



**YFU South Africa  
International  
Exchange**

**Exchange Program  
Information Brochure**

[www.yfu.org.za](http://www.yfu.org.za)

# YFU – A Daring & Unexpected Way to Learn

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*“No one who has lived through the second half of the twentieth century could possibly be blind to the enormous impact of exchange programmes on the future of countries.”*

**Bill Clinton**

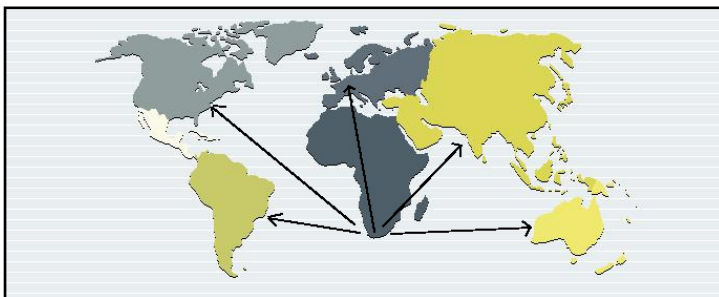
Youth for Understanding (YFU) is a worldwide exchange organization operating in more than 40 countries. It is one of the largest and oldest organizations of its kind. In South Africa, YFU was founded in 1994, and has exchanged hundreds of young people to and from South Africa since. YFU's main exchange programme is the 1-year high school exchange, but there are various other programmes tailor-made to suit your needs. It is our belief that the best way to understand other countries and cultures is by becoming part of a family, school and community in a foreign country; it is through this immersion into a new culture that YFU's mission is achieved: To prepare young people for their responsibilities and opportunities in a changing, interdependent world. YFU also believes that international cultural exchange is one the best ways for young people to get to know themselves and develop a better understanding of the culture from which they come.

In the brochure, you will find information on the different YFU organizations and countries with which YFU South Africa conducts exchange programmes. Where possible, brief explanations of the different programs are given. At the end of this brochure, you will find important information about the application process, as well as the contact details of YFU South Africa.

**With this brochure, we invite you to find out more about our exchange programs and YFU - a daring and unexpected way to learn!**

# YFU's Successful Global Network

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With the support of more than 40 autonomous, yet interdependent, YFU national organisations and volunteer groups globally, YFU programs have a reputation of maintaining the highest quality in the field of international exchange. We strongly believe that our largest opportunity to change the world is through instilling the insights, knowledge and understanding the new generations need to succeed in a globally interdependent and multicultural environment. Established in 1951, Youth for Understanding (YFU) International Exchange is a non-profit, educational organisation. YFU, consistent with its commitment to international understanding, does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, national origin, religion or gender.

YFU South Africa has exchange programs with Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland (German-speaking), Austria, Hungary, Belgium (Dutch-speaking), Norway, Finland, Estonia, France, the USA, Chile, Uruguay, and many more countries. For a full list of participating YFU national organizations, please visit: [www.yfu.org](http://www.yfu.org). You are also encouraged to visit YFU South Africa's website: [www.yfu.org.za](http://www.yfu.org.za).

**Thousands of young people around the world,  
their families and other volunteers have joined  
Youth for Understanding. Why don't you? The  
world out there might just amaze you!**

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# The Netherlands



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 16 million

**Size:** 41 500 sq km

**Capital:** Amsterdam

**Language:** Dutch

**Religion:** Christian (52%);  
Muslim (5%)

**Government:** Constitutional  
monarchy

**GDP:** US\$ 434 billion

As an exchange student in The Netherlands you'll most certainly hear the words: "*We're only a small nation ...*" Don't miss the pride behind these words. While Dutch people do live in a small country, it's a nation of which they are fiercely proud.

## The Dutch Culture:

Living among the Dutch, you will learn about their rich history of being one of Europe's major centres not only in the service industry, trade and transportation, but also the arts and culture. You can enjoy fabulous orchestral music or enjoy the cutting edge of Dutch pop music. The Netherlands is home to a great variety of professional theatre groups. Fine arts museums can be found in all cities and major towns. In summer, many towns organize street theatre and concerts, traditional trade markets, and multicultural events. The Netherlands has one of Europe's most multicultural societies with large numbers of immigrants having made this their home, which adds to the interesting exchange experience.

Traditionally, the Dutch live in close knit families and enjoy each other's company. Family activities such as birthdays, anniversaries and other

family outings are very important and will be part of your experience. Dutch families gather over meals, especially dinner, and the table is often the family gathering place at other times as well. As a YFU exchange student, you will either attend a so-called "HAVO" (high level vocational school) or "VWO" (pre-university school) where you'll find a relaxed atmosphere, though you will be expected to study hard just as you should do here in South Africa.

