

ScuDo

Scuola di Dottorato – Doctoral School

WHAT YOU ARE, TAKES YOU FAR



URD

PhD in Urban and Regional Development

IN VARIETATE CONCORDIA

# Urban and Regional Development Ph.D. Programme INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' GUIDE



Politecnico  
di Torino



UNIVERSITÀ  
DI TORINO



Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning  
Excellence MIUR 2018-2022

## Urban and Regional Development Ph.D Programme - AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' GUIDE

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Hello! If you are reading this document it means that you are thinking about doing a PhD in Politecnico di Torino or you have already been accepted and planning your move to Turin. This guide is mainly geared towards an international student, especially a non-EU citizen, but some sections might be useful to anyone moving to Turin. **The document also tries to pay attention to accessibility, and some useful links and notes are spread throughout.** This guide is written with a focus on the Ph.D. programme in Urban and Regional Development but it works for students of other programmes too.

You can find all the relevant information about the PhD application process, the documents needed, the deadlines of the Calls on this [page](#) on the Politecnico website. For practical information such as student cards, institutional email addresses, student log in, etc., you can review the PhD [Survival Guides Before](#) and [After](#) on the Politecnico website. They are very comprehensive.

In case you'd like tips on how to apply, how to write a motivation letter, how to choose a PhD supervisor, or if you'd like to find out if Politecnico is the right place for you, you can contact us by email at:

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We are two PhD students from the Urban and Regional Development Programme.

The Urban and Regional Development PhD programme is hosted by DIST (Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning) at the [Valentino Castle](#) (Castello del Valentino), Viale Mattioli 39, 10125, Torino.

The [main Campus of Politecnico](#) (or Centrale) is located at Corso Duca degli Abruzzi 24, 10129, Torino, where the SCUDO (Doctoral School) and the International Students Office are.

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# 1. HOUSING

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Finding a place in Torino is not easy. Here you can find a series of websites, main words, and tips to help you through the process.

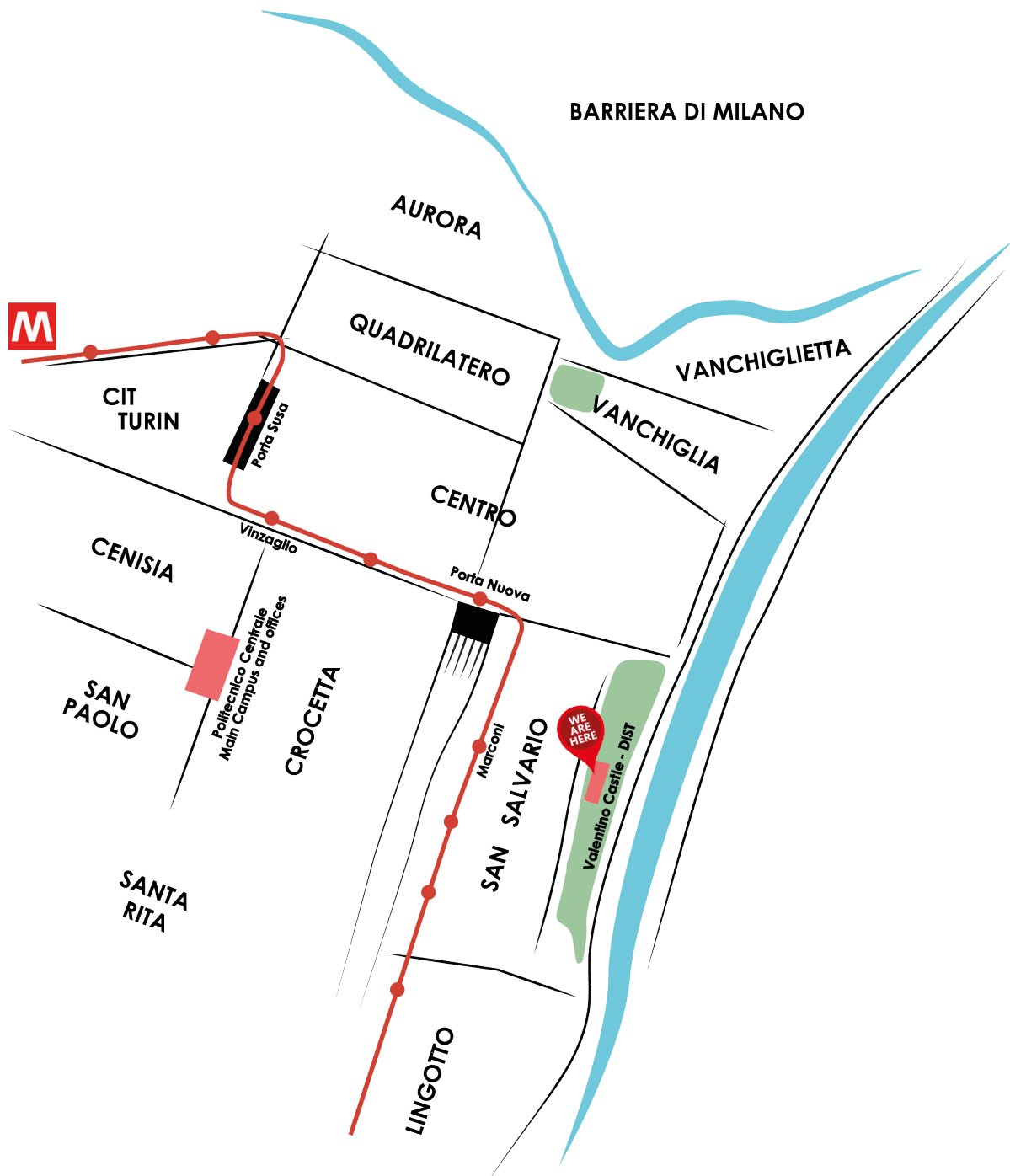
## DICTIONARY:

