



# **A Guide to Munich, the LMU and EES for MEME Students**

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## Living in Munich

### About the city

As a MEME student, you will potentially be spending up to two semesters in one of Germany's most popular travel destinations, a place full of history, culture and entertainment, with endless possibilities of what to do and see in your spare time, varying from a visit to one of Munich's several museums or a lazy Sunday in the Englischer Garten (one of the world's biggest city parks).

Around Munich, you will also find several places to visit – be it Schloss Neuschwanstein (built by Ludwig II – also known as “Mad King Ludwig” – and inspiration for Sleeping Beauty's castle), Dachau (a concentration camp built during World War II) or the Chiemsee, Bavaria's biggest lake and a popular recreation area.

Although Munich is one of the most expensive places in Germany, people enjoy living here. You will soon realize that people living are very relaxed, open-minded and enjoy life a lot. Especially in summer, you will see people gathering in beer gardens, along the Isar or in cafes in the pedestrian zone. And if you ask to join a table in a crowded place, you will hardly ever hear a “no”. Who knows, you may even have new friends by the end of the day.

### Bank accounts

Most of our EES students open bank accounts at the Deutsche Bank and are quite happy there. In the end, it doesn't matter which bank you choose. When opening a bank account, keep in mind to definitely take your passport. Some banks (like the Deutsche Bank) offer student accounts, which are then free of charge. So it is always good to take your letter of acceptance or your matriculation papers when doing this, as proof that you are or will shortly be a student. Also, some banks like to know if you actually have funding – here it is helpful to have some statement, that you are scholarship recipients.

### Public transportation

Munich has an extremely well-organized public transportation network, which makes getting around the city very easy. The city itself is divided into four rings (“Innenraum”), in which you will find all the places you need for your paperwork, the BioCenter and most of the tourist places. While the S-Bahn (something like a local train system) runs between cities as well as in Munich itself, the U-Bahn (subway) is restricted to the “Innenraum”.

As students, you are entitled to a student fare, called “**Ausbildungstarif II**”. However, you can only buy this ticket on a weekly or monthly basis (they will then go from the first of the month to the 30<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> – if you buy your ticket say on the 13<sup>th</sup> or the 26<sup>th</sup> of a month, you will still pay the FULL price for the monthly ticket!). In order to buy a student ticket, you need to go to a customer service point at either Poccistraße, Hauptbahnhof or Marienplatz. You will need proof of immatriculation and a passport photo. The price of the ticket for the “Innenraum” is currently at €48,40 per month. For an extra

€11,80, you can extend your ticket with the “Grüne Jugendkarte” and add the entire outer area of Munich (“Aussenraum”).

On weekends and for short trips around Bavaria, you also have special offers. The “Bayern Ticket” is valid Mondays to Friday (09:00 – 03:00am the following day), as well as on weekends and public holidays (0:00 to 03:00am the following day) and allows a total of five people to travel on any regional train around Bavaria (€29 if booked online).

The “Schönes-Wochenende-Ticket” allows you and four other people to take any regional train on either Saturdays or Sundays between midnight and 03:00 am on the following day (€39 if booked online).

For maps on the Munich transportation system, as well as the location of the BioCenter, please go to the back of the guide.

## Registration & residence permit

In Germany, it is necessary to register everyone who has moved to a new city. Here in Munich, both the registration and the issuance of your residence permit will be done at the “Kreisverwaltungsreferat” (KVR). The registration itself is a fairly short and painless procedure, as you only need to fill out a form and bring your passport to the “Meldebehörde”. It is also a necessary procedure, as this then enters you into the system, which the people of the “Ausländerbehörde” (immigration department) then access in order to be able to issue you your residence permits. The rules to apply for a residence permit have changed and as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, a procedure which until recently was a “necessary evil” is now a lengthy and time-consuming process for all non-EU students.

The new residence permit is now in credit-card format and contains a chip. You will need to give fingerprints, which will be saved on this chip for all residents. This means that you MUST apply for the permit in person.

