

Everything you need to know to get settled into your new home!

Pre-departure Manual.



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UvA Basics

- ONLINE COURSES

In the programme of Sociology, you will have to attend both lectures and tutorials. For each course you usually have 4 to 8 hours of lectures and 4 hours of tutorial each week. During the first year you usually have around 12 hours of classes per week. In the second and third year, it is around 8 hours of classes each week.

Lectures are bigger classes that you usually attend with everyone in the programme, while tutorials are focus groups of around 25 people.

As you may know, due to new corona rules, lectures are allowed to happen without 1.5m social distancing, but there is a maximum of 75 people allowed in the hall. The rest will be present through a live stream.

In case you are studying from home, and need motivation, UvA has designed an online study room in Microsoft Teams:

<https://uba.uva.nl/en/visiting-and-studying/online-study-space/online-study-space.html>

UvA Basics: Academic Calendars

01

The academic year is divided into 2 semesters. Each semester is composed of 3 blocks, 2 of 8 weeks and 1 of 4 weeks. You normally have 6 weeks of classes, a study week, and then exam week, and for the shorter block you have 3 weeks of classes and 1 week of exams/assessment.

02

Vacation: we usually get around 2 weeks off for Christmas, and a week off in May. The academic year starts in September and ends in July.

03

You can check the exact dates here:
<https://www.uva.nl/en/education/studying-at-the-uva/academic-calendar/academic-calendar.html>

Important Information

BSN (CITIZEN NUMBER)

The BSN is the citizen number that you receive once you register as a citizen of Amsterdam at the city hall (GGD). You'll need one in order to work, open a bank account, arrange health insurance, visit a doctor or hospital, or apply for benefits.

You are required to get your BSN within 5 days after your arrival in Amsterdam (or The Netherlands). You can only register through appointment, by calling 14 020, Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00. They will tell you what you need to bring with you.

Here you can find all the information on how to get an appointment at the city hall and what documents you need with you:

<https://www.amsterdam.nl/en/contact-information/appointment/>
<https://www.amsterdam.nl/en/civil-affairs/first-registration/>

DIGID

What is a DigiD?

DigiD is a means of identifying yourself when accessing services online. It allows you to access and use these services securely. You use it whenever you have to pay taxes, change your registration address, Government loans, and more. You can also use it to book corona tests and vaccinations.

Dutch people already have it, but as an international you have to request one.

How do I apply for one?

Applying is easy, just to this website: <https://www.digid.nl/en/>, click on 'Apply for or activate a DigiD', and click on 'DigiD application form'.

Once you apply, you will receive an activation code by mail (post).

Once you have that, you can activate your DigiD here:

<https://www.digid.nl/en/apply-or-activate-digid>

Vaccination programme

PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

ONCE THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE ARE IMMUNE TO CORONAVIRUS, THERE WON'T HAVE TO BE SO MANY CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS.

If you are not yet vaccinated but want to do so, you can receive your vaccination in the Netherlands. **If you have a DigiD**, you can request it on: <https://coronatest.nl/>

Once you get your dose, you are able to download a qr code that states you are vaccinated, and will allow you to get into clubs and events (once they open up). To do so, download the app: <https://coronacheck.nl/nl/>

*You need to be fully vaccinated (including the 2 weeks after your second dose) to use your vaccine pass. Until then, you can use negative tests qr codes.

In case you do not have a DigiD yet (but keep in mind that you should get one as soon as possible):

International students can either visit a vaccination unit on the **Roeterseiland campus from 6 to 10 September**, or they can get their vaccination at **RAI Amsterdam** any time after their arrival in the Netherlands.

You will not be required to prove that you have been staying in the Netherlands for at least one month or to have a BSN number.

Is this the first time you will receive a dose of a vaccine? You do not need to make an appointment for either the campus vaccination unit or for the RAI Amsterdam location.

Have you received the first dose of a vaccine in your home country? Please make an appointment with The Amsterdam Municipal Health Service (GGD). A special appointment hotline for international students is available: (+31) 020 5555 202.

You can also send an email to coronavragen@ggd.amsterdam.nl
More information on: <https://www.uva.nl/en/current/coronavirus/international-students.html#Can-I-get-vaccinated-against-COVID19-when-temporarily-in-the-Netherlands>



What to do if you need help

MENTORS

As a first year student in a foreign country you will often find yourself in situations where you do not know who to turn to. This may be an issue regarding school work or just general confusion about a certain thing. UvA has an array of professionals who are there to help you any time, do not hesitate to contact them.