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- Monolocale: studio flat
- Bilocale: two rooms flat, it can be a house composed by a kitchen/living room and a bedroom. Sometimes landlords refer to a house with two bedrooms (plus kitchen and bathroom) also as a bilocale.
- Stanza singola: single room
- Stanza doppia: double room
- Cucina: kitchen
- Bagno: bathroom
- Stanza condivisa: shared room
- Appartamento condiviso: shared apartment
- Riscaldamento autonomo, riscaldamento centralizzato: they both refer to the heating system but with a difference-when autonomo, you pay the bill by the actual usage of the heating system, and you can decide when to turn it off and on. When the heating is centralizzato, you receive an annual bill where your heating use is calculated based on the size of your apartment and connected with the condominium heating system (maybe also connected with the rest of the city) and working just in the colder months, usually mid-October to mid-March. In case you have centralizzato con termovalvole, you can further adjust the temperature in your house (usually you pay the full use and the landlords should make the calculation and check if what you pay corresponds to what you use. Those calculations are usually made by the end of the heating year)
- Spese condominiali (condominium fees): these fees usually include water, cleaning services for the common spaces of the building (stairs, corridors) and for the common electricity bill (lighting and elevator).
- TARI - Municipal Garbage tax: sometimes it is included in your rent while other times it is not. It is better to specify with the landlord/tenants if it is included in the fees.

## DESCRIPTION OF NEIGHBOURHOODS:

- San Salvario: the neighborhood has constantly changed in the past years. In the upper part, the one closer to the Castle, nightlife and pubs are everywhere. You can reach both the Castle and the main station, Porta Nuova, just by walking. You also have the Valentino park nearby. If you don't mind paying a little higher rent, this is a good neighbourhood that's very close to the Castle, where our office is.



