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## Welcome to

### Welcome to Cottbus

**Nice to have you here!**

Welcome to [Cottbus!](#)



You will quickly feel at home here.

Cottbus is a city of 100,000 inhabitants with many opportunities and surprises in store. We are particularly proud of the many parks and green spaces that invite you to go for a walk, do sport or relax. In Cottbus you are very close to nature.

Cottbus is a university city in Brandenburg, between Dresden and Berlin. Young people from all over the world come here to study and live. This makes the city lively and open.

And the city is changing. It used to be known for coal and energy. Today, there are many new ideas and projects. Cottbus is growing and developing - a real boomtown!

The Spreewald is very close by. The nature here is unique. A tour by bike or a boat trip on the famous canals are unforgettable experiences.

A special feature of Cottbus/Chóšebuz: many street signs and the city name are bilingual - German and Sorbian. The Sorbs are a minority with their own language and culture. This is a part of our history that we are preserving.

We are delighted that you are here.

Discover Cottbus - it's worth it!

Yours, Tobias Schick  
Lord Mayor

## First steps

Are you new to Germany and Cottbus? Here are some important things you should do:

### Housing:

- Find a flat and furniture
- Make sure your name is clearly legible on the letterbox

### Dealing with the authorities:

- Register with the residents' registration office within 2 weeks
- In Cottbus, this can be done at the city office: [Book an appointment](#)
- If you come from a non-EU country, you must register with the immigration office

### Health:

- Take out health insurance (statutory or private) - this is compulsory in Germany

### Language & education:

- If necessary: Attend an integration course or German language course
- Childcare: Enrol your children in a daycare centre or school
- Look for training, studies or a job

### Finances:

- Open a German bank account (helpful for rent & salary)
- Share your account details with the social welfare office or job centre if you receive money there
- Apply for child benefit from the family benefits office

### Contracts & insurances:

- If necessary: Take out a mobile phone or internet contract (check duration & costs)
- Take out private liability insurance (recommended)
- Apply for exemption from licence fees (if possible)

### Pets:

- Dogs must be registered with the municipality
- Some landlords want to be informed about pets

### Driving licence & car:

- With a foreign driving licence you are allowed to drive in Germany for 6 months. After that, you may need a German driving licence.
- Your car must be registered (citizens' office or vehicle registration office)

## Interesting facts about Cottbus

### 10 things you should know about Cottbus

1. 100,000 people live in Cottbus. Cottbus is the third largest city in the Berlin-Brandenburg metropolitan region. It is located between Berlin and Dresden and offers a good mix of history, culture and nature. You can find more information [here](#).
2. The [city of Cottbus](#) has a long history. Cottbus has been around for over 900 years. The city has always been an important centre for immigration and cultural diversity. Today you can feel the combination of tradition and modernity here.
3. Cottbus is the gateway to the Spreewald and Lusatian Lake District. It offers people many opportunities to relax and go on excursions. Discover [here](#) what great things you can experience.
4. Sorbs and Wends: Sorbian-Wendish minorities have settled in Cottbus and Lusatia. With their centuries-old traditions, Slavic language, lively festivals and ornate costumes, they contribute to the cultural diversity of the region. If you want to find out more, click [here](#).
5. The Cottbuser Ostsee is the largest artificial lake in Central Europe. Right at the gates of the city, it is an area for recreation and great experiences. [Click here](#) for the latest developments.
6. Jacket potatoes, linseed oil and quark: this dish was once the food of the poor. Today it is an integral part of every restaurant menu in the Spreewald. Linseed oil is also used as a natural household remedy in the Spreewald. If you would like to try it, use this [recipe](#).
7. Hermann Fürst von Pückler-Muskau lived from 1785-1871 and was one of Europe's greatest garden artists, a successful travel writer, a lover of exquisite food and the namesake of a world-famous ice cream. [Branitz Park](#) in Cottbus was designed by Pückler.
8. FC Energie Cottbus (full name: Fußballclub Energie Cottbus e.V.) is a football club from Cottbus. It was founded in 1966 and currently plays in the 3rd league. Current information can be found [here](#).
9. The [Brandenburg University of Technology](#) Cottbus-Senftenberg is the only technical university in the state of Brandenburg. With currently around 6,600 students from over 100 nations, it has long characterised the young and diverse life of the university town.
10. The [Medical University of Lausitz-Carl Thiem](#) (MUL-CT for short) is the clinical centre in Cottbus. It was founded in July 2024. It emerged from the Carl-Thiem-Klinikum (CTK) hospital. With around 3,200 employees, it is the largest employer in the city of Cottbus.

