WELCOME SERVICE
a practical guide for foreign professors and researchers staying in Florence as guests of the University
WELCOME SERVICE
a practical guide for visiting professors and researchers of the University of Florence
Brochure realizzata da
Coordinamento per le Relazioni Internazionali
Unità di Processo "Internazionalizzazione"

Area Comunicazione e Servizi all'Utenza
Ufficio Progettazione e Comunicazione

Università degli Studi di Firenze
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Progetto grafico
Laboratorio
Comunicazione e Immagine
Dipartimento di Architettura Università degli Studi di Firenze
The University of Florence encourages cooperation with academic and research institutions around the world and welcomes foreign professors and researchers in order to foster the cultural and scientific internationalization. To this end, the University, Departments and Schools, promotes the hospitality of visiting professors and researchers.

**Welcome Service** provides information for visitors from abroad wishing to carry out academic activities at the University of Florence for both short or long stays.
The City

Florence is the capital of the region of Tuscany. It spreads on the banks of the river Arno, almost in the middle of the Italian peninsula and it is easily accessible from many places in Italy and abroad by plane, by car and by train: it is on the main national railway lines; the international airport "Amerigo Vespucci" is located 5 Km from the city centre; the main motorway, A1, connects Florence with Bologna and Milano in the North and Rome and Naples in the South.

Today Florence can count not only on a glorious past but it is also an important centre for arts and crafts, commerce and industry and is committed to be a "smart" city. All of these activities attract tourists from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures.

History

Florence was founded by the Romans in the first century B.C. In medieval times it broke away relatively early from feudalism: at the beginning of the 13th century it was already a proud and blossoming free “Comune”. It reached its highest levels of civilization in the 15th century, under the Medici family, who later became the Grand Dukes of Tuscany. This was the period when the city was at the height of its glory in art and culture, politics and economic power. The Medici conferred
splendour to the city for over three centuries. The city grew remarkably and the glory of that period is still evident today. The Grand Duchy of the Medici was succeeded, in the 18th century, by that of the House of Lorraine. In 1860 Tuscany became part of the Kingdom of Italy of which Florence was the capital from 1865 to 1871.

**Art and Culture**
Florence has an exceptional artistic patrimony, glorious testimony to its secular civilization. Cimabue and Giotto, the fathers of Italian painting, lived here. The city is the cradle of the Renaissance, with Brunelleschi, Donatello and Masaccio; not to mention Ghiberti and the Della Robbia; Angelico and Botticelli; Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. Their works, along with those of many other artists, are gathered in the city's many museums. In Florence, thanks to Dante, the Italian language was born; with Petrarch and Boccaccio literary studies were affirmed; with Humanism the philosophy and values of classical civilization were revived; with Machiavelli modern political science was born; with Guicciardini, historical prose; and with Galileo, modern experimental science. Since the time of Charlemagne, Florence was a university town. Today it is an international
cultural center thanks to its Academies, art schools, scientific institutes and cultural centers. The city is an active centre of culture, and organizes exhibitions and art festivals.

The Economy
The Economy of Florence is mainly based on the services sector, especially tourism, which provides a considerable source of income. Commerce and crafts (jewelry, embroidery, footwear, leatherwork, ceramics, wrought-iron and basket work, lace and reproduction furniture) are also very important. Industry, though consisting generally of small and medium-sized firms, covers the important sectors of precision engineering, optical, pharmaceutical, chemical, metallurgical, publishing and textile sectors.

www.aboutflorence.com/the-town-of-Florence.html

Climate

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TRAVELLING TO AND IN FLORENCE

By Train
Ferrovie dello Stato/Trenitalia
www.trenitalia.com
The two main stations are Santa Maria Novella and Campo di Marte. Another important exchange station for local and regional services is Firenze Rifredi. The Trenitalia app for smartphones is a very useful tool to check timetables, buy tickets, etc.

By Plane
Amerigo Vespucci Florence Airport (FLR)
www.aeroporto.firenze.it
The airport is connected to Santa Maria Novella railway station by the Busitalia Volainbus shuttle.
Galileo Galilei Pisa Airport (PSA)
www.pisa-airport.com
The airport is connected to Santa Maria Novella railway station by a number of bus services and the train.

By Car
Autostrade per l'Italia
www.autostrade.it
If you travel on the motorway the exits for Florence are: Firenze Nord, Firenze Scandicci, Firenze Impruneta and Firenze Sud. Motorway tolls can be paid in cash or by a prepaid Viacard, which is available at Punto Blu customer service offices.

