KOÇ UNIVERSITY ARRIVAL GUIDE FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Community Services Office
ico@ku.edu.tr
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INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICES OFFICE (ICO)

Founded in June 2014 as a subdivision of the Office of International Programs, ICO services information on a variety of topics pertaining to the Koç University international community besides developing and running activities that cater to diversity, cross-cultural tolerance, and internationalization throughout KU campus.

Our main services are immigration advising (visa, residence permit, health insurance, notary, etc.), pre and after arrival resources development and support (Newcomers’ Guide, permit application guides, Turkish learning occasions, multicultural events, etc.), orientation, intercultural and integration programs (Turkish Practice Hour, Koç Guides, related activities, etc.). You may contact us if you have any legal/bureaucratic questions, community-related inquiries, and do not know which department to contact. ICO directs you to correct contacts if you have an inquiry that is not covered by the ICO. Please remember that the ICO does not involve in housing, finance, or academic issues.

For more information, please visit our website: [https://ico.ku.edu.tr/](https://ico.ku.edu.tr/)

We also highly recommend you follow us on Instagram at [icokocuniv](https://icokocuniv). Our Instagram account provides unique tips, news, and important legal& social announcements. It is also a hub for cultural awareness posts and a resource to the local culture.

Our office is located at the Student Center, lower 3rd floor, room: B398.

See our Newcomers' Guide: [https://ico.ku.edu.tr/resources/pre-arrival-resources/](https://ico.ku.edu.tr/resources/pre-arrival-resources/)

It is a comprehensive guide that provides significant information and tips to facilitate your life in Istanbul/Turkey, and at KU.
ENTRY TO TURKEY

In most cases, international students traveling to Turkey for an academic program are not necessarily required to apply for a student visa at a consulate. If you are eligible, by your citizenship, to obtain a touristic e-Visa, or to use your passport to enter Turkey as a tourist, we recommend this option as it provides “Multiple Entries” to Turkey and allows you to travel outside Turkey while waiting on your residence permit.

For country-specific visa regulations, please check out the following link: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/visa-information-for-foreigners.en.mfa

E-Visa

An e-Visa is a touristic visa that anyone can obtain online to enter Turkey and does not require any in-person visa application at a consulate. It is granted as “Multiple Entry”, valid mostly 90 days within 6 months starting from the first entry date, and the total days in Turkey cannot exceed 90 days. Please visit https://www.evisa.gov.tr/en/ to find out if you are eligible for an e-Visa. The website also provides information about whether someone is exempt from touristic visas and if he/she can enter Turkey with a valid passport. We recommend that everyone use the e-Visa module to check the visa requirements for Turkey.

Please use the link we provide since there are several non-official e-Visa pages.

ENTRY WITH PASSPORT ONLY

Nationals of some countries are allowed to enter Turkey with their national IDs or drivers’ licenses. Like e-Visa, this entry is usually granted as “Multiple Entry”, valid mostly 90 days within 6 months starting from the first entry date, and the total days in Turkey cannot exceed 90 days. However, since you are going to apply for a residence permit after your arrival, it is obligatory that you enter Turkey with a valid passport.
If you are not eligible for a touristic entry, you should apply for a student visa at a Turkish mission in your country.

**STUDENT VISA**

Student visa acquisition process may take up to 2 months and are usually granted as “Single Entry”, which means that you should apply for a new student visa to re-enter Turkey if you depart before receiving your residence permit card. In this option, the Turkish mission you contact may request a “Visa Support Letter” from the university. In that case, please inform us at ico@ku.edu.tr with the name of the Turkish mission you applied, your full name, and the application number (if possible). Then, we are going to prepare a visa support letter for you. Please note that we need 1 week to issue your visa support letter, so please mind the waiting time.

To find the closest Turkish mission to your location and to fill out a pre-application form, please visit the following page: https://www.konsolosluk.gov.tr/Visa/Index

**Please note:** The university does not take any part in the visa acquisition process except visa support letters. If you have any questions regarding the required documents or the process, you should contact the closest Turkish mission to you.

**IMPORTANT WARNING ABOUT PASSPORT EXPIRATION DATES!**

Please be warned that your passports must be valid at least 60 days from the anticipated study period in Turkey. As such, your passport must cover your enrollment period plus a minimum of 60 days. Otherwise, your residence permit application will be denied.

