



## **RELOCATING TO BRA:** **Planning your Move – Useful Information**

**DISCLAIMER:** The University is not responsible for ensuring the absolute veracity of this document. Rather, it is the student's responsibility to verify the information provided directly with the relevant authorities.

### **Hotels in Bra and Pollenzo**

Find [here](#) a listing of most hotels and B&Bs in Bra, and [here](#) the link to the tourist office in Bra.

Please be aware that Pollenzo is a subdivision of Bra with a population of only around 700. It has no supermarket, nor is it served by public transportation on Saturday afternoons or Sundays. For these reasons, **we strongly recommend that students live in Bra.**

### **Renting an Apartment in Bra**

In order to sign an apartment lease agreement, you will need to obtain a fiscal code (*codice fiscale*) from the Revenue Agency (*Agenzia delle Entrate*) (address below under Contacts). Bring your passport and visa with you. If they ask for your *Permesso di Soggiorno* (Permit of Stay), explain that you are a student renting an apartment and that you cannot apply for your *Permesso* until you have an address.

**NOTE: all information presented on your *codice fiscale* must correspond exactly to your legal name as indicated on your passport** (e.g. first, second and last name(s), date and place of birth). As the *Agenzia delle Entrate* has sometimes been known to make mistakes, we ask that you double this information is correct.

You can either rent an apartment through an agency or directly through a private individual. The advantage of renting through an agency is that they arrange all the paperwork and ensure that it is done properly. This service comes with a fee, usually equal to one month's rent (plus VAT at 22%).

Renting directly through a private individual will save you the cost of an agency fee, but can take more time and will require greater Italian skills on your part. There is also an element of risk, as you are entrusting your landlord to follow proper protocol in registering your contract. That said, you have more leeway to negotiate with your landlord to have certain expenses included, such as electricity and gas, or even have the contracts kept in their name, which will save you time and money (See "Cost of Rent and Utilities" below).

We recommend starting your apartment search as soon as you are accepted into the program. To get an early idea of the housing market in Bra, check out [www.immobiliare.it](http://www.immobiliare.it) which aggregates all local real estate listings into an easy-to-use search engine. If you find an apartment that looks interesting, contact the listed real estate agency directly.



## **UNISG Student Blog**

Additionally, whenever students leave their apartments in Bra, they usually let each other know via the [UNISG Student Association Blog](#) or the [UNISG Housing page on Facebook](#). Any ads that are sent to us will find their way to one of the aforementioned pages. In addition, students have also set up their own general Facebook page [here](#), with the title “UNISG Fun Food”.

## **Apartment Contracts**

**NOTE: the standard timeframe by which renters must give notice (via registered mail) for terminating their lease is 3 months.** However, students can always attempt to negotiate this to their advantage.

Our agency contacts in Bra recommend the “*contratto di locazione agevolata per studenti*,” as the best option for students. With this type of contract, there is no requirement to establish residency in Bra, and the rent, which cannot exceed €500 per month, is set based on the characteristics and amenities of the apartment (as determined by an independent contractor) and not by the owner. Furthermore, rent is tax deductible (for those filing returns in Italy) and the property owner also benefits from certain tax incentives.

That said, there is a €50 trade union processing fee for this type of contract, and students must present a certificate of enrollment to the agency, which they can obtain by contacting the Academic and Registrar Office.

The maximum duration of this type of contract is 36 months.

Should your agency be unfamiliar with this option, please point them to this Bra city website (in Italian): <https://www.comune.bra.cn.it/index.php/it/page/affitti-a-canone-concordato>

The second-best option would be the “*contratto di locazione transitoria*”, which has a duration of 2 to 18 months, and allows students to end the contract with 3 months’ notice, unless otherwise stipulated.

**Students should avoid signing a “*contratto di locazione agevolata con canone concordato*”.**

This type of lease lasts for 3 years with the option to renew for another 2 (“*tre più due*” in Italian) and typically requires students to give 6 months’ notice, though this may be negotiated down to 3 months. It also necessitates payment of an annual renter’s membership fee of €50, and requires students to obtain full-time residence in Bra.

**Students should also avoid signing a “*contratto ad uso abitativo standard*”,** also known as “*quattro più quattro*” in Italian, as it is a 4-year contract, renewable for another 4 years. In this case, students must give a minimum of 6 months’ notice to end the contract, which is non-negotiable.

**Non-EU/EEA students: make sure your lease (*contratto*) is officially registered by your landlord.** You will each pay a fee of 40 Euros, but it will ensure that you are protected under the law (i.e: have a valid contract) and that you can renew your *permesso di soggiorno*, should you intend to stay in Italy after your studies.



NOTE: If your landlord offers to pay for household items before your arrival (e.g.: pillows, sheets, towels, etc.), be sure to establish the approximate price/cost limit of these purchases to avoid any unpleasant surprises.

### **On-Campus Notice Boards**

You can also find out about free apartments at the University's notice boards upon your arrival; one is located next to the copy machine in the *Agenzia di Pollenzo* building, the other one in the *Cascina Albertina*.