While Dutch is fairly easy to learn (especially for South Africans, most of whom have some knowledge of Afrikaans), you can take advantage of tutoring in the Dutch language usually through your school. In many towns there are also possibilities to take courses in Dutch for foreigners. YFU The Netherlands expects exchange students to show a willingness to learn Dutch! A Dutch language test will be conducted about 10 weeks after arrival.

## **YFU exchange to The Netherlands: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to The Netherlands:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure (i) late December or (ii) August each year).
- 6-months (semester) high school exchange (departures are the same as for 1-year programs)

Application deadlines: For late December program: July of preceding year; for August departure: February of each year

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants must have a basic knowledge of English and will be expected to learn the Dutch language within a reasonable time-frame.

YFU The Netherlands offers the following services:

- Application for a temporary residence permit
- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment with a Dutch public high school

- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- Post-arrival, mid-year and re-entry orientations
- Contact and support by YFU volunteers
- Counselling and language assistance when required
- YFU cultural activity

YFU The Netherlands Website: [www.yfu.nl](http://www.yfu.nl)

Program Fee: Please enquire from your YFU representative

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



# Germany



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 82 million  
**Size:** 349 000 sq km  
**Capital:** Berlin  
**Language:** German  
**Religion:** Christian (Roman Catholic, Protestant)  
**Government:** Federal Republic  
**GDP:** US\$ 2.3 trillion

A country many YFU exchange students have been happy to call home, Germany is beautiful country with an exciting and diverse mix between old and modern at every turn. Located in the heart of Europe, Germany boasts Europe's largest economy, and the World's third largest. Germany was separated between West and East for many decades after the Second World War, but has been re-unified since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1990. YFU Germany is YFU South Africa's founding partner organization, and through the years, the majority of our inbound and outbound programs have been with Germany.

## The German Culture:

History, literature and philosophy, as well as theatre and the visual arts have flourished in Germany through the ages, and you can still enjoy the country's vibrant and artistic climate. You'll have a wide variety of cultural events to attend, ranging from public festivals and sporting events to world-renowned art exhibitions, theatre performances, concerts and the famous German Christmas markets. Bicycle tours, camping trips and hikes are all popular ways of enjoying the beautiful German landscape.

The traditional German family is very close and places great value on mutual respect (though sometimes in a different way than in South Africa).

The present day idea of the family varies greatly from household to household just as it does in South Africa. German teenagers are usually granted with more liberties but must also assume greater responsibilities for their actions than is generally the case in South Africa. Public transport is better organized, safer and more reliable than what South Africans are used to, and as an exchange student, you will certainly be using it frequently. Although most people in modern-day Germany are able to understand and speak basic English (especially the younger generation), you will have to learn to speak and understand German as soon as possible, as it will make life much easier for you in your every day life and school.

As an exchange student in Germany, you will be attending a public high school. Your grade level will be determined according to your age, language skills and academic requirements. An academic school year in Germany, like in the rest of Europe, usually begins in August/September and ends in June/July. Many students spend their leisure time in sports or music clubs outside school.

## **YFU exchange to Germany: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to Germany:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure (i) January or (ii) August of each year)
- 6-months (semester) high school exchange (departures are the same as for 1-year programs)

Application deadlines: For January program: July of preceding year; for August departure: February of each year

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants must have a basic knowledge of English and will be expected to learn German within a reasonable time-frame. South African students who do not have any knowledge of German will be expected to attend a German language course of 4 weeks at the start of their exchange years at an additional cost.

YFU Germany offers the following services:

- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a German public high school
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- Domestic travel within Germany from and to point of international arrivals and departures
- Post-arrival orientation
- 7-day mid-year orientation in one of the following cities: Berlin, Hamburg, Dresden or Munich
- 2-day regional re-entry orientation before departure
- Support by trained volunteers
- Counselling by professional staff when required

YFU Germany Website: [www.yfu.de](http://www.yfu.de)

Program Fee: Please enquire from your YFU representative

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



# Sweden



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 9 million  
**Size:** 450 000 sq km  
**Capital:** Stockholm  
**Language:** Swedish  
**Religion:** Christian (Lutheran)  
**Government:** Constitutional monarchy  
**GDP:** US\$ 291 billion

Sweden: Home of the Vikings, ABBA, Robyn, Roxette, the Nobel-Prize, IKEA and the Midnight-Sun! In this breathtakingly beautiful Scandinavian country, nature is very important and the Swedes very much enjoy spending time in the nature. The Swedish landscape features countless lakes and waterways, surrounded by vast pine and spruce forests in the north, mixed with romantic oak, birch and other leafy forests further south. Sweden has majestic mountains and glaciers, as well as wide-open countryside, interspersed by small idyllic villages and vibrant cities such as the modern capital, Stockholm. Swedes enjoy skiing and hiking and many have a summer cottage. The Swedes are descendants of the Vikings and proud of their history of kings, ancient wars and strong personalities.

