K12 ACADEMICS — INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERIES

Studying in Serbia

A guide for international students & families — how Serbian higher education works, the student visa and residence permit, affordable tuition, English programs, and work.

K12 ACADEMICS

Find Your Community

2026 EDITION

ABOUT K12 ACADEMICS

The world's largest education resource.

Online since 2004, K12 Academics has helped millions of families, students and educators **find the right school, college, camp, business and program in their community** — for every kind of learner.

AFFORDABLE, CENTRAL, GROWING IN ENGLISH

Serbia is an increasingly popular, **affordable** study destination at the crossroads of Europe, with a growing catalogue of **English-taught programs (180+)**, respected universities (led by Belgrade), and some of the lowest living costs on the continent. It's an EU candidate (Bologna-aligned), not yet an EU member. Non-EU/non-visa-exempt students need a **Type D visa and a temporary residence permit**. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. Serbia is an EU candidate (not a member); degree recognition abroad varies, so verify it. Rules, tuition, and funds change. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with the Serbian embassy, the police (MUP), and your university**.

1

STEP 01 OF 10

Understand Why Students Choose Serbia

WHAT TO KNOW

Serbia offers **affordable tuition and among the lowest living costs in Europe, a growing range of English-taught programs, respected universities, and a vibrant, central location** — with strengths in medicine, engineering, and IT.

BY THE NUMBERS

Very affordable	180+ English programs	Medicine & IT
tuition & living	and growing	strong fields

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Serbia's **affordability and growing English offering** against the fact that it's an EU candidate (verify degree recognition abroad) — for budget-conscious students, it's strong value.

GOOD TO KNOW

Serbia offers a **European study experience at some of the continent's lowest costs** — a major draw.

2

STEP 02 OF 10

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Serbia's leading institutions are the **University of Belgrade** (the largest and oldest), the **University of Novi Sad**, the **University of Niš**, and the **University of Kragujevac**, plus private universities. Degrees use **ECTS and the diploma supplement** (Bologna-aligned); the academic year starts in October.

BY THE NUMBERS

Univ of Belgrade	Novi Sad / Niš	Bologna-aligned
largest & oldest	+ Kragujevac	ECTS

HOW TO HELP

Choose among Serbia's **public universities** (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš, Kragujevac) or a private institution by field — and confirm the language of instruction and program accreditation.

WATCH OUT

Serbian degrees use **ECTS and the diploma supplement**, but as an EU candidate (not member), **verify recognition** in the country where you'll use the degree.

3

STEP 03 OF 10

Get the Visa & Residence Permit

WHAT TO KNOW

Citizens of many countries enter **visa-free for 90 days**; others need a **Type D (long-stay) student visa** from a Serbian embassy first. All foreigners must **register their address at the local police within 24 hours of arrival**, and apply for a **temporary residence permit** (valid one year, renewable) within the first 90 days.

BY THE NUMBERS

Type D visa	Register	Residence permit
if not visa-exempt	police within 24h	within 90 days

HOW TO HELP

Check whether you need the **Type D visa** (many nationalities are visa-exempt for 90 days), **register your address within 24 hours** of arrival, and apply for the **temporary residence permit within 90 days**.

WATCH OUT

The **24-hour address registration** and the 90-day residence-permit deadline are firm — handle both promptly on arrival.

4

STEP 04 OF 10

Apply to Universities

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply via the **Study in Serbia** portal or **directly to universities**. Some programs require an **entrance exam**, and your prior **degree must be recognized** in Serbia. Documents typically need **translation into Serbian and notarization**. Deadlines run roughly **May–September** for an October start.

BY THE NUMBERS

Study in Serbia / direct	Entrance exam	Recognize degree
application routes	for some	+ translate docs

HOW TO HELP

Apply via the **Study in Serbia portal or directly**, prepare for any **entrance exam**, and get your prior degree **recognized** and documents translated into Serbian — start early.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your previous degree usually must be **officially recognized in Serbia**, and documents translated/notarized — begin this early.

5

STEP 05 OF 10

Plan for Tuition & Funding

WHAT TO KNOW

Tuition is **affordable**: public universities charge international students **low fees** (some Serbian students study free), while private universities vary widely (up to ~€20,000 for some programs). Scholarships come from the **Ministry of Education and universities**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public	Private	Scholarships
low for internationals	varies (up to €20k)	Ministry & university

HOW TO HELP

Budget the **affordable public tuition** (or a private program's fees) plus very low living costs, and pursue Ministry of Education and university scholarships.

