

### **Tickets and travel.**

Bonn public transport. Our group split into two: some chose junior ticket, some went for a monthly card. The latter gives you access to all public transport but only in Bonn itself, while the junior card is valid for large distances in NRW. There is also price difference – junior card is much cheaper. But with it you have to pay for your monthly rides, if you plan to use public transportation. If you have a bike, as some of us, then junior ticket is the best choice for sure (valid after 3 o'clock on week days, and the whole weekend). Best place to buy a used bike is a small market near University – you could ask the teachers at the language school. If you want to buy a used bike it is better to hurry, as the market works only at the first week of the month.

I find 'Junior ticket' a 'must': you could travel with it over long distance over the week-end. For example, to get to Eifel park (national park relatively close to Bonn) with a junior ticket you pay nothing, without it – something around 10 euro, i.e. almost the price of the ticket itself. If you go to Dusseldorf with a junior ticket, you need to pay only for the zones that are not covered by your JT, that means you take the ticket not from Bonn, but from Langenfeld (that is the first stop in the next zone), and that saves you some money also. For example, with my Bahncard 50 I had to spend only 4.60 for the return ticket to Dusseldorf – that is a very good price!!!!

DB. Railway. Buying a railway ticket in the machine is better – it saves you time in queues and some euros. Besides you could plan your whole journey yourself, comparing the prices and schedules – use the "Routplanner" in the machine. Note, that you could print out the necessary schedules, connections etc. – just look attentively at the options offered at the screen. As you could have already heard the trains could be late – if you plan a long trip and need connections, or you are choosing the train to reach an airport I would suggest taking an earlier one as the risk of missing your plane is there.

Traveling around. Many wonderful places lie very close from Bonn – Siebengebirge (Koenigswinter as one of the popular destinations there), for example, lay at the bike distance: it is a wonderful trip for a day. Bad Godesberg is a good trip for half a day – with hills covered with the forest, the old fortress, an opportunity to take a ferry to the other shore of the picturesque Rhein – it is wonderful! Fields not far from Acora – take your time to explore them, as they deserve your attention!

Another good destination, doable with your junior ticket, is Eifel park – a natural preserve, lying between Germany and Belgium. It offers you wonderful scenery and an opportunity to feel yourself completely out of the city: spacious fields, picturesque hills and small rivers. To get there by public transport you need to get by railroad to Kall, and from Kall by bus. Several times per day there are direct connections between Bonn Hbf and Kall, that is much more comfortable. Pay attention to the bus schedule from Eifel to Kall – in 2008 the last bus left rather early (around 5 pm).

Small Bruehl seemed a very nice place with cozy streets, old park and beautiful palace. Get also to Schloss Falkenlust, a small palace in the park, – it is an interesting place as well, besides the way through the whole park to get there is very pleasant. Ice-cream in Bruehl is much better than in Bonn.

Leisure time. Check for concerts – could be really good! Better to check just after receiving the Anmeldung – there some free tickets, for example to Bonn opera (but in July and August the opera is closed). Look for all the sources of information – we found a free organ concerts in Koln cathedral. There were wonderful concerts for Beethoven Festival, there is Rheinkultur – the crowd at the entrance might seem a bit too wild, but is very peaceful and the concert itself

deserves attending. Besides there are smaller festivals, open-air events, etc. Simply remain open and do not forget to check for the updates!

Here are some suggestions on the virtual map, that you could keep on editing ;)

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=113195304498525168683.00044e84f86b2712e617a&z=9>

Moving around Germany on a bus – many people advice using it as an alternative to DB and Mitfahrcentrale, though it is more popular in big cities, i.e. connecting them to other destinations – if you are there, try it! I stay in a small town, we do not have such an opportunity L

### **Everyday needs**

Our greatest concerns in Bonn were internet access and laundry.

Laundry. The one at the Acora is too inefficient and costly, so we started going to the public ones. The closest to us were in Koeln str (better to reach it by bike) or in Boernheimerstr. (next stop after August-Macke-Haus, if you go from Acora) - almost opposite to the old Bonn cemetery, reachable with bus 63 from Acora.

Internet and telephone. For the internet we started using our mobile phones, getting a 2-year contract (you could terminate it after 1 year). Most of us chose O2, and that made our communication easier, as we did not have to pay for calling each other.

You get access to the Internet at school (you need to get a login and password there, but the access is free), but often that is not enough. For the first days we also used the free access to wifi at Einstein café (across from the University) – Am Hof 26a ([http://plazes.com/plazes/18464:caf\\_einstein\\_bonn](http://plazes.com/plazes/18464:caf_einstein_bonn)), or Italian restaurant Bacco (Oppelner Str. 2) not far from Acora. There was also a wifi spot in the yard in front of Tannenbusch metro station, if you are ready to hunt for it – sometimes was very helpful though! But be aware that at the play ground you computer could be hited by a ball. In Berlin one of us was attacked, which resulted in the loss of the computer because of the use of the free Wi-Fi spot around midnight.

