Welcome Guide
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Dear Student,

Congratulations on getting admitted to the University of Tartu! You have a wonderful journey ahead of you and you can shape it into everything you wish for.

I have been an international student myself and after my studies I understood how much I had gained from the experience. I obtained valuable knowledge, experienced a different culture, and connected with a lot of people who I can now proudly call my friends.

The University of Tartu is at your service to help you realise your goals and ideas. We wish that your time at the university would be meaningful and that you would use all the different opportunities that we can offer to you.

We hope that the information in this guide can help you explore the university and get to know us a bit better before coming to Estonia. I look forward to welcoming you at the University of Tartu.

Tõnu Lehtsaar
Acting Rector
Historical university

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.

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 Estonian people.

Highly ranked university

UT belongs to the TOP 1.2% of the world’s best universities and is the TOP 314th university in the world (QS World University Rankings). 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, The Guild and LERU.

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, ImmonoQure) and participates in various student exchange networks (Erasmus+, ISEP, AEN).
Large university

UT is the biggest university in Estonia with 13 000 students. More than 1300 international students from around 90 countries study at UT every year. The university owns over 100 buildings all across the country.

Innovative university

Researchers at UT have patented numerous inventions of practical application, including a glass of changing transparency, a linked manipulator operating as an actuator in artificial muscles, space cameras with extremely high image quality and a sensor which detects toxic gas. Satellite EstCube-1, developed by UT staff and students, made Estonia the 41st space nation in the world.

Multi-campus university

UT includes 4 faculties, which consist of institutes, schools and colleges. Most of UT is located in Tartu; however, it also has departments in Pärnu, Narva, Viljandi and 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.

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 88.9% (I-Graduate ISB).
More PhD degrees are defended at UT than in all other Estonian universities in total: in 2017, 141 PhD degrees were defended at UT.

Most of the publications of Estonian universities come from UT: 1359 out of 2786 in 2017.

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, Geosciences, Plant & Animal Science, Social Sciences (general), Molecular Biology & Genetics, Biology and Biochemistry, Neuroscience and Behavior, Psychiatry and Psychology (ESI Web of Science 2018).

A total of 48 UT scientists belong to the top 1% of most quoted scientists in the world (ISI Web of Science 2018), including programme directors Marlon Dumas (Software Engineering), Ivo Leito (Excellence in Analytical Chemistry) and many more.

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. To boost space innovation, European Space Agency Business Incubation Centre (ESA BIC) was launched in Tartu last year.

UT operates a science portal (novaator.err.ee) in collaboration with Estonian Public Broadcasting. UT is also visible internationally via science news portal EurekAlert!
Republic of Estonia

Declared: 24 February 1918
Member of: European Union, NATO, Schengen area
Official language: Estonian
Area: 45,227 km²
Population (2018): 1.31 million
Ethnic groups: 69% Estonians, 25% Russians, 6% others
Capital: Tallinn
Currency: Euro (EUR)
National anthem: “Mu isamaa, mu õnn ja rõõm”
lyrics: Johann Voldemar Jannsen
melody: Fredrik Pacius
National bird: barn swallow
National flower: cornflower
National stone: grey limestone
National fish: Baltic herring

1000
50% covered by forests, over 1000 islands and lakes.
Four distinct seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter.

99%
e-Estonia: 91% of population uses Internet, 99% of banking transactions are done electronically, 95% of population declared their income electronically, e-election system, mobile parking system etc.