## Welcome Centre in Cottbus

The Welcome Centre helps people who are moving to Cottbus or coming back. We support everyone who wants to live and work here.

Skilled workers from Germany and other countries are very welcome here. The Welcome Centre provides guidance. It provides advice and support. It refers people to the right places and organisations and establishes contacts.

## The Welcome Centre offers

- Advice on questions about living and working in Cottbus
- Help with the recognition of foreign qualifications
- Orientation and referral to the right places
- Support for companies with the entry and integration of skilled workers
- Cooperation with authorities, schools and companies

## Information and counselling on:

- Language courses and language programmes
- Work and job search
- Housing
- health
- Education (daycare centre, school, university)
- Culture and leisure
- Authorities and administration
- Encounters and commitment

**Our counselling is free of charge!**

## Iryna Kaminska | Welcome Center Cottbus

 [Berliner Straße 157, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 <https://www.welcome-cottbus.de/>

## Astrid Schreiber | Welcome Center Cottbus

 [Berliner Straße 157, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [+493556123412](tel:+493556123412)

 <https://www.welcome-cottbus.de/>

## Opening hours:

Dear visitors

Due to a reorganisation, we are currently open for you during these office hours until further notice:

**Monday 1pm - 4pm**

**Wednesday 9am-12pm**

**Thursday 1pm - 4pm**

You are welcome to send us an e-mail with your request: [welcome@cottbus.de](mailto:welcome@cottbus.de)


Thank you for your understanding!

The Welcome Centre team

## Important offices

### Immigration office

If you are not a German citizen, you can get help from the Foreigners' Registration Office in Cottbus. They will help you with questions about residence and entry to Germany. This counselling is for all people who live here in Cottbus or in the district of Spree-Neiße.

 [Karl-Marx-Straße 67, 03044 Cottbus](#)

[@auslaenderbehoerde@cottbus.de](mailto:@auslaenderbehoerde@cottbus.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556123390](tel:+49(0)3556123390)

 <https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschäfts...>

### Residents' Registration Office (City Office)

There are many services in the Cottbus city office. This is the residents' registration office. If you move to Cottbus, you must register within two weeks. If you move, you must notify your new address and can re-register here. You can also apply for identity cards, passports or certificates of good conduct at the city office.

You can find an overview of the services [here](#).

### Technisches Rathaus | Stadtbüro

 [Karl-Marx-Str. 67, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@stadtbuero@cottbus.de](mailto:@stadtbuero@cottbus.de)

 [+493556122070](tel:+493556122070)

 <https://www.cottbus.de/stadtbuero>

### Opening hours:

**By appointment only, Tuesday afternoons without appointments possible**

Monday 08:30 - 13:00

Tuesday 08:30 - 12:00, 13:00 - 18:00

Thursday 08:30 - 12:00, 13:00 - 18:00

Friday 08:30 - 12:00

### Please note

You can make an appointment:

- on the Internet under "[Make an appointment for your visit to the city office](#)"
- via the telephone service 0355 6123333
- by e-mail with a telephone number to [stadtbuero@cottbus.de](mailto:stadtbuero@cottbus.de)
- via the "appointment mailbox" on site - by filling out the appointment form

### **Accessibility:**

Lift available: Yes

Wheelchair accessible: Yes

### **Responsible for:**

Cottbus/Chósebus

### **Driving licence authority (driving licence)**

If you want to drive a car, you need a driving licence. The driving licence is also called a driver's licence.

Driving licences from non-EU countries are only valid for 6 months in Germany. You may only drive in Germany with a driving licence from your home country for the first 6 months. The international driving licence is also not valid indefinitely. It loses its validity after 6 months. It must then be exchanged for a German driving licence.

