the Southern Estonian hills. In summer the average daytime temperature is +19℃, but it can be up to +30℃. Estonian summer is famous for its “white nights” with around 19 hours of daylight and close to Midsummer Day (June 24) it does not get dark at all.

Food

UT does not offer centrally coordinated dining services. Most faculties and colleges have cafes with student-friendly prices; however, they operate separately from the university. Therefore it is not possible to purchase a meal plan. Students have the option to cook themselves or eat out in cafes and restaurants. Most restaurants offer reasonably priced daily specials (2-4 EUR).
A semester or two spent abroad as an exchange student is becoming a regular part of one's studies, giving a competitive edge on the labour market after graduation. As an international student of UT you will have numerous opportunities to explore the world even further.

UT students have the possibility to study abroad as exchange students with the help of grants provided under partnership agreements, international programmes and organisations as well as governments and funds (ut.ee/semester). Exchange students do not have to pay the tuition fee of the foreign university and some programmes offer additional scholarships to cover travelling, housing and food.

- **Erasmus+ programme** - hundreds of bilateral agreements with universities in Europe;
- **Bilateral academic cooperation agreements** - universities all over the world (e.g. USA, China, Australia, Japan, Chile etc.);
- **International Student Exchange Programs (ISEP)** - connecting over 300 member institutions in 50 countries;
- **As a member of the Utrecht Network, UT students can also go to the universities of AEN and MAUI networks.** AEN unites 7 universities in Australia and MAUI 15 universities in the USA.

You can easily travel throughout the Schengen area.
ORIENTATION COURSE

At the beginning of each semester, the International Student Service organises an orientation course for all new international students in Tartu. The course is designed to help international students get to know each other and receive practical information about living and studying in Tartu. It usually lasts for 3 days and is held during the week before the semester starts. The course includes introduction to the online study information system, tour around the university, library, and city and meeting your tutors. All international students, regardless of whether they will start their studies in Tartu, Pärnu or Viljandi, are welcome to join the orientation course in Tartu.

There will be separate introductory courses for all incoming international students of Pärnu College in Pärnu and Viljandi Culture Academy in Viljandi. In Pärnu, the introductory course, which runs parallel to studies, includes meeting the representatives of the college, introduction to the university’s study system, getting to know the college facilities and Pärnu, learning some basic Estonian, covering other practical issues related to the programme and a study trip in the county. Keep an eye on your e-mails for further information.

STUDY BUILDINGS

MAIN BUILDING

UT Main Building (Ülikooli 18, Tartu) is one of the brightest masterpieces of neoclassical architecture in Estonia and a symbol of the university. It was built in 1804-1809 and designed by the university’s architect Johann Wilhelm Krause. The main building’s opening ceremony took place on 31 July 1809 in the assembly hall and since then it has been hosting all major events of the university, including academic conferences and graduation ceremonies. The assembly hall is known for its exceptional acoustic, wide space and remarkable beauty.

The main building is home to the oldest museum in Estonia, the university’s Art Museum, founded in 1803. Since 1868, the walls of the museum have been decorated with well-preserved copies of murals from ancient Pompeii. The museum has also preserved a historical attic lock-up room, used for punishing students for wrongdoings in the past centuries. The Rector’s Office, most of the administrative units and the Faculty of Theology are also located in the main building.
**LIBRARY**

UT main library ([www.utlib.ee](http://www.utlib.ee)) is the oldest and largest research library in Estonia. Located in Tartu, it holds over 4.1 million items and hosts around 2000 visitors every day. The library has a well-established online system, where students can search for books and borrow them, download electronic materials from databases (JSTOR, EBSCO, etc.), receive updates about new arrivals and read e-journals. The library contains book stacks, reading rooms, a conference centre, exhibition halls, computer centres and private working rooms. Twice a year, during exam sessions in January and June, the Student Council of UT organises Night Library during which the library stays open longer than normal, various entertaining events take place and free coffee is available for students.