## The Swedish Culture:

Sport, nature and history are all important aspects of the Swedish life. Sweden is proud to be a home of science, literature and art. This you may see through the Nobel Prize, the most prestigious price that is awarded to scientists all around the world each year. Exchange students usually live with hostfamilies in a small city, village or rural area of Sweden. Swedish families are normally active and enjoy outdoor activities and they will want you to join them.

The school year in Sweden starts in mid-August and ends in mid-June, with Christmas vacation in between. You will attend *gymnasiet*, upper secondary school, which has different programs, social science, science, art etc. School in Sweden is, as most work environments, informal. Students call their teachers by their first names. School days are flexible and you don't study the same hours every day. Some days school begins at 8:00 a.m. and lasts until 3:00 p.m. and other days you might start at noon, finishing later in the afternoon. You will have an hour lunch break.

Most spare-time activities take place outside the schools in associations, clubs and with your new friends and host-family. In the winter it is popular to go alpine or cross-country skiing and ice-skating. In the summer Swedes spend a lot of time in the nature or go to the country-side to relax.

## **YFU exchange to Sweden: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to Sweden:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure August of each year)
- 6-months (semester) high school exchange (departures are the same as for 1-year programs)
- 1-year or semester Art high school exchange (departure August of each year)
- 6-week Summer Program (departure middle of June and return end of July of each year)

Application deadlines: For January program: July of preceding year; for August departure: February of each year; for Summer Program: February of each year.

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants must have a basic knowledge of English and will be expected to learn Swedish within a reasonable time-frame. Students to Sweden are expected to gain some knowledge of Swedish by means of language tapes prior to arrival in Sweden.

YFU Sweden offers the following services:

- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a Swedish public high school
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- Post-arrival orientation camp with language classes
- Mid-year orientation
- Re-entry orientation before departure
- Support by trained volunteers

Extra information on short-term 6-week Summer Program:

Arrival for this program is usually in mid-June and the program lasts until the end of July of each year. Students are placed with volunteer hostfamilies and will attend regional activities. An optional trip, at additional cost, to observe the midnight-sun phenomenon in the northern parts of Sweden will be offered if possible. All the normal support and counselling services apply for this program.

YFU Sweden Website: [www.yfu.se](http://www.yfu.se)

Program Fee: Please refer to separate pricing list

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



# Switzerland



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 7,3 million  
**Size:** 41 300 sq km  
**Capital:** Bern  
**Languages:** German (64%),  
French (19%), Italian,  
Romansch  
**Religion:** Christian (Roman  
Catholic, Protestant)  
**Government:** Federal  
Republic  
**GDP:** US\$ 256 billion

The natural beauty of Switzerland is truly breathtaking, with the Alps, lakes, cities and castles, you'll soon realize why Switzerland is regarded by many to be the most beautiful country they have seen. Switzerland has a rich heritage and many cultures and different language groups live side by side. The Swiss take pride in their history, being one of the oldest democracies in the world.

## The Swiss Culture:

Swiss society is quite diverse due to its multilingual composition. Living in the French part of the country in the West for example is quite a different experience to living in the German part in the North. The Swiss believe strongly in consensus, which may explain partly why the different cultural groups live together peacefully. Switzerland has a strong economy and some of its banks and insurance companies are world leaders. Swiss families are on average not very big, and although the various family members enjoy considerable independence, they do value having at least one meal per day together as a family.

The Swiss school system is very academically orientated, and exchange students are expected to show great effort in school performance. YFU

South Africa's exchange students will typically attend a school in German-speaking Switzerland, and therefore must either have at least 2 years of German language study or attend a compulsory German language course arranged by YFU Switzerland prior to starting school.

## **YFU exchange to Switzerland: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to Switzerland (Please note: YFU Switzerland only accepts students from South Africa to the German-speaking part):

- 1-year high school exchange (departure August of each year)
- 6-months (semester) high school exchange (departure August of each year)

Application deadlines: For August program: February of each year

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants must have at least 2 years of German language study at their South African school prior to departure to Switzerland. If the students do not meet this language requirement, they must attend a 4-week intensive German language course in Switzerland which is offered shortly after arrival. This course is at an additional fee.

