

Academia Raetica

SWITZERLAND



Guide to the Grisons

Welcome – Grüezi – Benvenuti – Allegra!

Information for scientists

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Welcome – Allegra – Benvenuti – Willkommen!

Welcome to Graubünden

You have decided to live, work, and research in this beautiful Swiss mountain canton. With the information in this brochure and on our [website](#) we want to help you to settle in quickly and feel at home in your new environment.

Although we have compiled the information primarily with foreign researchers in mind, Swiss individuals can certainly benefit from it as well. While much of our information is generally valid for the Grisons, some information refers specifically to the main sites for research and tertiary education, Davos and Chur.

For information that covers the whole of Switzerland, we recommend the information platform for foreign students and prospective students "[Switzerland+](#)" from swissuniversities.

Do you have any questions? We are happy to help you.



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1 Research location Graubünden

The range of teaching and research activities in Graubünden is surprisingly varied. The majority of [research institutes, clinics, and tertiary education organizations](#) in Graubünden and the surrounding areas are part of the network of Academia Raetica.

1.1 Academia Raetica

The Academia Raetica, based in Davos, is the association for the promotion of science, research and education in the canton of Graubünden and its neighboring regions. It includes thirty research institutes, universities



Science award recipients "Graubünden forscht 2024".

Image: Clemens Güdel

and clinics as well as partners and individual members. The Academia Raetica was founded in 2006 with the purpose of promoting young scientists, connecting its member institutions and representing their interests in politics and in public.

Based on a mandate from the Canton of Graubünden, the Academia Raetica promotes the continuing education, work and development of scientists through transferable skills courses and networking opportunities. We connect and support our members in cooperation projects with each other as well as with research institutions outside the canton. We communicate with cantonal offices and industrial partners and promote dialogue between the disciplines. We also inform the public and politicians about the social and economic importance of research in the canton. We support the government in the implementation of its higher education, research and innovation strategy. Academia Raetica was last evaluated in 2018 by the Swiss Agency for Accreditation and Quality Assurance.

2 Moving and settling in

What type of visa or permit do I need to enter Switzerland? What customs regulations do I have to observe when entering Switzerland? Where can I find the best apartments? How do I open a bank account? Before entering Switzerland and during the first months of your stay many organizational questions arise. We help you to tackle these questions.

2.1. First impressions

The website www.hallo.gr.ch informs newcomers in seventeen different languages about life in Graubünden – covering many topics, such as work, language, health care, and social security. Similar information is compiled in the welcome brochure of the Canton of Graubünden ([English](#), [German](#), [Italian](#), [Spanish](#)). More language versions are available on the [website “Integration Graubünden”](#).

2.2. Visa & Work Permits

EU/EFTA nationals only require a residence permit, which is also the work permit. A residence permit is issued upon presentation of a written declaration of employment or a certificate of employment from the employer (e.g. employment contract with specified duration of employment and workload).

Nationals of other countries apply for a visa at the Swiss embassy or a Swiss consulate general abroad. Entry into Switzerland may only take place after receipt of the visa.

The [website of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs \(FDFA\)](#) provides further information on country-specific entry requirements under the menu item [“Entry into Switzerland and residence”](#). Students will find helpful information on entry regulations here: [Studying in Switzerland](#) (Website DFA).

Links

[Information for Non-EU/EFTA nationals](#)

[Application form Non-EU/EFTA nationals](#)
(in German, for Graubünden)

[Application form EU/EFTA nationals](#)
Immigration Police Graubünden,
[Karlihof 4, 7001 Chur](#)

[Website](#) Registration Office, Municipality of Davos, [Berglistutz 1, 7270 Davos Platz](#)

2.3. Customs regulations

If you are moving to Switzerland from abroad, you must register your personal property, furniture, valuables, sports equipment, and your vehicle at a customs office. Detailed information is provided on the [website of the Federal Customs Administration](#).

Procedure: Fill in the form “18.44 Declaration/Application for clearance of household effects”. Create an inventory of all items that you want to bring to Switzerland. The form 18.44 and a guide for the inventory (list of resettlement goods) are available for download on the aforementioned website in the section “Service” at the bottom of the webpage. Do not worry; it is not as complicated as it looks.

