



INTERNATIONAL
HELLENIC
UNIVERSITY

University Center of
International Programmes
of Studies (UCIPS)

**International
Students
Support Unit**

Living & Studying in Thessaloniki



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**A
Practical
Guide**

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About Thessaloniki – Practical Information

Thessaloniki is not just a beautiful city, but a **student-friendly hub** full of opportunities and experiences. Here is what you need to know to get around and start feeling at home.

1. Getting Around Thessaloniki

Public Transportation: Thessaloniki has a **well-connected bus system** operated by **OASTH** (ΟΑΣΘ in Greek). Buses are affordable, reliable, and cover most of the city.

- For tickets, lines and schedules visit [OASTH](#) website or
- You can also download the **OASTH app** to your mobile device for real-time route and schedule information.



Metro: The **Thessaloniki Metro** began operating in **December 2024**, providing a fast, modern alternative for commuting. The first line connects **Nea Elvetia** to **Dimokratias Square** in the city center, with further expansions planned. It's an ideal option for avoiding traffic and reaching key areas quickly.

- For tickets, lines and schedules visit <https://www.thessmetro.gr/en/tickets/>

Taxis: Taxis are **easy to find** throughout Thessaloniki, especially near busy streets, universities, and nightlife areas.

You can hail a taxi on the street, book by phone, or use mobile apps such as [Uber](#) or [Freenow](#) for convenience, estimated fares, and card payments.

- **Useful taxi numbers in Thessaloniki:** 18300, 18180, 18288

Biking: While Thessaloniki is not particularly bike-friendly overall, the **seafront promenade** is ideal for cycling. It stretches along the coast and provides a scenic, safe, and flat route that allows for easy movement along the city's length—perfect for both commuting and leisure rides.

- For more information on the bike sharing system in Thessaloniki and available bike rentals, please visit the Thessaloniki.travel website

2. Accommodation

Where to live: Many students choose to live in areas close to the universities or with easy transport links.

- **Popular student areas** include **Ano Poli**, **Agiou Dimitriou**, **Vardari** and **Kamara**, which are centrally located and offer affordable rent options.
- Additionally, neighborhoods like **Faliro**, **Martiou**, **Analipsi**, **Harilaou**, **Voulgari** and **Votsi** are well-connected by public transportation and offer convenient access to the **International Hellenic University Thermi Campus**.

Student Dorms: The university does not provide dormitory accommodation for postgraduate students. Private student residences are also available, though limited in number, so it's advisable to start looking early, especially before the start of the academic semester.

Rent Prices:

- A one-bedroom apartment in the city center typically costs between **€350–€500/month**.
- Shared apartments are also common and significantly reduce costs.

Utilities & Bills:

In shared apartments, students usually split the cost of electricity, water, and internet. Monthly expenses typically range:

- **Electricity & Water:** €30–€50 per person
- **Internet:** €20–€40 per apartment
- Bills are usually paid by one tenant and then shared among roommates, unless a different arrangement has been made with the landlord.

Finding Accommodation:

- IHU's dedicated accommodation webpage [Students Accommodation](#) provides an overview of accommodation options in Thessaloniki, along with useful information to help you settle into the city.
-

3. Cost of Living

Food:

- Eating out is affordable: a meal at a local souvlaki place can cost around **€5–€10**.
- Monthly grocery expenses range from **€150–€250**, depending on lifestyle.

Shopping:

➤ **Supermarkets**

Masoutis, Sklavenitis, Lidl, and AB Vassilopoulos are the major chains across the city—handy for daily essentials and student budgets.

Supermarket Opening Hours in Greece

- **Monday – Friday:** 08:00 – 21:00
- **Saturday:** 08:00 – 20:00
- **Sunday:** Closed (with some exceptions in tourist areas during summer or on special sales/holiday dates).

➤ **Local City-Centre Markets**

Modiano and Kapani offer an authentic taste of Thessaloniki. In Modiano, you'll find fresh produce, meats, spices, and a few cozy tavernas inside its historic market building. Kapani buzzes with vendors selling everything from olives and sweets to household items in its traditional alleys.