By Bus
The easiest way of travelling within Florence is by bus. Bus tickets can be bought from bars, tobacconists, newsagents showing the sign
“biglietti ATAF” (ATAF tickets), from automatic machines, on the bus and via SMS on an Italian SIM card. The bus company providing the service is called ATAF www.ataf.net

Their app for smartphone is extremely useful to find bus stops, waiting times, purchase tickets and plan journeys.

By Taxi
To call a taxi dial 055-4242 / 055-4390.

Taxis are also parked outside railway stations and in the main city squares.

Hire Cars
There are several rental car companies in Florence (see telephone directory). Scooters and bicycles can also be easily rented.

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**ACCOMMODATION**

**Short Term Accommodation**
The city of Florence offers different options for accommodation. You can find hotels, hostels, individual/shared apartments, single/double rooms to suit all styles and budgets. Useful information can be found on these institutional websites:

- Florence Metropolitan City Council
  www火enzeturismo.it/en/vivi-firenze-2/dove-dormire-2.html
- Tourism Information Offices (Italian only)
  www.affirenze.info/apt-firenze

**Mid/Long Term Accommodation**

Florence offers different housing options for mid and long term stays: renting an apartment on your own and house sharing. The availability and costs of accommodation are extremely variable, depending on the location and the facilities provided. Housing announcements can be found on notice boards around libraries, departments, canteens at all the various campus locations.

Useful information can be found on the following websites:

- Housinganywhere (international housing platform) https://housinganywhere.com/
- Hometogo (accommodation search platform) www.hometogo.it/
- Florence apartments to rent
  www.aboutflorence.com/apartments-in-Florence.html

For flats or houses to rent you can also get in contact with any estate agency based in Florence.

The University of Florence is currently looking
for agreements to have own housing. Please check the website where info will be posted: www.unifi.it/cmpro-v-p-10832.html

THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORENCE AT A GLANCE

The University of Florence has 1,500 lecturers and internal research staff, over 1,500 technical and administrative staff, and over 1,600 research assistants and doctoral students. It offers a wide range of study programmes at various levels and in all areas of knowledge. 126 Degree courses (First and Second Cycle, corresponding to Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees) organised in 10 Schools, with a population of about 51,000 enrolled students, one-fourth of which come from outside of Tuscany. Over 9,000 degrees are awarded each year. According to the alumni data, the percentage of students who are in the workforce one year after their First Cycle degree is above national average.

The University of Florence has a natural international vocation and the development of internationalization is one of its strategic priorities. It is one of the largest and most productive public research systems in Italy. This result is accomplished thanks to the number of permanent and temporary researchers working in a wide range of disciplinary and scientific fields, and the numerous junior scientists in training. It is also due to an intensive participation in research programmes of national and international relevance and to the significant scientific results achieved. External funds support the research and knowledge transfer activities. This combination of factors qualifies the Florentine institution as a modern research university.
and accounts for its excellent position in national and world rankings. Researchers at the University of Florence operate within 24 different departments and use approximately 40 research structures comprising inter-departmental and inter-university centres as well as specialised research, knowledge transfer and advanced training centres. In recent years the University of Florence has increasingly consolidated its ventures in the field of knowledge transfer: from the filing of patents to the setting up of joint workshops with businesses, through to participation in spin-off companies. Knowledge transfer is the third mission of the University, next to Research and Higher Education. In recent years the University of Florence has developed a number of tools to promote research-based innovation in order to strengthen the relationship between the university's own research facilities and external bodies.

Living the University
Living the University also means:

• Participating in music activities, as the Choir or the Orchestra. Founded in 1996, University Choir comprises around 30 voices, mostly Italian and foreign students, as well as staff. The Choir participates in various events organised by the University, gives concerts in Italy and abroad and is often involved in cultural exchanges with other national and foreign university choirs. In December 2011 the Choir has been recognised Choir of National Interest by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage Info: spettacolo@unifi.it – coro@unifi.it

The Orchestra of the University of Florence was formed in 1996 to give students and staff the opportunity to live the experience of ensemble musical practice as well as enrich individual musical and technical skills and knowledge. Since 2012 the Orchestra has a regular performing space at “Il Tempio delle Muse”, a series of concerts (with free admission) staged every Sunday morning in the various spaces of the Museum of Natural History of the University. Info: iltempiodellemuse@gmail.com

• Taking advantages of the sporting facilities. The University Sports Centre (CUS) is equipped with three facilities. It promotes recreational activities and offers courses at basic, advanced and competitive levels in many sports. It also organises competitions, tournaments, national and international inter-university sporting events. For more information: www.cus.firenze.it

• Watching the performances of the University Theatre Company “Binario di Scambio”. The University Theatre Company “Binario di Scambio” (switch rail) is an open lab accessible by all students of the University wishing to express their artistic inclinations and talents. The involvement of the students covers all aspects of drama production, from the idea to the staging, from the artistic concept to the production and distribution.

