

Entry, residence and access to the German job market

Are you planning to move to Germany? Do you intend to work in Germany?

- If you are a citizen of a **Member State of the European Union (EU) or of the European Economic Area (EEA), which includes Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, or of Switzerland**, you can enter Germany with a valid passport or ID card without a visa, as a result of your right to freedom of movement. After arrival, only Swiss citizens will receive a residence permit from the local Aliens Authority as evidence of their right to residence. No further formalities need to be completed to take up employment (provided it is not a requirement for the specific professional activity, e.g. to obtain authorisation to practice as a doctor).
- As a **citizen of Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand or the United States of America**, you can enter Germany without a visa, even if you're planning an extended stay and would like to work here. You must then apply for the residence title required to undertake employment within the first three months following your arrival – and **before** starting work – from the Aliens Authority responsible for your place of residence.
- If you hold a **different citizenship** to those already mentioned, you must apply for a visa from a German embassy or consulate before entering Germany. With regards to the reason for your visa application, you must declare your intended employment as the reason for your journey and your stay in Germany.
- Basically, you must have already signed a **contract of employment** with an employer in Germany, or at least have been **offered** a permanent job.

- If you have a degree and still haven't found a **job** in Germany, you can also apply for a six-month job-seeker's **visa**. Details of the visa process, the conditions which must be met for a visa to be issued and the contact details of the relevant German embassy or consulate can be found at www.diplo.de.
- Following your arrival, you must ask the Aliens Authority in your place of residence in good time (before your visa expires) to issue an appropriate **residence title**, which explicitly allows employment. In general, the **residence title** will initially be issued as a temporary **residence permit**, but under certain conditions, graduates can also obtain an **EU Blue Card** or permanent **settlement permit**.
- Please note that professionals in training occupations (i. e. occupations without academic qualifications) who've completed their training in countries outside the EU may only immigrate for employment purposes if their profession appears on the Federal Employment Agency's **positive list** (www.zav.de/positivliste), or if they're transferred to Germany as part of a job creation scheme which is based on a transfer agreement between the Federal Employment Agency and the employment service in their native country. A further condition is that the competent authority responsible for professional recognition has determined the equivalence of their foreign professional qualifications with the relevant German qualifications (see Applying for recognition from abroad).
- You can find further information about entry, residence and access to the job market on the following websites:
 - www.bamf.de/Aufenthalt-in-Deutschland
 - www.bamf.de/Arbeiten-in-Deutschland
 - www.make-it-in-germany.com

How do I find a job?

You can search for jobs in Germany on the following websites:

- www.jobboerse.arbeitsagentur.de
- www.make-it-in-germany.com

Many companies also publish their job opportunities on other on-line job exchanges.

Networks such as Xing can also be helpful when looking for a job.

The International Placement Service (ZAV) provides more information about working in Germany at www.zav.de/arbeiten-in-deutschland.

Can I bring my family?

If your spouse and children are citizens of the EU, the EEA or Switzerland, they can essentially live and work in Germany without any restrictions. Family members from other countries must have an entry visa. Please direct any questions about this to the German embassy or consulate, or if you're already in Germany, to the Aliens Authority in your place of residence or to the local Immigration Information Centre.

Where can I get more information?

All the important information regarding the recognition of your foreign professional qualifications is available in several languages online at www.anererkennung-in-deutschland.de. Information in German and English is also available by phoning the Hotline "**Working and Living in Germany**": **+49 (0)30 1815 - 1111**. The hotline staff will also be happy to provide advice regarding entry and residence, learning German and seeking employment.

Hotline
Working and Living
in Germany
+49 30 1815 - 1111



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Recognition of your professional qualifications

One step towards working in Germany



Applying for recognition from abroad

Do you intend to work in your chosen profession in Germany? You'll be most welcome! Because Germany needs qualified professionals. You can have your foreign professional qualifications compared with the requirements of that profession in Germany. For some professions, you must provide such an assessment in order to be able to work in that profession. For other professions, the recognition of your qualifications will improve your chances in the job market. You can file an application to do this before you even enter the country – regardless of your nationality or whether you hold a residence permit.

Before attempting to file an application from abroad, you should, however, establish whether you're allowed to enter and work in Germany. The following paragraphs provide some initial information about this.

Why should I have my foreign professional qualifications assessed?

A comparison of your foreign professional qualifications with the requirements of that profession in Germany is particularly important if you intend to practice a regulated profession in Germany.

Only people who have obtained the required professional qualifications or whose professional qualifications have been recognised are entitled to work in regulated professions and use the professional title. In Germany, regulated professions include those in the health and education sector (for example doctor, nurse or teacher). In some professions, special regulations also apply if you intend to set up your own business (for example as a baker or hairdresser).

In non-regulated professions (for example mechanic or electronics technician), however, you don't need any formal recognition of your qualifications in order to practice your profession. In this case, you can also work in your profession in Germany without your qualifications having to be assessed. Having your qualifications verified is, however, useful, so that employers and companies can better assess your skills and knowledge.

How does the process work?

In order to file an application, you must contact the office which is responsible for your profession. You can obtain information about this on the internet at www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de or by phone on +49 (0)30 1815 - 1111.

Once you've submitted your documents, the competent authorities will check whether there are any substantial differences between your foreign professional qualifications and German professional qualifications. If substantial differences are identified, they may be compensated by other qualifications or professional experience. If your documentation is not sufficient for your qualifications to be assessed, some professions may also undertake a qualifications analysis, e.g. using work samples or interviews.

What are the possible outcomes?

If no substantial differences are determined between your qualifications and German qualifications, you'll be issued with a certificate confirming the full equivalence of your professional qualifications, or granted authorization to pursue the profession – provided you also satisfy any other conditions. This will allow you to practice your profession just as if you held German qualifications.

In the case of non-regulated professions, if the process identifies any substantial differences between your qualifications and German qualifications, you'll receive a letter which accurately describes those differences. This will allow you to apply directly to employers or undertake the

appropriate training. In the case of regulated professions, you may compensate for any differences. Depending on the profession, you must therefore complete an adaptation period or sit a professional exam.

How much does the process cost?

The fees are determined by the competent authority. You should therefore enquire about the likely cost before filing an application.

What documents do I need?

- Application form (available from the competent authority)
- Tabular overview of your education and previous professional experience (in German)
- Proof of identity (ID card or passport)
- Evidence of your foreign educational qualifications and relevant professional experience or continuing training (if applicable)
- Evidence that you intend to work in Germany (not required for citizens of the European Union, European Economic Area and Switzerland or for residents of those countries). Valid evidence includes documents regarding your application for an entry visa for employment purposes or documents regarding contact with potential employers.

For recognition in regulated professions, you'll sometimes require further documentation. Please find out what this is in advance from the competent authority.

NB: you should usually submit a German translation of your documents, together with a certified copy. Please enquire in advance as to whether you should commission a translation by an officially authorised translator.

Do I need to speak German?

A knowledge of German may be requested if it's needed to practice the profession. This particularly applies to the regulated professions, for example doctors, teachers or health professionals. Applicants will only obtain professional recognition in these professions if they have the required knowledge of German.

In Germany, you can learn German in the state-funded integration courses. Information about these and other language courses is available from the following websites:

- Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees): www.bamf.de/Deutschlernen
- Deutsche Welle: www.dw.de/deutschkurse
- Goethe-Institut: www.goethe.de/Deutschlernen