➤ **Weekly Neighborhood Markets (Laikí Agorá)**

Every neighborhood hosts open-air markets once a week—perfect for fresh fruit, veggies, olives, herbs, and bargain finds. These markets typically run from early morning until around 2 pm.

➤ **General Stores (clothing, electronics, etc.) shopping hours:**

Monday, Wednesday, Saturday: usually 09:00–15:00

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: usually 09:00–14:30 & 17:00–21:00

➤ **Shopping Malls in Thessaloniki:**

In Thessaloniki, you can find several modern shopping malls with a wide variety of shops, cafés, and entertainment options. The closest to the University is **Mediterranean COSMOS**, which is also the largest mall in Northern Greece.

Opening hours:

- Monday–Saturday: 10:00–21:00
- Sunday: Closed (except for special sale days)

For more information about shopping malls in Thessaloniki, please click [here](#)

Entertainment:

- Coffee to take away: **€2–€5**
- Drink at a bar: **€5–€7**
- Club/party entry: usually **€7–€10**

Transport card / Monthly pass:

- **Bus:** Regular €27 / Students €13.50
 - **Metro:** Regular €16 / Students €8
 - **Taxi start:** 4€
-

4. Healthcare and Insurance

- **EU Students:** If you are eligible in your country for free health insurance, you are covered with an **EHIC (European Health Insurance Card)**.
- **Non-EU Students:** Required to have private health insurance valid in Greece.
- **All Students:** If you work part/full-time in Greece, you are entitled to free (under several conditions) public health insurance from the Greek state, allowing you access to a public hospital and getting your prescription medications by paying a low contribution.
- **AMKA** is Greece's Social Security Number. AMKA is essential for accessing public healthcare, registering for employment, paying social security contributions, receiving pensions, and applying for various social benefits.
 - **EU Citizens:** Can apply with a valid passport or national ID and proof of residence in Greece.

- **Non-EU Citizens:** Must first obtain a residence permit before applying.
- **Pharmacies and Doctors:** Widely available across the city. Prescriptions can be filled at any pharmacy with a valid doctor's note.
- **For emergencies:** In Thessaloniki, general hospitals take emergency duty on a rotating basis, depending on medical specialties. You can check which hospital is on duty each day, as well as the list of on-duty pharmacies, at <https://www.vrisko.gr/en/>

5. Communication: SIM Cards & Internet

SIM Cards:

- Mobile providers: **COSMOTE, Vodafone, Nova**
- Starter packages with data typically cost **€10–€20**

Internet:

- Most apartments offer high-speed internet (fiber)
- Monthly cost: **€20–€40**, depending on speed and provider.

6. Emergency Numbers & Safety

Thessaloniki area code (+30) 2310

- European Emergency Number 112
- Police 100
- Tourist Police (+30) 2310554874
- Fire Department 199
- Ambulance 166
- Port Authority (+30) 2310593134
- Traffic Police (+30) 2310250740
- Railway Customer Service Centre 14511
- Urban Transportation 11085
- Intercity coaches (+30) 2310595400
- TAXI 18300, 18180, 18288
- Airport (+30) 2310985000

Thessaloniki's hospitals

- Hippokration (+30) 2313312000
- Papanikolaou (+30) 2313307000
- A.CH.E.P.A (+30) 2313303775
- Gennimata (+30) 2313308100



- Aghios Dimitrios (+30) 2313322100
- Aghios Pavlos (30) 2313304401
- Theagenio (+30) 2313301111
- Hospital of Skin & Venereal Diseases (+30) 2313308800
- Psychiatric (+30) 2313324100
- Chronic Disease Hospital (+30) 2313320001
- Papageorgiou (+30) 2313323000

7. Useful Apps & Websites

- Thessaloniki's map on [Google maps](#)
- Public transportation ([OASTH/ Thessaloniki Metro](#))
- The official travel guide of Thessaloniki on [Thessaloniki.travel](#)

6. Climate

Thessaloniki has a Mediterranean climate with hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. Summer temperatures often rise above 30°C, while winters are cooler with occasional rain and rare snowfall. The city enjoys plenty of sunshine year-round, making it an appealing destination in any season.