CENTRAL STUDENT SERVICE DESK

If you have any questions regarding technicalities and practical information of your study programme like tuition etc. you can contact The Central Student Service Desk at this link: [Central Student Service Desk - University of Amsterdam \(uva.nl\)](#)

STUDY ADVISORS

You can always contact your mentors (most likely your Craftsmanship teacher), tutorial teacher as well as lecturers regarding any questions about classes or courses you are taking or about the syllabus via email. If there are any questions regarding the study programme, your study plans, complaints or personal issues that hinder your ability to study you can always contact the study adviser. With the following link you can set up a personal appointment: [Study advisers - Social Sciences - University of Amsterdam \(uva.nl\)](#)



Living in The Netherlands : Essentials

WAYS TO FIND HOUSING:

1. **Student housing websites** that are based on registration time. The longer you are registered, the higher your chances of getting a room! Sometimes this could take years and a lot of Dutch students register from the age of 16 so international students, other housing options might be better for you. Still worth trying if you'd like a room somewhere further away from the city.

- **Room.nl**
- **Studentenwoningweb.nl**
 - **Pros:** cheap accommodation, housing allowance from the government in some places, Amazing student experience because you live with other students, More likely to get away with throwing massive parties
- **Cons:** successful application depends on many factors and your chances of getting a good room are slim if you've been registered for only less than a year or two.

2. Private student housing

- <https://www.thestudenthotel.com>
- <https://www.ourcampus.nl/en/apartments>
- <https://www.the-cohesion.life>
- <https://www.stunest.nl/availability>
- <https://www.ourcampus.nl>
- <https://www.thisisourdomain.n>

3. Housing rental platforms.

Look at properties on the site, plan a viewing and send your documents as soon as possible if you like the place. Always call agencies instead of emailing for faster communication and then send them a follow-up email after the phone call.

Housing

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

- [pararius.com](https://www.pararius.com)
- [Funda.nl](https://www.funda.nl)
- [Kamernet.nl](https://www.kamernet.nl)

4 questions to ask them once you're interested in an apartment:

1. If students are allowed
2. Number of registrations
3. If there is a minimum income requirement or if a sponsor statement would be sufficient
4. If the rent is inclusive or exclusive of utilities
5. Energy rating (A is the best, that means you'll probably pay less utilities because the gas/electricity in your apartment is more efficient)

If they cannot meet these requirements for the property you are interested in, ask if they have any other properties available that would be suitable for students.

Documents to prepare

1. Bank statements (of your sponsors or of your own if you're working)
 2. Copy of ID and passport
 3. Proof of enrollment
 4. Previous landlord statements (if applicable)
 5. Letter about yourself and your roommates (if required)
- Useful resources about house-hunting in Amsterdam:
 - <https://www.wanderlustingk.com/travel-blog/ultimate-rental-amsterdam>
 - <https://www.iamsterdam.com/en/living/settling-in/housing>
 - <https://www.iamsterdam.com/en/study/life-in-amsterdam/finding-housing-in-amsterdam>

Housing

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

5. Facebook groups

- [Amsterdam Housing, Rooms, Apartments, Sublets](#)
- [Amsterdam rent a room, apartment or studio](#)
- [Amsterdam rent a room, apartment or studio](#)
- [Amsterdam Room Studio Apartment 2021](#)
- [Amsterdam Apartments 4 Rent](#)

Pros:

- Often furnished

Cons:

- A lot of scams
- Competitive
- Unpredictable

Furniture

If you need to buy furniture for your new place in Amsterdam, as well as the classic Ikea trip, you can also have a look in Amsterdam's large array of second hand stores (Kringloops) or check out some websites such as Marktplaats or Facebook marketplace for free stuff. You can also check stores such as Hema, Action or Xenos for generic housewares.

Check out the following link:

<https://www.marktplaats.nl/>
<https://www.hema.nl/>



Work

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

Working in the Netherlands depends on whether you are a citizen of the EU or an international student.

- **Students with EU nationalities:** can work easily alongside their studies without restrictions. Usually EU students work around 56h/month, which allows you to apply for free public transport.
- **International students:** can also work alongside their studies but there are more restrictions (if it says 'TWV vereist voor > >' at the bottom of your residence permit, your employer must apply for a work permit for you to be working legally and you must have a Dutch insurance). As a non-EU student you can work 16h/week or full time during June, July and August. 6 Check out more information regarding working as a student in The Netherlands, in the following links:
 - https://www.studyinholland.nl/life-in-holland/working-while-studying_
 - <https://collegelife.co/nl/guides/work-netherlands-complete-guide/>

Tips and tricks:

- **YoungOnes:** freelancing platform, good pay and flexible (not for non-EU)
- **UberEats:** non-EU allowed because considered to be self-employment
- **SuperProf:** teaching languages (non-EU allowed)
- **Babysitting:** [CharlyCares](#), [24Nannies](#) (non-EU allowed)

Transportation

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

The **public transport** in Amsterdam is well organized but keep in mind that it is quite expensive.