- **Crocetta:** The area is inhabited by families and a rich variety of local shops, stores and other commercial activities. The major connection from here to the Castle is the tram no. 16. If you live in the upper part, you might be close to the metro station, which takes you near the Castle in a few minutes. Living with other people might be cheaper if living here.
- **Cit Turin, Cenisia, San Paolo:** these neighborhoods are populated by many students due to the presence of the main Campus of Politecnico, where many of the engineering departments are present. Rents are quite affordable.
- **Santa Rita:** The neighbourhood is very chill and inhabited mostly by older people. Rents are cheaper here and there is also a major park, really pleasant for those interested in outdoor sports activities.
- **Aurora - Barriera di Milano:** the two areas are famous for their strong multicultural atmosphere. Porta Palazzo, one of the biggest open air markets in Europe, represents the gates of Aurora, along with the Balon, a vintage flea street market. Rents are relatively affordable.
- **Centro - Quadrilatero:** the beauty of Turin is in its historical centre, its plazas and mazes of smaller streets and bigger open spaces. Living here you will be surrounded by the major tourist attractions. Rents here will be more expensive.
- **Vanchiglia - Vanchiglietta:** these two areas are located in the northern part of the historical center of the city, still maintaining their character. They are both characterized by the presence of students due to the location of the main University of Turin Campus. If Vanchiglia is more popular on the weekends, Vanchiglietta is still quite chill. Rents here are very variable.
- **Lingotto:** the area is not really popular among those moving to Torino but characterized by bigger houses/rooms and cheaper rents. There are several Metro stops in the neighborhood and it is well connected with the Castle/center.

## WEBSITES AND GROUPS FOR HOUSE-HUNTING

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- <https://www.cercoalloggio.com/#!/city/Torino>
- <https://www.subito.it/>
- <https://torino.bakeca.it/annunci/offro-camera/>
- <https://www.idealista.it/affitto-stanze/torino-torino/lista-mappa>
- <https://www.immobiliare.it/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HomeStudentTorino>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/182051112459622>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HomeStudentTorino/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/182051112459622/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/AffittiTorinoPrivati/>

## GENERAL TIPS

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- Websites like HousingAnywhere charge a steep fee, and so do some housing agencies. They might ask you for two months of rent (beside the deposit) while other agencies might ask you for a fee (between 200 and 250 euros) to get the landlords' contacts. Usually everyone avoids them.
- Read the rental contract carefully before signing (have an Italian speaker read it if it's in Italian).
- The landlord will ask for your codice fiscale (see the specific section below) to register you in the system, so make sure you have it in place, if not by the time of signing the contract, then at least soon after.

## 2. BUREAUCRATIC PROCEDURES (for non-EU citizens)

Italian bureaucracy is infamously obtuse. Here are some tips taken from our experience as international students to help you navigate the system and ensure you have a smooth beginning to your life in Italy.

### CODICE FISCALE (fiscal code)

The codice fiscale (fiscal code) is probably the most important thing you'll need in the beginning (for SIM cards, Covid tests, Bank accounts, renting a house, etc.). When you get admission, Politecnico will send a letter to the Italian embassy in your country asking them to issue it to you. However, you might have to follow up with the Italian embassy and make a special request. Otherwise, you can generate the codice fiscale once you land in Italy by visiting the Agenzia Entrate (tax agency) and bringing your passport, university admission letter, address proof/rental housing contract (if applicable) and other documents. You can wait in line or try booking an appointment using the [Agenzia Entrate app](#).

Important addresses:

Agenzia Entrate, Turin - Corso Bolzano, 30, 10121 Torino TO

### PERMESSO DI SOGGIORNO (residence permit)

The information on the [International Students page](#) on the Politecnico website is pretty comprehensive. It lists all the documents you need and the process for submission. What you can do is:

- Go to any branch of Poste Italiane (post office) and collect the “permesso di soggiorno kit”. You don't need to wait in line, you can just head directly to a counter and ask for it. It is an envelope containing all the forms you need to fill for the permesso di soggiorno.
- Go to a tabacchi (tobacco/general store) and buy a 16 euros marca da bollo (duty stamp). You can find tabacchi shops in every neighbourhood, just look for a black or blue 'T' on a white sign board.
- Email the International Students office ([immigration.desk@polito.it](mailto:immigration.desk@polito.it)) and book an appointment to help fill out your permesso di soggiorno. You can do it on your own if your Italian is good enough. Their office is in the [main Campus of Politecnico](#) at Corso Duca degli Abruzzi 24, 10129, Torino.
- The folks at the International Students office will fill out the form for you. Make sure to carry your passport, photocopies of the relevant passport pages (including the Italian visa), university admission letter, codice fiscale, and other documents.
- Put everything in the kit and submit it to the nearest Poste Italiane (wait for your number this time or book a slot using the [Ufficio Postale app](#)). You will have to pay 100,46 euros (they have card machines at the post office). They will give you a postal receipt of the permesso di soggiorno (guard this with your life!) and an appointment day and time for fingerprinting at the Questura (police immigration office headquarters).
- This appointment day will be around 4 months after you submit the kit at the post office. Till then, your postal receipt should be enough. Carry it with you along with your passport when leaving the country.
- Make sure you are present on the day of the fingerprinting at the Questura, it is difficult to change the date of your appointment. Bring your permesso di soggiorno postal receipt, 4 passport-sized photographs, passport, codice fiscale, university admission letter, any missing documents from your kit, etc.