**ARRIVAL DATE**

All international students must arrive at KU one week before the semester start date. Planning early arrival and identifying dates will be helpful for several reasons, such as:

- Resting up from your trip and getting ready for school
- Arranging housing or checking into a previously arranged residence
- Complete university registration and course registrations
- Obtain university ID and computing credentials
- Finding your college or graduate school, join a guided campus tour
- Attend international orientation sessions and complete immigration check-in
- Complete paperwork for health insurance, residence permit, students’ discount public transit card and graduate assistantships

GETTING TO CAMPUS

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION
We recommend you fly to Istanbul Airport on the European side. This is because you will find better airfare deals to this airport since there are more international flights there, and the university is on the same side of Istanbul, the European side, making it easier for transportation. Below you can find the public transportation and airport shuttle directions to KU from the Istanbul Airport and a link to review transportation options from Sabiha Gökçen Airport.

TRANSIT DIRECTIONS FROM ISTANBUL AIRPORT
(https://www.istairport.com/en)

First, purchase the smart transit card of Istanbul called “Istanbul Kart” from the 24 different Istanbul Kart machines on the lower 2nd floor (arrival public transportation floor) following the signs, the HAVAİST offices, and the contracted exchange offices at the airport. The plain card costs 6 TL. Load at least 40-50 TL into your card. For all public transit modes, you’ll use the card by tapping it to the readers.

Second, choose your option:

A. Taxi: The approximate taxi fare from Istanbul Airport to KU will be around 135-165 ₺ depending on the route and traffic conditions.

B. Take the bus H-8 to either Acarlar Bus Stop or Hacıosman Bus Terminal (It costs 7 ₺/takes 100-120 min.). The Acarlar bus stop is the closest stop of this line to the KU main campus. You can either get off the bus at Acarlar, walk to the taxi station there and get a taxi to the campus (taxi will cost around 20 ₺), or stay onboard until Hacıosman Bus Terminal. Getting off at Hacıosman means traveling the distance back since all transition means from Hacıosman to KU passes through the same way. From Hacıosmam Bus Terminal, you can either:
   1. Take the bus no 154 (recommended). It costs 3,5 ₺ and takes 50 minutes.
   2. Cross the street and take a minibus (pay cash to the driver 3.3 ₺) with the KOÇ ÜNİVERSİTESİ sign at the front windshield or side window. The ride takes 40 minutes.
III. Take a taxi. The ride costs around 40 ₺ and takes 20 minutes.

C. **Airport Shuttle HAVAIST-5** to 4. Levent (It costs 23 ₺/takes 90 min.) and connect to M2 Green Metro Line to Hacıosman Station (It costs 3,5 ₺/takes 10 min.). Follow the signs and exit through Otobüs Durakları (Bus Terminal). There you can use one of the choices mentioned in option B.

D. **Take the bus H-2 to Mecidiyeköy** (it costs 7 ₺/takes 100 min.) and connect to M2 Green Metro Line to Hacıosman Station (it costs 3,5 ₺/takes 15 min.). Follow the signs and exit through Otobüs Durakları (Bus Terminal). There you can use one of the choices mentioned in option B.

**Third**, unless otherwise arranged, you must first visit the housing office, which is S building next to the health center. On the bus, you can push the “stop” buttons while approaching the stop called “SAGLIK MERKEZI” for S building. On the minibus or taxi, you must show this stop name written on a piece of paper or from your cell phone to the driver. Most minibus and taxi drivers do not speak English.

**TRANSIT DIRECTIONS FROM SABIHA GÖKÇEN AIRPORT**
(http://www.sabihagokcen.aero/homepage)

For transportation options from Sabiha Gökçen airport, please visit http://www.sabihagokcen.aero/passengers-and-visitors/transport-andparking/transportation

**TAXI FEE CALCULATOR AND ROUTE PLANNER**
Taxi is a common option for airport transportation. You can use this taxi fee calculator before riding a taxi in Istanbul and other cities in Turkey; get an estimate on your taxi fare and see route planning alternatives on a map: https://taksiyle.com/en

For more information: https://ico.ku.edu.tr/resources/arriving-on-campus/

**CHECKING IN**

**ENTERING THE UNIVERSITY: SECURITY GATE ON THE MAIN CAMPUS**
Upon arrival to campus, you will first be welcomed by security guards at the security gate of the main campus. Please be prepared to present a picture ID (i.e.: passport) and a copy of your acceptance letter. Be informed, security guards speak little or no English, but they will give you a card with directions, so you can proceed to the housing office to complete your check-in procedures. Please co-operate with the security guards as they might need you to fill out a guest form and check your ID in until you leave the campus.