[Moving household effects](#) (Website Federal Customs Administration)

2.4. Obligatory registration

After moving to Graubünden, you have fourteen days to register your new address at your municipality. Foreign nationals need to provide the following documents:

Documents

- Valid passport (or identity card, European Community / EFTA citizens only)
- Guarantee of residence permit (third country)
- Completed [application A1](#) (European Community / EFTA)
- Completed [application B1](#) (third countries)
- Employment contract
- Rental contract
- Insurance certificate of a Swiss health insurance

Links

[Einwohnerdienst Gemeinde Davos](#) (Registry office Davos, information in German only)

[Einwohnerdienst Gemeinde Klosters-Serneus](#) (Registry office Klosters-Serneus, information in German only)

[Einwohnerdienst Stadt Chur](#) (Registry office Chur, information in German only)

2.5. Bank Account

To open a bank account in Switzerland, most banks require a valid residence permit. An exception is Postfinance, where you can open an account even without a permit. Before opening an account, compare the fees charged by different banks for account maintenance, debit cards (Maestro or other debit cards), and credit cards. Depending on your needs and your assets, the fees can vary considerably. Some banks require foreign nationals to pay a deposit when opening an account. This deposit is refunded when you close the account.

Some banks

[Graubündner Kantonalbank](#)

[Raiffeisenbank](#)

[Postfinance](#)

[UBS](#)

2.6. Taxes



Swiss nationals and foreigners with a residence permit (C-Bewilligung) pay their taxes in the year following the tax year. In the case of foreigners with a L- or B- permit, the taxes are deducted directly from the wage at the end of each month (so-called Quellensteuer), provided that the annual income does not exceed CHF 120'000. The employer transfers the tax directly to the cantonal tax office. Apart from [very few exceptions](#) (document in German only), foreign students and interns who are employed in Graubünden are also subject to that tax.



Contact

Kantonales Steueramt Graubünden

Steinbruchstrasse 18
7001 Chur

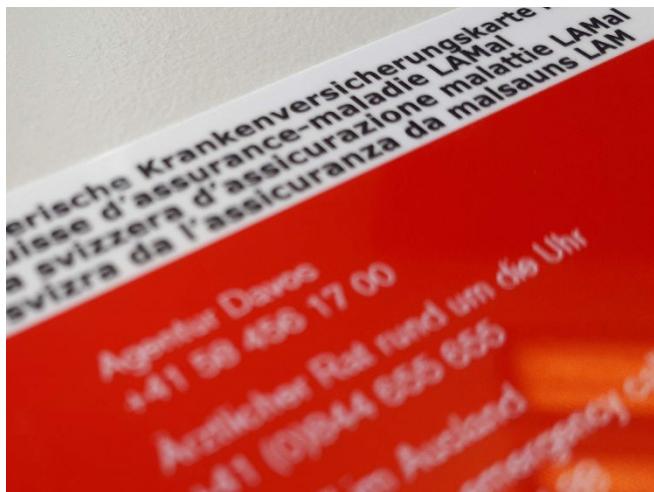
2.7. Health insurance

You must take out mandatory basic health insurance no later than three months after registration at your place of residence in Switzerland. The benefits are identical with all health insurance companies. The insurance applies retrospectively from the first day of your residency. Premiums are also payable for this period. The individual of residence, age, insurance model and deductible (so-called "Franchise"). The deductible determines the share of the health costs you pay yourself per calendar year. The regular deductible is CHF 300 per year (children are free) for adults over 18 years of age. The insured can choose a higher deductible and pay lower premiums.

In addition to the deductible (Franchise) you need to pay ten percent of the treatment costs up to an annual maximum contribution of CHF 700. The basic health insurance bears all costs exceeding that limit. In addition to the basic insurance, you can specify various additional benefits, e.g. alternative treatment methods, and dental treatments.

In individual cases there is the possibility of being exempted from the mandatory Swiss health insurance, e.g. for non-working students from EU/EFTA countries.

Comparis helps you to compare different health care insurers. On the website of the Federal Department of Home Affairs (German, Italian, French) you will find a to



determine the approximate cost for basic health insurance depending on the place of your residence.