7
Among top seven of countries with the cleanest city air in the world (WHO).
Tartu

First mentioned: 1030
Location: South Estonia
Area: 38.86 km²
Population (2017): 93,124
Ethnicity: 80% Estonians, 15% Russians, 5% other

Known as: intellectual capital of Estonia, city of youth, national centre of science and research

City of good thoughts

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

Other names: Pernau (German), Parnawa (Polish), Pērnava (Latvian)

Founded: ca. 1251
Location: Southwestern Estonia, on the coast of Pärnu Bay
Area: 33.15 km²
Population (2017): 40,558
Ethnicity: 83% Estonians, 12% Russians, 5% other

Title: Summer Capital of Estonia (since 1996)

Summer capital of Estonia

Pärnu is an internationally recognized health tourism destination. The city focuses on promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring good health for its residents and visitors. It counts 175 years of longstanding traditions in health resorts and hospitality. 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 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.
Tallinn

Name: Tallinn
Other names: Reval (German)
First mentioned: 1154
Area: 159.2 km²
Population (2017): 449 604
Ethnicity: 53% Estonians, 37% Russians, 3% Ukrainians, 7% other
Known as: the capital city of Estonia

Europe’s hottest startup capital

Tallinn is the political and financial centre of Estonia. It is the country’s largest city and its capital, with about 1/3 of Estonia’s population as its residents. About a half of Estonia’s GDP is created in Tallinn. In the middle of Tallinn lies a limestone hill called Toompea, home to Estonian government and Estonian parliament (Riigikogu). Estonia’s presidential palace is located in Kadriorg, a green neighbourhood by the seaside.

Tallinn is most well-known for its picturesque old town, often referred to as a place from a fairy tale. In fact, Tallinn’s old town is one of the world’s best preserved medieval towns, declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 1997.

Every year, about 1.5 million foreign tourists visit Tallinn. Estonia’s most well-known alcoholic beverage – liqueur Vana Tallinn (Old Tallinn) – is produced in Tallinn and carries its name.

In every five years, Estonia’s famous song festival takes place in Tallinn Song Festival Grounds, when approximately 30 000 singers will perform to an audience of 90 000. A number of other events take place every year, such as Tallinn Music Week - the largest music festival in the Baltic and Nordic countries.
Faculties

**Arts and Humanities**
- Institute of History and Archaeology
- Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics
- Institute of Philosophy and Semiotics
- Institute of Cultural Research and Arts
- School of Theology and Religious Studies
- College of Foreign Languages and Cultures
- Viljandi Culture Academy

**Medicine**
- Institute of Biomedicine and Translational Medicine
- Institute of Pharmacy
- Institute of Dentistry
- Institute of Clinical Medicine
- Institute of Family Medicine and Public Health
- Institute of Sport Sciences and Physiotherapy

**Social Sciences**
- Institute of Education
- Johan Skytte Institute of Political Science
- School of Economics and Business
- Administration
- Institute of Psychology
- School of Law
- Institute of Social Studies
- Narva College
- Pärnu College

**Science and Technology**
- Institute of Computer Science
- Estonian Marine Institute
- Institute of Physics
- Institute of Chemistry
- Institute of Mathematics and Statistics
- Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology
- Institute of Technology
- Institute of Ecology and Earth Sciences
Higher Education in Estonia

Estonia is home to 20 universities and professional higher education institutions. Approximately 50,000 students are enrolled in the public and private 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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>ECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHD</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Higher Education</td>
<td>3-4 years</td>
<td>180-240 ECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Bachelor and Master</td>
<td>5-6 years</td>
<td>300-360 ECTS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

January 1    New Year’s Day
February 24   Independence Day
March 14      Native Language Day*
Friday and Sunday in April Good Friday & Easter Sunday
(moveable holiday)
May 1         Spring Day
Second Sunday in May Mother’s Day*
June 4        National Flag Day*
June 23       Victory Day
June 24       St John’s Day or Midsummer Day
August 20     Day of Restoration

Second Sunday in November of Independence
Second Sunday in November Fathers’ Day*
December 24   Christmas Eve
December 25   Christmas Day
December 26   Boxing Day

* 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 to know the surroundings

☐ Take your flight, bus or ferry
Be happy – new adventures await!
Practical info

Residence permits for study

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 6 months need a temporary residence permit for study purposes. Residence permit is valid for the whole period of your studies. All non-EU nationals can travel inside the Schengen area with an Estonian residence permit or D-type visa for 90 days within a 6-month period.