- On the day, be prepared to wait a LOT. On average, it takes 3-5 hours of waiting. Carry water, some snacks, and something to read. In winter, make sure you wear warm clothing because there is not enough heating and you might have to wait outside on the street.
- Your actual appointment time doesn't really matter, except to determine the order of entry towards the counter. Some people prefer arriving at the Questura early in the morning and getting it done with, irrespective of their later appointment time.
- Once you reach the counter, the actual process only takes a few minutes. Your postal receipt will be stamped and you will receive the Integration agreement form to sign.
- You're not done yet. You will be made to wait for a while after that, and one by one you will be taken to another room where your height will be measured and your fingerprints taken.
- However, you won't receive your actual permesso di soggiorno card yet. After around 1-2 months, you will receive a text message informing you of the day and time of collection at the same Questura. You can also check the [online status](#) of your permesso di soggiorno using the username and password on your postal receipt.
- In case you're out of town during this time, it's okay if you go to the Questura a few days later. The appointment day is not that strict for the collection of the permesso di soggiorno as it is for the fingerprinting.
- There is a separate line for the collection. Bring your postal receipt. Be prepared to wait for around 2 hours.
- Congratulations, you finally have your permesso di soggiorno! And now you have to start the process again in a few months for the [renewal](#) :)

## SOME TIPS

- When preparing the permesso di soggiorno kit, make sure you have photocopies of your relevant passport pages, including a photocopy of your Italian visa with the immigration stamp.
- It's okay if you don't have a tessera sanitaria (health insurance) by the time you submit the permesso di soggiorno kit. You can just bring the health insurance receipt with you on the fingerprinting appointment.
- Make sure you have 4 passport-sized photographs ready for the fingerprinting appointment at the Questura.

Important addresses:

Questura for immigration purposes - Corso Verona, 4, 10152, Torino TO

## SOME MORE IMPORTANT TIPS WHEN TRAVELLING ABROAD

- If you are a non-EU student, your residence permit is only valid for one year at a time. Under these terms, you **CANNOT BE OUTSIDE ITALY FOR MORE THAN 6 MONTHS** at a stretch. If you do so, you will be violating the terms of your residence permit, and you will face a lot of difficulty in re-entering Italy (your re-entry visa might even be rejected). So make sure to plan your visiting periods abroad to be less than 6 months.
- In case you absolutely cannot avoid doing a longer visiting period, try contacting the Questura to move up your fingerprints appointment and get your physical residence permit card before you leave Italy. Make sure you have 4 passport-sized photographs ready for the fingerprinting
- If you're travelling for a period shorter than 6 months and don't have your card yet, make sure to get the postal receipt of the residence permit stamped by the border police when you're leaving Italy.
- Italian immigration rules are complex, the Questura is opaque, and it's always uncertain what will or will not be acceptable at the border checkpoint. It's always best to be prepared (even overprepared) with all documents, talk to your fellow PhDs who've been in similar situations, and get confirmation from the International Students' office at Polito and/or the Italian embassy in your country before you make your travel plans.