The health insurance companies can offer the following franchise rates:

Adults (from 18 years): CHF 300, 500, 1'000, 1'500, 2'000, 2'500

Children: CHF 0, 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600

3 Home



3.1. Finding a place to live

Comparis lists the real estate offers of the most popular Swiss real estate portals. This service is also available as an app for iOS and Android. For shorter stays, also try booking websites, for example Davos Klosters Tourism and Airbnb.

For local housing offers, you may check out:

- Notice boards at the supermarket
- Davos: Kleinanzeigen Davos auf Facebook, WOHNUNG FREI Davos (Facebook)
- Chur: Wohnungsbörse FH Graubünden (Housing ads of the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons, German only)

Renting an apartment

Rental flats are equipped with a kitchen or cooking facility. Usually, there is a washing machine in the flat or for shared use. Normally, the minimum rental period is one year. The notice period is three months. Pay attention to the termination dates. Often in Graubünden, you can only terminate your contract on March 31, June 30, and September 30. The deposit is between one month's and three months' rent. The deposit should be paid into a rental deposit account with a bank. Fully furnished rooms may be subject to different rules. In the case of an extraordinary termination, you must present a suitable subsequent tenant or pay until the contractual termination date. In the case of shorter stays, your employer may be able to help with the search for accommodation.

3.2. Additional property expenses

On top of your fixed rent, you will have to pay additional property expenses (for example, water, garden maintenance, snow removal). In Switzerland, the additional property taxes can be charged in different ways.

- a) "Inklusive": The additional costs are included in the rental price.
- b) "Pauschal": In addition to the monthly rent, you pay a monthly flat rate.
- c) "Akontozahlung": You make a monthly advance payment for additional costs. At the end of the year, you will receive a final statement. The statement will tell you whether you still owe money or if you will receive reimbursement.

Inquire before signing the lease, what is already included in the additional costs.

3.3. Household contents and private liability insurance

The household contents insurance covers damage to your home furnishings caused by fire, water, theft, and glass breakage. Private liability insurance protects you from liability, if you harm another person or damage the property of that person. We recommend taking out both insurances. On the [Comparis website](#), you can compare premiums.

3.4. Waste disposal: household waste and recyclable materials

Waste disposal may work differently depending on where you live. You may discard your household waste only in so-called "Gebührensäcke" (specifically labeled rubbish bags). Supermarkets sell them in different sizes at the checkout. Either the garbage collectors come around on fixed days (leave the tied-up rubbish bag by the roadside in the morning) or you can take the rubbish bag to a drop off point. You can recycle PET bottles and batteries at the supermarket. Glass, aluminum, and tins can be discarded at drop off points in your municipality. Most municipalities regularly carry out collections for paper and cardboard, or they provide fixed drop-off points.



3.5. Phone, internet, television, and radio

The network coverage of the well-known mobile telephone service providers is overall very good in populated areas in Graubünden, and the rest of Switzerland. However, in sparsely populated areas and tunnels, there is often limited or no reception. Reflect your usage behavior. This will help you to decide whether you should opt for a prepaid option or a contract. The duration and cancellation options of mobile phone contracts vary between one month and twenty-four months depending on the provider. Bring a copy of your ID and your residence permit to complete a contract or purchase prepaid credit.

As soon as you have a device (for example, radio, TV, computer, tablet, smartphone) that can receive radio and television programs, you are obliged to pay reception fees. To register, please contact [Serafe](#).

Selected providers:
Aldi Suisse mobile (Sunrise Netz)
Coopmobile (Swisscom)
Green
MBudget mobile (Swisscom)
Salt
Sunrise
Swisscom
UPC

Apart from the mandatory reception fee, you may need to set up internet, cable, aerial, or satellite television services. Most telecommunication and internet service providers offer packages for mobile and fixed line telephony, internet, and TV.

3.6. Useful telephone numbers and addresses

Phone/Address	
Air rescue (REGA)	1414
Dental emergency	144
Doctor on Call (Chur)	081 252 36 36
Doctor on Call (Davos)	0900 003 003 (CHF 1.00 per Minute from landline)
Fire department	118
Medical emergency	144
Pharmacy Emergency Service	144
Poisoning	145
Police	117 (national), 081 257 6350 (Cantonal police)
Taxi Davos	Express Taxi 081 410 11 11, Gotschna Taxi 081 420 20 20

Hospitals:	Phone/Address
Kantonsspital Graubünden, Chur	081 256 61 11 / Loestrasse 170, 7000 Chur
Spital Davos	081 414 88 88 / Promenade 4, 7270 Davos Platz

4 Family

4.1. Childcare

Young children up to five years can attend the day-care centers and nurseries in Davos. The childcare services incur a fee based on your income.