Pärnu College has its own library in the main building of Pärnu College. It focuses on collecting items related to the study fields of the college (tourism, entrepreneurship, social work etc.). It has a reading room that seats 56 readers, 8 computers with Internet access, a catalogue computer and 4 networked workstations for those with their own computers. The library card enables all users to borrow books and use the same online system as the readers of the main library.

Viljandi Culture Academy has its own library in Viljandi, which holds numerous books and materials with an emphasis on philosophy, culture and social sciences. The library card enables all users to borrow books and use the same online system as the readers of the main library. The Viljandi City Library is located next to the culture academy library and is open for everyone. The city library is bigger both in size and the number of items it holds; therefore it is regularly visited by students of the culture academy.

**SPORTS**

UT Academic Sports Club ([sport.ut.ee](http://sport.ut.ee)), located in Tartu, has been the most successful athletics club in Estonia for over 100 years. Nowadays, students enjoy a wide variety of modern sports facilities including main sports hall (gym, fitness club, jogging tracks and basketball courts), stadium, rowing base, gyms for wrestling and gymnastics. The Club provides discounts for students.

UT does not have sports facilities in Pärnu, however, twice a week the college rents gyms from high schools in the centre of Pärnu where students can play basketball or volleyball. There is no fee for students. It is also possible to borrow volleyballs from the college to play volleyball on the beach.

UT does not have sports facilities in Viljandi, however, there are round the year volleyball and basketball practices for students of the culture academy.

**CITY CENTRE CAMPUS (TARTU)**

Tartu is a university city and the study buildings are located a short distance from each other. It takes 2 minutes to walk from the main building of the university to the Faculty of Philosophy and 7 minutes to the Faculty of Social Sciences. If you keep walking up the hill, you will see the Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Sciences from where you can easily follow the road to the Faculty of Law. The Faculty of Economics and Business Administration is located right across the river close to the student residence halls.

**MAARJAMÕISA CAMPUS (TARTU)**

The Science Campus (Maarjamõisa campus) is a complex of ultramodern study buildings with fully equipped scientific labs and research centres. It is located a 15 minute bus ride from the city centre. The campus is home to the Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Science and Technology. The newest buildings, Physicum and Centre for Translational and Clinical Research, were opened in 2014. Most of Tartu University Hospital buildings are also located in Maarjamõisa.
European College

Founded in 1998, European College (ec.ut.ee) is an interdisciplinary study and research centre that concentrates on issues related to the European Union and European integration (EU policy-making, transition, enlargement processes, and EU-Russia relations). The professors and lecturers of the college come from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education, the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration and the Faculty of Law at the University of Tartu. In addition, visiting lecturers, experts from public sector and researchers both from Estonia and abroad are involved. Located in Tartu, European College is housed in the same building as the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education. The building, which used to be a maternity hospital, was renovated and the college moved there in the beginning of 2012. European College will join the Institute of Government and Politics in 2016.

Viljandi Culture Academy

Viljandi Culture Academy (kultuur.ut.ee) offers Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programmes in music, theatre and dance arts, Estonian native crafts, culture management, and others. In 1991 the former Viljandi Culture School was reorganised into a college providing applied higher education in different areas of culture. In the course of the last decade the variety of specialities provided by the academy has been continuously increasing. After the reconstruction of Estonian higher education system at the beginning of the new millennium, the academy joined the University of Tartu in 2005.

Pärnu College

Pärnu College (pc.ut.ee) is an institution of UT that operates under its own charter in Pärnu. UT operated in Pärnu from 1699 to 1710. It had moved there from Tartu as a result of the coalition against Sweden and the Great Famine of 1695–1697. It was closed in 1710 because of the surrender to Russian forces during the Northern War. Due to the need for higher education in Pärnu, on May 17, 1996 Pärnu College, University of Tartu opened its doors. The first part of Pärnu College’s current building was opened in 1999 and the second part, the library, in 2001.