### **Führerscheinstelle**

 [Karl-Marx-Straße 69, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@fahrerlaubnis@cottbus.de](mailto:fahrerlaubnis@cottbus.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556124788](tel:+49(0)3556124788)

 <https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschäfts...>

### **Cottbus job centre**

Are you unemployed and need support? The Jobcenter Cottbus helps people who are entitled to Bürgergeld.

Would you like to:

- Submit an application to Bürgergeld ?
- Have your application approved?
- Or report changes?

Then you can do this conveniently online [here](#).

 [Bahnhofstraße 10, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@jobcenter-Cottbus.Eingangszone-Team-715@jobcenter...](mailto:jobcenter-Cottbus.Eingangszone-Team-715@jobcenter...)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556193100](tel:+49(0)3556193100)

 <https://cottbus.de/verwaltung/gb-1/dz-1-1/jobcent...>

If you need a personal appointment, you can book one yourself [here](#).

You can also find news about Jobcenter and the latest information on our [Instagram channel](#).

### **Vehicle registration office**

If you want to register or re-register a vehicle, the vehicle registration authority is the right place to go. It takes care of everything to do with the registration of vehicles and trailers in road traffic. If you have a vehicle, you can contact the vehicle registration authority.

 [Karl-Marx-Straße 69, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@kfz-zulassung@cottbus.de](mailto:kfz-zulassung@cottbus.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556124777](tel:+49(0)3556124777)

 <https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschäfts...>

### **Social welfare office**

The social welfare office provides social assistance. This assistance includes

- Support for everyday life
- Basic security in old age and in the event of illness
- Help with education and participation in life
- Citizen's allowance and social assistance
- School transport
- Assistance for health
- Care assistance
- Support for disabled people
- Assistance for asylum seekers and foreign nationals
- Benefits in accordance with the State Participation Allowance Act

The specialist centre also offers advice on housing to prevent or remedy homelessness. Here you can ask questions on these topics and get support.

### **Sozialamt Cottbus**

 [Thiemstraße 37, 03050 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556124800](tel:+49(0)3556124800)

 <https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschäfts...>

### **Housing benefit office**

The section helps with these topics:


Application for housing benefit.

Application for a rent subsidy.


Application for an encumbrance allowance.

Certificate that you need a flat.

## **Wohngeldstelle**

 [Karl-Marx-Straße 67, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](https://www.wohngeldstelle.de)

[@wohngeldstelle@cottbus.de](mailto:wohngeldstelle@cottbus.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556120](tel:+49(0)3556120)

## **About Integreat**

Integreat is a guide to support you in your everyday life. You will find important addresses, contacts and tips and tricks to help you find your way around.

This guide has several chapters. Each chapter deals with a different topic. Among other things, you will find information on doctors, schools, German courses and other institutions. There is also a chapter with ideas on what you can do in your free time. The information and leisure activities are subject to change. The Integreat team updates them regularly. It is therefore a good idea to check your mobile app often. You will always be informed about current activities and events. You can rely on the information in Integreat.

You can also use this app offline if you don't have internet access. When you are online again, the app updates itself.

## **Sharing information**

Important information that you want to pass on, for example, can be downloaded as a PDF in the web app and shared. In the mobile app, you can share interesting content directly, for example via WhatsApp, Facebook or e-mail.

## **The latest news**

You can also receive push notifications with the Integreat smartphone app. You can agree to receive them in the app settings. Important or urgent information is sent to you via push notifications.

## **Feedback**

You can contribute to the further development of the Integreat app. You can give feedback using the smiley icons. This feedback is sent to the people who create the content. You can praise or criticise. Write down as many details as possible for ideas or criticism. You can also write an e-mail directly: [integreat@cottbus.de](mailto:integreat@cottbus.de)

## Read aloud function

The content of the Integreat app can also be read aloud. To do this, the read aloud function must be switched on in the smartphone settings. This works in all languages. Alternatively, you can also use the built-in read aloud function in Integreat via the menu.

We very much hope that we can make your life in Cottbus easier with this app.

## Integreat in sign language (Video)

This video explains how Integreat works in German sign language. You will learn what is possible. Click on the image to watch the video on YouTube.



## Counselling, law and help

### Anti-discrimination counselling

Discrimination means that people are treated worse than other people. Another word for discrimination is disadvantage. Discrimination makes people feel unfairly treated. Discrimination can occur at work, in leisure time or in an office, for example.