The Museum of Natural History
The most important natural history museum in Italy belongs to the University of Florence.
It is also one of the oldest and most renowned museums at international level. The Museum of Natural History was founded in 1775 by the Grand Duke Peter Leopold. The Botanical Garden section of the Museum, however, is even older, dating back to 1545. Consisting of nine sections scattered over the historic centre of Florence and beyond, the Museum houses 8 million exhibits, some of outstanding scientific and naturalistic importance: from sixteenth-century herbaria and precious eighteenth-century waxworks, to fossil skeletons of elephants and collections of multicoloured butterflies. Visitors can participate in educational and dissemination activities; there is a rich calendar of exhibitions and special events throughout the year.

www.msn.unifi.it/

Libraries
The Library System consists of 5 large thematic libraries (Biomedical, Sciences, Social Sciences, Technological Sciences, Humanities) where over 3.5 million documents, including almost 30,000 periodicals, are available, as well as valuable antique volumes and prestigious collections.

The university library system also offers online catalogues and many other resources in digital format (journals, articles, books). Students and all users are offered courses for guidance in the use of the library and its search tools. Sistema Bibliotecario di Ateneo, is the university library system’s website

www.sba.unifi.it/changelang-eng.html

Wi-Fi at the University
A wireless connection is available throughout the university buildings. All registered users can connect using their own portable PC and authenticate themselves with their login and password.

Italian Language Courses
The University of Florence offers language courses at various levels at its Centro Linguistico di Ateneo.

www.cla.unifi.it

There is also a service of customized one-to-one meetings (consulenze).

Further courses on Italian language and culture are provided by another affiliate facility of the University: the Centro di Servizi Culturali per Stranieri.
For Stays up to 90 Days
Any researcher coming from any EU Member State or EEA country can be defined as “European”.
European researchers are allowed to travel freely and stay either in Italy or in other European Union countries up to 90 days without any formalities.
Before departure researchers should verify that their ID or passport is valid for travel outside of their country and for the entire period of stay in Italy. They should also have an adequate health insurance that covers Italy (TEAM card and/or private insurance).

Upon their arrival in Italy visitors are required to file a declaration of presence within 8 days of arrival with the Police Headquarters (Questura) of the province in which they are staying, using the proper form.
For those staying in hotels and other reception facilities, the declaration of presence is handled by the reception facility upon check-in, a copy of which is supplied to the guest to be displayed to authorities upon eventual request.

For Stays of more than 90 Days
EU Researchers, who wish to stay in Italy

Note
(1) Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, UK
(2) EU countries + Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway
longer than 90 days, need to do the following. Before departure researchers should verify that their ID or passport is valid for travel outside of their country and for the entire period of stay in Italy. They should also have an adequate health insurance that covers Italy (TEAM card and/or private insurance, and/or voluntary registration at the National Health Service). Upon their arrival in Italy visitors are required to register at the Anagrafe (Demographic Office) of the town they reside in (it is necessary to contact the office beforehand) submitting specific documents:

- Valid ID card
- Tax code
- Work contract or proof of sufficient funds to cover living expenses
- Health insurance
- Any other pertinent documents

Note

(3) Citizens of SAN MARINO and HOLY SEAT are in any case exempt from visa
(4) There are 21 types of visa according to purpose of travel. Those of main interest for University staff or students are: Invitation; Self-employment; Study; Research
Countries whose citizens need a visa to cross borders:
www.esteri.it/mae/it/ministero/servizi/stranieri/ingressosoggiornoinitalia/visto_ingresso/paesi_esenti_visto.html

Upon their arrival in Italy visitors are required to declare their presence in Italy at border authorities where a Schengen stamp will be put on their travel document.

For Stays of more than 90 Days
Citizens coming from countries outside the EU, EEA and Switzerland wishing to staying in Italy more than 90 days should verify before departure to have a passport (or equivalent expatriation document) with at least 3 months validity beyond the date of expected departure.