So, to apply for a residence permit, you need to bring the following documents:

- passport
- 1 biometric compatible passport photo
- immatriculation papers
- proof of health insurance (the Erasmus Mundus card you have, as well as the paper from the German health insurance company, stating that you are exempt from German health care)
- proof of sufficient funding (your scholarship paperwork)

Please be aware of the following fact: when you apply for your visas, they are valid for **THREE MONTHS** from the date they were issued (NOT date of entry into the country!!). The current waiting period for these new residence permits is anything from **4 to 8 weeks!** In order to receive a residence permit, you need to be enrolled at the university. So, for example, if you apply for your visas in January and the date of issue is February 1<sup>st</sup>, they will be valid until May 1<sup>st</sup>. As the registration period is at the beginning of April, you still have a month before your visa expires, in order to apply for your residence permit. If you start the visa application process sooner and the date of issue were to be January 1<sup>st</sup>, then your visa would expire before we could enrol you at the university. As stated above,

you cannot apply for a residence permit, without being enrolled. It is a somewhat vicious cycle, but one that can be dealt with when keeping all this information in mind.

A tip given by the immigration department: if you plan on staying here for one semester only, try to apply for a visa (“Nationalvisum”) for your entire stay here in Munich. This would completely eradicate the process of having to apply for a residence permit.

For more information on the new electronic residence permit, please see the “Practical Information” on the EES wiki site ([http://www.eeslmu.de/eeswiki/Practical\\_information](http://www.eeslmu.de/eeswiki/Practical_information)).

If you **DON'T** have a scholarship and are **NOT** an EU student, you need to be aware of the fact that you will need to provide proof of financial support during your stay in Germany (no proof, no residence permit). This “proof” comes in two different forms and is dependent on your country of origin. Detailed information about this can be found on the EES wiki site under the option “Practical Information” ([http://www.eeslmu.de/eeswiki/Practical\\_information](http://www.eeslmu.de/eeswiki/Practical_information)).

## University issues

### Acceptance letters

At the LMU, we issue two acceptance letters – the EES acceptance letter and the official LMU acceptance letter.

At EES, we can issue you your acceptance letter fairly soon after you start in the MEME programme, so that you can start potential visa application processes.

The International Office – who will also be receiving your documents after you have decided to come to Munich, in order to determine if you are eligible for studying at the LMU – is responsible for issuing you your official LMU acceptance letter. You will need this letter when you come to Munich, as it is essential for the registration process.

For your information – for the summer semester, this letter will be issued the earliest in November. For the winter semester, it will not be before May or even June.

### Housing issues

As soon as possible, I will send all of you application forms for student housing here in Munich. Please fill this form out as soon as possible and also send it to the person responsible (usually mentioned at the bottom of the form). As housing in Munich is hard to come by and can also be quite expensive, this will be your first option.

However, I cannot guarantee that you will receive student housing, as this is also limited and all ERASMUS MUNDUS programmes at the universities only receive a certain number of rooms. When filling out the form please keep in mind that you will **NOT** be able to extend your contract should you sign for one semester and then decide to stay for two. In order to avoid potential problems, sign the contract for 2 semesters, as you are able to cancel the agreement two months prior to the end of your stay.

There are also several helpful websites, which can help you find a room, for example:

<http://www.wg-gesucht.de/en/wg-zimmer-in-Muenchen.90.0.0.0.html>

[http://www.studenten-wg.de/angebote\\_lesen.html?&PHPSESSID=005d451fe3236811435466a5ab49d19a](http://www.studenten-wg.de/angebote_lesen.html?&PHPSESSID=005d451fe3236811435466a5ab49d19a)

Unfortunately this site is only available in German. But for places more or less close to the Biozentrum, look for rooms situated in “Hadern”, “Sendling”, “Westpark”, “Gräfelfing”, “Großhadern” or “Pasing”.

If you are arriving for the summer semester, this will all be a lot easier than if you are arriving for the winter semester, as ALL new students will be arriving in October. Please keep this in mind, so that you start looking for housing as soon as possible.

## University registration process (international students)

The registration process here at the LMU is a very bureaucratic procedure and only takes place in a pre-determined time frame. For the summer semester 2012, this means that you will need to be here by April 1<sup>st</sup>, as the registration period is approximately 2 weeks before the summer semester starts. PLEASE NOTE that should you arrive in Munich **BEFORE** the registration period, you will not be able to receive student status, as you will not be able to register! This has several consequences – you will not be eligible for student transportation cards, you will not have access to the wireless internet at the university, you will not be able to apply for a residence permit, etc.