If you are discriminated against, you have certain rights. These rights are set out in a law. The law says

- All people should be treated equally.
- No person may be treated worse than other people.
- People have these rights.
- Discrimination is prohibited.

There are various reasons why a person may discriminate against another person. Sometimes people experience discrimination because these people, for example:

- come from another country
- are a woman or a man
- do not feel like a woman or a man
- have a different faith
- think differently
- have a disability
- are old or young
- love another person

## **Anti-discrimination counselling Brandenburg / Opferperspektive e.V.**

Opferperspektive offers professional counselling for victims of right-wing violence and racist discrimination. The counselling is free, confidential, impartial and independent. Opferperspektive provides counselling on everything that victims experience as right-wing violence.

We support you in cases of discrimination because of:

- racist attributions,
- gender,
- sexual identity
- disability or chronic illness,
- of age,
- religion and/or ideology.

Get in touch with us:

Office in Cottbus

In the Schloßkirchpassage  
Brandenburger Platz 11  
03046 Cottbus

Head office in Potsdam

Rudolf-Breitscheid-Straße 164  
14482 Potsdam  
E-mail: [antidiskriminierung@opferperspektive.de](mailto:antidiskriminierung@opferperspektive.de)  
Telephone: 0331 - 58 10 7676  
<https://antidiskriminierungsberatung-brandenburg...>

## **Opferhilfe Land Brandenburg e.V.**

A criminal offence can change your life dramatically. Many victims are shocked. They have to testify as a witness in criminal proceedings. Even long after the offence, the consequences often continue to have an impact.

- Victim counselling
- Trauma counselling
- Stalking counselling
- Psychosocial trial counselling

- External services for rape victims

Victim counselling Cottbus  
Cottbus North Medical Centre  
Gerhart-Hauptmann-Straße 15, 03044 Cottbus  
T: 0355 729 6052  
M: [cottbus@opferhilfe-brandenburg.de](mailto:cottbus@opferhilfe-brandenburg.de)

## **Brandenburg Police**

The police can organise offers of help. The police help. They take up reports. The police try to solve or prevent crimes.

For emergencies: 110

Contact:  
Juri-Gagarin-Straße 16  
03046 Cottbus  
Telephone (general): 0355 4937-1224/1225

## **Advisory Board for Integration and Migration**

The Advisory Board for Integration and Migration represents people with a migration background in Cottbus. It sets itself goals. For example these: How can the integration of immigrants in Cottbus be improved? How can immigrants participate in decision-making in Cottbus? Do the services for immigrants in Cottbus meet their needs?

The advisory board works on a voluntary basis and has eleven members. The city of Cottbus elects the members for the duration of the election period. Seven members are foreign nationals. Four members must have German citizenship and be committed to the integration of people with a migration background in Cottbus.

The advisory board offers consultation hours on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month from 14:00-16:00. You can find us at Spremberger Straße 29 and no appointment is necessary.

## **Advisory Council for Integration and Migration of the City of Cottbus**

[@migrationsbeirat@cottbus.de](mailto:@migrationsbeirat@cottbus.de)  
[!\[\]\(b65ff707ec4d1ab514bcb3ba54feee42\_img.jpg\) Beirat für Integration und Migration](#)

**Information about the work of the advisory board can be found here:**

[Current information](#)

## **Counselling centres for professional integration and qualification**

Are you looking for a job? There are various organisations in Cottbus that can help you find a job.

If you are still in the asylum process and have a permit or tolerated stay, the [Cottbus Employment Agency](#) will help you

If you have a residence permit, the [Cottbus Job Centre](#) is usually responsible for you.

Immigrants also have the option of contacting the following advice centres in Cottbus.

### **BIWAQ - vocational integration**

#### **BIWAQ - Help with finding a job**

BIWAQ helps people without a job.

You receive support to help you find a job.

For example:

- Learn German better
- Writing your CV and application
- Practise for job applications
- Help with your job search
- Accompanying you to appointments (e.g. office or doctor)
- Counselling with your questions

The offer is :

- free of charge
- voluntary
- in your neighbourhood: Neu-Schmellwitz, Sachsendorf or Sandow

We speak German and English.