- **OV-chipkaart:** you can get an anonymous transportation card called OV-chipkaart at most stations, airports or at newsagents and supermarkets and you can easily top it up with money at one of the machines. However, getting a personalized chipkaart is better because of discounts that you may get. At this link you can apply for one: [OV-chipkaart - Personal OV-chipkaart](#)
- **EU students** with government loans/grants can get free transport, and discounts on EU travel, however it is quite difficult to get.
- **Non-EU students** cannot get discounts on transportation unless they are working. As you already know, Amsterdam is famous for its biking culture.

Bikes: it is highly recommended to get a bike in Amsterdam because not only is it cheaper than public transport but also very practical.

- Careful when you are buying your bike second hand or on **Facebook Marketplace** because owning a stolen bike comes with fines (ask for receipt or proof ownership)
- You can buy **second hand** bikes at Waterlooplein (for around 60eur)
- When you are buying a bike look out for the **locks** (Action has cheap, good ones) as well because those are integral parts so your bike does not get stolen as easily
- You can also rent a bike from a company called **Swapfiets** which gives free servicing and possible replacement. They often have 'beginning of the academic year' discounts and offers for students. Check them out in the following link: <https://swapfiets.nl/en/>

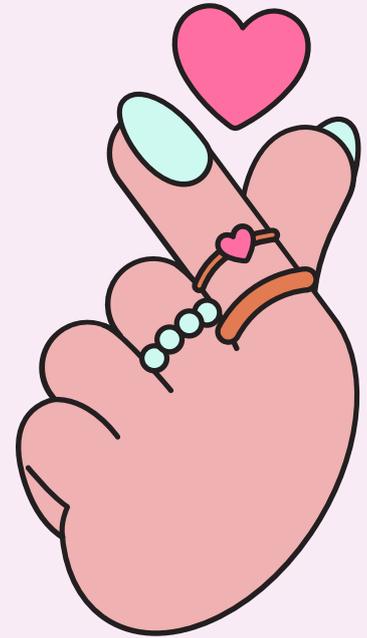


Fines

BEWARE OF THESE RULES TO NOT GET FINED IN AMSTERDAM

- Texting or calling while biking can cost you **95 euros**
- Cycling under the influence
- Not abiding to signs and lights with your bike (always sign with your hand while turning)
- Missing bike lights
- Drinking in public places is also not allowed although often seen [Disclaimer: We are not promoting the use of alcohol/drugs. However, prior knowledge about the legality is in any case recommendable.
Technically weed smoking is not allowed outside of coffeeshops, but you will not be in trouble if you're an otherwise law-abiding citizen, you're not causing a public disturbance, you don't have more than 5g on your possession and you're smoking in an Amsterdam area where weed smoking is not banned]
- (When it is applicable not wearing a mask when instructed can also get you fined)

Health



MENTAL HEALTH

- Check out more information in the following link:
<https://student.uva.nl/en/content/az/psychologists/psychologists.html>
- However, the waiting list tends to be quite long, so if you are in need of urgent help you might want to go directly to your GP or contact a private psychologist instead.
- Keep in mind that the student psychologist only provides you with **maximum 4–5 sessions** and will make referrals for you if you need further assistance.
- Your GP **waiting list** may be up to 6 months– a year but if you need a specialist or have very urgent issues, it might be shorter (1–2 months).
- There are also **workshops** for stress management and other study-related issues as well as peer support groups for personal issues such as dealing with grief and loss.
- The Dutch basic insurance often covers 5–10 sessions of psychological help so keep this in mind when choosing your insurance plan.

UVA DOCTORS

- It is important to know that UvA has a team of doctors that work for students only. If you have a EU Health Card you can go to the doctor there for free, and get appointed to a GP. If you work through Insurance, you can go there and they will manage the insurance fee for you, or explain how to declare it yourself if needed.
- Although, you may have to insist while calling to make an appointment, in my experience they have been very helpful.
- Check out the following links to learn more about UvA doctors:
 - <https://student.uva.nl/en/content/az/doctors/doctors.html>
 - <https://www.huisartsenamsterdam.nl/international/>

