

## 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 an **EU citizen, a national of the EEA states of Liechtenstein, Norway and Iceland, 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 nationals still 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 these are not required due to the specific professional activity, e.g. for accreditation as a doctor). An exception to this (until 30.06.2015), is if you're a Croatian national, as you will then basically require an EU work permit from the International Placement Service (ZAV) before starting work. This does not apply to graduates in a graduate-level job and their families, and to apprentices in a nationally recognised training occupation.

■ As a **national 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 nationality** 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 office responsible for professional recognition has determined the equivalence of their professional overseas qualifications with the appropriate 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 basically live and work in Germany without any restrictions. Family members from other countries will basically require 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.

More information can also be found at:

■ Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge: **www.bamf.de**;  
Hotline "Bürgerservice Integration": **+49 (0)911 943-6390**;  
E-Mail: **info.buerger@bamf.bund.de**

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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 professional overseas qualifications compared with the requirements of this profession in Germany. For some professions, you must provide such an assessment in order to be able to work in this 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 professional overseas qualifications assessed?

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

“Regulated” means that you may not practice a profession or use a professional title without a national accreditation or the recognition of your professional qualifications. 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 checked 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](http://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de) or by phone on +49 (0)30 1815 - 1111.

Once you've submitted your documents, someone will check whether there are any major differences between your professional overseas qualifications and German professional qualifications. If this is the case, the differences may be offset by other qualifications or professional experience. If your documentation is not sufficient for your qualifications to be assessed, some professions may also undertake a skills analysis, e.g. using occupational tests or technical discussions.

## What are the possible outcomes?

If no major 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 professional accreditation – 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 major differences between your qualifications and German qualifications, you'll receive a letter which accurately describes these differences. This will allow you to apply directly to employers or undertake the appropriate training. In the case of regulated professions, you may offset

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 relevant office. Please therefore enquire about the likely cost before filing an application.

## What documents do I need?

- Application form (available from the relevant office)
- Tabular overview of your education and previous professional experience (in German)
- Proof of identity (ID card or passport)
- Evidence of your overseas educational qualifications and relevant professional experience or further training (if applicable)

Evidence that you intend to work in Germany (not required for nationals of the European Union, European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland and for residents of these countries). Valid evidence includes documents regarding your application for an entry visa for employment purposes, or documents regarding contact with potential employers.

For accreditation in regulated professions, you'll sometimes require further documentation. Please find out what this is in advance from the relevant office.

**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 accreditation in these professions if they have the required knowledge of German.

In Germany, you can learn German on 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](http://www.bamf.de/Deutschlernen)
- Deutsche Welle: [www.dw.de/deutschkurse](http://www.dw.de/deutschkurse)
- Goethe-Institut: [www.goethe.de/Deutschlernen](http://www.goethe.de/Deutschlernen)

## Where can I get more information?

You can find all the important information in German and English on the internet at [www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de](http://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de) or by phone on +49 (0)30 1815 - 1111.