Childcare options in Davos:

[Kinderkrippe Mandala & Kindervilla Schwiizerhuus](#) (Spital Davos), Davos Platz

[Chinderchrottä](#) (Kinderkrippe), Davos Dorf

[Kinderkrippe Glückspilz](#) (Hochgebirgsklinik Davos), Davos Wolfgang

You will find more information on **childcare facilities in Chur and other places in Graubünden** on the website ["Fachverband Kinderbetreuung Graubünden"](#) or [www.famur.ch](#). The Volksschule Davos offers holiday

care for kindergarten children and primary school students. The children's parents are informed about the offer by a letter from the school.



4.2. School

The website “[educationsuisse](#)” provides a detailed overview of the Swiss education system. In Graubünden, children start kindergarten after the school summer holidays in the year they turn five. After two years in kindergarten, children move on to primary school. After primary school (six years), there are various possibilities to complete the obligatory nine years of schooling (Gymnasium, secondary school, Realsschule) and continue education beyond that. In Graubünden there are three official languages: German, Italian, and Romansh. Depending on where you live, one of these languages or several languages will be taught.

Links to schools of secondary education in Graubünden

[Schweizerische Alpine Mittelschule Davos](#)
[Oberstufe Davos](#)
[Bündner Kantonsschule, Chur](#)
[EMS Schiers](#)
[Lyceum Alpinum Zuoz](#)
[Hochalpines Institut Ftan](#)

5 Work

5.1. Job listings for scientists

The website of [Euraxess](#) publishes vacancies for scientists and offers further services around the job search. Looking for a PhD position: [www.findaphd.com](#).

Regional job offers for all professional groups can be found at [Südostschweizjobs.ch](#). For the Switzerland-wide search, the portals [Jobs.ch](#) or [NZZ Jobs](#) are recommended.

5.2. Co-Working Space

Innovation Center Davos
Obere Strasse 22
7270 Davos Platz
Phone +41 79 658 20 10
[www.coworking-davos.com](#)

miaEngiadina
Stradun 322
7550 Scuol
Phone +41 81 508 05 05
[www.miaengiadina.ch/mountain-coworking](#)

6 Mobility

6.1. Transport and tickets

On the website of the [Swiss Federal Railways](#) (SBB), you find all timetables for local, regional, and national travel by bus, tram, or train. In Graubünden, the Rhaetian Railway (Rhätische Bahn, RhB) operates the regional trains. Please note that some trains stop at smaller stations only on request. You need to push a button on the information board at the train station or on the train. Depending on how often you use public transport, it is worth buying a half-fare subscription (“[Halbtax](#)”, nationwide discount of up to 50 percent), [Büga](#) (general subscription for Graubünden) or a [GA travel card](#) (unlimited travel nationwide) from SBB.

Important: If you want to bring a [dog](#) or [bike](#) on the train, you will have to buy an extra ticket.

Savings potential: You can bring your bike on the train free of charge, if you carry it in a bike case or bike bag. Dogs can ride the train free of charge, if their shoulder height does not exceed 30 cm and if they stay in a bag or small cage.



6.2. Driving and parking

You always need to turn on the headlights when you are driving, even during the daytime. Check out [speed limits](#) and [the penalties](#) for driving too fast. Winter tires are not compulsory in Switzerland, but they are indispensable during winter in Graubünden. You should also keep a pair of snow chains in the trunk during the winter months, if you do not have a four-wheel drive. A four-wheel drive is an advantage in the mountains.

It is very common that you have to pay a fee for public parking in Switzerland, even in small villages. It is customary that you have to pay in advance in public parking lots and also in covered car parks. In many alpine villages, an overnight parking ban applies in public car parks during winter. In Davos, the monthly rent for a covered parking spot is around CHF 130.