Language help is also available (by arrangement) in:  
Arabic, Ukrainian, Russian

☐ Contact persons in the neighbourhoods

### **Jörn Körner | Neu Schmellwitz**

📍 [Zuschka 27, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

✉ [@joern.koerner@cottbus.de](mailto:joern.koerner@cottbus.de)

☎ [+49 \(0\) 15124041795](tel:+49(0)15124041795)

Consultation hours:

Tuesday: 10:30-12:00 (Zuschka 27)

Thursday: 13:00-14:30 (Zuschka 27)

Friday: 10:30-12:00 (Am Fließ 10)

## Gregor Wollenick | Sachsendorf

[📍 Zielona-Gora-Str. 16, 03050 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@gregor.wollenick@cottbus.de](mailto:gregor.wollenick@cottbus.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 15124041771](tel:+49(0)15124041771)

Office hours:

Tuesday: 13:00-15:00 (Zielona-Gora-Str. 16)

Wednesday: 13:00-15:00 (Zielona-Gora-Str. 16)

## Janine Wehlan | Sandow

[📍 Hermannstraße 13, 03042 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@janine.wehlan@cottbus.de](mailto:janine.wehlan@cottbus.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 15155675789](tel:+49(0)15155675789)

Office hours:

Tuesday: 10:00-11:00 (Elisabeth - Wolf - Straße 41 / Kita Pfiffikus via entrance  
Max-Grünebaum- Straße)

Wednesday: 11:00-12:30 (Hermannstraße 13 / neighbourhood shop)

Further help

## Nour Altaha | Allgemeine Beratung auf Arabisch

[📍 Petersilienstraße 22, 03044 Cottbus](#)

[@nour.altaha@cottbus.de](mailto:nour.altaha@cottbus.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 15124046830](tel:+49(0)15124046830)

Friday: 10:00-12:00 (Petersilienstraße 22)

## Liliya Reuß | Sprachmittlung (ukrainisch)

[📍 Neumarkt 5, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@liliya.reuss@cottbus.de](mailto:liliya.reuss@cottbus.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 3556124889](tel:+49(0)3556124889)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 1719117111](tel:+49(0)1719117111)

Contact:

Email: BIWAQ@cottbus.de  
Address: Petersilienstraße 22, 03044 Cottbus  
Website: BIWAQ Cottbus

## **IQ network - Recognition and qualification counselling**

### **Integration through Qualification (IQ Network)**

The "Integration through Qualification Network" (IQ Network Brandenburg) helps you to find a job in Germany. You will receive counselling, courses and further training. This will help you learn the language better and improve your professional skills. You will also receive help with the recognition of your qualifications.


The IQ Network Brandenburg has various projects:

### **Faire Integration**

People who come to Germany and want to work have many questions. For example, there are often questions about the employment contract, salary or cancellation. It is not easy to understand. That's why the project Faire Integration provides support.

You can find out more here: Caritas - Cottbus region

### **Edris Rasuly | Faire Integration**

 [Südstraße 1, 03046 Cottbus](#)

 [@edris.rasuly@caritas-goerlitz.de](mailto:edris.rasuly@caritas-goerlitz.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 35538003770](tel:+49(0)35538003770)


### **Recognition and qualification counselling**

If you have a vocational qualification, you need it to be recognised in Germany. This is important so that you can work in your profession. You can find out what is required for this in the counselling session.

### **Dagmar Wolf | Standort Cottbus**

 [Querstraße 48, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@wolf@ihk-projekt.de](mailto:wolf@ihk-projekt.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 15125072223](tel:+49(0)15125072223)


 <https://www.ihk-projekt.de/aner kennungs-und-quali...>

Please book an appointment using this [contact form](#) before you come to us.

**Dual anerkannt!**

Have you learnt a profession abroad? For example: electronics technician, businessman or hairdresser. Perhaps your qualification is not fully recognised. If so, you can do further training to compensate for the differences. Your qualification will then be recognised as equivalent to a German qualification.

