

International Students

Handbook



Welcome to BBU:
Your Guide to Studying and Living in Cluj-Napoca



Welcome!

Welcome to Babeş-Bolyai University and to Cluj-Napoca - a city that has been home to scholars, thinkers and students for centuries, and one we're glad you'll now call home, too, even if only for a while.

Whether you've come here through an exchange programme, a degree track, or a partnership like EUTOPIA, you are joining one of Romania's oldest and most diverse academic communities - one that brings together students and faculty from dozens of countries and disciplines. We know that studying abroad is as much an adventure as it is an academic pursuit and we want to make sure the transition feels as smooth as possible.

This handbook was put together with exactly that in mind: to answer the practical questions that come up first - where to go, who to ask, what to expect - so you can spend less time figuring things out and more time enjoying what Cluj-Napoca and BBU have to offer. Inside, you'll find information on everything from arrival formalities and housing to academic life, student services and getting to know the city.

We're excited to have you with us. Welcome to BBU - we hope this becomes a place you're proud to have studied.

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Before Arrival

First Steps

1. After deciding to take a study semester abroad, as an exchange student within interuniversity agreements, please visit this [website](https://cci.ubbcluj.ro/international-cooperation/partners/) to **peruse the list of international partners** where you might apply:

<https://cci.ubbcluj.ro/international-cooperation/partners/>

2. If you decide on Babeș-Bolyai University, the next step is to find the **courses you wish to take**, based on the curricula at your home university. For that, please visit:

<https://infoadmitere.ubbcluj.ro/en/>

Please consider that this webpage is subject to year-round updates.

3. For more precise information, please also visit this webpage to see the **academic year calendar at BBU**:

https://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/studenti/invatamant/structura_anului_universitar

Please consider that this webpage is subject to updates.

4. To find out more information about the student life at BBU, you may also want to visit

<https://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/studenti/>

5. Requirements:

- You may enrol in the courses taught in the English language, without taking the course in Romanian. All foreign students must have a **minimum B2 level of English**
- If you are a student coming from partner universities, you may enrol in **any course in the undergraduate level and/or postgraduate level**, in order to meet the necessary credits at your home institution, upon your return home



Application Process

Express your intention to apply for a semester of studies abroad to your **home university's international office**.

Ask for the **BBU fact sheet** they have in order to know all necessary steps in applying.

Documents needed for your application folder

1. Ministry of Education Application Form (provided by BBU).
2. BBU Application Form (provided by BBU).
3. Accommodation Form (provided by BBU).
4. Learning Agreement (provided by BBU).
5. Nomination letter from the home university (from a professor or from a member of the International Relations Office) stating that the student is nominated for a mobility within the general cooperation agreement
6. Recommendation Letters (optional).
7. High-school graduation diploma or its equivalent - certified copy in the original language and certified translation, at notary public (in Romanian, German, English or French, if the original is not issued in one of these languages) .
8. Bachelor diploma or its equivalent (only for the application for master programs) - certified copy in the original language and certified translation at notary public (in Romanian, German, English or French, if the original is not issued in one of these languages).
9. Transcript of records pertaining to the previous studies - certified copy or certified translation at notary public (in Romanian, German, English or French, if the original is not issued in one of these languages) and the analytical curriculum in case of candidates that request equivalence for certain periods of studies.
10. Medical certificate (translated in an international language).
11. Birth certificate, certified copy or certified translation at notary public (in Romanian, German, English or French, if the original is not issued in one of these languages).
12. Passport copy valid for at least 6 months after the date of issue of the Acceptance Letter.
13. Proof of financial sustainability during the entire stay on Romanian territory, mandatory for the visa and the residence permit (bank statement certifying total amount in USD, EUR or RON*).

Application Process

Application deadlines

1st semester (Oct. – Feb.): 1st July of prior semester

2nd semester (Feb. – July): 1st November of prior semester

After the official nomination, the international office at your home university will ask the BBU Centre for International Cooperation for the forms needed to be added to your application file (documents nos. 1-4, above).