### **Cost of Rent and Utilities**

**Important notice #1: utility providers do not solicit information door-to-door. Therefore, do not buzz in anyone purporting to be from your energy company, as they are either a rival energy sales rep trying to get you to sign a policy, or a thief attempting to enter the premises.**

**Important notice #2: for those renting with roommates: remember that your utility provider will hold the account holder, and not the apartment tenants, responsible for any unpaid bills.**

**Important notice #3: As a precaution, we would suggest taking detailed photos of any pre-existing damage found prior to moving in, and either have it fixed, or document it in such a way (e.g.: in an email) as to avoid being charged for it when closing your contract (as you would do when renting a car).**

The cost of rent will vary depending on where you choose to live, along with the size and arrangement of your apartment. A fully furnished one-bedroom apartment in the center of Bra costs on average 300 Euros per month, a two-bedroom apartment about 500 Euros. **In addition to your rent, expect to pay monthly condominium fees, normally around 30 Euros, which can range as high as 250 Euros.** These cover different costs related to the common areas of your building, as well as maintenance, repairs, and cleaning of the apartment.

Rent does not include utility fees, which can be quite expensive in Italy. Italian utilities are billed every two months and include gas, electricity and water. Expect to receive your highest bills during the winter, which can be as high as 150 Euros per month. You will also be required to pay a garbage tax, known as *TARI*, the value of which could total around €100, and varies depending on the size of your apartment and the number of occupants.

Unless students specify in their contract that utility contracts be kept in their landlords' name, **expect to pay account opening and closing fees (around 50 Euro per activation or closure). There are also deposits for both gas and electricity (up to 150 Euro), which in some cases you may opt out of by providing a valid Italian IBAN number at the moment of activation.**

The two largest energy providers in Bra are [ENEL](#) (which shares an office with the TIM phone provider and [EGEA](#)). Their prices are comparable. Water is provided exclusively through [TECNOEDIL](#) (EGEA).



## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Airport Shuttle and Direct Commuter Train to Bra**

#### From Turin Caselle Airport:

- (1) Sadem Shuttle Service to Turin **Porta Susa** Station with departures every 15/30 min.: <http://www.sadem.it/media/6355/000268.pdf>. Tickets can be purchased in the airport.
- (2) Direct train from Turin **Porta Susa** Station to Bra (Line SFM4): [http://www.sfmtorino.it/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2013.12.15\\_sfm4\\_Ceva.pdf](http://www.sfmtorino.it/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2013.12.15_sfm4_Ceva.pdf)

#### From Milan Malpensa Airport:

- (1) Sadem Shuttle Service to Turin **Porta Susa** Station with departures every 2hrs: <http://www.sadem.it/en/prodotti/collegamento-aeroporti/milano-malpensa-airport.aspx>

#### **Seat Reservation Must Be Made In Advance Online**

- (2) Direct train from Turin **Porta Susa** Station to Bra (Line SFM4): [http://www.sfmtorino.it/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2013.12.15\\_sfm4\\_Ceva.pdf](http://www.sfmtorino.it/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2013.12.15_sfm4_Ceva.pdf)

#### From Bergamo Orio al Serio Airport

- 1) Flixbus Offers 1 direct bus to Bra every day: <https://www.flixbus.it/>

Otherwise, your best option is to take one of the many shuttle services to Milano Centrale train station, and then a train from there to Bra.

### **Bra – Pollenzo Shuttle**

Pollenzo and Bra are linked by a bus route (Linea n. 1). Travel time from the Bra - Movicentro stop to UNISG is about 20 minutes. The schedule is available [here](#). A one-way ticket can be purchased only on the bus. Special 12-month student passes can be purchased through our General Services Office, however, they will only be activated beginning the second week of classes.

Should you intend on taking the bus more than 3 times round-trip to and from Pollenzo prior to the second week of classes, we suggest purchasing a **BIP transit card in person** from the bus company for €5 and then have it charged with either 10 single rides or an “*abbonamento 10 corse*”, or a weekly pass “*settimanale*”. The Bra “*Nuova Beccaria*” bus company is located [here](#), in Strada Falchetto, 61. Alternatively (Italian skills permitting) you can submit your transit card request directly to the bus driver and pick it up from him (or a colleague) the following day.

One last option is to download the Grandabus app, which can be found [here: http://grandabus.it/app-grandabus/](http://grandabus.it/app-grandabus/) By syncing your credit card, you can charge your account with credit that can be used to purchase discounted single ride tickets directly on the bus by passing your phone in front of the QR code reader on board.

### **Bringing, Renting or Purchasing a Car**

While the public transportation network is quite reliable on weekdays, students sometimes find it difficult to travel independently to and from Bra on weekends and evenings. For that reason, we



encourage students who can to bring their cars with them, as they will then have additional mobility during their studies. For those who cannot, there is an AVIS car rental office in Bra. Here is a link to their website: <http://www.avisautonoleggio.it/Autonoleggio/Europa/Italia/Bra/Bra-Autonoleggio>. [Kayak](#) is another good site for finding interesting deals.