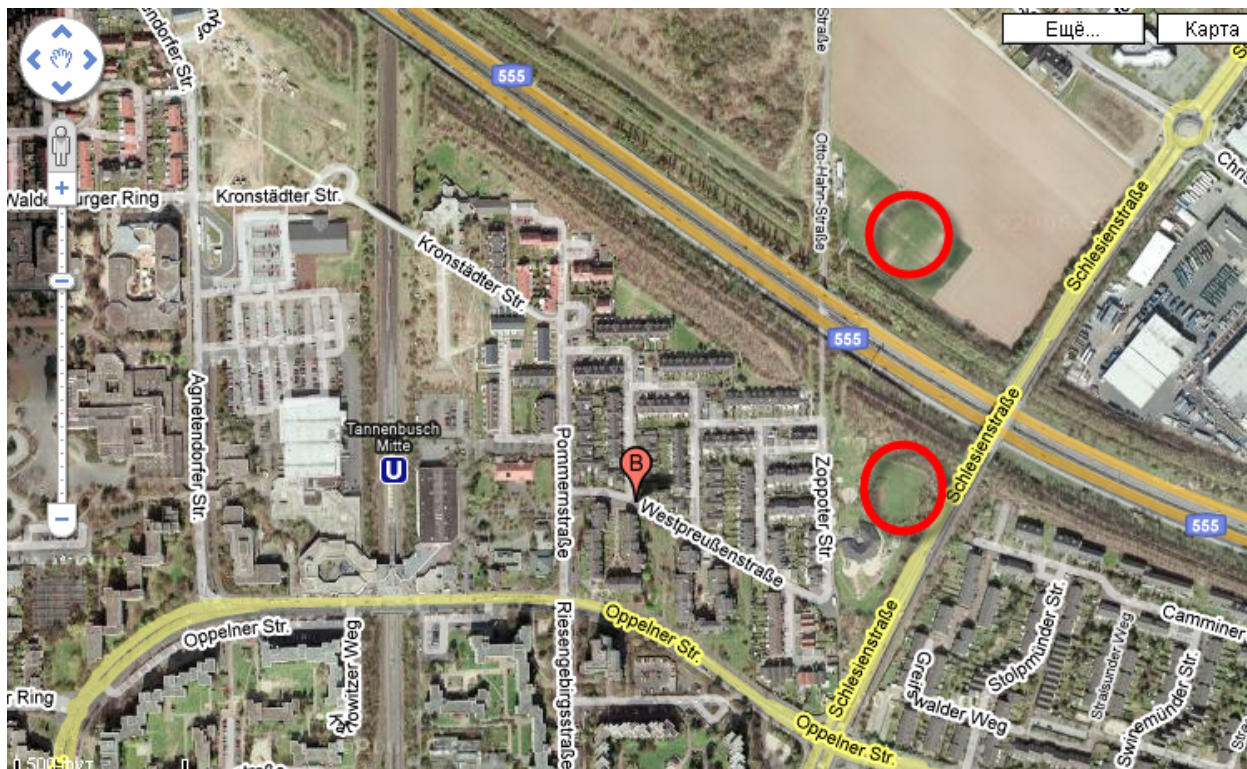
### Suggestions for calling abroad from Germany:

As the first option which I now recommend to those coming for a short time from abroad, could be ORTEL sim-card, which you could buy at E-plus shops.

After you get access to the Internet SKYPE and REBTEL could be the best solutions. Rebtel allows the use of the local number, so if you have O2 contract with unlimited calls you receive the phone call to e.g. Russia just for 0,007euro (check actual tariffs).

Bank account. To get a bank account you need a registration, which is easy for those who arrive first. Bring your passport, your Anmeldung, and the letter from the Foundation – these are the necessary papers. It takes about a week to get all your cards and keys for them after opening an account. If you are lucky you could receive the bank without Anmeldung, but then it is better just to give your address, without specifying that you are living in a hotel.

Becoming BUKAS. National food / cooking parties, football (a lot of possibilities to play around Acora you could find at pic.1), music evenings, going out and traveling around were our recipes for getting together – seem to work out well! In Acora you could find a large TV and you could ask your language school teachers for some German DVD.



The closest football fields

Looking for an apartment takes time – do not forget about it! Be aware that you will need to show up in your future place, and in most cases you will be the one to be selected. Do not forget to reserve the money for the deposit (Kaution) – it could be high (appr. 700-1500 euro) for a good place. Pay attention to neighborhoods, whom you might live with, the infrastructure around – availability of shops in your area, transport connection, distance to the train station, etc. It's common that the apartments offered by the agencies are mostly not furnished. You can either use Ikea nearby, or look for the furnished apartment.

If you plan to live alone in Germany and not to suffer from the lack of communication, it is highly recommended to live in a so-called WG (Wohngemeinschaft) as the neighbors are in most cases very friendly and helpful. Usually they support you to solve any routine issues during your stay in Germany. It is easy to find a room in a WG with the help with [www.wg-gesucht.de](http://www.wg-gesucht.de)

In some cities there is IBZ network of accommodation for scientists - it is cheap and good.

Travelling by car. The petrol is quite expensive but if you traveling not alone it could be cheaper than DB. The driver license of Russian BUKAS is valid only for one year (6 first month and + 6 month if you prove that you will be in Germany only for 1 year, after Antrag in Verhkeramt). If you stay longer you have to pass theoretical (quite a good site for training - [http://www.autoschkola.de/component/option,com\\_fahrschule/Itemid,1/lang,ru/](http://www.autoschkola.de/component/option,com_fahrschule/Itemid,1/lang,ru/)) and practical exams. If you stay in Bonn for 3-2 month you could make your German driver license in Koln - search internet for Russian fahrschule. They provide possibility to do it in 2 weeks (I found them too late for a test). But check the up to date information because soon in Germany would not be possible to pass the exam in Russian

Post. The post works in Germany really great, so banks will send you everything: credit cards, passwords, etc by post. So if you move from one hotel to another give the responsible person at the reception your new address and ask to deliver your correspondence. If you are moving from one apartment to another, discuss this problem with your housekeeper.

Viel Spass!!!