After compiling the folder, you may contact the BBU international officer and send the documents via e-mail.

Anytime during the process of compilation, you may directly contact the BBU international officer for further information.

The BBU international officer will process your documents, issue a **Certificate of Acceptance to BBU** (whose copy you will receive via e-mail) and send the folder to the Romanian Ministry of Education; after their assessment, the Ministry will issue a **Letter of Acceptance**. The BBU international officer will send you the Letter of Acceptance from the Ministry.

This will serve you in your application for the visa.

Student *Buddies*

Upon arrival at BBU, you may be assigned a **buddy** (tutor) - a Romanian student who will help you get around town, move within the university and assist you in all of the necessary procedures.

You may request such a student buddy prior to your arrival.

Visa

Once you receive the Letter of Acceptance from the Ministry, you may visit the webpage of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to see where, in your country, the **Romanian General Consulate**** is and **apply for the visa**:

<https://mae.ro/en/romanian-missions>



There might be cases where Romania's General Consulate is provided by an Embassy in a different country (e.g., Romania's diplomatic representation in Ecuador is provided by the Romanian Embassy in Peru). In that case, you may have to travel to said country to apply for the visa.

During the process of applying for the visa, you are entirely responsible for the communication with the Consulate and other authorities. The BBU international officer or BBU as an institution have no role.

After receipt of visa, you may begin travel arrangements.

Travel Arrangements



Please take notice that Babeș-Bolyai University is located in the Romanian North-Western town of Cluj-Napoca, in the region of Transylvania. Do not book your final destination to Bucharest (Romanian capital).

Cluj-Napoca has an international airport ([Avram Iancu Intl. Airport](#)) and can be reached from pretty much every major city in Europe.

Notify the BBU international officer of your travel arrangements prior to departure.

Upon Arrival

From the airport to the dorms

Outside of the International Arrivals terminal:

- you may take a registered taxicab, order an Uber or a Bolt, or
- get outside the airport gates, on the right side you will see the bus stop (buses 5, 8 or A1E take you downtown)

Use Google Maps for further information.

Housing

Based on your assigned dormitory, you will either reside in Hașdeu Campus (dormitories A1, A4) or in the Sports Park (Sport XXI Residence Hall).

https://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/studenti/campus/spatii_cazare

Addresses:

- dorms A1, A4 - 90-92 B.P.Hașdeu Street
- Sport XXI residence hall - 7 Pandurilor Street

Please make sure to notify the BBU international officer of your arrival.

Upon your arrival at the dorm, within the first 1-3 days, you will have to **sign a contract with the dormitory** administrator (standard procedure).

Faculty *Enrolment*

Once installed in the dormitory, you are required to visit the Centre for International Cooperation, more specifically see the international officer you had been in contact with.

The international officer will provide you with the original documents needed to **get enrolled in the faculty**.

The next stop is the faculty secretariat. Once you get enrolled, you will be issued an official paper of confirmation, which you need when applying for the residence permit***.

After enrolment, you will have to sign a **contract of study** specifying the precise courses you will be taking during the mobility.



As mentioned before, international students coming within interuniversity agreements (you) may take as many courses as they need, at more than one faculty, at undergraduate and postgraduate levels (combined) - so as to satisfy their curricula at the home university.

You may attend courses at any time, after your enrolment. The sooner, the better.

Medical Certificate

Babeș-Bolyai University students can receive **medical consultations** in the offices situated on the main floor of the Sport XXI residence hall, located in the Iuliu Hațieganu Sports Park, 7 Pandurilor Street.

as an international student, you must visit the respective doctor assigned to the faculty where you are enrolled in order to have issued a medical certificate serving you when applying for the residence permit.

https://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/studenti/campus/orarul_cabinetelor_medicale

Opening a *Bank Account*

During the first few days in Romania, you must **open a bank account with a Romanian bank** (e.g., Banca Transilvania) and deposit the money necessary for your subsistence during your studies at BBU.

The proof of said bank account will serve when applying for the residence permit.

