

FAQs

The *Rundfunkbeitrag* is a licence fee for general public access to radio and TV. It has to be paid by every apartment to finance the numerous radio shows, TV shows and online accesses of **ARD**¹, **ZDF** and **Deutschlandradio**. The fee of approx. 18,- € monthly has to be paid regardless of the fact that reception equipment like TVs is available and if it is being used.

1. What is the *Rundfunkbeitrag*?

The *Rundfunkbeitrag* has to be paid by every apartment to finance the numerous radio shows, TV shows and online accesses of ARD, ZDF and Deutschlandradio. Since January 2013 the fee is approx. 18,- €. The exact amount can be found here: <http://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de/>

2. Do foreign students have to pay this fee?

Yes, also foreign students have to pay this fee. Even though being an international student receiving a scholarship or taking part in an exchange programme (e.g. ERASMUS), the fee has to be paid.

3. Over which period of time does this fee have to be paid?

The liability to pay this fee starts with the first day of the lease and ends corresponding to the agreement in the lease. If the student fails it's duty to register at the Citizens' Advice Bureau, the liability to pay this fee remains.

4. Do I have to pay this fee even though there is no reception equipment in my apartment or even though I don't use it?

Yes, the fee has to be paid regardless of availability of reception equipment in the apartment or of its usage.

5. Does every single resident of a shared flat have to pay this fee?

No, the fee has to be paid once per apartment. It doesn't matter how many people live together in this shared flat. One resident of age has to be registered and pay the fee for the apartment. He/she can then ask the other residents to pay him/her their amount of the fee.

6. When is my dorm room regarded as an apartment?

Your dorm room is regarded as an apartment, if the rooms branch off from a corridor which is opened to the general public. It doesn't matter if the rooms have a private bathroom or kitchen. The fee of approx. 18,- € monthly has to be paid for every dorm room which is regarded as an apartment.

7. When is my dorm room regarded as a room of a shared flat?

Your dorm room is regarded as a room of a shared flat, if the premises are designed like a private apartment or a shared flat. This is the case when the rooms are separated by a front door from a corridor or a stairwell which is opened to the general public. Only residents of these rooms have a key to this front door. If this is the case, your room is regarded as a room of a shared flat which means that only one fee has to be paid for all rooms.

8. How do I have to pay the fee?

The fee has to be paid for three months in advance. A monthly payment is not possible. The fee can be paid in the middle of three months (legal payment), in advance quarterly, half-yearly or yearly. The amount of the fee is always the same. A discount is not available if the fee is paid in advance.

9. How can I be granted exemption from the payment?

You can be granted exemption from the payment of the fee, if:

1. You receive BAföG payments.
2. Your case is regarded as a case of hardship: If you don't receive the social security benefits mentioned in § 4 paragraph 1 Rundfunkbeitragsstaatsvertrag (treaty of the licence fee for general public access to radio and TV) because your income exceeds the limit of need, you can be granted exemption from the payment of the fee as a case of hardship (§ 4 paragraph 6 Rundfunkbeitragsstaatsvertrag). This is only possible under the precondition that the exceeding is smaller than the *Rundfunkbeitrag*.
3. You are deaf and blind or a recipient of aid to blinds.

If you fulfil one of these requirements, you can file a petition to be granted exemption from the payment of the *Rundfunkbeitrag* at "ARD ZDF Deutschlandradio Beitragsservice". You can download the application form here:

http://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de/buergerinnen_und_buerger/ermaessigung_und_befreiung

10. When do I only have to pay the reduced fee?

You only have to pay the reduced fee if you have a disability and if the identity card for your disability says "RF".

11. How much is the reduced fee?

The reduced fee is approx. one third of the entire fee.