In order to register here at the university, you will need to bring several documents with you:

- your letter of acceptance (“Zulassungsbescheid”)
- **ALL** your **ORIGINAL** degree certificates and transcripts
- **CV**
- proof of health insurance
- passport

### ***Letter of acceptance***

You can bring both acceptance letters (EES and LMU) that you have received, but you **MUST** bring the official LMU one. It is the letter that gives a registration number (“Reg. Nr.”) under which all your documents are filed at the International Office. You will receive this letter of acceptance **ONLY** if you send me **certified copies** (you can also scan them and send them to me via email) of the following documents by the deadlines given in the section “Within EES – Deadlines”:

- certified copy of your Bachelor’s certificate
- certified copy of your Bachelor’s transcript
- updated CV (Please make sure that there are no gaps in your “academic career” until you started in the MEME programme. The International Office seriously checks these and will refuse to issue an acceptance letter if there are unaccounted for gaps.)

If these documents are complete and contained in your MEME application package, then disregard this. I will just print documents from there.

### ***Original degree certificates and transcripts***

When the university states that they need “**ORIGINAL**” documents, they really do mean **ORIGINAL**. For the registration process, they do not accept certified copies at all. Please make sure that you bring these with you when you arrive in Munich! I know that for some countries it is not normal to hand out original documents, but unfortunately, at the moment, there is absolutely no way around this.

Currently, the list of languages at the International Office that do NOT require certified translations are as follows:

English, Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese and German

## **CV**

Please make sure that your CV, especially concerning your academic career to date, is complete! This means that it should include everything you have done until the start of the MEME programme. If there is a larger gap between finishing your Bachelor's degree and starting in the programme, please list it as "sabbatical" or something similar. The International Office is extremely fussy about incomplete CVs and they will not issue you a letter of acceptance unless they are satisfied.

## ***Proof of health insurance***

All of you have an Erasmus Mundus health insurance. However, one of the many rules and regulations of enrolling you at a German university is that you need **GERMAN** health insurance. Fortunately, there is a way around this, which involves getting every one of you a form from a German health insurance company, stating that the one you have is sufficient. It is just another stop on the way to getting you enrolled.

## **University registration process (German students)**

As with the international students, the registration process for German students is also bureaucratic. When you come for registration, please bring the following documents with you, both in the **original** **AND** as a normal copy (these are kept):

- Bachelor's certificate and complete transcript
- Exmatrikulationsbescheinigung (if you carried out your Bachelor's at a German university)
- Studienverlaufsbescheinigung (if you carried out your Bachelor's at a German university)
- Abiturzeugnis
- proof of health insurance
- Personalausweis or passport

## **Cafeteria cards, library cards & everything else**

Here at the BioCentre, it is not possible to pay for food in the cafeteria with cash. You need a so-called "Mensakarte". If you are here before being able to enrol, you can purchase one of these by showing the people your acceptance letter and your ID. If you have already enrolled, please bring your matriculation papers and your ID. Currently, the Mensakarte costs €10 - €6 deposit and €4 credit. There is a machine next to the office where you purchase your card, where you can charge your card using banknotes.

In order to obtain a library card, you need to show the students at the desk your ID and your matriculation papers. As far as I know, they will not accept your letter of acceptance as proof of your student status.

There is a computer room (C00.001) here at the BioCenter, which is accessible to all students. The username is already given on the screen (“DepBiol2” or something along those lines) and the password can be found on the whiteboard at the back of the room.

Once you are registered at the university, you automatically receive a campus ID, which enables you to also access the wireless network at the Biocenter.

## Within EES

During your time in Munich, you will be fully integrated into the local Master’s programme “Evolution, Ecology and Systematics” (EES). We are affiliated with a number of institutes outside of the LMU, for example with the MPI for Ornithology in Seewiesen, as well as with the Zoological State Collections, the Botanical Garden and the GeoBio-Center. This enables you to choose from a wide range of project possibilities.

## Deadlines

Please keep in mind that when you want to come to Munich, I need to start a bureaucratic process, mainly with the International Office. In order to keep everyone happy, there are some deadlines that I would like you to adhere to.

- If you want to come to Munich for any given summer semester, please make this decision and send me your documents by **December 31<sup>st</sup>** of any given year. Especially if you are coming for your second semester, you should have made this decision several months ago, enabling you to send me your complete document package by this date.
- If you want to come to Munich for any given winter semester, please make this decision and send me your documents by **July 1<sup>st</sup>** of any given year.