YFU Switzerland offers the following services:

- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a German-speaking public high school
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- One week post-arrival orientation in October of each year
- 4-day ski camp in January with an integrated mid-year orientation
- Weekend pre-return orientation before departure
- Support by trained volunteers and counselling assistance by professional staff if necessary

- All administrative fees (to be paid in Switzerland) related to residence permit
- All transportation costs from hostfamily to school which exceed a specified amount per month
- School fees

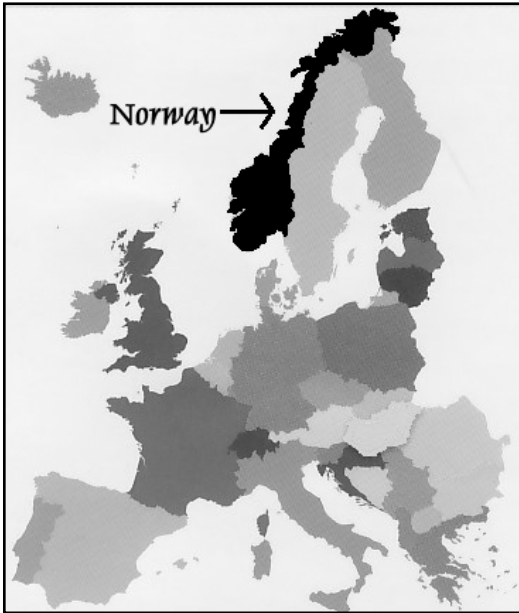
YFU Switzerland Website: [www.yfu.ch](http://www.yfu.ch)

Program Fee: Please enquire from your YFU representative

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# Norway



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 4,5 million

**Size:** 324 000 sq km

**Capital:** Oslo

**Language:** Norwegian

**Religion:** Christian (mainly Protestant)

**Government:** Constitutional Monarchy

**GDP:** US\$ 213 billion

Tolerance, human kindness and independence are important Norwegian values. Norway is known for its breathtaking nature, which plays a central role in every day Norwegian life. With its mountains, fjords, islands, glaciers and forests, Norway is a place where YFU exchange students can enjoy the best outdoor activities imaginable.

## The Norwegian Culture:

We bet when you think of Norway, you probably don't think of trolls. You should, though, because those sometimes endearing and usually pesky creatures originated in Norway, where storytelling is a centuries old tradition. The trolls are an essential element of many Norwegian tales probably created during dark winter months when fireside storytelling helped to pass the time. Trolls eventually became responsible for all of life's woes, an easy way to explain why things went wrong. Today, trolls live on as mascots, place names, and carved figures.

The variety in nature and seasons, combined with family life, are important qualities in Norway. The century-old struggle with a rugged environment has created a strong, imaginative and independent society; however, despite this proud tradition of individual independence, Norway has a

legacy of a Government-sponsored social welfare system protecting the individual. Although the Norwegian society is to a large extent mon-cultural, there are small groups of Lapps, or Sami people, living in the far north of the country. Family life is very important in Norway; husbands and wives usually regard each other equal in authority, unlike many other societies in the world. Norwegian families tend to be small, and parents usually emphasize shared family responsibility in the raising of their children. Standard of living is very high in Norway, and the majority of families belong to the middle class. Most Norwegian families own holiday cottages or cabins in the countryside.

## **YFU exchange to Norway: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to Norway:

- 1-year or semester high school exchange (departure January of August of each year)

Application deadlines: For August program: February of each year; For January program: July of preceding year.

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants must have a basic knowledge of English, and are expected to study very hard to learn the Norwegian language, as this will be the key to a successful stay in Norway.

YFU Norway offers the following services:

- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a public high school
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- Domestic travel in Norway
- Post-arrival orientation upon arrival
- Mid-year orientation in each region
- One day regional re-entry orientation before departure

- Monthly contact and support by trained volunteers and counselling assistance by professional staff if necessary

YFU Norway Website: [www.yfu.no](http://www.yfu.no)

Program Fee: Please refer to separate pricing list

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



# Hungary



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 10 million

**Size:** 93 000 sq km

**Capital:** Budapest

**Language:** Hungarian

**Religion:** Christian (mainly Roman Catholic; Protestant)

**Government:** Republic

**GDP:** US\$ 175 billion

In Hungary, you will experience a particular organic link between the old and new, between history and the present day. The Hungarians keenly safeguard their traditions, cultures and arts, but are always perceptive to what is new, different and the future. In Hungary you can see regions with a particular atmosphere, fabulous villages, churches and castles. Hungarians are original, profound, passionate and curious...

## The Hungarian Culture:

Approximately 16 million people speak Hungarian as a first language – living both in Hungary and in surrounding countries. Hungary is a country of good food, hospitality and folk music. Hungarians are known to be excellent hosts – they are pleased to see and meet strangers, and even if they do not speak one's language, they always do their best to make one feel home. Hungarian families are normally close-knit, stable and enjoy talking to each other and doing things together. Families value individualism and young people are made aware of the importance of independence, responsibility for their own lives, including school and household duties.