Please read the information sent to your e-mail and apply for residence permit or visa as suggested on: ut.ee/residencepermits

Healthcare

All students are required to have health insurance in Estonia:

- EU/EEA citizens have the same social welfare benefits as residents of Estonia if they are insured back home and should obtain an EU health insurance card prior to arrival in Estonia.
- Non EU/EEA citizens, except for PhD students, need to purchase health insurance coverage in Estonia.

Some recommendations:
- Ergo Insurance
- AS Inges Kindlustus
- Salva Kindlustuse AS
- AON Baltic

For most updated information, please check: ut.ee/en/welcome/health-insurance-0

UT runs the biggest hospital in Estonia and operates several clinics throughout Tartu.

UT also provides a professional psychologist for students.
Accommodation

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, check city24.ee and kv.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.

You can also find various offers from these Facebook groups:
1. KORTERITE/MAJADE MÜÜK/ÜÜRIMINE!
2. Korterite üürimine (MAAKLERITETA!)
3. Korterite üürimine Tartus (Otse Omanikult)

Tartu

International students interested in getting housing in dorms, need to apply for accommodation within the limited time period – 1–10 June. The application process and other requirements are described on ut.ee/en/welcome/housing 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 150 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.
Pärnu

International students of Pärnu College live in a dormitory (Hotel Vesiroos), which is located close to the College (only 5-10 minutes walk). For up to date information, please check the website: pc.ut.ee.

Students may rent private flats in the city for about 150-250 EUR/month (1-2 rooms, kv.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.

Tallinn

International students can look for private flats alone or with fellow students.

New offers are posted every day on city24.ee or kv.ee.

There are no residence halls available in Tallinn for the students enrolled in the School of Law of the University of Tartu.

1-2 bedroom apartment in Tallinn city centre might cost 350-400 EUR/month (plus utilities).
Transportation

Transportation is not provided by the university and all travel arrangements are your 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 ([tallinn-airport.ee](tallinn-airport.ee)) has direct flights to more than 25 countries.

Ferries run from Helsinki and Stockholm to Tallinn are operated by Tallink ([tallink.ee](tallink.ee)), Viking Line ([vikingline.ee](vikingline.ee)) and Lindaline ([lindaline.ee](lindaline.ee)).

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

**From Tallinn Airport:**
From Tallinn Airport: Tallinn Bus Station is about 10 min drive from the airport. You can take a taxi (approx. 5 EUR), tram No.4 (stop „Bussijaam“) or bus No.2 (stop „Autobussijaam“, bus ticket price: 2 EUR) to the bus terminal. It is possible to take a bus/train straight from the airport to Tartu. Tickets are available at the airport.

**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 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 Tallinn, 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 – all taxis have fixed rates. You can ask for a receipt after arriving at your destination.

Uber and Taxify are widely used in Estonia. You can download the apps to get the best rates.

It is also mandatory to fasten your seat belt while seated in a taxi.
How to get to Tartu?

- Tartu Airport is connected with Helsinki Airport also through direct flights (tartu-airport.ee).

- From Tallinn Airport and Tallinn Bus Station: direct buses (tpilet.ee) to Tartu Bus Station leave hourly from 5 am – 11 am.

- Tickets cost from 7 to 15 EUR depending on time and company. It takes 2.5 hours to get to Tartu by bus.

- From the Baltic Station: trains depart 10 times a day to Tartu (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 (luxexpress.ee, 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. (luxexpress.ee, ecolines.ee).

How to get to PÄRNU?

- 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 (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 (luxexpress.ee, 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 (etakso.ee) and Pärnu Takso (parnutakso.ee).
Phones

+372

Estonia’s country code is +372 followed by the subscriber’s number. Local mobile SIM cards and mobile plans are operated by Smart, Simpel, Zen, Diil and Super.

You will receive an Estonian SIM card at the orientation course during the first week.

If you have a smartphone, 4G internet is very fast and reliable, and can be accessed widely in Estonia.

Emergency contact

112

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 during studies

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).