Visitors should request entry visa at the Italian Embassy or Consulate in the country of residence (5) submitting the following documents:
• 1 passport size photo
• valid travel document
• specific document according to visa requested

Mandatory information to provide
• scope of the trip
• adequate funds to cover living expenses
• type of lodging

It is highly recommended to contact the diplomatic offices well ahead of time as procedures and documentation vary according to the type of visa required.

Upon their arrival in Italy visitors are required to apply for residence permit to Questura (Police Headquarters) within 8 business days of arrival following the procedures set forth in the type of visa. Afterwards visitors should enroll in the Anagrafe (public records office) of the town of residence.

Visa and Entry Permit Procedures
All visitors that are not citizens of the EU/EEA or Switzerland normally require a visa and for stays beyond 90 days they also require a residence permit.

The entry visa, be it either for a short or a long stay, consists of a sticker placed on a passport or other valid travel document authorizing its foreign bearer to set foot on the soil of the Italian Republic or that of another contracting country for transit or stay, to be evaluated on the basis of the needs associated with the status of international relations and with the defence of national security and the public order.

It is released by Italian diplomatic offices abroad. Visa types vary depending on the purpose of the trip and there are a total of 21 of them: requisites and conditions to obtain a visa are set forth by specific European regulations.

The residence permit is a document issued by the Questura (Police Headquarters) authorising the legal presence (sojourn) of

Note
(5) Citizens of SAN MARINO and HOLY SEAT are in any case exempt from visa
foreign nationals on Italian soil until its expiry date. This permit is an essential condition to be assigned the residency and to be allowed to work on the conditions stated on the permit itself. The residence permit is issued for the same purposes indicated on the visa. A study visa or a research visa are what is normally needed for visits to universities. The issuing procedures may require some time so it is advisable to apply at least 3 months ahead of the intended travelling date.

**Visa for Research Purposes**
A visa for research purposes allows foreign nationals to enter Italy for either a brief and a long stay to carry out research activities as specified by the research institute or university that have invited them. Applicants must hold an academic title that in the country it was granted gives access to doctoral programmes. The university or research institute extending the invitation must be enrolled in a list of approved institutions issued by the Ministry of Education, University and Research on the basis of a hosting agreement. The visa application will be considered only after the Immigration Desk (Sportello Unico per l’Immigrazione - SUI) has issued the necessary authorisation (nulla osta).

The University of Florence is enrolled in the above mentioned lists since 18 January 2012 with number 170. The application for a research visa is lodged to the Immigration Desk by the International Relations Unit on behalf of President of the University and upon request of the Department hosting the prospective researcher. Such procedure is necessary also in case of foreign nationals who have been awarded a research grant at the University of Florence. Regulations of reference: Testo Unico n. 286/1998, art. 27-ter and further amendments.

**Visa for Study Purposes**
This visa allows foreign nationals entry in Italy for a long stay which must be, however, of a fixed duration in order to pursue university-level studies. It is issued to applicants wishing to acquire the following academic titles, irrespective of any research activity carried out:

- PhD
- University Professional Master Course
- Post-graduate Specialisation School Diploma
- Advanced Training Course

The visa for study purposes, both for short and long stays, is issued also to foreign nationals wishing to enter Italy in order to carry out advanced research or cultural activities which are not mentioned expressly among the visa for research purposes cases. Application for this type of visa is lodged directly by the applicant through an Italian diplomatic mission in their country of residence.

Requisites and conditions to obtain the visa:

- evidence of enrollment in the study programme or agreement for scientific/cultural activity to be carried out
- evidence of adequate economic means
- comprehensive medical insurance in case the foreign national does not have the right to public medical assistance in Italy thanks to bilateral agreements with their country of origin
- evidence of living arrangements: hotel
booking, declaration of hospitality given by an Italian or foreign citizen with regular residency in Italy

**Tax Code**
The tax code (Codice Fiscale) is a fiscal identification code, comprised of letters and numbers, that identifies citizens when dealing with Italian public Authorities and other Administrations. It is required in Italy for all sort of procedures (e.g. applying for a resident permit, opening a bank account, applying for the National Health Service card, renting a flat, applying for a fixed telephone line, buying a mobile phone's SIM card, etc.).
The request may be submitted personally to any local tax office branch of the Italian Revenue Agency (Agenzia delle Entrate). Direzione Provinciale di FIRENZE Via santa Caterina d'Alessandria, 23 50129 - FIRENZE phone: 055-4787111 E-mail: dp.firenze@agenziaentrate.it

The tax code is issued immediately and free of charge. It is necessary to complete the AA4/8 form EU/EEA citizens must bring a valid passport or another form of ID; non EU/EEA citizens must bring the passport with a valid visa (if requested) and a copy of it (clearly showing personal data and visa) and/or the residence permit. Alternatively, it is possible to apply for the tax code to the Italian consular authorities in the country of residence.
For further information, please visit the Agenzia delle Entrate website: www1.agenziaentrate.gov.it/english/

**HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE**

**National Health Service (SSN)**
Citizens of the EU, EEA and Switzerland

**For Stays up to 90 Days**
1. Either hold a TEAM card (Tessera Europea di Assicurazione Malattia) which entitles them to obtain the same services provided by the National Health Service (SSN) to all Italian residents.
2. Or have private health insurance covering Italy.