### **Alex Schenk | Projektleitung**

 [Puschkinstraße 12b, 15236 Frankfurt \(Oder\)](#)

 [@schenk@ihk-projekt.de](mailto:schenk@ihk-projekt.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 033560696136](tel:+49(0)033560696136)

 <https://www.ihk-projekt.de/dualanerkannt/>

#### **IQ Service Centre Begleitet. Qualifiziert. Anerkannt.**


You have learnt a profession in the field of health, medicine or medical professions abroad. For example: nursing, midwife, doctor or educator. We can help you with this. Our aim is for your qualification to be fully recognised. Then you have a chance and can work in your profession.

Contact us:

### **Anne Dann | Projektleitung**

 [Bahnhofsplatz 2, 16321 Bernau](#)

 [@a.dann@kontakt-egerswalde.de](mailto:a.dann@kontakt-egerswalde.de)


 [+49 \(0\) 033387059430](tel:+49(0)033387059430)

 <https://kontakt-egerswalde.blogspot.com/p/blog-pa...>

### **Alexander Leifels | Mitarbeiter**

 [Bahnhofsplatz 2, 16321 Bernau](#)

 [@a.leifels@kontakt-egerswalde.de](mailto:a.leifels@kontakt-egerswalde.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 033387059431](tel:+49(0)033387059431)

 <https://kontakt-egerswalde.blogspot.com/p/blog-pa...>

#### **Entering the labour market for graduates**

If you have completed a university degree in social sciences, natural sciences, law or art abroad and would like to work in this profession, we can help you. We will accompany and support you. In order to participate, you need a good knowledge of German. At least level B1.

Contact us:

### **Martin Abrahamowicz | Leitung**

[📍 Bahnhofsplatz 2, 16321 Bernau](#)

[@m.abrahamowicz@kontakt-egerswalde.de](mailto:m.abrahamowicz@kontakt-egerswalde.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 033387059432](tel:+49033387059432)

### **MY TURN - World Wide Women Work**

This project is an offer for women with a history of migration in Cottbus.

Women with a migration background are supported on their path to qualification, training and employment subject to social insurance contributions.

The project offers courses, workshops and counselling so that the women can discover and strengthen their skills. The aim is to give them more self-confidence and opportunities for the future. The project helps women to find a daycare centre for their children. And it helps with problems with the daycare centre and school.

### **MY TURN- World Wide Women Work**

#### **Sascha Kahle | Projektleitung**

[📍 Berliner Straße 6, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@sascha.kahle@cottbus.de](mailto:sascha.kahle@cottbus.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 3556123415](tel:+4903556123415)

[🌐 https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschafsb...](https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschafsb...)

#### **Asal Markazi | Projektmitarbeiterin**

[📍 Berliner Straße 6, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@asal.markazi@cottbus.de](mailto:asal.markazi@cottbus.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 3556123414](tel:+4903556123414)

[🌐 https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschafsb...](https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschafsb...)

#### **Ewa Zadrozna | Lotsenstelle Kinderbetreuung**

[📍 Berliner Straße 6, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@Ewa.Zadrozna@cottbus.de](mailto:Ewa.Zadrozna@cottbus.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 3556123414](tel:+4903556123414)



[🌐 https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschafsb...](https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschafsb...)

#### **Networking for refugees**

The Network for Refugees in Brandenburg and Cottbus advocates for refugees at a political level.

The network organises events on various topics. There you can find out more about topics such as asylum and migration. You can also take part in discussions. The Cottbus Refugee Network provides information on these topics: Asylum, residence, education and work, leisure and everyday life, health, children and young people and language courses.

### **Contact in Cottbus:**

 Nabil Abo Nasser  
 015750941430

@

[gefuechtete.netz.cottbus@gmail.com](mailto:gefuechtete.netz.cottbus@gmail.com)

 Güterzufuhrstraße 8, 03046 Cottbus

### **WiC - Welcome to Cottbus**

"Welcome to Cottbus" is a project. It helps people who come from another country or have fled to find a job.

The project offers counselling and help for professionals. The project is also for students and their families. It does not matter what residence permit they have. It is not necessary to speak German.

The project helps. It offers opportunities to learn German. It supports the recognition of qualifications. It helps with the search for work. There are workshops and events. At the meetings you can get to know other people with similar problems.

### **The office hours at the Welcome Centre Cottbus are**

Monday: 13:00 to 16:00  
Wednesday: 09:00 to 12:00  
Thursday: 13:00 to 16:00

You can reach the project at

@[welcome@cottbus.de](mailto:welcome@cottbus.de)

The project is funded by the state of Brandenburg and the European Union.