Once you have already progressed with your studies it will depend on your area of specialty and language skills whether it is possible to find a job in Estonia. 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. Thus, international students should be prepared that finding a job during studies is not realistic in Estonia.

cv.ee

Check cv.ee, cvkeskus.ee or workinestonia.com for vacancies or contact the university’s career service.
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.


Shopping

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

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.

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 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 minukool.ee, SEB and Swedbank

ESN card – contact ESN Tartu (esn.ee/tartu)

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 (3-4 EUR).

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.

Religion

Estonia values freedom of religion and diversity. Therefore, international students from different religious backgrounds live in harmony here. Historically Estonians belonged to the Christian Lutheran Church. Currently most of Estonians do not affiliate themselves to any major practicing religion. However, most of the traditions and celebrations (Christmas, Easter, etc.) still come from the Christian background.
Cost of living

Dormitory rent per month
Flat rent (one bedroom apartment)

Monthly budget for food
Daily lunch specials
Loaf of black bread
Milk (1 l)
Coca-Cola (0.5 l)

Big Mac
Monthly student ticket for public transport
Theatre ticket
Cinema ticket
Amateur sport per academic year
Fitness club per month
Nightclub ticket

Beer at a pub (0.5 l)
Monthly mobile phone

According to Business Insider, Tartu and Tallinn are one of the most affordable places to live in Europe.

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°C. The average daytime temperature in winter is -2°C (gets as low as -25°C) and there is a lot of snow which is perfect for skiing, skating and sledging 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°C, but it can be up to +30°C. 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.
Exchange studies

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](http://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.
Travelling abroad
You can easily travel throughout the Schengen area.
Orientation course

At the beginning of each semester, the Study Abroad Centre 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 or Pärnu or Tallinn are welcome to join the orientation course in Tartu. However, the students of Pärnu and Tallinn need to take care of their accommodation, the university does not provide housing during the orientation course.

There will be separate introductory courses for all incoming international students of Pärnu College in Pärnu and Tallinn.

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.

In Tallinn, a separate orientation day is organised before the beginning of studies. First, the core academic staff of the master’s programme explains the content, organisation and expectation of the programme. Then, the administrative staff will explain the main study regulations, the Study Information System, administrative support, etc.

Keep an eye on your e-mails for further information.
Study buildings

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** (utlib.ee) is the oldest and largest research library in Estonia. Located in Tartu, it holds over 4.1 million items. 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. Due to renovation works, some parts of the library are not currently accessible. Meanwhile, students can access libraries and reading rooms also at the faculties and institutes, as well as visit the city library.

**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.

The School of Law in Tallinn has a small library on premises containing legal materials. However, students can use the National Library which has the Law and International Organisations Reading Room containing extensive legal materials. Electronic resources (including access to databases) are available in both libraries.

SPORTS

UT Academic Sports Club (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 Tallinn; however, there are numerous fitness centres and sports’ clubs where students can do professional and amateur sports.
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 Arts and Humanities and 7 minutes to the Faculty of Social Sciences. If you keep walking up the hill, you will see the Institute of Computer Science and Institute of Mathematics and Statistics. From there you can easily follow the road to the School of Law. Some of the central residence halls are located just across the river next to the School of Economics and Business Administration.

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. Some of the institutes of the Faculty of Science and Technology are also located there.

Tallinn Office
University of Tartu Office in Tallinn represents the university in the capital of Estonia. The university’s representation in Tallinn provides information about the university and the study programmes and offers lecture rooms equipped with modern presentation technology for holding conferences, seminars and trainings. UT also runs Tallinn Office of the School of Law, which offers a chance to get UT diploma in law in Tallinn (oi.ut.ee). Law studies have rich history at the University of Tartu dating back to the times of its foundation in 1632. The School of Law’s Office in Tallinn offers an international master’s programme in International Law and Human Rights.
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.

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.

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 Emajõgi.
Student Life

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.

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 (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 (aiesec.ee) engages students and graduates in international volunteering and internship programmes;
- AEGEE Tartu (aegee-tartu.ee) 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 (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 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 (isa.ut.ee) is 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.
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;
- attend various student parties.