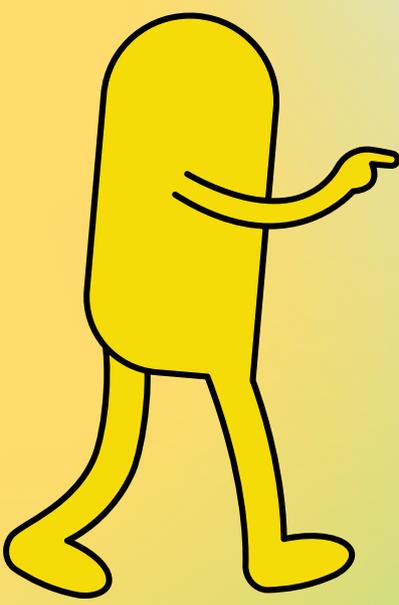
UNIVERSITY SPORTS CENTRE

- 6 locations, over 65 sports and fitness facilities at student-special prices

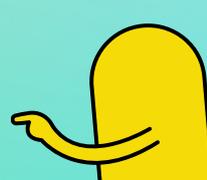
Bank Account

- Very often stores in The Netherlands don't accept Visa or MasterCard. Moreover, dutch banks nowadays use an online banking payment system called Ideal, which only works for dutch banks. Several banks offer free student accounts, such as **ING**.
- To get a dutch bank account (besides Bunq) you will need:
 - to have your BSN (Citizen service number), which you will get once you register at your municipality.
 - a dutch phone number.
- Sometimes starting your new life in Amsterdam as an international can be hard, because the steps in bureaucratic processes overlap. That is to say for example, you might need a dutch phone number to get a dutch bank account and vice versa.
- **ING**
- **ABN Amro**
- **Bunq (No BSN but fees more expensive)**
- Extra personal recommendation: Dutch debit cards most of the time do not have a CVV. So you could also get a Bunq bank account in addition to your Dutch one.

Legal Advice



Particularly in regards to housing, you might find yourself in need of legal assistance. If that was the case you could always contact organisations/associations who offer free legal advice to students in Amsterdam.

- Check out ASVA Student Union's free legal advice, in the following link: <https://asva.nl/en/services/legal-aid/>
 - You might also want to check out The Legal Counter's free legal advice, in the following link:
 - <https://www.juridischloket.nl/>
- 

Becoming a true Dutchie

DUTCH PHRASES & TRADITIONS

- **Borrels:** An informal social gathering with drinks and snacks. SEC organises weekly borrels at a designated location.
- **Sinterklaas:** The feast of *Sinterklaas* celebrates the name day of Saint Nicholas on 6th December. The feast is celebrated annually with the giving of gifts on *Sinterklaasavond* the 5th of December. During *Sinterklaas* a lot of *pepernoten*, *kruidnoten*, *speculaas* and *taai-taai* will be eaten. These are all traditional Dutch sweets. It is a controversial holiday due to the helpers of Sinterklaas who are called *Zwarte Piet* (Black Pete). More information about Sinterklaas: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinterklaas>
- **King's Day:** In the Netherlands the Dutch celebrate the birthday of our king Willem-Alexander on the 27th of April. It is a national holiday and everyone wears orange. Everywhere in the Netherlands there will be flea markets where people sell their stuff and a lot of parties.

KNOWING THE WEATHER & MORE

Download one of these apps:

- Buinenradar
- Buinenalarm
- AccuWeather
- 9393 (Public transport must-have)
- Tikkie (going Dutch has never been so easy!)

LEARNING DUTCH

UvA offers this for students: [Dutch Language Courses \(NT2\) - INTT - University of Amsterdam \(uva.nl\)](https://www.uva.nl/en/education/language-courses/nt2-international). (have to pay for these courses but it is well worth it)

Also check out the following to see more information about Dutch courses the municipality of Amsterdam offers: [Learning Dutch - City of Amsterdam](https://www.amsterdam.nl/en/learning-dutch)

DUTCH SIMCARDS

- Tele2 (cheapest)
- KPN
- Vodafone
- T-Mobile

GROCERY

- There is a wide variety of supermarkets and grocery stores in the Netherlands but they often have differences in price and quality.
- Most expensive to the cheapest:
 - Albert Heijn
 - Jumbo
 - Dirk
 - Aldi
 - Lidl
- Make sure if you shop at AH that you get a bonuskaart to get deals and download the apps for the stores to see the week's deals.
- There are also fresh markets in many neighbourhoods such as at Bijlmerplein, Diemerplein, Dappermarkt, Noordermarkt, Ten Katemarkt and etc.

BUDDY PROGRAMME

If you signed up for the buddy programme, you should be receiving an email about your buddy and your group very soon. Whatsapp group where you can make plans and ask any questions/ tips & tricks about living your best life in Amsterdam and studying sociology at the UvA.