## TESSERA SANITARIA (health insurance)

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Unlike the information on the permesso di soggiorno, the information on the tessera sanitaria (health insurance) on the Politecnico website does not cover everything. The process is as follows:

- Go to the nearest Poste Italiane (you can wait for your token number or book an appointment using the [Ufficio Postale app](#)) and ask for a “F24 Modello”.
- Submit the F24 Modello at the post office (the sample is on the following page). As students, we have to pay 149,77 euros per year. Make sure you carry your passport, codice fiscale, and other documents.
- The tessera sanitaria is valid only for one calendar year. So if you apply in October 2022, it will expire in December 2022, and you will have to pay 149,77 euros again starting from January 2023 for the year 2023.
- After payment at the post office, they will stamp your F24 modello. This is now your tessera sanitaria receipt.
- Go to the ASL (Azienda Sanitaria Locale) office (address below) and wait in line for your turn. Bring your passport, tessera sanitaria receipt, codice fiscale, and other documents.
- You should also have a name for a family doctor (medico di base) ready. You can choose one in your neighbourhood from the list of public doctors [here](#). Don't worry if you're not sure of anyone, or you don't know if they speak English, etc. You can always change this later!
- At the ASL, submit your documents and tell them the name of your chosen doctor. You will receive the provisional tessera sanitaria.
- It might so happen that when your codice fiscale is scanned at the ASL, it might not show up in the system (especially if your codice fiscale was issued by the Italian embassy in your country). This is because it may not be registered with a local address.
- This is a simple problem to fix- go to the Agenzia Entrate (it's easiest to book an appointment on the [Agenzia Entrate app](#)) with your codice fiscale, passport, residence proof/rental housing contract (if needed), and other documents. You will be issued a new codice fiscale (same number but a new document with the signature and stamp of the Italian tax agency).
- You can go back to the ASL and finish the tessera sanitaria process.
- You will receive the tessera sanitaria card via post in around 1 month.
- However, this is just a temporary tessera sanitaria valid only for a few months. Once you receive your permesso di soggiorno card, you have to go back to the same ASL with your permesso di soggiorno, codice fiscale, passport, and health insurance receipt (the stamped F24 modello).
- It's only after this that you will receive the tessera sanitaria card valid for the whole year. It will be sent to you in a month via post.
- The renewal process for the tessera sanitaria is the same.

Important addresses:

ASL - Oftalmico, via Filippo Juvarra, 19, 10122 Torino TO; Agenzia Entrate - Corso Bolzano, 30, 10121 Torino TO

## GENERAL TIPS

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- It's helpful if you know a few basic phrases in Italian, especially the names of the documents (codice fiscale, permesso di soggiorno, tessera sanitaria, etc.) and numbers in Italian (since the token numbers are usually in Italian).
- Be mentally and physically prepared to do a lot of waiting and standing around in queues.
- Like in most bureaucratic places around the world, you will find helpful and friendly workers, as well as rude and harried ones. Be polite but firm.
- The level of English knowledge in bureaucratic agencies in Turin is low to medium. Most of the signs and documents will be in Italian.
- Finally, the information and addresses provided above might be subject to change. We encourage you to contact the International Students office ([immigration.desk@polito.it](mailto:immigration.desk@polito.it)) in case you'd like to confirm any details.





Sample of Modello F24 for the Tessera Sanitaria

Mod. **F24**

**MODELLO DI PAGAMENTO UNIFICATO**

DELEGA IRREVOCABILE A: \_\_\_\_\_  
 AGENZIA \_\_\_\_\_ PROV. \_\_\_\_\_  
 PER L'ACCREDITO ALLA TESORERIA COMPETENTE

**CONTRIBUENTE**

**CODICE FISCALE** YOUR TAX CODE \_\_\_\_\_  
cognome, denominazione e ragione sociale

**DATI ANAGRAFICI** FAMILY NAME \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
data di nascita giorno mese anno sesso (M/F) comune (lo Stato estero) di nascita prov.  
 D | D | M | M | Y | Y | Y | Y | \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

**DOMICILIO FISCALE** CITY WHERE YOU LIVE NOW \_\_\_\_\_ T O \_\_\_\_\_  
contiene via e numero civico CURRENT ADDRESS (ST. NAME AND NUMBER)

**CODICE FISCALE del coobbligato, erede, genitore, tutore o curatore fallimentare** \_\_\_\_\_  
codice identificativo

**SEZIONE ERARIO**

IMPOSTE DIRETTE - IVA RITENUTE ALLA FONTE ALTRI TRIBUTI ED INTERESSI	codice tributo	ratazione/ versante/ prov./ mese/ ril.	periodo di riferimento	importi a debito versati	importi a credito compensati	
<b>TOTALE A</b>				0,00 B	0,00	<b>SALDO (A-B)</b>

