

Travel Advice Pack for Visitors to the University of Kinshasa, DR Congo

Welcome to the University of Kinshasa! We're excited to host you in the vibrant capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This travel advice pack provides essential information to help you prepare for your stay, ensuring a smooth and enjoyable experience.

1. General Information About Kinshasa and the University of Kinshasa

Kinshasa is a lively, bustling city with a rich cultural heritage. As the capital of the DRC, it is the country's political, economic, and cultural hub. You'll find a mix of modern infrastructure, lively markets, and friendly locals. French is the official language, but Lingala is also widely spoken.

The **University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN)** is one of the most prestigious higher education institutions in Central Africa, with a strong reputation in research, medicine, and social sciences. It offers a dynamic academic environment with well-equipped facilities and a diverse student body. The campus is located in the Lemba district, providing a conducive atmosphere for learning and collaboration.

International Recognition and Rankings

- **Top University in the DRC:** UNIKIN consistently ranks as the **#1 university in the Democratic Republic of the Congo** and among the **top 50 in Sub-Saharan Africa** (according to regional rankings).
- **Global Impact:** UNIKIN is recognized for its contributions to African academia and its collaborations with American, European and African universities.
- **Key Strengths:** The university excels in **medicine, law, engineering, social sciences, Agronomy and Environmental sciences** with growing research output in public health and tropical diseases.

The **Faculty of Medicine at UNIKIN** is a leading institution for medical training and research in Central Africa. Key highlights include:

- **Research Output:** Faculty members regularly publish in **peer-reviewed journals**, particularly in **tropical medicine, infectious diseases (malaria, HIV, Ebola, Mpox), and public health**.
- **Notable Contributions:**
 - o Pioneering studies on **HIV/AIDS epidemiology** in the DRC.
 - o Research partnerships with **WHO, CDC, NIH, and Universities across the globe**.

- o Active involvement in **epidemic response**, including during Ebola, Mpox, and Cholera outbreaks.
- o **Medical Training**: The faculty is the main medical training institution in Central Africa and trains some of the best doctors in the region, with a strong emphasis on **clinical practice and community health**.



Picture: University Hospitals of the University of Kinshasa

2. Visa and Travel Documents

To enter the DRC, most visitors will need a **visa**. Here's what you should know:

- **Tourist or Business Visa**: Apply at the nearest DRC embassy or consulate before traveling.
- **eVisa** is also available and applications can be submitted through the web portal of the immigration department: <https://evisa.gouv.cd/>
- **Required Documents**: Passport (valid for at least 6 months), visa application form, passport photos, certified invitation (to be provided by the host if needed), proof of accommodation, and a return ticket.
- **Visa on arrival** : is available for the following categories:
 - o Citizens of Mauritius may obtain a visa on arrival valid for up to 7 days.
 - o Visitors with a document that proves their DR Congo origins may obtain a visa on arrival for a maximum stay of 30 days.
 - o Visitors with a document that proves that their parents are of DR Congo origins may obtain a visa on arrival for a maximum stay of 30 days.
 - o Visitors arriving from a country with no DR Congo embassy may apply for a visa confirmation ("**visa volant**"). A letter of request is sent via e-mail to