7. Currency

Greece uses the **Euro (€)** as its official currency, like most countries in the European Union. One Euro (€1) is divided into **100 cents**, and banknotes come in denominations of **€5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200, and €500**, while coins range from **1 cent to €2**. If you're traveling from outside the Eurozone, you can exchange your money at banks, exchange offices, or even some hotels. Credit and debit cards are widely accepted, but it's always good to carry some cash, especially for small purchases, public transport, or in more rural areas where card payments may not be as common.

8. Holidays

New Year's Day – 1 January

Epiphany – 6 January

Clean Monday (First day of Lent) – movable

Independence Day and The Annunciation– 25 March

Good Friday– movable

Orthodox Easter Sunday – movable

Orthodox Easter Monday – movable

Labor Day/May Day – 1 May

Holy Spirit Monday – movable

Dormition of the Holy Virgin – 15 August

WWII Day / “OHI (no) Day”– 28 October

Christmas Day– 25 December

Saint Stephen’s– 26 December

Academic Life & University Services

1. University Structure

The **International Hellenic University (IHU)** is a public university based in Northern Greece. It consists of nine (9) Schools and twenty-five (25) Departments, with academic facilities located in the cities of **Thessaloniki (Sindos & Themi)**, **Serres**, **Katerini**, and **Kilkis**.

The university operates under the supervision of the Hellenic Ministry of Education and follows the European Higher Education framework.

The **University Center of International Programmes of Studies (UCIPS)** is a distinct academic unit of IHU, located in Thessaloniki. It offers exclusively **postgraduate programs taught in English**, attracting students from both EU and non-EU countries.

UCIPS currently includes two academic schools:

- School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Economics
- School of Science and Technology

Courses are delivered at the **Themi Campus**, located approximately 14 km southeast of Thessaloniki city center. This modern campus hosts classrooms, administrative offices, study spaces, and student support services, all designed to meet the needs of an international academic community.

2. Course Office

The **Course Office** is your main point of contact for all academic-related matters during your studies. It is located on campus (Building A) and can assist you with:

- Course registration and schedules
- Certificates and grade transcripts
- General administrative procedures

Office hours: Monday–Friday, 09:00–17:00

Contact Information

- For the School of Humanities, Social Studies and Economics
co-seba@ihu.edu.gr
2310 807523, 530

- For the School of Science and Technology
co-tech@ihu.edu.gr
2310 807521, 5525

For detailed information about the structure of each MSc programme, as well as academic regulations and guidelines, students are advised to consult the **Student Handbook**, which is provided to all the enrolled students at the beginning of the academic year.

3. IT Support

The IT Support of the University Center of International Programmes of Studies (UCIPS) in Thermi is responsible for the development and support of electronic (computing, networking and communication) services provided to the students and the academic staff of UCIPS.

Office hours:

- 09:00 – 21:00 on weekdays
- during class hours in the weekends

Contact details:

- +30 2310-807510
- servicedesk@ihu.edu.gr
- Building A, 1st floor, Thermi Campus

Website: <https://www.ihu.gr/en/it-thermi#generalinformation>

4. Libraries & Study Spaces

The International Hellenic University provides students with access to a well-equipped [Library and Information Center](#), located on the Thermi campus.

Key features:

- Quiet study zones and reading rooms
- Desktop computers and free Wi-Fi
- Access to a wide range of academic resources, both physical and electronic

Students benefit from subscriptions to major digital databases and e-journals, including:

- Web of Science
- Scopus
- Statista

- ScienceDirect
- SpringerLink

Access is available through the university's internal network or remotely via VPN with student credentials.

The library also supports:

- Information literacy workshops (on plagiarism, citation management, research strategies)
- Reference Services (help finding and evaluating sources)
- Assistance with reference and citation (APA, MLA, etc.)

Opening hours may vary by semester but they are generally:

Monday to Friday: 10:00–15:30

5. Erasmus+ Office

Students can contact the **Erasmus+ Office at IHU** to explore opportunities to participate in mobility programs for studies, internships abroad, post-placement opportunities, or doctoral mobility.

Outgoing Students: erasmus.out@the.ihu.gr | Tel: +30 2310 013712

Incoming Students: erasmus.in@the.ihu.gr | Tel: +30 2310 013706

6. Career Office

The Careers Office helps students plan their careers and connect with employers through one-to-one advice, interview workshops, job listings, career events, and online resources. Students can also attend annual career fairs to gain experience and network with professionals.