You are welcome to contact the following persons:

### **Hebat Hammash | „Willkommen in Cottbus“ Projektleitung**

 [Berliner Straße 157, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

@[Hebat.Hammash@cottbus.de](mailto:Hebat.Hammash@cottbus.de)

 [+493556123416](tel:+493556123416)

 <https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschäfts...>

### **Anne Wolf | ausländische Fachkräfte**

 [Berliner Straße 157, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@Anne.Wolf@cottbus.de](mailto:@Anne.Wolf@cottbus.de)

 [+493556123421](tel:+493556123421)


### **Farzaneh Farahani | internationale Studierende**

 [Berliner Straße 157, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)


 [@Farzaneh.Farahani@cottbus.de](mailto:@Farzaneh.Farahani@cottbus.de)

 [+4915124046819](tel:+4915124046819)

### **Mayeesha Azhar | internationale Studierende**

 [Berliner Straße 157, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@Mayeesha.Azhar@cottbus.de](mailto:@Mayeesha.Azhar@cottbus.de)

 [+4915124046819](tel:+4915124046819)

### **KAUSA Regional Office Brandenburg**

**The KAUSA regional office in Brandenburg provides information on training and careers**

The focus is on young people with experience of flight or migration and their parents. Companies that would like to provide training also receive support.


**The KAUSA team will help you with all your questions about training:**


- **What is dual training?**  
We explain how training takes place in the company and at vocational school.
- **What do I need for an apprenticeship?**  
We tell you what requirements and documents you need.
- **Where can I find training places?**  
We show you where you can search for vacancies - online or on site.
- **What documents do I need for an application?**  
We give you tips on CVs, cover letters and certificates.
- **How do I find the job that suits me?**  
We provide you with information to help you find a career that matches your interests.

### **Andrea Behrends | KAUSA-Landesstelle Brandenburg: Ausbildung und Migration**

 [Sandower Straße 6, 03044 Cottbus](#)

 [@behrends@berlin.arbeitundleben.de](mailto:behrends@berlin.arbeitundleben.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 355301085](tel:+49(0)355301085)

 [+49 \(0\) 1622036776](tel:+49(0)1622036776)

 <https://kausa-brandenburg.de/>

## Advice centre for care and social issues

### Care support centre Cottbus

Here you will find information on care, medicine and social issues. The aim is to enable everyone to lead a self-determined life. Another aim is to support relatives in their task. The care support centres have a large network. The employees are certified. They have extensive knowledge. Counselling can also take place over the phone. Or at your home. Just give them a call. Or send us an e-mail. Counselling is free and neutral.

### You can find support here:

- People in need of care
- People with disabilities
- relatives
- Specialists
- helpers
- Interested parties

### The support centre provides information about

- the care services in Cottbus
- help from the care insurance
- help from social welfare
- Dementia
- Severe disability
- health care proxy
- the living will
- Living in old age
- Alternative forms of living
- Everyday aids and technical aids
- Voluntary offers for support in everyday life

### Care support centre Cottbus

Am Turm 14, 03046 Cottbus/Chósebus

[Opening hours / consultation hours](#)

**Tuesday:** 09.00-12.00 and 13.00-17.00

**Thursday:** 09.00-12.00 and 13.00-18.00

## Telephone

### Care counselling

0355 612 2511

0355 612 2514

### Social and housing counselling

0355 612 2510

0355 612 2513

### Dementia counselling

0355 612 2512

0355 612 2510

**Email:** [cottbus@pflegestuetzpunkte-brandenburg.de](mailto:cottbus@pflegestuetzpunkte-brandenburg.de)

Further information can be found here:

<https://pflegestuetzpunkte-brandenburg.de>

## ALINA APP

With the ALINA app, you have all the important information about care at your fingertips - simple, free and up-to-date.

Now with new regional offers for Elbe-Elster, Spree-Neiße, Dahme-Spreewald and Cottbus!

Here you will find the download link to the app.

[Everyday information APP](#) on care topics.

- Social issues
- Severe disability
- Dementia
- Living


## DRK Tracing Service

I'm looking for my brother.