GOOD TO KNOW

Serbia's **total cost is low** — public tuition and living costs are both modest by European standards.

6

STEP 06 OF 10

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the visa/permit you must prove **sufficient funds** — commonly around **€3,000–6,000/year (~€500–600/month)** in a bank account — plus **health insurance** (covering at least €20,000) and proof of accommodation.

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds	Insurance	Accommodation
~€3,000–6,000/yr	€20,000+ cover	proof required

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds** (~€500–600/month), **health insurance** (€20,000+ coverage), and accommodation proof — all required for the visa and residence permit.

WATCH OUT

Confirm the current funds figure with your embassy — it varies, and insufficient/unclear financial proof causes refusals.

7

STEP 07 OF 10

Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

Programs are taught in **Serbian** or, increasingly, in **English (180+ programs)**. Note: some English programs require **one year of Serbian language training first**. Serbian (Cyrillic and Latin scripts) helps daily life; check your program's exact requirement.

BY THE NUMBERS

Serbian or English	Some English programs	Some Serbian
180+ in English	need 1 yr Serbian first	helps daily life

HOW TO HELP

Confirm your program's **language and any preparatory-year requirement** (some English programs need a year of Serbian first), and learn some Serbian for daily life.

WATCH OUT

Some "English" programs still require **a year of Serbian language training** before instruction — check carefully so you aren't surprised.

8

STEP 08 OF 10

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

After arriving, **register your address at the police within 24 hours**, apply for the residence permit, confirm insurance, and set up banking. Living costs are very low (€300–500/month), and student cities like **Belgrade, Novi Sad, and Niš** have vibrant scenes.

BY THE NUMBERS

Register	Very low costs	Vibrant cities
police within 24h	€300–500/mo	Belgrade, Novi Sad

HOW TO HELP

Handle arrival admin — **24-hour police registration, residence permit, insurance, banking** — and enjoy Serbia—s very low living costs and lively student cities.

GOOD TO KNOW

The **24-hour police registration** is easy to miss but mandatory — do it immediately (your accommodation may handle it).

9

STEP 09 OF 10

Understand Work Rules

WHAT TO KNOW

International students can **work in Serbia** (with the appropriate permit alongside their residence permit). Foreign workers are welcomed, and a master's degree improves employability, especially with companies doing business with the EU.

BY THE NUMBERS

Work	Welcomed	Master's
with a permit	foreign workers	boosts employability

HOW TO HELP

You can **work with the appropriate permit** — confirm the current process — and note that a master's degree improves your prospects, especially with EU-facing companies.

GOOD TO KNOW

Confirm the **current student work-permit process** — rules for working alongside study can change.

10 STEP 10 OF 10

Thrive & Work After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

Serbia welcomes foreign graduates: you can apply for **permanent residency after 5 years** of continuous stay (study + work counts), with citizenship possible after further years. Demand is growing in **IT, engineering, and companies serving EU markets**.

BY THE NUMBERS

PR	Study + work counts	Growing demand
after 5 years	toward it	IT & engineering

HOW TO HELP

Plan your longer-term path: **permanent residency after 5 years** (study counts), and target Serbia's growing IT/engineering sectors and EU-facing companies if you want to stay.

GOOD TO KNOW

Serbia offers a **route to permanent residency after 5 years** — confirm current conditions, which can change.

QUICK REFERENCE

Studying in Serbia: The Essentials

A snapshot — Serbia is an EU candidate (not member); verify degree recognition, and confirm details with the embassy, police, and your university.

The system

University of Belgrade (largest/oldest), Novi Sad, Niš, Kragujevac, and private universities; ECTS and diploma supplement (Bologna-aligned); 180+ English-taught programs; October start.

Visa & permit

Many nationalities enter visa-free for 90 days; others need a Type D student visa; all register their address at the police within 24 hours and apply for a temporary residence permit within 90 days.

Tuition

Affordable: public universities charge international students low fees; private universities vary (up to ~€20,000); Ministry of Education and university scholarships available.

Money & language

Prove ~€3,000–6,000/year (~€500–600/month) plus health insurance (€20,000+) and accommodation; Serbian or English (180+ programs), though some English programs require a year of Serbian first.

Work & after

Students can work with the appropriate permit; foreign graduates are welcomed, with permanent residency possible after 5 years (study counts).

YOUR SERBIAN JOURNEY STARTS HERE

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