Email: careers@ihu.edu.gr | **Tel:** +30 2310 807529

7. Healthcare service

IHU offers on-campus healthcare services through a clinic located at the IHU Themi Campus at building A. The clinic provides **first-aid and general health care services** for students on weekdays, operating **Monday to Friday from 07:30 to 15:30**.

For an appointment, please contact:

- Telephone: +30 2310 807503
 - Email: e.zampaoglou@ihu.edu.gr
-

8. Unit for Equal Access for students with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs

The Unit offers counselling and psychological support to students of the International Hellenic University, addressing issues such as equal access for people with disabilities, special educational needs and more.

The Centre is located at the Sindos Campus clinic, opposite the Administration building, and operates Monday to Friday, 08:00–16:00 (by appointment).

To book an appointment, please contact:

- Telephone: +30 2310 013916
 - Email: kzavrakidis@ihu.edu.gr
-

Settling In – Daily Life in Greece

1. Academic Identity Card

Once you activate your online account, you become eligible to apply for the Academic Identity Card. This card offers a wide range of student discounts, such as reduced fares on all means of transportation, as well as discounted tickets for cultural events, museums, trade fairs, and more.

Shortly after receiving your academic credentials, you will get an email from the Course Office with detailed instructions on where and how to submit your application

2. AFM (ΑΦΜ in Greek) – Greek Tax Identification Number

As soon as you arrive in Greece you must obtain a Tax Identification Number (AFM in Greek), which is required for several necessary formalities, such as:

- Signing a rental contract
- Opening a bank account

You can find the list of the required documents and further useful information on our dedicated webpage [International Students Support Unit- During your stay](#)

3. Opening a Bank Account

- Find the list of the required documents and further useful information on our dedicated webpage [International Students Support Unit- During your stay](#)
 - Major banks: National Bank of Greece, Alpha Bank, Eurobank, Piraeus Bank
 - Opening hours Mon-Fri 08:00-14:00
-

4. Residence Permit (for Non-EU Students)

EU citizens and students from Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein do not have to apply for a residence permit, as they are entitled to the right of free movement within Greece.

If you are a non-European (third country) national, you must hold a student visa (visa D 1.1) from the Greek embassy in your country of origin before entering Greece and then obtain a student residence permit before the visa expires. The application for a student residence permit is submitted online with the assistance of our Unit and it is issued by the competent Immigration Service of the Decentralized Administration of Central Macedonia and Thrace

Full list of the necessary supporting documents can be found on our dedicated webpage [International Students Support Unit- During your stay](#)

5. Greek language courses

At the International Hellenic University, free Greek language courses are provided for international students enrolled at the University, to support their integration into academic and everyday life in Greece. The courses last for one semester, with 2 hours of instruction per week. Upon successful completion, students receive a certificate.

More information and registration at [International Students Support Unit](#)

ESN IHU Thessaloniki

ESN IHU is a student-run organization that helps international students feel at home in Thessaloniki. They organize social events, cultural activities, trips, and provide useful tips to make your student life easier and more fun.

Contact:

- **Email:** ihu@esnthessaloniki.gr
- **Facebook:** [ESN IHU Thessaloniki](#)
- **Instagram:** [@esn_ihu_thessaloniki](#)

Want even more tips and insider advice? Check out the [ESN Thessaloniki Survival Guide](#) – it's full of useful info from students for students!

International Students Support Unit

The International Students Support Unit (ISSU) is your main point of contact for any non-academic questions or issues during your stay in Greece. Its role is to assist international students with all aspects of daily life and relocation, including:

- Accommodation and housing queries
- Orientation and integration into campus life
- Answering practical questions related to living in Greece
- Support with procedures related to legal residence and interaction with public authorities
- Acting as a liaison to connect students with the appropriate university department when needed

The ISSU staff is always ready to help, ensuring a smooth transition and a positive Experience during your relocation and stay in Greece.

Contact Information:

- Email: isso@ihu.gr
- Phone: +30 2310 807501
- If you would like to visit the office in person, please [book an appointment](#) in advance.



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