As an exchange student at school, you will experience the Hungarian language and literature, history, and foreign language classes of your choice (English, German, French, Spanish or Italian). At school, you will also be able to participate in a wide range of optional classes and you will most likely have the opportunity to participate in a school study tour to explore other parts of the country. Exchange students are mostly enrolled in a public high school (Gimnazium). Typically, classes have between 25-40 students. Leisure time is often spent at sport clubs, parties, or just spending time together at each other's homes.

## **YFU exchange to Hungary: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to Hungary:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure August of each year)
- 1-year Music high school exchange (departure August of each year)
- 6-week Summer Program (departure July of each year)

Application deadlines: For August program: February of each year; for Summer Program: February of each year

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants must be able to speak English.

YFU Hungary offers the following services:

- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a public high school (or school of music in case of music exchange program)
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- 4-day post-arrival orientation
- 3-day mid-year orientation in January
- 3-day re-entry orientation in June

- Regular support by YFU volunteers and counselling assistance by professional staff if necessary
- Invitation to YFU Hungary Christmas concert and regional volunteer activities (for 1-year programs)
- Optional 4-day trip to Vienna or Prague (at student's own expense)

Extra information on 1-year Music Program:

In this program, exchange students are given an option to study music in addition to regular academic study at a public school. In order to qualify for this special program, students must have studied music previously and be serious in working at a high level with instructors. Audition tape and two year study of solemnization is required for applying. Students can bring their own instruments with them, if possible. This is an excellent program for students who are serious about their music studies. In all other aspects, this program follows the same routine and activities as the normal 1-year high school exchange.

Extra information on short-term 6-week Summer Program:

Arrival for this program is usually at the beginning of July, and students may be slightly older than the normal age for YFU programs (students up to 19 years old are accepted for this program). In this program, students are placed with two different hostfamilies in different parts of Hungary. During the post-arrival orientation, a brief language study in Hungarian will be offered. The program also includes a 2-3 day horse riding or sailing camp, and celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> August National Holiday in Budapest. Furthermore, the program includes a sightseeing trip to Vienna and a ticket to the biggest European open-air music festival, the "Sziget Festival". All the normal support and counselling services apply for this program.

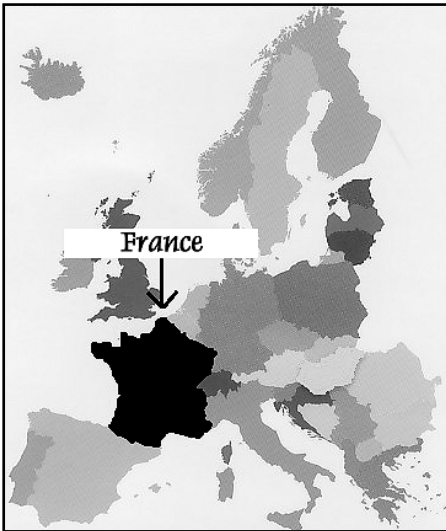
YFU Hungary Website: [www.yfu.hu](http://www.yfu.hu)

Program Fee: Please refer to separate pricing list

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



# France



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 60 million

**Size:** 547 000 sq km

**Capital:** Paris

**Language:** French

**Religion:** Christian (mainly Roman Catholic)

**Government:** Republic

**GDP:** US\$ 1,9 trillion

France, the third biggest country in Europe after Russia and Germany, is the home of great cuisine, wine, fashion, art and blessed with a rich history. The French are very proud of their cultural heritage, which they want others to discover and admire through their chateaux, churches, museums and monuments. Paris, the capital, is described by many as the most romantic city in the world, although most agree that Paris is not at all representative of all of France and its people. France is one of Europe's more culturally mixed countries, which adds to the appeal of this country. Generally, the French are quite a patriotic nation.

## The French Culture:

The family is one of France's most fundamental institutions. Just about everything and everyone revolve around the concept of the family unit. Parents and children get together to eat, as mealtimes are set family gatherings and food is of great importance. Parents usually take great interest in the school activities of their children and follow their school performance on a regular basis. Although the French are enthusiastic supporters of team sports such as football and rugby, participation in organized sport is actually less than would be expected.

The school system in France is quite complicated, and education plays an important role for the French. As an exchange student to France, you will

have to master the French language, and it is therefore expected of applicants to have previous French language classes (2 years preferably) prior to the exchange year. As an exchange student to France, one usually attends a public high school, or *lycée*, where one may choose a course of study ranging from literature and philosophy, economics and social sciences, or science and maths. In France, school days can be quite long, often starting at 08h00 and ending at 17h00.

YFU exchange students are typically placed in smaller towns and villages, and not in bigger cities such as Paris.

## **YFU exchange to France: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to France:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure September of each year)
- 6-month (semester) high school exchange (departure September or January of each year)

Application deadlines: For September program: February of each year; for January program: July of the preceding year

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants must have at least 2 years of French language study at school prior to the exchange year.