Narva College

Founded in 1999, Narva College (narva.ut.ee) is a North-Eastern regional centre of UT. The city of Narva borders with Russia and is the third largest city in Estonia. Due to its location the college plays an important role in implementation of the state integration policy. Particularly, it helps local Russian-speaking youth to integrate into the Estonian society and get quality higher education. In autumn of 2012 the construction of the new building of Narva College on the territory of the Old Town in close vicinity to the Town Hall was completed. The architectural exterior appearance of the new building is acknowledged in literature on architecture both in Estonia and Europe.
The rich collections of UT museums give an opportunity to explore and enjoy the cultural and scientific heritage of the university. All of UT’s museums are located in Tartu. Permanent exhibitions are held in the University of Tartu Museum (located in the ruins of a middle-age monastery), Art Museum and Natural History Museum. The Faculty of Medicine displays its medicine collection at the "AHHAA" Science Centre. Stars can be observed at the Old Observatory designed by the university’s architect J. W. Krause in 1808-1810 and various collections of plants and trees can be seen in the Botanical Garden located at the ruins of the ancient city wall near the River Emajogi.

Studying at a university is never only about lectures and seminars, it is important to make the most of the social side of the university as well. While being an international student at UT, you have a chance to participate in various events and get to know to the Estonian culture, travel around Europe or take part in sports competitions. Each academic year begins with events especially for new students who are called “rebased” (foxes) and throughout the academic year many traditional events take place.
PÄRNU

Pärnu College offers various opportunities for active students:

- act in a student theatre group;
- take part in annual 3-day Student Winter Days celebration;
- learn Estonian national dances; in a folk-dance group;
- attend various student parties.

Student Winter Days (www.talvekad.ee) is an annual festival organized by the students of Pärnu College. Students play snow football, snow hockey, volleyball, bowling and there’s a pub crawl. The goal of the event is to tie together entertainment and sports. Students can also participate in traditional events of Pärnu College such as new student’s party, Christmas carnival, etc.

TARTU

Four centuries of student traditions and the city’s young population are the main reasons why Tartu is considered to be the student capital of Estonia. It is easy for a student to “get lost” in a big city, but in a student city you can really feel that you are special.

- Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Tartu (www.esn.ee) focuses its full attention on the social life of international students. Volunteer Estonian students organize events every week: national evenings, movie nights, jam sessions, cruises, trips around Estonia and abroad, pool parties, theatre nights and various parties;
- AIESEC Tartu (www.aiesec.ee) engages students and graduates in international volunteering and internship programmes;
- AEGEE Tartu (www.aegee-tartu.com) helps students communicate and cooperate throughout Europe. They frequently organize events that promote learning languages and cultures of different European nations;
- Tartu Spring and Autumn Student Days (www.studentdays.ee) offer over 200 student events held during one week per season. During the Student Days, you can fly across the River Emajõgi or participate in a boat race, sing and dance during the night festivals and visit all the fraternities and sororities on the Walpurgis Night. Student Days, especially the Spring Student Days, are the most important student events in Estonia;
- International Student Ambassadors (ut.ee/ambassadors) are a group of volunteer students who share their stories of living in Estonia via a blog and Facebook;
- UT anniversary celebration - each year on the 1st of December UT celebrates its anniversary as a national university. There’s an official public ceremony, torch parade and a glamorous ball, which welcomes both current students and alumni.