M = Male  
F = Female

**SEZIONE INPS**

codice sede	capogruppo contributo	matricola INPS/codice INPS/ tipici azienda	periodo di riferimento da mm/aaaa	importi a debito versati	importi a credito compensati	
<b>TOTALE C</b>				0,00 D	0,00	<b>SALDO (C-D)</b>

**SEZIONE REGIONI**

codice regione	codice tributo	ratazione/ mese/ ril.	periodo di riferimento	importi a debito versati	importi a credito compensati	
1 3	8846		2022			
<b>TOTALE E</b>				149,77 F	0,00	<b>SALDO (E-F)</b>

CURRENT YEAR

**SEZIONE IMU E ALTRI TRIBUTI LOCALI**

codice ente/ codice comune	Rav.	mens. versati	Ass.	Saldi	ultimo mensile	codice tributo	ratazione/ mese/ ril.	periodo di riferimento	importi a debito versati	importi a credito compensati	
<b>TOTALE G</b>									0,00 H	0,00	<b>SALDO (G-H)</b>

**SEZIONE ALTRI ENTI PREVIDENZIALI E ASSICURATIVI**

codice sede	codice ditta	c.c.	numero di riferimento	periodo di riferimento	importi a debito versati	importi a credito compensati	
<b>TOTALE I</b>					0,00 L	0,00	<b>SALDO (I-L)</b>

codice ente	codice sede	situazione contributo	codice posizione	periodo di riferimento da mm/aaaa	a mm/aaaa	importi a debito versati	importi a credito compensati	
<b>TOTALE M</b>						0,00 N	0,00	<b>SALDO (M-N)</b>

**FIRMA** \_\_\_\_\_ **SALDO FINALE** EURO + 149,77

READABLE SIGNATURE

**ESTREMI DEL VERSAMENTO** (DA COMPILARE A CURA DI BANCA/POSTE/AGENTE DELLA RISCOSSIONE)

DATA	CODICE BANCA/POSTE/AGENTE DELLA RISCOSSIONE	Pagamento effettuato con assegno _____
giorno _____	AGENZIA _____ CAB/SPORTELLI _____	<input type="checkbox"/> bancario/postale
mese _____		<input type="checkbox"/> circolare/vaglia postale
anno _____		tratto / emesso su _____
		cod. ABI _____ CAB _____

Autorizzo addebito su conto corrente codice IBAN \_\_\_\_\_ firma \_\_\_\_\_

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## 3. LIVING IN THE CITY

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### REACHING TORINO

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**Airports:** Torino has its own airport named Torino Caselle, which is connected with several European locations. From there you can take a [shuttle](#) connecting you with the two major railway stations, Porta Susa and Porta Nuova. The ride is 7.5 euros and the service runs every 15/20 minutes. **For those with reduced mobility check [here](#).**

The other useful airport nearby Torino is Milano Malpensa. There are services connecting the airport with the city such as [this](#). Even some Flixbus rides connect the airport with Torino.

**Train:** There are two main railway stations in Torino, Porta Susa and Porta Nuova. They are both connected with the high-speed train line and they reach almost anywhere you need to go.

To buy tickets you can do everything online at [Trenitalia](#), which is the only public company delivering train services. Beside that, you also have [Italo](#) which delivers only high-speed train services. **For those with reduced mobility check [here](#).**

### MOVING IN TORINO

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**Public transport\*:** Did you know Torino has the oldest tramway system in Italy?

Moving in Torino is quite easy with public transport. Single tickets are 1,70 euros per 100 minutes of ride but you can also get yearly or monthly tickets. Please check [here](#) for fares and discounts.

To get constant updates on rides and lines you can use several apps like [GTT TO Move](#), [Moovit](#), or you can use the Torino Live Bus bot on Telegram to receive live updates about the bus stop you're at.

For yearly tickets, as PhD students, we can receive some discounts (check [here](#)).

\*to plan an accessible journey within Turin: <https://www.gtt.to.it/cms/en/ricerca-percorsi>

To obtain the free transportation card for people with disabilities, check [here](#) (page in Italian)

**Bikes:** Riding a bike in Torino has gotten easier in the last few years. [Here](#) you can find an updated map of the existing paths, although in minor streets the municipality has tried to promote 30 km/h zones where cars and bicycles can share the lane.