Buddy Borrels:

- **Thursday September 9th at 20h00**
- **Wednesday October 6th at 17h00**

Mark the dates and come hang out with us and your buddies!

Otherwise, contact us or the study advisor if you did not get any information.

About SEC

Who are we?

SEC is the student association for all Sociology students at the University of Amsterdam. We offer a wide variety of events ranging from lectures, trips, parties, to career-related events. SEC was established in the year 1987 under the name "James, Vereniging van Sociologiestudenten". On January 6 in the year 2000, the name was changed to "Sec, Sociologisch Epicentrum". SEC has had a total of 139 board members (including the current board).

The Board

Sara (Secretary): Third Year from Italy
Personality trait:
Doing a double bachelor's
secretary@sociologen.nl

Fleur (Chair): Third Year from The Netherlands
Personality trait:
Having blue eyes
voorzitter@sociologen.nl

Star (Treasurer): Third Year from Thailand
Personality trait:
wearing Birkenstocks
treasurer@sociologen.nl



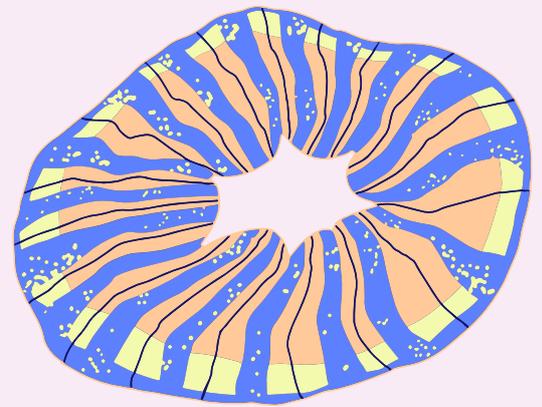
Khushi (Study Coordinator): Second Year from India
Personality trait:
reading your zodiac charts
study@sociologen.nl

Anna (Social Coordinator): Second Year from Hungary
Personality trait: talking
social@sociologen.nl

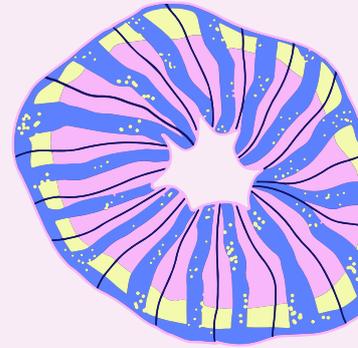
Join SEC

[HTTPS://WWW.SOCIOLOGEN.NL/EN/WORD-LID/](https://www.sociologen.nl/en/word-lid/)

Events in September



AUGUST 31ST: SOCIOLOGY INTRODUCTION DAY
SEPTEMBER 9TH: BUDDY BORREL
SEPTEMBER 16TH: WEEKLY BORREL
SEPTEMBER 30TH: WEEKLY BORREL
SEPTEMBER 21ST: UVA FLEA MARKET X SEC EVENT
SEPTEMBER 7TH: BEER TASTING EVENT
SEPTEMBER 8TH: COMMITTEE INFO NIGHT
SEPTEMBER 5TH-10TH: COMMITTEE APPLICATION
& MORE!



FOLLOW OUR INSTAGRAM @SOCIOLOGISCH_EPICENTRUM AND
BECOME A MEMBER TO STAY UPDATED!

We are looking for Committees Members !!!

ACADEMIC AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE
BORREL AND PARTY COMMITTEE
THE PODCAST COMMITTEE
THE ACQUISITION COMMITTEE
EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE
STUDY TRIP COMMITTEE





Academic and Political Activities Committee

- Organise Academic and Political Events, such as lectures, master markets, and career related events
- Build connections with Professors, Alumnis, and other study associations

Borrel and Party Committee

- Organise social events, such as parties, open mic nights, and the End of the Year Festival
- Organise themed borrels (for special festivities such as Halloween, Christmas, etc.)
- Create a welcoming, fun, and safe atmosphere for members at events

The Podcast Committee

- Be in charge of SEC's podcast 'Unapologetic' (check us out on [Spotify](#) and Instagram [@unapologetic.sec](#))
- Choose your position among Speaker, Graphic Designer, Researcher, Social Media Manager, and Editor, based on your interests



The Acquisition Committee

- Recruit companies for collaborations and deals
- Work on your own personal network with companies and brands
- Gain experience in communication, money management, and networking

External Activities Committee

- Organise social events, such as small trips, the December dinner, and much more
- Give fellow students the opportunity to spend time with each other