I know that especially the July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline is fairly early, but as the process takes a while and there are fairly long summer holidays, the International Office, the Erasmus Mundus office and myself need to know with plenty of time to still get things done.

## Arrival dates

Most of you will probably be arriving in Munich for the summer semester. As the winter semesters in both Groningen and Uppsala end weeks and months before the summer semester here even thinks about starting, you have the choice of two arrival dates: **March 1<sup>st</sup>** and **April 1<sup>st</sup>**. Do **NOT** arrive in Munich any later than April 1<sup>st</sup>! This is when the official registration period starts (see “University registration process for international students”) and as I want to take each cohort as a group, you have to be in Munich by this date. The courses of the summer semester then start mid April.

If you decide to come earlier, you have several options of what to do with your time before the administrative summer semester starts. There are courses on offer within EES that take place between the winter and summer semester. They will be listed on the course lists I send around during

November/December. You can join these and receive credit for them for the summer semester. See “Internal courses” below, for details on how to register for them. You can also carry out a project here in one of the labs, if you have contacted the corresponding professor/lecturer and you have both agreed to the project. For projects you want to conduct elsewhere but receive LMU credits for, please check the “External courses/projects” section below, on how to go about this.

The arrival dates for the winter semester follow a similar pattern. Registration will probably always be at the beginning of October, so you need to be in Munich the latest on **October 1<sup>st</sup>**. The courses for the winter semester always start mid October. If you arrive before then, there will also be some courses, but the choice is not as wide-spread as it is between the end of the winter and the beginning of the summer semester, as many lecturers and professors are on summer holiday. You always have the option of carrying out a project.

## **EES Wiki site**

The EES programme has a wiki site (<http://www.eeslmu.de/eeswiki>) which contains a ton of useful information on courses, upcoming events, news, people, summer schools, seminars, etc. I try to keep this website as updated as possible, as it often answers several questions students may have.

## **People**

Apart from me, the main contact person for the Munich-side of MEME is Prof. John Parsch, who you will probably all have met at the annual summer school, before starting the programme. A complete list of people associated with EES (as well as broad concept of what each of them does) can be found under [http://www.eeslmu.de/eeswiki/EES\\_people](http://www.eeslmu.de/eeswiki/EES_people).

## **Courses**

### ***Internal courses***

When you come to Munich, all **elective** EES courses will be open to you. You just need to make sure that you register with the corresponding instructor well ahead of time, as some courses may have a limited number of places available.

EES students are also required to take certain courses during the semester (**required courses**). These will also be open to you, but please also make sure that you sign up for these (contact either myself or the responsible instructor), as parallel groups may have to be created ahead of time, in order to be able to accommodate everyone.

As I start working on the curriculum for the summer semester somewhere around September/October, I will be able to give you information on potential courses around this time. The curriculum is normally finalised early in the year, but you can keep yourselves updated by checking

out the information on the EES wiki page ([http://www.eeslmu.de/eeswiki/Courses\\_Overview](http://www.eeslmu.de/eeswiki/Courses_Overview)). If you have any questions about any of the courses, let me know or contact the instructors directly. Please keep in mind that I work ONLY on EES-related courses. If there are course in other departments that you would like to take, please refer to the “external courses” section below.

### ***External courses/Projects***

You do of course also have the possibility to take external courses or conduct projects outside of the LMU.

For external courses you should first check with the responsible instructors if they agree with your participation. From our side, there is generally nothing against you taking part in other courses (EES regulations state that you should not take more than 6 ECTS worth of “other” courses). Please make sure that the instructor then sends an email to the coordinator, confirming your participation and stating the number of ECTS you will be receiving for the course.

In order to obtain the ECTS credits for external projects, you need to apply for the participation well ahead of time. There are rules as to how to go about this, which are explained below:

- You should apply to the coordinator **before** doing the project
- The application should include a project description (what they will be doing) and the duration (How many weeks? How many hours per week?)
- You must have a supervisor at the external institution, who agrees to supervise you and to evaluate your work at the end. The supervisor should provide a letter (or email) to confirm this.
- You must also have a supervisor at the LMU, who will be the official supervisor that gives the grade. The LMU supervisor should also confirm that they agree to this.
- After the project, you must submit a report about your project (introduction, methods, results, discussion, references) to the LMU supervisor.