Some students with sufficient means even consider purchasing a used car at the beginning of the program and reselling it at the end. Know however, that cars may only be registered to EU citizens, or non-EU full-time residents. Lastly, those EU citizens who decide to establish full-time residency in Italy, and only those, must obtain an Italian license plate within 60 days.

**For those students living in the historic center of Bra:** you will need to request a permit in order to have unrestricted access to the limited traffic zone, or “ZTL” pedestrian area, with your private vehicle. Be advised that, in order to obtain a parking permit, your apartment must be located in the restricted area and must include a garage on the lease agreement.

For further information, please see [this page](#) of the Bra City Hall’s website: <https://www.comune.bra.cn.it/it/page/zona-a-traffico-limitato-ztl>

**Taxi Service:** [www.paginegialle.it/ricerca/taxi/Bra%20\(CN\)?rk=0](http://www.paginegialle.it/ricerca/taxi/Bra%20(CN)?rk=0)

### **Language Learning Opportunities**

We strongly encourage all non-native speakers to improve their Italian language skills as much as possible prior to their studies, as the better their abilities, the more satisfying their study experience in Italy will be. Furthermore, Italian language skills are essential for those considering internships in Italy, even in large companies.

Here are five interesting contacts for language learning, unofficially recommended to us through outside sources:

- **Emiliano Trucco** of Cooperativa Orso: 338 389 1126. Tell them you are UNISG students.
- **Paola Capellino** [pcapellino@yahoo.it](mailto:pcapellino@yahoo.it), teaches Italian at UNISG, but may be quite busy. Ask her for language contacts in and around Bra;
- **Academy International** Language School in Bra;
- **SIALIP**: An intensive six-week full-immersion course in Italian in the Val Pellice. [Here](#) is the brochure.

### **ESTIMATED COSTS OF LIVING IN BRA**

Economic needs vary depending on the lifestyle of the individual, on the stores or markets and on the season. The following figures should be used as a guide and are based on local knowledge and on UNISG students' experience.

#### **Accommodation & Connectivity**

- A single room in an apartment (shared with other students): around 300€ / month, plus utilities
- One-bedroom furnished apartment: around 500€ / month, plus utilities (**€30 - €150 per month, depending on the season; ask landlord for estimate before signing the contract**)



- Condominium expenses: **from €30 to €250 per month, depending on the building (check contract before signing)**
- High-speed internet: around €30 / month
- Mobile phone with a pre-paid-sim-card: €30. Monthly phone costs around €20

#### Food - an estimate of monthly expenses

- Bought at the local and seasonal food market / grocery store / supermarket: approx. €200/month

#### Food

pasta €2,00 per kilo

rice €3,20 per kilo

milk €1,20 per liter

bread €3,50 per kilo

sugar €1,00 per kilo

coffee (250 grams) €3,50

beef €10,00 per kilo

chicken €6,00 each

potatoes €1,00 per kilo

tomatoes €3,00 per kilo

lettuce €0,80 per head

carrots €1,50 per kilo

apples €2,00 per kilo

bananas €1,60 per kilo

a coffee €1,00

a croissant €2,50

a cappuccino €1,50 to €2,50

an orange juice €2,00 to €3,00

a beer €1,00 per bottle

a bottle of Dolcetto/Barbera: wine €10,00

Meals at a Pizzeria: €20 per person

Meals at a Restaurant from €25-€55 per person

Facebook page for the local "Community supported agriculture-group"):

<https://www.facebook.com/GAS.La.Credenza/info>

#### Stores, markets, supermarkets

Food stores in Bra are usually open from Monday to Saturday, from 9 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. and from 4:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.

Supermarkets are usually open from Monday to Saturday, from 8:30 A.M. to 7:30 P.M. and also occasionally on Sunday morning until noon.

The Big Store in Via Don Orione 45 is open nearly every day from 9.00 A.M. until 9 P.M.

#### Night life & Leisure time

- Cinema tickets €5 to €10

- 10 entries at the swimming pool, including student discount: €60



Transportation:

- bus from Torino airport to Torino Porta Susa train station €7,00
- train from Torino to Bra €4,60
- train from Milano to Bra €14,15 or €34,60 (for high-speed train)
- shuttle bus from Milano to Torino Porta Susa train station €22 (from Malpensa); €25 (from Bergamo)
- Shuttle bus from Linate Orio al Serio to Milan Central Train Station: €5
- Discounted bus card Bra – Pollenzo €50 for the whole year
- a used bike costs between €50 and €500 (depending on model)
- Travel by car round trip from Bra to Savona (200km): €40 (petrol + highway toll)
- to rent a car in Bra for the weekend: €130
- a return flight with Ryanair from Turin to London, booked one month in advance €330

Useful Transportation Websites:

Trains: [www.trenitalia.it](http://www.trenitalia.it), <http://www.italotreno.it/EN/Pages/default.aspx>,

Planes: <http://www.skyscanner.it/>

Airport Shuttle: <http://www.sadem.it/en/home.aspx>

Bus Service Bra – Pollenzo: <https://www.viaggisac.it/linee-ed-orari-1>

Permesso di soggiorno/Permit of Stay for non-Eu students:

- revenue stamp (*marca da bollo*) €16,00
- €101,96 for mailing and processing

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