Most faculties have student organisations or groups based on specific interests, e.g. marketing club of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. There is a possibility to participate in various summer schools, e.g. philosophy summer camps or summer school of measurement science in chemistry.
EVENTS IN ESTONIA

Many other cultural and sporting events take place in Estonia throughout the year:

- Estonian Song and Dance Celebration ([laulupidu.ee]) - the main event takes place once every 5 years, but there are many different song celebrations held each year;
- Tartu Maraton ([www.tartumaraton.ee]) - annual ski, inline skating, running and biking marathon. However, the most important one is the ski marathon, the biggest one in Eastern Europe, held each year in February;
- Night of Museums ([www.muuseumioo.ee]) - all Estonian museums open doors after their regular working hours for free;
- Opening of Pärnu Summer & Watergate Water Festival ([www.watergate.ee]) - Pärnu takes over as the Summer Capital of Estonia and the biggest water festival in the Baltics takes place at the same time;
- Hanseatic Days - each hanseatic town in Estonia (Tartu, Tallinn, Pärnu, Viljandi) has its own celebration held during the summer months;
- Viljandi Folk Music Festival ([www.folk.ee]) - annual 4-day folk music festival at the end of July;
- Tartu Love Film Festival T ARTUFF ([www.tartuff.ee]) - a big screen is set up on the Town Hall Square of Tartu;
- Researcher's Night ([www.ahhaa.ee]) - pan-European event happening simultaneously in 300 cities;
- Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival ([www.poff.ee]) - one of Northern Europe's most important film festivals showing various films.

More events: [www.culture.ee]

VILJANDI

Throughout the year students of Viljandi Culture Academy organise and participate in various events:

- **Viljandi Guitar Festival** aims to promote improvisation and playing methods;
- **Student Theatre Festival TTP** welcomes amateur student theatre groups who come together, perform their shows, learn new skills and have fun. The festival is strongly connected to the Culture Academy, as the organisers are or have been students here;
- **School Jazz = Jazz School** is a three-day workshop seminar for young students of jazz music from all over Estonia;
- **Dance Week** is a week full of dance performances, workshops, films and open courses in Viljandi’s secondary schools and in the academy led by students, teachers and alumni;
- **OmaMood** is an annual fashion show by students, alumni and partners of Traditional Textile curricula;
- **Weekly jazz nights** see performances by both aspiring and famous jazz musicians;
- **Oma Lugu** is an educational and entertaining festival in Viljandi Culture Academy that aims to bring together our students and local community;
- **Public Lecture Series "Own Culture"** are annual lecture series on Estonian heritage culture for the local community.

Students also celebrate the national holidays of Estonia and participate in parties organized by the Student Council of Viljandi Culture Academy.
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AMBASSADORS

International Student Ambassadors (ISA) is a group of volunteer international students of UT who share their stories of studying and living in Estonia via a common blog and Facebook and advise prospective students.

At the beginning of each autumn semester the Marketing and Communication Office of UT that manages the project, accepts applications to the programme. Application form will be available on ISA’s website.

“Tartu for me is about studying in a personal atmosphere, learning a fascinating new language – Estonian, and enjoying the beautiful countryside around Tartu with my friends from all over Europe. Just come here and enjoy your new experiences.”

— Brigita, Lithuania

“In Estonia, you should take your shoes off when entering an apartment. If you don’t study Estonian, there are few basic words you should pick up immediately. “Tere” means “hi” in Estonian, and this is the first word you hear everywhere you go. The second Estonian word all the foreigners learn as one of the first ones is “Terviseks!” It means “cheers”."

— Gecohe, Germany

“Despite the fact that Tartu is a small town, it is full of life with many different events happening all the time. So forget about staying in at your room as lots of activities are waiting for you! Even the most skeptic introvert turns into social butterfly. Be active, meet new people and collect the most exciting memories for the rest of your life.”

— Shota, Georgia

“Learn to drink like a real man. Locals become socially normal only after consuming alcohol, also known as, the country’s social lubricant. Don’t let the shyness of the locals affect you. Keep smiling and be yourself! The more you try to understand the local culture, the more you will get confused. Don’t try, just go with the flow. Instead of saying “aitäh”, say “aitüma”. You will get locals grinning.