### ***Report guidelines and deadlines***

Regardless of whether you are conducting an internal or external research project, the guidelines and deadlines for both are more or less the same.

The research projects you conduct under the jurisdiction of the LMU can vary in the amount of ECTS you receive, which obviously influences the scope of the report.

- 3 ECTS project = 2 weeks of full-time research, plus a 6 – 8 page report.
- 6 ECTS project = 4 weeks of full-time research, plus a 8 – 10 page report.
- 9 ECTS project = 6 weeks of full-time research, plus a 10 – 12 page report.
- 15 ECTS project = 10 weeks of full-time research, plus a 14 – 16 page report.
- 30 ECTS project\* = 20 weeks of full-time research, plus a 30 – 40 page report.

\* This 30 ECTS project includes both a “research project” and your Master’s thesis.

You should use a 12 point font and double-spacing.

As for the deadlines – when conducting a 30 ECTS “thesis project” in your fourth semester, you should start this the **LATEST** on April 1<sup>st</sup> of a given year. This way, you will hand in with the EES students on September 2<sup>nd</sup> of any given year and adhere to their rules. Technically you have 5.5 months to conduct your thesis, but you can also carry this out in 5 (starting 01.04) or 6 (starting 01.03) months. September 2<sup>nd</sup> is the final deadline for handing in, unless there are serious reasons to have to extend this.

The deadline for handing in any other report is something that needs to be discussed between you and your supervisor (including a 30 ECTS project in your second semester). The only thing I need is for your supervisor to send me the grade by the administrative end of a semester (March 31<sup>st</sup> for the winter, September 30<sup>th</sup> for the summer semester).

Further guidelines for your actual Master’s thesis are as follows:

- you must have two supervisors at the LMU (they also need to send me an email confirming this)
- you must hand in four hard copies, as well as a PDF
- attach a “statement of originality” at the back of your thesis and sign it
- attach a “last page” (requirement of our exam office) at the very end of your thesis – this can be found on the EES wiki site

### ***Language courses***

During your stay at the partner universities, you obviously have the possibility to take language courses. Here at the LMU, we recommend the ones offered by the university (International University Club Munich, IUCM), as previous students have also found these not only very helpful, but also fairly inexpensive in comparison to many others. Placement tests normally take place shortly before the semester begins and the courses take place twice a week during the evenings. Please keep in mind that although you receive credits for the German course, these credits do NOT count towards your MEME semester total, as they are not related to MEME course work.

### **ECTS credits**

As you already know, you will need to collect 30 ECTS per semester (this is also the maximum that can be collected!) during the programme. MEME regulations state that you need a minimum of 60 research ECTS, 45 course work ECTS and 10 transferable skills ECTS. In order to receive a degree from the LMU, you need to collect 60 ECTS during 2 semesters.

While in Munich, you can choose from a wide range of courses and fit these around the project you will be working on during your first semester here.

