



### ***- How to get along financially without major Problems -***

Due to bad experience other refugees had to make, here are a few hints how to get along financially:

If you buy things you need, you will in most cases pay cash. Furthermore you have also the possibility to pay cashless with your bank card. If you pay with your bank card, be sure that there is enough money left in your bank account. Otherwise the bank will charge a penalty fee of up to 25,00 € additionally and deduct it from your account.

These incidents are also reported to the so-called „SCHUFA“, an institution gathering data regarding the credit-worthiness of the people. If you have several negative entries there, it will be more difficult to get a credit or loan you may need in the future.

To know the current account balance it is recommendable to get an account statement regularly via the bank statement printer (in German: „Kontoauszugsdrucker“) using your personal bank card. You should do this anyway to control, whether amounts debited and credited to your account are correct or not.

In any case, for the reasons above it is advisable to pay cash, in case you are not sure, whether there is enough money left in your bank account.

If you want to buy more expensive things or use long-term services, which are not free of charge, for example regarding telecommunication, cell-phones or access to the internet, you will be confronted with a contract (in German: „Vertrag“). A contract is a piece of paper regulating the terms and conditions of the business relationship between you and the company involved and it has to be signed by both parties to become valid.

A contract – once signed – is binding. It can be compared to a promise you make. For this reason be sure that you understand everything thoroughly and completely.

This contract will of course be in German language. So, if you are unsure of its contents, ask for a unsigned copy of the contract and consult a German speaking person you can trust.

Do not rely on what you are told by the personnel or employees of a shop. They have their own interests in mind and want to make business and earn money. What counts in the end is only what is written in the contract, not what you were told before orally.

So, to avoid trouble:

- never sign anything you do not understand
- never sign anything you do not agree with
- always get and keep a copy of all documents that you sign

In case of problems or further questions please do not hesitate to contact one of the German volunteers, who attend the facilities regularly.