As beautiful as Estonians are, your admiration for their beauty will be mistaken as creepiness. Place no significance on their beauty and that’s how you can make friends.”

— Iulia, Ukraine

“Tartu for me is about studying in a personal atmosphere, learning a fascinating new language – Estonian, and enjoying the beautiful countryside around Tartu with my friends from all over Europe. Just come here and enjoy your new experiences.”

— Saburi, Singapore

“Everybody keeps saying that it’s hard to break the ice with Estonians, but don’t think this means you should be too careful about who you approach and how. Social hierarchy is practically non-existent here. So if you see your professor outside of class, don’t hesitate to have a chat! No need to worry about formalities, they will be pleasantly surprised to know you don’t consider them a stranger to yourself.”

— Antti, Finland

“Only those who have never been in sauna or singing festival with locals believe that Estonians tend to be quite shy or even reluctant in engaging into conversation with foreigners. Remember, nothing is a better icebreaker than a hot steamy sauna and some good jokes. By the way, they have saunas everywhere: in university’s buildings, apartments or even transportable saunas!”

— Brigita, Lithuania

“Learn to drink like a real man. Locals become socially normal only after consuming alcohol, also known as, the country’s social lubricant. Don’t let the shyness of the locals affect you. Keep smiling and be yourself! The more you try to understand the local culture, the more you will get confused. Don’t try, just go with the flow. Instead of saying “aitäh”, say “aitüma”. You will get locals grinning.

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— Antti, Finland

Webpage: ut.ee/ambassadors
Blog: utambassadors.wordpress.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/utambassadors

University of Tartu Welcome Guide
SOCIAL MEDIA

All social media accounts related to UT are available at social.ut.ee.

facebook
tartuuniversity

Linkedin
www.linkedin.com/edu/tartu-ülikool-12164

International Student Ambassadors Facebook:
utambassadors

Degree Students of the University of Tartu Facebook group
www.facebook.com/groups/447103002131058/

#unitartu

USEFUL LINKS

Estonia
Weather in Estonia: www.weather.ee
Estonian events: www.culture.ee
Tartu events: www.kultuuriaiken.tartu.ee
Police and Border Guard Board: www.politsei.ee
Health Board: www.terviseamet.ee
University of Tartu hospital: www.kliinikum.ee
About Estonia: www.estonia.eu
Official tourist information website: www.visitestonia.com

University of Tartu
Official website: www.ut.ee
Virtual tour: virtualtour.ut.ee
Welcome Web: www.ut.ee/en/welcome

Accommodation

Transportation
Tallinn Lennart Meri Airport: www.tallinn-airport.ee
Tartu Airport: www.tartu-airport.ee
Bus tickets: www.tpilet.ee
Train tickets: www.elron.ee
City and regional transport schedule: www.peatus.ee
HOW TO RECOGNISE AN ESTONIAN?

**Estonians:**

- are convinced that Estonia is very strategically located
- consider Finland to be their second home country, because half of their relatives live there and they know at least 2 Estonian builders and 5 doctors who work in Finland
- are so proud of every Estonian that they correct foreigners who say that the population is 1 million, not 1.3 million as it actually is
- mention a city with a population of a million or more causes them to panic
- are mildly annoyed if it takes more than 10 minutes to drive somewhere within the city, because it is too far
- consider a 100 metre pile of coal ashes to be a mountain and speak with pride of Estonia’s tallest mountain
- know that there is no such thing as bad weather, only wrong clothing
- enjoy global warming, but can’t imagine Christmas without snow
- have heard the phrase “Estonians are slow” at least once
- strongly believe in common sense
- consider constantly smiling and friendly people high on drugs or just annoying
- are extremely hard-working
- spit three times over their left shoulder for good luck
- are sarcastic - they believe that they are funny
- are not even slightest bit impressed by a person who speaks three languages
- always take their shoes off when entering their own or somebody else’s home
- cannot make small talk
- do not think that “terviseks!” (“cheers!”) is a funny word
- use the word “normaalne” (“normal”) if something is good, bad or okay
- say “kurat” (“damn it”) as at least every second word
- bring you a box of chocolates by Kalev or Kohuke when they visit you abroad
- know how to end the sentence “Kui Arno isaga koolimajja jõudis…”
- know the moves to “Kaerajaan”
- feel butterflies in their belly when they hear Tõnis Mägi’s “Koit”
- believe that Estonia will once again win the Eurovision Song Contest
- don’t even expect a victory from the Estonian football team anymore, but still cheer when they play
- think that sauna is mostly about networking, not washing, preferably naked
- have not seen their paper passport or paper anything in years
- can barely remember that there are other forms of payment except electronic ones
- declare their taxes and vote online like all normal people
- panic when there’s no Wi-Fi
- are extremely proud of Skype, the greatest invention that has ever come from Estonia
- wait for a green light at a pedestrian crossing even when there is no traffic to be seen