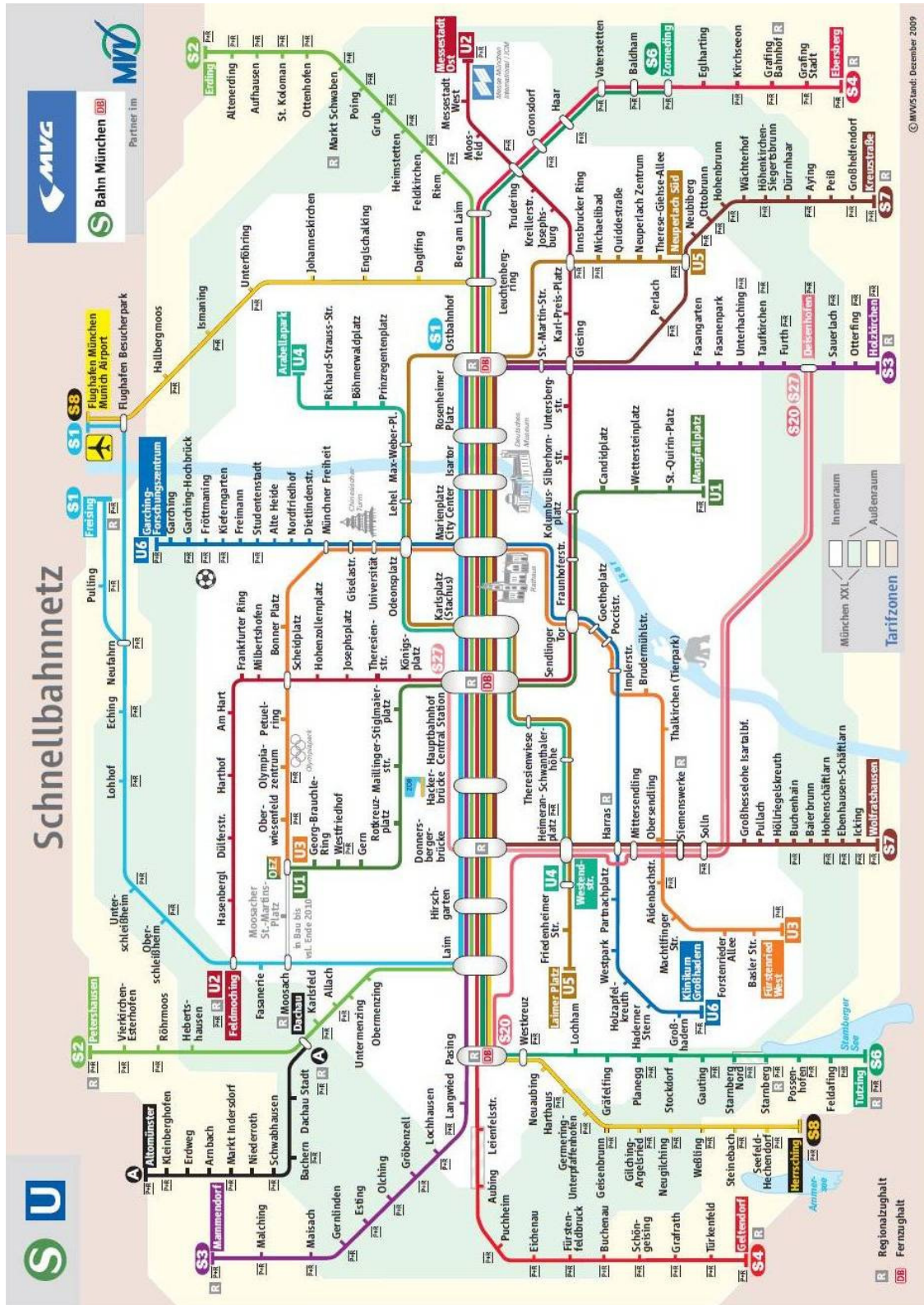
During this first of two semesters here in Munich, you must collect 15 ECTS in course work and do a 15 ECTS research project, while in your second semester here, you do a 30 ECTS project – please make sure that you do **NOT** receive more than 30 ECTS for any given project, as we cannot give you more than that.

Also, you will not be able to achieve 30 ECTS in one semester by just visiting courses! As we follow a block system, you can sometimes only visit one course per block, which (in the worst case) would allow you to achieve 15 ECTS in course work between April and August. This means that you would have to also complete a small research project, in order to stock up on the remaining credits. As you will normally receive a list of possible courses from me several months before the semester starts, it would be wise to check out the possible courses you want to take, add up the ECTS you can achieve with these and plan your research project accordingly.

**Please note:** obviously the semesters in Groningen and Uppsala end way before the summer semester in Munich even considers starting. Some or most of you will want to spend the time between these two semesters doing something meaningful towards your degree. Should you be working on a project before the summer semester starts and then want to work on another 15 ECTS project DURING the summer semester, you will obviously have more than the 30 ECTS per semester. In this case, we will issue you a separate transcript certifying the extra work you have done. Obviously, you can also carry out a 15 ECTS project starting between semesters, leaving you more time during the actual semester for your courses. So, don't worry. Your extra work will not be lost!

# Appendix

## Public transportation system ("Innenraum")



## Location of the BioCenter

The address of the Biocenter is Grossshaderner 2, 82152 Planegg-Martinsried. In order to get here, you need to take the U6 to “Großhadern” and then take Bus 266 towards Planegg (get off at “Grosshadernerstrasse”). You can also take the U6 to the last station “Klinikum Grosshadern” and then walk approximately 1km to the Biocenter.