**CHECKING INTO YOUR RESIDENCE**
Check-in and dorm/apartment key acquisitions for all student residents must be made on the main campus Housing Office located in S Building. Undergraduate international students will be shown their rooms and will be able to check in on the premises right away.
OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING SUGGESTIONS
If you choose to live off-campus at a self-arranged accommodation, you can check out our resources at the following link: Off-Campus Housing. Please note that these off-campus housing resources are only for recommendation and our office does not assume any responsibility in case of any conflict or disappointment. The ICO does not assist students with off-campus housing. You can also refer to the route maps we provide to conveniently search for and find off-campus accommodation. The route maps show the start and endpoints of the public transits (BUS 154 and M2 Green Line Metro) to the main campus, drawing a line where to look for a house.

HEALTH INSURANCE
International people are required to have health insurance that is valid in Turkey, covering the complete duration of their specific academic program or research. Each individual must share a copy of his/her insurance policy in English or Turkish (if obtained in Turkey) with his/her program advisor or department upon arrival. As health insurance is not only for your own safety, but it is a legal obligation for foreign residents in Turkey, those students who fail to do so will be de-registered from their programs.

ACCEPTED HEALTH INSURANCE OPTIONS
INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE
Any insurance company from anywhere that has an office in Turkey, offers service and coverage for you in Turkey (Only for exchange students).

PRIVATE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE IN TURKEY
If you do not arrive in Turkey with an insurance policy, you can obtain one in Turkey. To purchase insurance, you can email Guard Me (salesturkey@guard.me). Guard Me offers services in English and can arrange your insurance fairly quickly without a Tax ID number (most companies need a Tax ID number). You may also look for and find other companies by yourself. In that case, please specify to the agency you contact that you are going to apply for a residence permit, and your insurance must be issued accordingly.

Please note: We do not provide assistance or assume any responsibility with health insurance. You must contact the agencies, follow through all transactions, and make sure you understand your policy coverage very well.
**HOME COUNTRY SOCIAL SECURITY/ FORMULER (BASED ON ELIGIBILITY)**

If you are from a European country that has a Bilateral Social Security Agreement with Turkey, you can benefit from your local state insurance in Turkey.

If you are eligible for this insurance, you must first obtain a document (Formuler) from your local Social Security Office stating the specific agreement code, then you should bring the original version to Turkey with you.

More information available at the [OIP’s website](#).

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**RESIDENCE PERMIT**

Students enrolled in an academic program in Turkey for 3 months or longer are obliged to acquire a residence permit as per Foreigners’ Protection and Immigration Laws. As the entry to Turkey can be through a visa (regular or electronic), passport, or other entry documents, the online residence permit application must be submitted before the expiration date of these. Each student must be aware of the expiration date of their visas or the amount of time allowed in Turkey with other documents.

**Please note:** Entry with a passport is an obligation for residence permit application. Those who enter Turkey with a national ID or a driver’s license cannot apply for a residence permit.

**APPLICATION**

Student residence permit (SRP) application process consists of 3 main stages:

- Filling out the online application form, printing it out and signing the signature field on the 6th page,
- Collecting the required documents,
- Submitting your application documents to the International Community Services Office (ICO).

You will receive further information about the process (when, where, and how to submit your residence permit application documents) by our office after your arrival.
Please note: you need to obtain a tax ID number in order to be able to pay the permit card fee. To learn how to obtain, please check out our website: https://ico.ku.edu.tr/5101-2/

The ICO submits students’ application files to the Immigration Department on behalf of the students so that they do not need to go to their appointments. It may take up to 1.5-2 months to receive the permit cards. Once issued, the permit cards are delivered to the university. The Registrar’s Office notifies students whose cards are received by them so that those students can collect their permit cards from them. For the whole process and the required documents, please check out our website: https://ico.ku.edu.tr/students/student-residence-permit-srp/first-time-srp-application/#1561556889963-cd959629-4057

STUDENTS BELOW 18

If you are below 18, there are 2 documents that you should bring with you on your journey to Turkey:

- Apostilled birth certificate
- Apostilled consent letter signed by parents

The letter must mention that the parents are aware and have permission that the student will be studying at KU in Turkey and he/she will be financially supported by his or her parents.