**For Stays of more than 90 Days**
1. Either be registered in the SSN. Registration is free of charge and obligatory for certain categories of foreign nationals such as those who have a work contract where they pay personal income taxes in Italy. Enrolment is on a voluntary basis for foreign nationals who, for instance, are in Italy with a research or study permit or in case the work contract is not taxable (such as research grants).
2. Or have private health insurance covering Italy.

**Citizens coming from countries outside EU/EEA/Switzerland**

**For Stays up to 90 Days**
With the exception of holders of specific types of residence permits who are registered in the SSN, foreign nationals will be able to receive emergency treatments and hospital care by paying the corresponding fees at the time of discharge. Tariffs are determined by Regional and Provincial governments.
It is advisable, however, to take out private health insurance covering Italy.
For Stays of more than 90 Days
Foreign nationals that do not have the right to register in SSN must take out private health insurance either prior to arrival in Italy and covering the entire Italian territory or upon arrival to Italy with an Italian insurance company. Alternatively, they can apply to be registered in the SSN by paying the required fees.

Please note
Make sure that your private health insurance is valid in Italy by checking with an Italian diplomatic office located in your country of origin.

Registration to the SSN
Those who are registered to SSN have the same rights and duties of Italian citizens including the co-payment of fees for the services provided (ticket). The contribution varies according to the financial situation of the applicant. In some cases (e.g. students) applicants pay a flat fee.

For more information please refer to the local health offices in your area of residency and visit www.asf.toscana.it (in Italian only) or Ufficio Stranieri - ASL 10 in Via Gramsci, 561 – Sesto Fiorentino – phone: +39 055 6930111 - e-mail: ufficio.stranieri@asf.toscana.it Monday to Friday from 9 am - 2 pm
The main hospital is AOU Careggi, situated in Largo Brambilla, 3 - Firenze
There is a desk dedicated to foreign citizens:
Foreigners’ Hospitalisation Office | Ufficio Spedalità Stranieri
Pavilion 2 NIC (Main Entrance)
phone: +39 055 794 9888 | 055 794 7057
Monday to Saturday 7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Banking Services
To open a bank account, citizens must be over eighteen years of age, possess a valid ID and the Italian tax code and they must have not been convicted for bankruptcy. Foreign nationals must declare whether they currently reside in Italy or not at the time they open the account. Foreign citizens qualify as residents when they have their habitual home (residenza) or have their main business activity (domicilio) in Italy or are enrolled in the public registry of residents for at least 183 days a year. Bank account (conto corrente) terms and conditions vary from bank to bank: in most cases, a debit card (Bancomat) is issued as well as a cheque-book (libretto degli assegni). In some banks a small deposit of money in order to open the account can be required. Before opening a bank account, it is recommended to get all the information needed since banks can offer different solutions (i.e. fees included or not for account management, withdrawal of money, etc.). In general bank opening hours vary according to the bank and the town. Some banks are open all day with no lunch break and/or on Saturday mornings. On the day before a public holiday, banks often close early.
1. Cascine  
2. Polo di Novoli  
3. Morgagni  
4. Careggi  
5. Pieraccini  
6. Santa Marta  
7. Torretta  
8. San Salvi  
9. Santa Verdiana  
10. Santa Teresa  
11. San Clemente  
12. Capponi  
13. via Laura  
14. Brunelleschi  
15. via Alfani  
16. San Marco  
17. La Pira  
18. via del Proconsolo  
19. San Gallo  
20. Santa Reparata  
21. Savonarola  
22. Il Pellegrino  
23. San Niccolò
24. Polo Scientifico e Tecnologico viale delle Idee, 26 - Sesto Fiorentino
25. Polo Universitario "Città di Prato" piazza Ciardi, 25 - Prato
26. Design Campus viale Pertini, 93 - Calenzano
27. via Paladini, 40 - Empoli
28. piazza della Libertà, 18 - Vinci