Residence Permit

As an international student staying for more than 90 days on Romanian territory, you will have to **apply for a residence permit within the first 30 days** from their arrival. The residence permit will have to cover your entire stay within the Romanian territory, **not exceeding the period of time mentioned in your visa.**

<https://igi.mai.gov.ro/en/residence-permit/>

The Immigration Office in Cluj is located at Iulius Mall (53, Alexandru Vaida Voievod St.).

The international officer will make an online appointment.

Residence Permit

If the stay on Romanian territory is longer than 90 days, you must apply for the residence permit

<https://igi.mai.gov.ro/en/residence-permit/>

Documents needed to apply for the residence permit

- [application](#)
- border crossing document (passport, travel document etc.) original and duplicate
- certificate of acceptance from the educational institution
- documents showing that the foreigner is participating in a student exchange programme, conducted by an institution established according to law and recognised for this purpose
- documents showing that the organisation is established and recognised under the law
- certificate from the organisation that conducts the exchange students
- proof of legal ownership of the living space (original and duplicate)
- medical certificate
- proof of [fees](#) payment

Situations of exemption for foreigners studying in Romania:

- Beneficiaries of a Romanian State scholarship are exempted from payment of consular fees, the residence permit and do not have to prove the means of support.
- Foreigners who are ethnic Romanians (who have an ancestor who has or had Romanian citizenship) do not have to prove the means of support.
- Foreign students who have reached the age of 26 and need social health insurance for the extension of the right of temporary residence, according to the Law no.95 / 2006 on healthcare reform.

The BBU international officer (and possibly the student buddy) will assist you in this process.

During the Study Period

Attendance & Grading System

When applying and coming to study at BBU, you may only choose/take courses that are listed in the semester of your mobility (i.e., if choosing the spring semester for your studies at BBU, you can choose only courses that are taught in spring).

Attendance could be mandatory, depending on course.

If not informed by the professor at the beginning of the semester, you must ask.

In some cases, attendance is part of the professor's grading system.

Exams

The session of exams takes place after each semester and the duration of it is three (3) weeks.

After each session of exams, there is a one-week holiday followed by a one-week resit session.

You should make sure your visa and residence permit cover all this in case there is need for re-examination.

Upon the end of your study period, you will receive (or ask the secretary's office of your faculty to issue) a **transcript of records** for study equivalence at your home university.

Useful Information

Fees

BBU housing (dormitories):

https://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/taxe/tarife_de_cazare

Ways of payment:

https://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/studenti/campus/spatii_cazare#plata_taxelor

For other types of fees within the university:

<https://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/studenti/>

BBU Life & Student Support

Most BBU faculties have their own **student cafeterias**, where students may have breakfast, lunch or coffee during opening hours.

The **Central University Library** (BCU) is the main academic library in Cluj-Napoca and has branches in many of the BBU faculties, depending on department. Access to the libraries is dependent on a subscription: <https://www.bcucluj.ro/>

BBU has a network of **23 cultural centres** (some of which also do research), established in collaboration with foreign embassies and university partners all around the world. International students are welcome to visit and perform internships there.

BBU also has an **Office for Students with Disabilities**: <https://bsd.centre.ubbcluj.ro/en/>

BBU offers a **sports park** complete with an **olympic swimming pool**, a **botanical garden**, an **astronomical observatory** and several **museums**.

The University provides health care through its own **medical clinic**, as well as **mental health clinic**.

Local Life

Safety

Cluj-Napoca is a truly safe town, with honest-minded people ready to give foreigners a hand all the time. It is rated 90/100 in the [Safety Index](#).

Taxi-drivers, the youth and generally all restaurants' and cafés' employees speak at least one foreign language (mainly English), so it's easy to get around.

Eateries & Cafés

Cluj-Napoca's food scene mixes cozy cafés with a lively, student-driven dining culture. The old town around Piața Unirii, Piața Muzeului and Strada Universității is packed with specialty coffee spots that draw a steady crowd of students and remote workers with good espresso and quiet corners for reading or working.