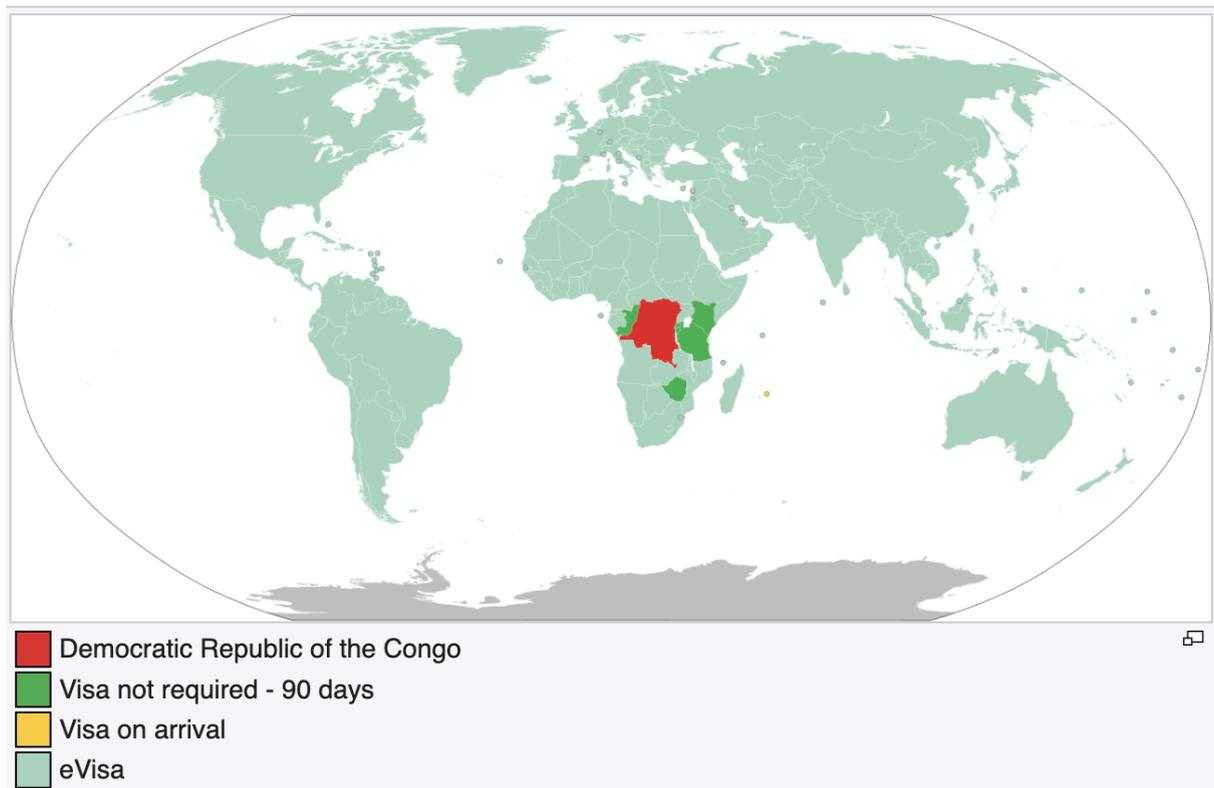
the Direction Générale de Migration with a photocopy of the passport of the applicant and the inviting person/organization. A confirmation is sent to the applicant which is then used to obtain a visa on arrival, valid for 7 days and extendable in the DR Congo.

- **Official Websites:**

- o Ministry of Foreign Affairs: www.diplomatie.gouv.cd
- o Directorate General of Migration (DGM): www.dgm.cd

We recommend applying well in advance to avoid delays. If you need an invitation letter for your visa, please let us know.

The map below summarizes the visa requirements for different countries of origin.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visa_policy_of_the_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo

3. Health and Sanitary Measures

Your health and safety are important. Here's what to keep in mind:

- **Vaccinations:** A **yellow fever vaccination** is mandatory for entry. Other recommended vaccines (not mandatory) include hepatitis A, typhoid, and meningitis.
- **Malaria Prevention:** Kinshasa is a malaria zone, so bring antimalarial medication and use mosquito repellent. Mosquito protection nets can also be used. The CDC recommends that travelers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo take

prescription medicine to prevent malaria. Depending on the medicine you take, you will need to start taking this medicine multiple days before your trip, as well as during and after your trip. Talk to your doctor about which malaria medication you should take.

- **Medical Facilities:** There are several good clinics in Kinshasa, including the **University Hospitals of Kinshasa, CMK (Centre Médical de Kinshasa), and Clinique Ngaliema, among others.**
- **Water and Food:** We recommend drinking bottled or filtered water and eating at reputable restaurants.

If you need any medical assistance during your stay, we can guide you to reliable healthcare providers.

