



Prepare for your study in Europe

The following checklist has been developed as a tool for Indian students who are orienting themselves to study in a European Member State. This document was developed to help you ask the right questions in order to help you prepare in each step of the process. Regardless of your focus on any institution in any European Member State this document will assist you from your first orientation right up to graduation and beyond. Additionally, as an Indian citizen services are available to support you in times of need or crisis or simply if you want to file a grievance. Recent developments (e.g. Consular Services Management System – MADAD) have made this process seamless and electronically manageable across the world.



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When you are looking at websites to find a good programme abroad you have to realize there are many inaccurate or misleading websites around. You should always try to get to the source of the information, being the website of the institution.

Here are a few examples that should make alarm bells ring:

-  If a website does not offer direct links to the University website it is a clear signal the website you were looking at is untrustworthy. NOTE: Trustworthy websites usually have a suffix format/ending that includes the EU country's abbreviation (e.g. for Germany .de, for the UK .ac.uk, and for France .fr).
-  If the website has only a few institutions per country, that is a sign that the website is not working with many institutions (at best) and is not a good source to prepare.
-  If you see different information on the University website than on the study abroad website you should always follow the University's information.

Questions to ask during the Preparatory phase

While selecting countries/ Universities use websites such as: [studyportal](#)s, [findamaster](#), [masterstudies](#), or rankings like [Times Higher Education \(THE\)](#), [Shanghai ranking](#) or [U-Multirank](#) or the [QS ranking](#) or when you know your EU country of choice try to do an online search for (study in [country of your choice]). Please look at the suggested web pages in the box.

 <http://ec.europa.eu/education/study-in-europe/>
 https://ec.europa.eu/education/study-in-europe/country-profiles_en

Additionally, ask yourself questions like:

- What is the reputation of the institution in question? (academic & service level)
- What are the language requirements?
- Does my entry education level qualify myself for the programme?
- What is the cost of tuition?
- What is the cost of living? (also look at the questions at the predeparture phase)
- If I so choose, what are my options post-graduation/student employment? (also look at the post-graduation phase)
 - Have I taken into consideration the unemployment rate (industry specific and overall)?
 - Can I contact current alumni? Is there an alumni group in India I can reach out to?
 - What is the current demand for graduates of my programme in the local job market?
 - Am I allowed to work while studying? (how many days or hours per week?)
- Does the university provide help on visa application?
- Does the country provide post study work opportunities?

After selecting a programme/Institution, you can find the answers to all of the questions listed below on the websites of the University of your choice – those websites are your main source of information. If the information is not to be found on the English website of the institution chances are you will need in-depth knowledge of the local language as well for an easy stay.

Questions to ask while gathering information

For each selected programme at each University, ask yourself:

- What is the application process?
- What are the application (& scholarship) deadlines?
- What are the admissions criteria?
- What are the required language skills?
- Will the programme teach me skills that will help me succeed in finding a job after my graduation?

Questions to ask during the University Application Process

- Do I have all the required documents? (at least a certified copy of your degree, transcript of records, motivation letter, cv)
- Are all my documents translated by a certified translator (when relevant)?
- Do I have certified copies of all my certificates and of translations?
- Did I make digital files of my applications?
- Did I pay handling/application fees (if relevant)?

Once all documents are gathered, you can apply either online or by post dependant on the institution. Regardless, you should always ensure that you are able to Track and/or Trace your application.

Questions to ask during the Pre-departure phase

When your application is complete and submitted it will be reviewed for possible acceptance by the institution (this usually takes 2-6 weeks).

- Do I know what steps I will be taking in the next months?
 - Do I know how to arrange my visa?
 - Do I know how to arrange housing?
 - Is there an induction program/ orientation when I arrive?
 - Are there Social media I can join?
 - When should I arrive?
 - How can I arrange health insurance that is accepted in the EU Member State
 - When are fees due?




Photo by Annie Spratt on Unsplash


Regarding your visa application:

Generally the website of your institution will offer you tailor-made information regarding your visa process. The visa process may take anywhere between 2 weeks and 3 months. Alternatively the websites of the embassies and the national websites might offer help, and it is strongly suggested to look at these if the university one does not offer the answers! (Please look at the suggested web pages in the box on page 2).

Although the process is different per country but you will typically need to ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I have my acceptance letter?
- Do I have proof of financial means?
- Do I have a copy of health insurance valid in the EU?
- Do I have a picture (in the right format)?
- Do I have a passport valid for at least 3 months longer than your visa you are applying for?
- Did I complete the visa application document?

 *For everything regarding visa make sure you use the right formats, wrong formats will lead to refusal of your visa!*

 *Regarding the proof of finances, realize that often the stated amount is actually the minimum you will need to live in your country of choice – you really need that and your tuition fee on top of it!*

Questions regarding housing:

- Will my university help me? (use it!)
- What is the normal cost of student housing in my destination?
- Can I see the room before I pay?
- Is the room I found on my own online perhaps a scam? (Universities will help you, but online providers might not be trustworthy)

Questions regarding arrival:


- Is there an introduction/welcome programme for International Students?
- Are there student organisations/associations I can join?
- Did I pay all fees?
- Have I completed my Registration of Indian Students Abroad?
- Have you downloaded the MADAD mobile app in case of emergency?

When you have arrived your studies will start, but the introduction and student organisation will help you build a social network and offer you valuable information and insights into Institution practical matters and your studies. Therefore, make some time to talk to the student organisation representatives or attend welcome sessions and introductory meetings.

Questions regarding Post Graduation

The following questions are designed to help guide you to the right source of information ensuring that you may then make an informed decision in a timely manner. Keep in mind that each EU Member State is different but offers similar post-graduation alternatives. Remember it is never too early to start thinking about your options:

- Do I have verifiable means to sustain my stay after graduation?
- Does my study visa allow for a job seeking period post-graduation or establish a business?
- What are the criteria for a work permit a work permit and am I eligible?
- Is there a reasonable chance I might find a job (e.g. is the field on a priority occupation list?).
- How do I learn to speak the local language?
- Are there student services/expat/alumni organisations that can help?

 *Should you wish to continue your education and pursue a PhD, note that in some European countries, PhD positions are paid jobs.*

Planning your studies in Europe is an exciting time. Make sure you have sufficient time to prepare!

For further information, the following website(s) offer a wealth of information on each of the mobility aspects briefly highlighted above.

 https://ec.europa.eu/education/study-in-europe/planning-studies_en

 https://ec.europa.eu/education/study-in-europe/welcome/student-experiences_en