Student Winter Days 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 stylistic dinner, etc.

Tallinn

The visitors and residents of Tallinn have wide opportunity to live the life of the capital through various massive events. At the School of Law, the students can participate in the activities of the Estonian branch of the European Law Students’ Association (ELSA). They organise lectures with prominent lawyers and officials, and organise visits to law offices and governmental offices.

Estonian Song and Dance Celebration (July 2019) 2019.laulupidu.ee/en/
Nargen Music Festival (June–September) nargenfestival.ee
Simple Session session.ee
Öllesummer (July) ollesummer.ee
Night of Ancient Bonfires ancientlights.eu
Tallinn Sea Days (July) tallinnamerepaevad.ee
Tallinn Music Week (April) tallinnmusicweek.ee
Tallinn Fashion Week (March) estonianfashion.eu
Jazzkaar, international jazz festival (April, September and December) jazzkaar.ee
Design Night (September) disainioo.ee
Tallinn Flower Festival (May–August) kadriorupark.ee/lillefestival
Golden Mask Theatre Festival (November) goldenmask.ee
Old Town Days (June, July) vanalinnapaevad.ee
Christmas Market on Town Hall Square (December–January)
Tallinn Guitar Festival (June) kitarrifestival.ee
Events in Estonia

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

**Estonian Song and Dance Celebration** ([laulupidu.ee](laulupidu.ee)) – the main event takes place once every 5 years, but there are many different song celebrations held each year;

**Tartu Maraton** ([tartumaraton.ee](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** ([muuseumioo.ee](muuseumioo.ee)) – all Estonian museums open doors after their regular working hours for free.

**Weekend Festival Baltic** ([weekendbaltic.com](weekendbaltic.com)) – largest electronic music festival in the Nordic countries.

**August Insomnia: Night of Pärnu Arts** – is an open air festival that brings together street music, theater performances, dances, fair, cinema, etc.

**Hanseatic Days** – each hanseatic town in Estonia (Tartu, Tallinn, Pärnu, Viljandi) has its own celebration held during the summer months;

**Viljandi Folk Music Festival** ([folk.ee](folk.ee)) – annual 4-day folk music festival at the end of July

**Tartu Love Film Festival TARTUFF** ([tartuff.ee](tartuff.ee)) – a big screen is set up on the Town Hall Square of Tartu;

**Researcher’s Night** ([ahhaa.ee](ahhaa.ee)) – pan-European event happening simultaneously in 300 cities;

**Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival** ([poff.ee](poff.ee)) – one of Northern Europe’s most important film festivals showing various films.

**More events:** [culture.ee](culture.ee)
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 all international degree students are welcome to apply to the programme. Application form will be available on ISA’s website.

Eka, Indonesia

„Studying at UT is beyond expectation. As an Analytical Chemistry student, novelty is important and up to date knowledge is essential to me, hence I am grateful that UT has committed to investing in new instruments. As UT is the country’s best university, studying here means learning from the best experts of the country and from all over the World. Living in the lovey-dovey city of Tartu and in the advanced and peaceful Estonia, I have got comprehensive support with my studies. In addition to that, I can jump on a 30-minute bus ride from Tartu to various Estonian forests for a quick escape from my studies.“

Rahul, India

„Needless to say, explaining to my family, where exactly Estonia is located, was the first challenge. But after coming here, I realised what a little hidden gem it is and why people should know about it. A land of forests, tranquility and peace with a technologically advanced society. Therefore, some of the surprises I felt while settling down were: (a) You never need to carry any cash, just pay with your contactless card everywhere. (b) The University is the land of opportunities, it lets you choose from a diverse range of courses, in addition to your compulsory ones. (c) The weather is unconventional to say the least, I have seen both rain and snow on a sunny day. My motto is #LiveEstoniaLoveEstonia.“

Wouter, Netherlands

„If I could say anything to a future student, I would tell them to go all in. Immerse yourself in projects that you care for, participate in extracurriculars, be diligent and make the most of your period of studies. But also make sure you have fun and make many new friends!“
Katerina, Russia