YFU France offers the following services:

- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a public high school
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- Post-arrival orientation
- Three regional orientations throughout exchange year to evaluate progress
- Re-entry orientation prior to returning home

- Regular support by YFU volunteers and counselling assistance by professional staff if necessary

YFU France Website: [www.yfu-france.org](http://www.yfu-france.org)

Program Fee: Please refer to separate pricing list

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



# Belgium



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 10 million  
**Size:** 30 500 sq km  
**Capital:** Brussels  
**Language:** Dutch (58%);  
French (32%)  
**Religion:** Christian (Roman  
Catholic; Protestant)  
**Government:** Parliamentary  
democracy  
**GDP:** US\$ 343 billion

Belgium can be described as the “capital of Europe”. It is home to the seat of the European Parliament; headquarters of the European Union and NATO, as well as more than 1000 other international organizations. Although a tiny country by surface area, its population of 10 million makes it the second most densely populated country in Europe. In its long history, Belgium has changed hands more than any other European nation: it has come under the rule of the Visigoths, Vandals, Austrians, Spaniards, French, Dutch and Germans! All these comings and goings have left the Belgians with a warm welcoming of foreign visitors and an appreciation for culture and refinement.

## The Belgian Culture:

In Belgium, there are three official languages: Dutch (or Flemish), French (Wallonian) and German. Exchange students of YFU South Africa are placed with Dutch-speaking Belgian families and attend Dutch-speaking schools in the region of Belgium called Flanders. Belgium is an industrialized nation, and its economy is mainly based on processing and services. The typical Belgian family has remained a close-knit unit despite the great changes in society due to industrialization. It is not unusual for members of the same family to live in the same neighbourhoods or even

the same house throughout a lifetime. Since Belgium is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, many families live in apartments or townhouses, and children frequently share bedrooms. Mealtimes are important events for the average Belgian family, and they are proud of their cuisine.

Leisure time is often spent by families visiting famous sights on Sundays, and children are often exposed to cultural events at an early age. In summer, most Belgian families take vacation for up to one month. Education is considered very important in Belgium; therefore academic standards are very high and students are expected to work hard for school. This will obviously also apply to exchange students!

## **YFU exchange to Dutch Belgium (Flanders): Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to Belgium:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure August each year)
- Semester high school exchange (departure: (i) August each year; or (ii) January each year). *Please note that YFU Belgium expects students on the January program to arrive during the last week of December.*
- 1-year Art high school exchange (departure August of each year)
- 1-year Sport high school exchange (departure August of each year)
- 1-year Tourism high school exchange (departure August of each year)
- 1-year Fashion high school exchange (departure August of each year)

Application deadlines: For August program: February of each year; for January program: July of the preceding year

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year.*

Language criteria: Applicants must have basic knowledge of English and are expected to study very hard to learn the Dutch language within a reasonable time-frame.

YFU Belgium offers the following services:

- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a public high school
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- Post-arrival orientation
- Mid-year orientation
- Re-entry orientation prior to returning home
- Regular support by YFU volunteers and counselling assistance by professional staff if necessary
- YFU cultural activity

YFU France Website: [www.yfu.be](http://www.yfu.be)

Program Fee: Please enquire from your YFU representative

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



# Estonia



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 1,4 million

**Size:** 45 200 sq km

**Capital:** Tallinn

**Language:** Estonian;  
Russian

**Religion:** Lutheran,  
Estonian & Russian  
Orthodox

**Government:** Parliamentary  
democracy

**GDP:** US\$ 26.9 billion

Although Estonia is only a small country, it still offers quite a surprising cultural diversity, mainly as a result of the Soviet occupation of earlier times, which introduced a sizeable Russian minority to the Estonian population. Ethnic Estonians are very different from their more emotional, open-minded neighbours, the Russians. At first, Estonians seem quite distant, but upon getting to know them better, one discovers that they are actually hospitable and warm-hearted. Estonians are generally well educated, and proud of their country and culture.

## The Estonian Culture:

Estonia is a highly urbanized nation, with more than 70% of the population living in urban areas and one-third of the total population in the capital, Tallinn, alone. Estonians view themselves as an industrious and efficient people, who maintained their values and traditions, even during the period of Soviet occupation. Although they are proud of the history and heritage, modern day Estonia is keen to have closer ties with the West. Generally, Estonians place a high value on education and work. Religion and church are not very important for most Estonians.

Estonians are very fond of music, and song festivals are often held – a reminder of the so-called “Singing Revolution” of the late 1980’s during which time Estonians were unified in their protests against Soviet occupation. The Revolution started in the summer of 1987, when mass protests began. In the June evenings of that year over 10,000 people a night packed the “Lauluväljak” (The Tallinn Song Festival Grounds), where they sang patriotic and national songs forbidden by the Soviet regime. These gatherings helped unite the Estonian people and ignited a renewed wave of passion for their national identity (which was being marginalised by aggressive Russification of the country), furthering the country’s desire for freedom. In September of 1988, 300,000 Estonians gathered at the Lauluvaljak to continue their protest and to hear Trivimi Velliste make the first public demand for independence.