The town offers healthy, veggie-friendly and vegan-forward menus, creative modern European dishes in a stylish setting, as well as traditional Romanian and Transylvanian fare.

Cluj also has a strong craft beer and wine bar culture and the city's many bakeries and patisseries make it easy to grab something sweet between classes or meetings.

Social Life & Local *Events*

Cluj-Napoca has a lively, youth-driven social scene, largely shaped by its huge student population (approx. 100,000 students between 6 public universities); the city has one of the highest student-to-resident ratios in Europe. The old town centre around Piața Unirii and the pedestrian streets nearby, which fill up in the evenings with people moving between cafés, bars and terraces. Nightlife spans a wide range, from laid-back beer gardens and craft cocktail bars to bigger clubs, and the summer months bring an especially strong outdoor culture with rooftop bars and garden terraces.

Cluj is also known for its festival calendar - the **Untold festival** (early August, the only music festival in Europe to be held in the downtown area) and **Electric Castle festival** (mid-July, held just outside the city) draw huge international crowds, while smaller cultural events, film screenings, and street festivals keep things active the rest of the year.

The **Transylvania International Film Festival** (mid-June) is a 25-year-old tradition that brings extremely high quality screenings and personalities from across the globe.

Cluj City Hall also organises the **Days of Cluj** (end May) and the **Hungarian Cultural Days** (mid August), every year.

The town also organises several **wine festivals** and **jazz festivals** around the year, and is host to numerous **sports championships** and **international concerts**.

Overall, the social rhythm feels casual and communal, with coffee culture, terrace hangouts and a strong sense of local pride blending with a cosmopolitan, international vibe thanks to the universities and growing tech scene.

Useful Information about Cluj-Napoca

Public Transportation

Cluj-Napoca's public transportation is run by CTP Cluj (Compania de Transport Public Cluj-Napoca) and covers the city with a mix of buses, trolleybuses and trams, plus routes extending into nearby towns like Florești, Baci, Feleacu and Apahida through the metropolitan transport system.

The network is fairly extensive and frequent on main routes, especially those serving the university area, city centre and residential traditional neighborhoods.

A few practical points:

- **Tickets and passes:** You can pay via the 24Pay or CTP mobile apps, contactless card tap-on-board, or physical tickets/cards from kiosks and vending machines. Multi-ride passes and monthly subscriptions are available and much cheaper per trip than single tickets.
- **Trolleybuses:** Cluj has one of the larger trolleybus networks in Romania, which are quieter and electric.
- **Traffic:** The city has significant congestion, especially during rush hour and around the university areas, so buses/trolleybuses on main corridors can be slow at peak times. However, all public transportation vehicles run their own lane so delays are seldom.
- **Bike-share:** There's also a public bike-sharing system (Cluj Bike) that complements transit for shorter trips.
- **Walkability:** The city centre itself is quite walkable, so many people combine walking with transit rather than relying on it end-to-end.

Useful Information about Cluj-Napoca

TIME

The local time in Cluj-Napoca is Eastern European Time (EET), i.e., 2 hours ahead of Coordinated Universal Time (UTC).

CURRENCY AND BANKING

The currency in Cluj-Napoca, Romania is the RON.

ATMs are accessible 24/7 and they can be found all over the city. Card/phone payments are available everywhere.

TELEPHONE

Country code for Romania: +40

INTERNET

Romania's average internet speed is 170 Mbps (broadband speed) and just 41 Mbps in terms of mobile internet. The internet infrastructure in Romania is very developed and reliable, offering top speeds even in remote areas and villages. UBB provides free WiFi access in all its buildings.

ELECTRICITY

Voltage in Cluj-Napoca is 220 volts with a frequency of 50 hertz, and plugs are of the two-pin continental type.

SMOKING

Smoking is not allowed in indoor public places in Cluj-Napoca.