The Apostille is attached to your original document to verify it is legitimate and authentic so it will be accepted in one of the other countries who are members of the Hague Apostille Convention. Visit the following link for the list of member countries: https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/authorities1/?cid=41

If your country is not listed in the above-given link, please contact us at ico@ku.edu.tr.

Please note: Students below 18 are not allowed to pay the permit card fees themselves. Therefore, you may ask a friend who is above 18 or contact us for assistance to pay the fee on your name with your tax ID number.

PHONE REGISTRATION

According to the regulations set forth by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority of Turkey (ICTA), each individual, regardless of nationality, coming

Figure showing the stages that students below 18 should take.
into Turkey with a phone or other mobile devices with call features must register their device within 120 days of arrival. The registration per person/per passport is limited to one device every three years. Devices not registered within 120 days will be blocked and unable to make or accept calls. Other features of the device can still be used without registration, including emergency calls.

Below instructions and our tutorial video are available for individuals with a valid Turkish residence permit in Turkey to help them avoid paying extra fees to mobile operator branches to register their phones. You can follow the instructions below and register your phone by only paying the respective official fee (1838 TL for 2020/ around 270 USD) for phone registration. The dealers will charge varying service fees in addition to the registration fee that is paid at specified banks or tax offices. Therefore, we advise not to rush and wait to obtain your residence permit and register within 120 days.

**FIRST: PAY THE FEE**
Pay the phone registration fee at Ziraat Bank with your Residence Permit and your phone’s IMEI number. You can retrieve your IMEI number by dialing *#06# on your phone.

**SECOND: OBTAIN E-DEVLET PIN CODE**
Visit a PTT branch (National Post) with your active Turkish cell phone, passport, and residence permit card and purchase your e-Devlet (e-Government) pin code. The code must be registered with your Foreign ID number. Sarıyer PTT is the closest one to KU.

**THIRD: REGISTER YOUR PHONE**
Watch our video guide on our YouTube Channel (International Community Office) and go onto www.turkiye.gov.tr to register your phone.

**MEDICAL SERVICES ON CAMPUS**
Health Centers on Main and West campus operate 24/7 with an ambulance, 6 physicians, 1 nurse, and 8 health care specialists. It is easy to make an appointment, and the doctors speak English. Non-Turkish speakers can e-mail alperkeskin@ku.edu.tr for appointments or call x1273 (main campus reception); x7000 (west campus reception). Health Center services are free of charge and available to KU members only. There are also a number of good hospitals around the city that provide high-quality healthcare in English. The Health Center can also arrange to have medicine delivered to campus for you.
TRANSPORTATION
Istanbul has one of the best public transportation networks in the world. There are several options to reach any location for 24 hours, and Taxi is a convenient option compared to large metropolitans in the world and other cities in Turkey.

For the main transportation categories specifically for the KU community, please check out our website: https://ico.ku.edu.tr/resources/transportation/

DRIVING IN TURKEY
Short term visitors with a driver’s license in another country do not need a new driver’s license in Turkey for up to 6 months. Their driver’s licenses must be translated into Turkish and notarized. Residents staying longer than 6 months must apply to switch their licenses to a Turkish driver’s license if the country they obtained their licenses is a party to the Convention on Road Traffic.

Those who would like to obtain a driver’s license for the first time can do so in Turkey once they have a residence permit.

For more information: https://ico.ku.edu.tr/driving-in-turkey-page/

Please contact the International Community Services Office at ico@ku.edu.tr to receive further assistance.