Exchange students must bear in mind that the level of education in Estonian schools is high, and one is expected to work hard in school.

## **YFU exchange to Estonia: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to Estonia:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure August each year)
- 1-year Art high school exchange (departure August each year)
- 1-year Music high school exchange (departure August each year)
- 1-year Nature program

Application deadlines: For August program: February of each year

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants must have basic knowledge of English.

YFU Estonia offers the following services:

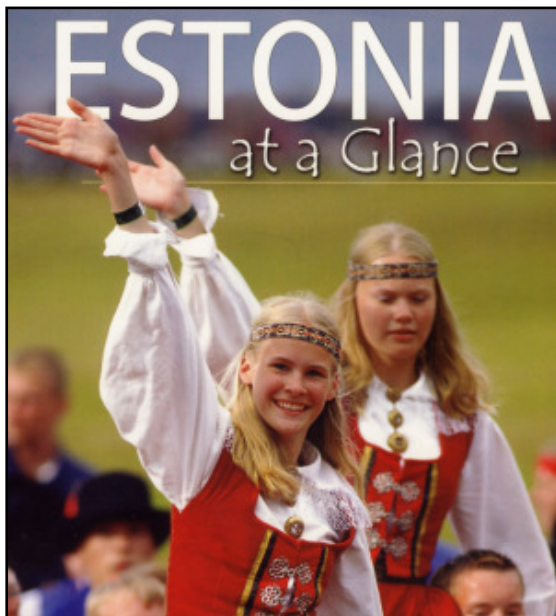
- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a public high school
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure

- 1-week post-arrival orientation
- Mid-year orientation in mid-January
- Re-entry orientation prior to returning home
- Weekend trip to Southern Estonia and Northern Latvia in May
- Regular support by YFU volunteers and counselling assistance by professional staff if necessary
- YFU cultural activity

YFU Estonia Website: [www.yfu.ee](http://www.yfu.ee)

Program Fee: Please enquire from your YFU representative

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



# Austria



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 8,2 million

**Size:** 84 000 sq km

**Capital:** Vienna

**Language:** German

**Religion:** Christian (mainly Roman Catholic)

**Government:** Federal Republic

**GDP:** US\$ 284 billion

Once the center of power for the large Austro-Hungarian Empire, Austria was reduced to a small republic after its defeat in World War I. It remained a small republic for decades to follow, which included annexation by Nazi Germany from 1938-1945. In the years to follow after World War 2, Austria developed into a prosperous, democratic country that entered the European Economic and Monetary Union in 1995.

## The Austrian Culture:

Landlocked giant mountains, green valleys, and lakes in Central Europe make Austria the most forested country in Europe for a YFU exchange student to spend his/her exchange year. Much of the western and southern parts of Austria is covered by the famous Alps and in the east and northeast flatlands dominate. If you love the outdoors, you will enjoy a *Spaziergang* (a long leisurely walk) - a favorite Austrian pastime. Mountain climbing, hiking, skiing, cycling, and boating are very popular activities with most families.

Enjoy the remarkable natural beauty of Austria and its rich music history which will accompany you with the world-known melodies of Mozart and Strauss. Vienna Imperial Orchestra will invite you to its unique atmosphere of classicism and amazing architecture in Vienna, considered by many to

be the world's music capital. Travel to Austria and you will experience amazing landscapes, follow the scent of freshly brewed coffee, and listen to the wonderful concerts in Vienna!

## **YFU exchange to Austria: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following program to Austria:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure August each year)

Application deadlines: For August program: February of each year

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15½ and 17½ years old *in the month of arrival in Austria.*

Language criteria: Applicants must have sufficient prior knowledge of German, which could be either 2 years of secondary school German language education, or completion of an intensive German language course. In the absence of these, students may be expected to participate in introductory German classes after arrival at their own expense.