6.3. Motorway toll

If you are going to drive on the Swiss highways and some national roads, you will have to purchase a motor charge sticker ("Autobahnvignette") for CHF 40. The motorway toll sticker is valid from December 1 of the year prior to that printed on the sticker through to January 31 of the year following that printed on the sticker. Stickers are available at customs offices, petrol stations, and post offices in Switzerland. Petrol stations abroad, which are close to the Swiss border, sell them as well. Since August 1, 2023, you can also buy an e-vignette for the same price: <https://via.admin.ch/shop/dashboard>. Attach the sticker to the windshield of your car. You will find a [map of all toll roads](#) on the website of the Federal Customs Administration.

6.4. Customs registration of a vehicle

If you take up residence in Switzerland and want to bring your car or another vehicle with you, you need to follow some rules: Report your vehicle at the Swiss customs office immediately when you arrive. On the [website of the Federal Customs Administration](#), you will learn about the most important rules and under which conditions your car is exempt from customs duties.

6.5. Getting a Swiss license plate

As a rule, you must register your car with the [cantonal road traffic authority](#) (e.g., "Strassenverkehrsamt Graubünden") no later than twelve months after reporting it to the customs office. You will need the following documents:

- Proof of a Swiss car insurance. You take out a car insurance with a Swiss insurance company. The latter electronically transmits the proof of insurance to the cantonal road traffic authority.
- Foreign vehicle papers in the original

- Proof of foreign registration
- 18.44 Declaration/Application for clearance of household effects
- Technical characteristics of the vehicle (e.g., service booklet)
- Residence permit
- Certificate of Compliance with European Standards (EC Certificate of Conformity). If not available: confirmation of exhaust and noise emissions (e.g., TÜV report).
- Test report of the cantonal traffic authority (form 13.20A)



Before you receive the Swiss registration, you must have your vehicle checked for road safety. This motor vehicle test is called "Motorfahrzeugkontrolle" (MFK) in Switzerland. The cantonal road transport authority carries out the inspection. You can [make an appointment](#) as soon as the road transport authority is in possession of all the other necessary documents. Test sites are in Davos and Chur, for example ([all sites](#)). Note that it may take several weeks for the approval to be completed. Advice: Your car should be clean and tidy when you hand it in for inspection.

Contact

Strassenverkehrsamt Graubünden

(road transport authority)

Ringstrasse 2

7000 Chur

Phone +41 81 257 80 00

info@stva.gr.ch, www.stva.gr.ch

6.6. Traffic tax and vehicle insurance

Please refer to the [table](#) for the applicable taxes for your car.

Motor vehicle liability insurance is compulsory in Switzerland. Further insurance such as partial and full insurance is voluntary. On [Comparis](#) you can compare different insurance providers.



6.7. Driving license

After 12 months, your foreign driving license is no longer valid in Switzerland. Fill out the form [“Gesuch um Umtausch eines ausländischen Führerausweises”](#) (Request for the exchange of a foreign driver's license) and submit it to the registry office (“Einwohneramt”) of your municipality. They will forward it to the cantonal road traffic authority. Remember to bring an identity card when submitting your paperwork.

6.8. Car train Vereina

The [car train Vereina](#) (Autoverlad Vereina) transports vehicles between Klosters (Prättigau) and Sagliains (Lower Engadine). You can buy regular tickets at the portals in Klosters or Sagliains. Some municipalities (for example, Klosters and Davos) sell discounted, non-transferable tickets to their residents. Please check with your municipality if discounted tickets are available. From the beginning of May to the beginning of January, the Flüela Pass is an alternative, scenic route between Davos and the Engadin.

7 Discover Graubünden

Start exploring Graubünden in your free time. Discover impressive landscapes, a diverse culture, and culinary specialties. In the section “Discover Graubünden”, you will find information on destinations, culture, cuisine, sports activities, events, and clubs. On the official tourism website for [Graubünden](#), you will find plenty of suggestions for recreational activities and get to know the tourist highlights of the different regions.

- [Official Tourism Website Davos Klosters](#)
- [Official Tourism Website Chur](#)



7.1. Clubs

Maybe you want to join a club to make new friends or even find a new hobby.