4. Accommodation for Short Stays

For short-term stays for activities at the University of Kinshasa, we recommend booking accommodation in the vicinity of the university campus to avoid traffic issues. The University of Kinshasa offers affordable accommodation on the University's campus. In addition, the Kinshasa School of Public Health (<https://espskinshasa.net/presentation-ksph/>) and the Association of Professors of the University of Kinshasa offer good quality accommodation, including Air Conditioning and meals (optional).



If you need to book an accommodation in any of the above facilities, please reach out to your contact person for assistance.

The city of Kinshasa has multiple high-class hotels available on your favorite travel App. We can assist with recommendations based on your budget and preferences.

5. Transportation in Kinshasa

Getting around Kinshasa is manageable with these options:

- **Taxis:** The most common way to travel. Always negotiate the fare before getting in.
- **Ride-Hailing Apps:** **Uber** and **Yango** operate in Kinshasa for safer, fixed-rate trips.
- **Public Buses (Transport en Commun):** Affordable but often crowded. **We strongly discourage the use of this means of transportation for our guests.**
- **Private Drivers:** For convenience, you can hire a driver for the duration of your stay.

We advise avoiding driving yourself due to traffic conditions. If you need help arranging transport, let us know.

6. Sport facilities at the University of Kinshasa

The University of Kinshasa has a modern sports complex. This complex was recently renovated and served as a training ground for athletes competing in the Francophone Games in Kinshasa. This complex includes soccer, volleyball, and basketball fields, a large Olympic-sized swimming pool, and a multi-purpose gym.



The University of Kinshasa has an extensive road network, providing ideal terrain for jogging enthusiasts. We recommend early morning running to set your mind in place or late afternoon rounds to cool down after a busy day of work or research.



7. Cost of Living in Kinshasa (Approximate in US\$)

Kinshasa is an energetic city with a range of living costs depending on your lifestyle and location. Below is a general guide to help you budget for your stay:

Daily Expenses

- **Meals:**
 - o Local restaurant: **5–10** per meal
 - o Mid-range restaurant: **15–30** per meal
 - o Fast food (e.g., burgers, pizza): **8–15**
 - o **Groceries (per week): 30–60** (basic items like bread, eggs, fruits, and vegetables)
 - o **Bottled water (1.5L): 0.50–1**
 - o **Coffee (in a café): 2–5**
- **Transportation**
 - o **Taxi ride (short distance): 3–10** (always negotiate before boarding)
 - o **Taxi ride (longer distance): 10–20**
 - o **Ride-hailing (Uber/Taxi Jet):** Slightly more expensive but safer (**5–15** per trip)

- o Public bus (minibus): **0.50–0.50–1** (crowded but very affordable)
- **Accommodation (Short-Term Stay)**
 - o Budget guesthouse: **30–50** per night
 - o Mid-range hotel: **60–60–120** per night
 - o High-end hotel (e.g., Pullman, Memling): **150–150–300+** per night
 - o Monthly apartment rental (furnished): **500–500–1,500** (depending on location and amenities)

Other Costs

- **SIM card + mobile data: from 20 US\$ per month**
- **Gym membership (monthly): 30–80**