TURKISH LANGUAGE RESOURCES
Turkish learning and practicing resources are listed on our website: https://ico.ku.edu.tr/learn-practice-turkish/

ONLINE TURKISH PRACTICE HOUR SESSIONS
ICO of the Office of International Programs invites you to join the Online Turkish Practice Hours to practice your conversational Turkish with Turkish volunteer students. Turkish Practice Hours was formerly planned to be on campus as Turkish Coffee Hour, but in the current situation, we’ve decided to move things online. All international students, faculty, researchers, and their families are welcome to join, and we hope to continue as Turkish Coffee Hour whenever we are back on campus.
### YOUR GO TO CONTACTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department/Person</th>
<th>E-Mail</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Office Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Admissions Office</td>
<td><a href="mailto:study@ku.edu.tr">study@ku.edu.tr</a></td>
<td>0090 212 338 1374/1178</td>
<td>Portal of Knowledge Building “A” 1st Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar’s and Student Affairs Directorate</td>
<td><a href="mailto:registrar@ku.edu.tr">registrar@ku.edu.tr</a></td>
<td>0090 212 338 1000</td>
<td>ELC Building (Behind the Library), Ground Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Community Services Office</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ico@ku.edu.tr">ico@ku.edu.tr</a></td>
<td>0090 212 338 1299</td>
<td>Student Center Lower 3rd Floor B398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Office- Mrs. Sevcan Ucal</td>
<td><a href="mailto:housing@ku.edu.tr">housing@ku.edu.tr</a></td>
<td>0090 212 338 1105</td>
<td>Housing Office S Dormitory Entrance Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/7 Emergency Line</td>
<td></td>
<td>0090 212 338 1122</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumelifeneri Campus Main Entrance Security</td>
<td></td>
<td>0090 212 338 3535/3636</td>
<td>Portal of Knowledge Building “A” Lower 1st Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost &amp; Found Office</td>
<td></td>
<td>0090 212 338 3639</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Security (24 Hour)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0090 212 338 3639</td>
<td>Portal of Knowledge Building “A” Lower 1st Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Campus Security Office</td>
<td></td>
<td>0090 212 338 7007/7008</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can always contact us and request support if you do not know who to contact.

### REFERENCE RESOURCES

**Maps and Transportation:**

**Maps:** All campus maps are available on the KU Mobile App and here: [https://www.ku.edu.tr/en/contact/koc-university-campuses/](https://www.ku.edu.tr/en/contact/koc-university-campuses/)

**Location of Istanbul, Sariyer and KU** [https://ico.ku.edu.tr/welcomecenter/location-maps/](https://ico.ku.edu.tr/welcomecenter/location-maps/)
Istanbul Metropolitan Rail Network:
Website: [http://www.metro.istanbul/en](http://www.metro.istanbul/en)

Istanbul Rail Network Maps: [http://www.metro.istanbul/YolcuHizmetleri/AgHaritalari](http://www.metro.istanbul/YolcuHizmetleri/AgHaritalari)


Istanbul Ferries, Passenger Boats, Cruises: [https://www.sehirhatlari.istanbul/en](https://www.sehirhatlari.istanbul/en)

International and Local Radio, News:
Turkish National Radio & TV Corporation (TRT): [http://www.trt.net.tr/Anasayfa/anasayfa.aspx](http://www.trt.net.tr/Anasayfa/anasayfa.aspx)


Sputniknews Voice of Russia: [https://sputniknews.com/](https://sputniknews.com/)

BBC World: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldserviceradio](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldserviceradio)


Public Radio International: [https://www.pri.org/](https://www.pri.org/)

Local Misc. Listings: [https://yabangee.com/](https://yabangee.com/)

Daily Events and Misc. Listings:
Eventbrite: [https://www.eventbrite.com/d/online/istanbul/](https://www.eventbrite.com/d/online/istanbul/)


Zorlu: [https://www.zorlups.com/tr](https://www.zorlups.com/tr)

KU People Finder: [http://eguide.ku.edu.tr/eGuide](http://eguide.ku.edu.tr/eGuide)

KU Promo Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YULRsObCuw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YULRsObCuw)

History, Departments and More: [https://www.ku.edu.tr/en/explore/about/](https://www.ku.edu.tr/en/explore/about/)

Office of the President: [https://president.ku.edu.tr/en/](https://president.ku.edu.tr/en/)

Office of Dean of Students: [https://dos.ku.edu.tr/en/](https://dos.ku.edu.tr/en/)

Office of Vice President for Academic Affairs: [https://vpaa.ku.edu.tr/en/](https://vpaa.ku.edu.tr/en/)

Office of Vice President for Research & Development: [https://vprd.ku.edu.tr/en/](https://vprd.ku.edu.tr/en/)

Office of General Secretary: [https://ogs.ku.edu.tr/en/](https://ogs.ku.edu.tr/en/)