SUGGESTED TAXI APPS

[Bolt](#), [Wow Taxi Cluj](#) and [Uber](#)

Useful *Contacts*

Emergency Services

- General emergency (police, ambulance, fire department): 112
- County Emergency Hospital (Spitalul Clinic Județean de Urgență Cluj-Napoca): main hospital for serious emergencies

Utilities & City Services

- Cluj-Napoca City Hall (Primăria Cluj-Napoca): handles local administration, permits, civic issues
- CTP Cluj (public transport authority): for transit questions, lost items on buses/trams
- Electrica Grid: electricity and gas utility providers for outages or billing
- Compania de Apă Someș: water utility company

Transport

- Cluj Avram Iancu International Airport: flight info and airport services
- CFR (Romanian Railways) - Cluj-Napoca train station: for train schedules and tickets
- Local taxi apps: Clever Taxi, Bolt and Uber all operate in the city

Consulates & Diplomatic Presence

- Cluj has a number of honorary consulates (e.g., Hungary, Italy, Great Britain, The Netherlands etc.) - useful for consular services and needn't travel to Bucharest

Healthcare

- Private clinics like Regina Maria, Medlife and others have locations in Cluj for non-emergency care
- Pharmacies are widespread; many operate late hours and some are 24/7 near the city center

Around the *University*

Babeș-Bolyai University is spread across many buildings throughout Cluj-Napoca rather than one unified campus, so getting around means navigating a patchwork of faculties scattered across the city center and beyond.

The main Rectorate building sits on Mihail Kogălniceanu Street, right in the historic centre, near Piața Unirii, and many humanities and social science faculties (History and Philosophy, Psychology and Education Sciences, European Studies, Theatre and Film) and the faculties of Mathematics and Computer Science, and Physics cluster within or nearby, within easy walking distance of each other.

Other faculties (Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Environment and Environmental Engineering, Biology, Geology, Business, Letters) are mostly grouped a bit further from the centre, while others - like Economic Science (FSEGA) Political Sciences, Law and Sociology and Social Work sit in their own separate locations across town. The 4 faculties of theology in BBU are spread all across town, covering 7 religious denominations.

Because of this spread, many staff and students walk between nearby faculties, but rely on CTP buses or trolleybuses for longer hops, especially routes connecting the centre to everywhere else.

As the university developed along with the town of Cluj-Napoca (since 1581), it, too, is dissipated all around in traditional buildings, as well as modern state-of-the-art buildings.

Transylvania and Sightseeing

AI generated

Transylvania is one of Europe's most rewarding regions to explore, blending medieval history, dramatic landscapes, virgin forests and rich wildlife, and a mix of Romanian, Hungarian and Saxon cultural heritage. A few highlights worth building a trip around:

- **Sibiu** - A beautifully preserved Saxon town with a charming old square, colorful houses with "eyes" in the rooftops and a strong arts/culture scene (it was a European Capital of Culture).
- **Brașov & Bran** - Brașov has a gorgeous old town beneath Tâmpa mountain and nearby **Bran Castle** (often marketed as "Dracula's Castle") is a popular, if touristy, stop. **Râșnov Fortress** nearby is quieter and equally scenic.
- **Sighișoara** - A UNESCO-listed medieval citadel, one of the best-preserved in Europe, with cobblestone streets and colorful facades - also the birthplace of Vlad the Impaler.
- **Turda Salt Mine** (Salina Turda) - Just outside Cluj, a former salt mine transformed into a surreal underground amusement park with a Ferris wheel, boats and amphitheater.
- **The Carpathian Mountains** - As the region of Transylvania is encased in the chain, they offer incredible hiking and scenery, including the Piatra Craiului range, Bucegi Natural Park and the dramatic **Transfăgărășan** and **Transalpina** mountain roads (best in summer).
- **Alba-Iulia** - Home to a massive star-shaped Vauban fortress and significant historical sites tied to Romanian unification.
- **Maramureș** - A bit further north, known for wooden churches (UNESCO-listed), traditional villages and the famous "Merry Cemetery" in **Săpânța**.

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This material was compiled and edited by
the department of interuniversity agreements
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Babeş-Bolyai University
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Its main purpose is to guide international students
coming within interuniversity agreements.

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