“One can hardly imagine before coming to the University of Tartu that here they will make new friends around the globe. It is here, in a city with a bit less than 100,000 inhabitants, where in the morning your Italian flatmate explains to you how to bake croissants. In the university, you will discuss how to translate the word ‘governance’ into dozens of languages. In the library, you will be working on a paper together with guys from Germany, Turkey and Singapore, and realize how differently they perceive the results of American elections. Here, in Tartu, you will learn how to say ‘hello’ in Malaysian language because your classmate is coming from there. Later in the evening you will play foosball with Spanish and Estonian dudes. Joining ISA, one will expand their social circle, having an opportunity to work on projects, organise events and just hang out with people of various backgrounds, which is awesome.”

Anastasiia, Ukraine

“At first glance, Tartu seems to be an unremarkable town, but it’s completely the opposite as it hides an enormous amount of opportunities. Tartu is a real incubator of bright minds from all over the world who come here for pursuing their goals. Such an environment of enthusiasm and dedication pushes you to set new goals and challenges for yourself. Once you come here, you find yourself in the open-minded vibrant community which will encourage you to foster new skills, extend your horizons and share your own knowledge with others. Not only will you make new friends, but you will also meet people who might accompany you on your future career path. Thus, I will definitely recommend not to narrow down your surroundings with international students only, but also try to make friends with Estonians and keep great relations with your professors.”
Social media  #unitartu

Official blog: blog.ut.ee
International Student Ambassadors blog: isa.ut.ee/blog

Facebook: tartuuniversity
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/school/university-of-tartu/

FB: Degree Students of the University of Tartu Facebook group
FB: International Student Ambassadors Facebook

Weibo: weibo.com/u/5096635445
User Qzone: user.qzone.qq.com/2606674909

/tartuuniversity /tartuuniversity vk.com/unitartu /unitartu
Useful links

Estonia

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

Accommodation
Real estate portals: city24.ee, kv.ee

University of Tartu

Official website: ut.ee
Virtual tour: virtualtour.ut.ee
Welcome Web: ut.ee/en/welcome

Transportation

Tallinn Lennart Meri Airport: tallinn-airport.ee
Tartu Airport: tartu-airport.ee
Bus tickets: tpilet.ee
International buses: ecolines.net, luxexpress.ee
Train tickets: elron.ee
City and regional transport schedule: 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

1 000 000

• 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

• a mention of 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

• laugh at western countries, who can’t handle 1 mm of 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

• believe in personal space, at least 1 m even when greeting

• 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 koolimaja jõudis...”

• know the moves to “Kaerajaan”

• find nothing special about singing a superstate to collapse

• 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.
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.

**Estonian alphabet:**
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, ž, t, u, v, ŵ, ä, ö, ü

**Useful phrases in Estonian:**

Hello!     Tere!
Thank you!    Aitäh!
Goodbye    Head aega
Yes     Jah
No     Ei
My name is...   Minu nimi on ...
Please     Palun
How are you?   Kuidas läheb?
I love you   Ma armastan sind
Cheers     Terviseks
Bon appetit   Head isu
Excuse me     Vabandage

1 - üks
2 - kaks
3 - kolm
4 - neli
5 - viis
6 - kuus
7 - seitse
8 - kaheksa
9 - üheksa
10 - kümme
Estonian cuisine

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. 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.

![Food images]

- **Must leib**
  - black bread

- **Seapraad mulgikapsaga**
  - pork roast with sauerkraut

- **Kama**
  - thick dessert drink made with sourmilk and mixture of ground grains

- **Sült**
  - pork jelly

- **Suitsukala**
  - smoked fish

- **Mannavaht piimaga**
  - semolina cream with milk

- **Kohupiim**
  - curd

- **Kohuke**
  - curd snack

- **Kartulisalat**
  - potato salad
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International Marketing Team

Thank you for reading the Welcome Guide for the new international students of UT! We, the authors, work at the Marketing and Communication Office 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,
Eveli, Ekaterina, Elis