You have free floating services such as [ridemovi](#) or if you are a rider it is easier to find a used bike somewhere, probably in Porta Palazzo, or in facebook groups like the ones below. It's common to have a second hand used bike in Turin.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1126844257504988/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/622507807846870>

There are bike parking spaces in the Castle, and we recently got a small station with some tools useful to repair your bike.

**Cars:** There are two major car sharing services in the city: [Enjoy](#) and [SHARE now](#). You can check out their website to see fares and how they work.

**Scooter:** there are several companies providing the sharing service in Turin. [Here the link](#) with all of them (in Italian)

**Motorbike:** still with a sharing formula, it is possible to [rent motorbikes](#) to go around the city.

**Taxi:** Taxis are not very common in Turin, but you can use the app [Free Now](#) or use this number to order (011 5730).

## LIVING IN TORINO\*

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\* to know more about services for people with disabilities you can check [here](#) and [here](#) (both in Italian)

**Sim cards:** usually your passport should be enough to request a new SIM card with the existing companies. Some companies might ask for Italian IDs or for your Codice Fiscale (check the specific paragraph). Popular companies are TIM, Vodafone, Windtre.

**Healthcare:** Healthcare is free in Italy, there are just taxes to pay. As you will see when receiving your tessera sanitaria, everybody in Italy needs to have their own Medico di Base (General Doctor), which is the one you are meant to refer to each time you have smaller issues. From there, if you need to take additional exams, your doctor will give you further instructions to proceed with specialized centres or doctors. Be prepared that the system is quite rigid and timings to book for a specific visit might be extended. Also the system of booking appointments will be in Italian. You can book appointments with your doctor by directly calling them. To book other appointments or tests, you can use the app [CUP Piemonte](#). The sanitation system in Italy is coordinated by the ASL (Azienda Sanitaria Locale), which works on a regional base. For Piemonte, you can look [here](#).

In worst cases scenarios, if you find yourself in a hospital, remember that all the treatments are free.

**Medicines:** When recommended by the doctors who apply their own stamp to the 'ricetta' they give you, you might get a discount for specific medications. For some light and common medicines (medicinali da banco), you don't need the 'ricetta' (aspirin, paracetamol, etc.)

**Bank account:** You can open a bank account online in minutes using [Revolut](#). This way you get an IBAN number and a debit card that you can use to receive the PhD stipend/do essential shopping while you get around to opening an account in a physical bank, or you can continue using Revolut throughout your stay.

**Cultural life:** Once you log in to your Portale della didattica (student portal) you will receive a notification through which you can sign up for free for a [Museum subscription](#). This gives you free access to most museums, galleries, guided tours in the Piemonte region. We encourage you to subscribe as it's a good way of seeing the city. To keep up to date with cultural events, concerts, gigs, tours, festivals, etc. in the city, you can check out the websites [Guida Torino](#) and [Torino Today](#).

**Delivery apps:** You can use [Glovo](#) to order restaurant food, groceries, pharmaceuticals, etc. You can also use apps like [JustEat](#) and [UberEats](#) for food deliveries.