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ESTONIAN LANGUAGE

Estonian language belongs to the Finno-Ugric family of languages similarly to Finnish and Hungarian. The dialects of Estonian language differ slightly from the North to the South of the country. Northern regions and islands are affected by Swedish and Finnish languages, while you might hear people speak Seto or Võro language dialects in the South.

The right pronunciation of the vowels õ, ä, ö, ü is very important in Estonian language, if not crucial. Sometimes you may meet them in a mind-blowing combination: jäääär (edge of the ice), töööö (working night), õueala (courtyard), etc. However, it’s worth trying to amaze your new Estonian friends.

**Estonian alphabet:**

\[ a, b, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, š, z, ź, t, u, v, ŏ, ķ, ü \]

**Useful phrases in Estonian:**

- **Hello!** — **Tere!**
- **Thank you!** — **Aitäh!**
- **How are you?** — **Kuidas läheb?**
- **I love you** — **Ma armastan sind**
- **Cheers** — **Terviseks**
- **Excuse me** — **Vabandage**
- **My name is...** — **Minu nimi on...**
- **Bon appetit**
- **Head aega**
- **Head isu**
- **1,2,3,4,5,…,10**

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University of Tartu Welcome Guide
The majority of Estonian food is very simple. Traditional Estonian cuisine commonly consists of pork, potatoes, fish, black bread, soups, milk products and garden vegetables. Cooking and dining customs in Estonia historically comprise influences of various other cultures, especially German.

Some of the most popular traditional Estonian dishes are:

- **Kohupiim** (curd)
- **Heeringas hapukoore ja sibulatetega** (Herring with sour cream and onions)
- **Kartulisalat** (potato salad)
- **Must leib kilu ja munaga** (rye bread with Baltic sprats and egg)
- **Suitsutatud kala** (smoked fish)
- **Sült** (pork jelly)
- **Kohuke** (curd snack)
- **Karry** (thick dessert drink made with sour milk and a mixture of ground grains – rye, oat barley, and pea flour)
- **Süpprüd** (southern regional potato porridge)
- **Seepraad mulgikapsaga** (pork roast with sauerkraut)
- **Mulgipuder** (southern regional potato porridge)
- **Verivorst** (blood sausage)
- **Kama** (thick dessert drink made with sour milk and a mixture of ground grains – rye, oat barley, and pea flour)
- **Suitsutatud kala** (smoked fish)
- **Mannavaht piimaga** (semolina cream with milk)
- **Kohupiim** (curd)
- **Kohuke** (curd snack)

The favourite season of Estonians is summer when local fruits, vegetables and mushrooms are available. Estonians get especially excited about strawberries, fresh potatoes (cooked unpeeled with dill) and chanterelles.