YFU Austria offers the following services:

- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a public high school
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- Domestic travel in Austria upon arrival and departure as well as to and from the orientations
- 1-day post-arrival orientation upon arrival followed by weekend post-arrival orientation one month after arrival
- Weekend mid-year orientation
- Weekend re-entry orientation prior to returning home
- Events on a regional level, and optional excursions or ski trips may be offered by YFU Austria at student's own expense
- Regular support by YFU volunteers and counselling assistance by professional staff if necessary

YFU Austria Website: [www.yfu.at](http://www.yfu.at)

Program Fee: Please refer to separate pricing list

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



# Chile



## AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 16 million  
**Size:** 757 000 sq km  
**Capital:** Santiago  
**Language:** Spanish  
**Religion:** Christian (mainly Roman Catholic)  
**Government:** Parliamentary democracy  
**GDP:** US\$ 202 billion

Chile is an exceptionally beautiful country, extending southwards on the east coast of South America. One can almost regard Chile as “the end of the world”! Geographically, it is a long and narrow country, wedged between the Andes Mountains in the east and the Pacific Ocean in the west. Chile has a turbulent political history, but today it is a stable, democratic country with much to offer. Approximately 40% of Chile’s population live in the greater Santiago region. Chile has an interesting population composition, with about 65% being so-called white mestizos (descendants from integration between Spanish colonists and indigenous Amerindians); only about 5% of Chileans are Native Americans. Spanish is the main language spoken in Chile.

## The Chilean Culture:

Northern Chile was an important center of culture in the medieval and early modern Inca empire, while the central and southern regions were areas of Mapuche cultural activities. Through the colonial period following the conquest, and during the early Republican period, the country’s culture was dominated by the Spanish. Other European influences, primarily English and French, began in the 19th century and have continued to this day.

Chileans call their country *país de poetas*—country of poets. Gabriela Mistral was the first Chilean to win a Nobel Prize for Literature (1945). Chile's most famous poet, however, is Pablo Neruda, who also won the Nobel Prize for Literature (1971) and is world-renowned for his extensive library of works on romance, nature, and politics.

Chileans are an exceptionally hospitable people who will welcome you into their homes and hearts for an experience that can only come from living in Chile. Family life is valued and treasured in Chile. Parents, siblings, and extended family not only live and eat together, they also enjoy special gatherings and social events. As a member of your host family, you'll experience this unity from the inside out and enjoy developing close ties with your host parents, brothers, and sisters. Because of its isolation and challenging geography, Chile is a country of people who are strong, proud, extremely innovative, and caring.

## **YFU exchange to Chile: Quick Facts**

YFU offers the following programs to Chile:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure July of each year)
- 6-month (semester) high school exchange (departure January or July of each year)

Application deadlines: For July programs: February of each year; for January programs: July of the preceding year

Age criteria: Applicants for the high school exchanges must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants for the high school programs must have a basic knowledge of Spanish, with an adequate vocabulary for social and school needs. Should students have problems learning Spanish, they will have to attend a language course at additional cost.

YFU Chile offers the following services:

- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment in a high school (mainly private schools)
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure and domestic travel

- Two orientations: post-arrival and re-entry
- Regular support by YFU volunteers and counselling assistance by professional staff if necessary
- Optional cultural trip and Santiago weekend (at student's own expense) for 10 days

YFU Chile Website: [www.yfuchile.cl](http://www.yfuchile.cl)

Program Fee: Please enquire from your YFU representative

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**



## **Other countries not listed in this brochure:**

YFU South Africa also offers exchange programs to the following countries. Please visit their websites and contact YFU South Africa for more information:

1. The USA: [www.yfu-usa.org](http://www.yfu-usa.org)
2. Argentina: [www.yfu.org.ar](http://www.yfu.org.ar)
3. Latvia: [www.yfu.lv](http://www.yfu.lv)
4. Denmark: [www.yfu.dk](http://www.yfu.dk)
5. Finland: [www.yfu.fi](http://www.yfu.fi)
6. Belgium (French-speaking) Wallonia: [www.yfu-belgique.be](http://www.yfu-belgique.be)

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND YFU SOUTH AFRICA CONTACT DETAILS:**

- If you fulfill the basic requirements as listed for the country of your choice, you need to apply by obtaining an application form either by downloading it from our website: [www.yfu.org.za](http://www.yfu.org.za) or by contacting the YFU SA national office, or your local YFU representative (see details below);
- Once you have filled in the application forms, you need to hand the forms in and make arrangements with your local YFU representative for a personal selection interview;
- If positively selected to become an exchange student, you will receive further instructions from YFU as to the further steps.
- For price information, please see separate price list or contact your local YFU representative

### **Contact details:**

1. National office (Cape Town, Western Cape). Tel: 021-423 1677 Fax: 021 – 423 1677; e-mail: [info@yfu.org.za](mailto:info@yfu.org.za)

2. Regional office (Pretoria, Gauteng). Tel: 0824643957; e-mail: [scholtz1@telkomsa.net](mailto:scholtz1@telkomsa.net)

3. Regional volunteer in Port Elizabeth. Tel: 0825192590; e-mail: [iGoeda@aspenspharma.com](mailto:iGoeda@aspenspharma.com)

4. Regional volunteer in Bloemfontein. Tel: 0824644197; e-mail: [Joubert.vanZyl@transnet.net](mailto:Joubert.vanZyl@transnet.net)