- [Clubs Davos](#)
- [Clubs Klosters](#)
- [Clubs Chur](#)
- [Clubs Landquart](#)

7.3. Cross-country skiing

For cross-country skiing in Davos and Klosters you can buy one-day or weekly passes as well as a seasonal pass for CHF 160 ([Schweizer Langlaufpass](#)).



7.4. Drinking water

The water quality in Graubünden is excellent. Tap water and water from public wells can be enjoyed without hesitation. The “[mineral water path](#)” (Senda d’ aua) in Scuol leads you to various springs. Take a bottle with you and fill your favorite water. Also, on the [waterway “ansaina”](#) in the Albula Valley you will learn a lot about water.



7.5. Events

Graubünden is a lively place. The best way to find out about upcoming events is to read the local newspapers or to look at the official tourism websites of your region. In the [events section](#) of the Academia Raetica website we list different types of science related events.

7.6. Languages

Graubünden is the only trilingual canton in Switzerland. German, Romansh, and Italian are the official languages. Two thirds of the approximately 188,000 people living in Graubünden speak German as their main language, followed by Romansh (15 percent), and Italian (10 percent).

The [Institut dal Dicziunari Rumantsch Grischun](#) is one of the member institutions of Academia Raetica. It is an important research and documentation center for the Romansh language and the Alpine culture. The Institut dal DRG edits the national Romansh dictionary.

As in the other German-speaking parts of Switzerland, the German-speaking locals also write everything in German, but in conversation, they generally speak Swiss German. Swiss German includes various Alemannic dialects, which are clearly different from German. At the workplace, you may encounter either Swiss German, German, Italian, or English. (We recommend a German language course for social and linguistic integration, if you want to stay longer in Graubünden.)

Language courses at Migros Clubschule: [Davos](#), [Chur](#).

7.7. Mountain Access Davos Klosters

The five mountain resorts of Davos Klosters offer discounted season passes for residents of the following municipalities: Davos, Klosters-Serneus, Saas, Conters, Küblis, Luzein, St. Antönien-Ascharina, Fideris, Furna, Jenaz, Wiesen, Schmitten, Alvaneu Dorf, and Filisur.

The subscription is valid for Parsenn, Jakobshorn, Rinerhorn, Madrisa, and Pischa (Pischa only in winter). You will receive the subscription on presentation of your permit at the cash desks of the mountain railways. For the

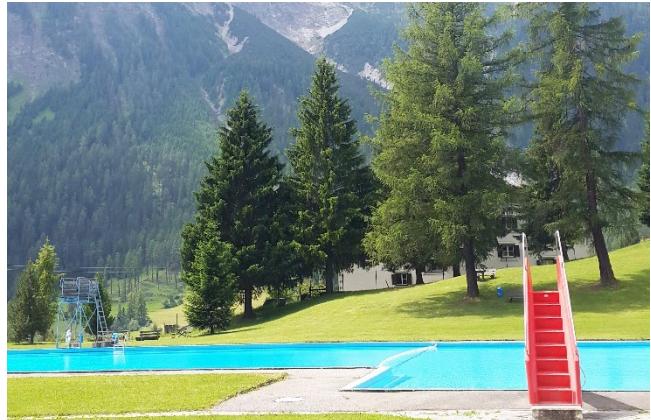


data carrier KeyCard, you pay 5 francs (non-refundable). If you buy the subscription in spring, then it is valid in the summer and the following winter.

Further information: www.davosklostersmountains.ch.

7.8. Mountainbiking and hiking

Graubünden is a hotspot for mountain bikers and hikers. Frequently, they share the trails - fairness and mutual respect are obligatory. You will find many routes for mountain biking and hiking (plus cycling, inline skating, and canoeing) on the website [Switzerland Mobility](#). In addition, you can download the free [Switzerland Mobility app](#) for iOS and Android. Learn more about [trail tolerance and trail rules](#).



7.9. Swimming

Enjoy one of the numerous indoor and outdoor swimming pools, thermal baths, and [mountain lakes in Graubünden](#).

Some indoor and outdoor pools

[Eau Là Là \(Davos\)](#)

[H2Lai \(Lenzerheide\)](#)

[Bogn Engiadina \(Scuol\)](#)

[Badi Pany](#)

[Freibad Bergün](#)

[Badi Fideris](#)

[Strandbad Klosters](#)

[Schwimmbäder Chur](#)