When dining with Estonians, it's important to be punctual and arrive on time. If you are invited to dinner, the communication and environment might be formal. You need to be very polite, finish the dish on your plate, compliment the host on the meal, thank for inviting you over and offer to clean together. Do not eat with your mouth open or spill any food on the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme contacts</th>
<th>Official contact of the University of Tartu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bachelor of Business Administration</strong></td>
<td>Ms Helen Poltimäe, <a href="mailto:helen.poltimae@ut.ee">helen.poltimae@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer Science</strong></td>
<td>Mr Eero Vainnikko, <a href="mailto:eero.vainnikko@ut.ee">eero.vainnikko@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democracy and Governance</strong></td>
<td>Mr Vello Pettai, <a href="mailto:vello.pettai@ut.ee">vello.pettai@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medicine</strong></td>
<td>Ms Kristel Koemets, <a href="mailto:kristel.koemets@ut.ee">kristel.koemets@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excellence in Analytical Chemistry</strong></td>
<td>Mr Iivo Leito, <a href="mailto:iivo.leito@ut.ee">iivo.leito@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baltic Sea Region Studies</strong></td>
<td>Mr Heiko Pääbo, <a href="mailto:heiko.paabo@ut.ee">heiko.paabo@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>European Union-Russia Studies</strong></td>
<td>Ms Olga Bogdanova, <a href="mailto:olga.bogdanova@ut.ee">olga.bogdanova@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Mathematics</strong></td>
<td>Mr Kalev Pärna, <a href="mailto:kalev.parna@ut.ee">kalev.parna@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Technology Law</strong></td>
<td>Ms Helen Eenmaa-Ilmitriev, <a href="mailto:helen.eenmaa@ut.ee">helen.eenmaa@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International Relations and Regional Studies</strong></td>
<td>Mr Eiki Berg, <a href="mailto:eiki.berg@ut.ee">eiki.berg@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Philosophy</strong></td>
<td>Ms Kadri Simm, <a href="mailto:kadri.simm@ut.ee">kadri.simm@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Robotics and Computer Engineering</strong></td>
<td>Mr Heiki Kasemägi, <a href="mailto:heiki.kasemagi@ut.ee">heiki.kasemagi@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantitative Economics</strong></td>
<td>Mr Jaan Masso, <a href="mailto:jaan.masso@ut.ee">jaan.masso@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semiotics</strong></td>
<td>Ms Elin Sütiste, <a href="mailto:elin.sytiste@ut.ee">elin.sytiste@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Software Engineering</strong></td>
<td>Mr Marlon Dumas, <a href="mailto:marlon.dumas@ut.ee">marlon.dumas@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sound Engineering Arts</strong></td>
<td>Ms Kadri Steinbach, <a href="mailto:kadri.steinbach@ut.ee">kadri.steinbach@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management</strong></td>
<td>Ms Liis Juust, <a href="mailto:liis.juust@ut.ee">liis.juust@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Official contact of the University of Tartu
Address: Ülikooli 18, 50090 Tartu, Estonia
E-mail: info@ut.ee (general enquiries), studyinfo@ut.ee (study enquiries)
Information secretary: +372 737 5100

International Student Service
Address: Ülikooli 18, room 132, 50090 Tartu, Estonia
Ms Ülle Tensing, Senior Specialist for International Studies,ulle.tensing@ut.ee
Ms Kaija Murasov, International Student Coordinator, kaija.murasov@ut.ee
Ms Piret Saluveer, International Student Coordinator, piret.saluveer@ut.ee
International Marketing Team

Thank you for reading the welcome guide for new international students of UT! We, the authors, work at the Marketing and Communication Office of UT and are responsible for the promotion of UT’s study programmes. You might have spoken to us during the many educational fairs that we have attended throughout the years or written to our e-mail studyinfo@ut.ee.

We are happy that you have chosen to study at UT and we wish you a pleasant journey to Estonia. Feel free to come by our office (Ülikooli 18-104, Tartu) once you are in Estonia or contact us if you have any questions!

Yours sincerely,

Kärt, Alexander, Eveli