Tips for Saving Money

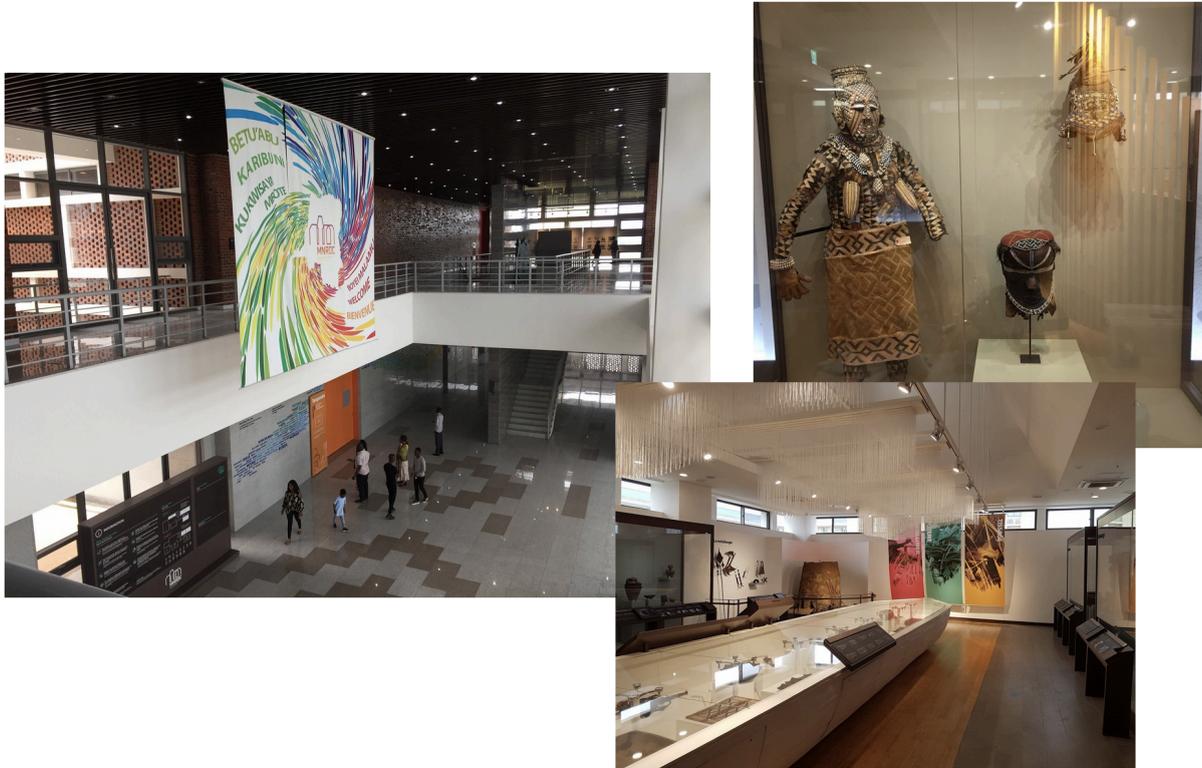
- Make yourself accompanied by local colleagues when having to buy goods. They can negotiate for you
- Use ride-hailing apps to avoid overpaying for taxis.
- Exchange money at **official bureaux de change** for better rates than hotels or airports. Seek help from local colleagues.

While Kinshasa can be expensive in some areas, smart budgeting will help you manage costs comfortably. If you need advice on affordable options, feel free to ask!

8. General Tips for a Pleasant Stay

- **Currency:** The Congolese franc (CDF) is the local currency. Carry small bills for easier transactions.
- **Safety:** Like in any major city, stay aware of your surroundings, avoid walking alone at night, and keep valuables secure.
- **Cultural Etiquette:** Congolese people are warm and hospitable. A friendly greeting goes a long way!
- **Internet & Connectivity:** Mobile data is widely available. Local SIM cards (Airtel, Vodacom, Orange) are affordable.
- **tourist attractions:**
 - o *le Parc de la Vallée de la Nsele* offers a unique in-town Safari experience. You can book your visit online <https://parcdelavalleedelansele.com/>
 - o *The National Museum of the Democratic Republic of Congo (MNRDC)* : the MNRDC is a museum located in Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is dedicated to the cultural history of the country's many ethnic groups and historical periods.

It was officially handed over to the Congolese government on June 14, 2019, after three years of construction. With a capacity to house 12,000 objects, the museum was designed with the objectives of conserving, transmitting, and promoting Congolese cultural heritage.



Pictures MNRDC

- o **Zongo Falls:** Zongo Falls is a natural wonder! This is located at around 180km out of Kinshasa, in a safe environment and is connected to Kinshasa with a very safe road. The falls take their name from the town of Zongo. They are located on the Inkisi River. The Inkisi enters the DRC through a waterfall and flows into the river after the Zongo Falls.



Credit Par fabricewonga, CC BY-SA 3.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=53906911>

We're here to make your visit to Kinshasa and the University of Kinshasa as smooth as possible. If you have any questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out.

Safe travels, and we look forward to welcoming you soon!

Contact for Support:
University of Kinshasa Website: www.unikin.ac.cd