## 4. LIFE AT DIST

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- The Valentino Castle, where the DIST Department and offices are, is in the vibrant neighborhood of San Salvario. For lunch and snacks, there is a Caffetteria within the building but there are also many restaurants and fast food places in the surroundings that offer many varieties of food. After a long day spent working, the area offers several spots to chill while having a spritz or taking a warming tea during the winter time. From late spring onwards, the Valentino park at the back of the Castle transforms into the perfect spot to relax laying down on the grass, or to refresh your mind with a walk alongside the Po river. The Park is the oldest in the city and one of the richest for its biodiversity. There is a [botanical garden](#) right next to the Castle that opens every weekend during the spring and summer.
- Office: our PhD office, the so-called URD Mezzanine, is at the end of the Chevalley wing, level -1. The space has shared working stations and a small kitchenette. **Please note that this space is not fully accessible for those users with reduced mobility.**
- Libraries: There are three libraries in the Castle. The main one is easily accessible during the week and might be a peaceful place to study. The other two are open just for a few time slots during the week, and usually used just to borrow specific books. More info [here](#).
- The city offers many other locations if you need to work but willing to change your working site for a while. You can visit Biblioteca Norberto Bobbio, in the Unito Campus, or head to the National Library in Piazza Carlo Alberto. The city of Turin also has several study rooms spread around the city, some of them also open during the weekend or, in case of late deadlines, sometimes even in the night (we hope you never find yourself in those conditions). Check them [here](#).
- Sport facilities: as Polito' students or employees, we have easier access to the CUS (Centro Universitario Sportivo) facilities around the city. More information can be found on the official [website](#) (page in Italian)
- PhD students representation: The PhD candidate, at least in Italy, is a mythological kind of figure between someone who is still studying and someone already working. You just know what you are not. Institutionally, every PhD programme of Polito has its own PhD students representative, who is a channel for collective needs within the programme. Other three PhD representative figures are in the SCUODO board (the doctoral school) and one more in the academic senate.
- In terms of PhD labour union, the only association existing today in Italy is ADI (<https://dottorato.it/>), which also has a local unit in Politecnico. <https://www.facebook.com/dottoratotorino>

- **Accessibility:**  
[https://didattica.polito.it/specialneeds/en/chi\\_siamo](https://didattica.polito.it/specialneeds/en/chi_siamo)  
<https://en.unito.it/services/students-special-needs/disabled-students/services-disabled-students>

## 5. LEARNING ITALIAN

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Don't be intimidated by learning Italian. Most Italians are helpful if they see you making some effort. It's easier to grasp the language when you're immersed in the culture, practicing while shopping or eating out, or just listening to your friends or flatmates speaking Italian. While the medium of instruction in DIST is English, and all the students and the professors speak English, the department (and Politecnico as a whole) is not very English-friendly when it comes to administration things. You can expect Italian in emails, instructions, the online portal, etc. Don't worry, you can always ask an Italian colleague to help you communicate with the administration.

### SOME PRACTICAL TIPS

- Politecnico requires all international students to pass an A1 level Italian test before the end of their PhD. It's easy to pass the test if you attend the Italian language course at Centrale (you're automatically enrolled in this course). If you feel confident about your Italian grammar, you can give the test directly!
- Apps such as [Duolingo](#) and [Memrise](#) are good supplements, and you can start learning even before reaching Italy.
- The [Google Translate app](#) is very helpful, especially the camera tool that allows you to translate documents, sign boards, pictures, etc. Remember to download Italian so that you can use the app even offline!

## 6. CONTACTS

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In case you need further information you can reach us:

- Lorenzo Mauloni, PhD student and representative of the URD PhD programme: [lorenzo.mauloni@polito.it](mailto:lorenzo.mauloni@polito.it)
- Saanchi Saxena, PhD student: [saanchi.saxena@polito.it](mailto:saanchi.saxena@polito.it)
- Francesco Nurra, PhD student and reference person for accessibility: [francesco.nurra@polito.it](mailto:francesco.nurra@polito.it)

Other institutional contacts:

- SCUDO (PhD school): [scudo@polito.it](mailto:scudo@polito.it)
- URD PhD programme general email (Mrs. Daniela Belloni): [dottorato.d.ist@polito.it](mailto:dottorato.d.ist@polito.it)
- URD PhD chairman, Marco Santangelo: [marco.santangelo@polito.it](mailto:marco.santangelo@polito.it)
- DIST Department (hosting the Ph.D. Programme): [dist@polito.it](mailto:dist@polito.it)

## 7. OTHER USEFUL LINKS

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- COVID-19 <https://www.coronavirus.polito.it/>
- Practical Information for International Students at Politecnico [https://international.polito.it/practical\\_information](https://international.polito.it/practical_information)
- Student economic discounts and scholarship <https://www.edisu.piemonte.it/it/documentazione/bandi-di-concorso>
- University Welfare Office [https://www.swas.polito.it/services/cug/sportello\\_cug.asp](https://www.swas.polito.it/services/cug/sportello_cug.asp)
- Postdocs/paid employees (To be developed)