I'm looking for my mum.

I'm looking for my daughter.

The GRC Tracing Service helps people who have lost their loved ones, for example due to war or flight. The service provides support in the search for missing family members and re-establishes contacts. It works together with many countries and organisations. The GRC Tracing Service is free of charge and is available to anyone who needs help finding their relatives.

 [Ostrower Damm 2, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@suchdienst@drk-cottbus.de](mailto:@suchdienst@drk-cottbus.de)

[+49 \(0\) 0355715061](tel:+49(0)0355715061)

<https://www.drk-cottbus.de/angebote/suchdienst/su...>

## Parenting and family counselling

How can I help my child? I'm worried about school. I feel stressed. How do we cope with the separation? Questions can arise in a family. You can find advice here.

[SOS Children's Village Lausitz - Counselling, Youth and Family Centre](#)

The counselling services are aimed at foster families, families, children, teenagers, young adults, parents and grandparents. Do you need help? Do you need support in dealing with your family problems? Do you have questions about parenting?

- Counselling
- Counselling for couples
- Mediation in family disputes
- Work with grief and worry
- Working in groups

You can come to counselling. There are offers for groups.

## Stephanie Spieske

[Poznaner Straße 1, 03048 Cottbus - Chóšebuz](#)

[@kd-lausitz@sos-kinderdorf.de](mailto:@kd-lausitz@sos-kinderdorf.de)

[+49 \(0\) 355869587100](tel:+49(0)355869587100)

<https://www.sos-kinderdorf.de/kinderdorf-lausitz/...>

## Youth Counselling Cottbus . Educational counselling and family counselling

Free counselling for parents, children, young people and those involved.

- age-appropriate parenting, separation
- divorce and rights of access
- Stress with friends, parents or adults
- Fears, insecurity, abuse, violence

Counselling is confidential. Do you have questions about parenting? Are you worried about a child? Have you had a bad experience? Do you feel afraid? You can talk here.

## Annemarie Brandel

[📍 Am Spreeufer 14/15, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@erziehungsberatung@jhcb.de](mailto:@erziehungsberatung@jhcb.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 3554786120](tel:+49(0)3554786120)

[🌐 https://jhcb.de/projekte/erziehungs-und-familienb...](https://jhcb.de/projekte/erziehungs-und-familienb...)

**The parenting and family counselling centre of the youth welfare office of Cottbus city council**

**Nadine Hofner**

[📍 Hopfengarten 57, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@Erziehungsberatung@cottbus.de](mailto:@Erziehungsberatung@cottbus.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 355861785](tel:+49(0)355861785)

Opening hours:

Tuesday 13.00-17.00

Thursday 9.00-12.00 and 13.00-18.00

Telephone availability:

Monday: 09:00 to 11:00

Tuesday: 09:00 to 11:00 and 13:00 to 17:00

Thursday: 09:00 to 11:00 and 13:00 to 18:00

**Caritas-Region Cottbus - Marriage, family and life counselling**

[📍 Straße der Jugend 63, 03050 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@efl-beratung.hoyerswerda@caritas-goerlitz.de](mailto:@efl-beratung.hoyerswerda@caritas-goerlitz.de)

[☎ +49 \(0\) 3554310021](tel:+49(0)3554310021)

[🌐 https://www.caritas-goerlitz.de/angebote/ehe-fami...](https://www.caritas-goerlitz.de/angebote/ehe-fami...)

Counselling and support through:

- Information and education
- Relief
- Finding resources together and awakening self-help powers
- Help in understanding the causal connections between problems and conflicts
- Preventing relationship conflicts and crises that can lead to illness
- Promoting a culture of relationships, conflict and communication in marriage and family
- Listening in a protected space

The counselling service is

- accessible to anyone seeking advice, regardless of origin, social status, sexual orientation, marital status or religious denomination
- free of charge (donations welcome)
- voluntary

- confidential (confidentiality obligation)

## **Specialist counselling service for asylum seekers**

### **The counselling service helps and supports:**

- People who have applied for asylum and have a residence permit
- People whose asylum has been rejected but who have a tolerated stay or a certificate for crossing the border
- People who have a recognised protection status
- Counselling is free of charge and confidential.

### **You can receive counselling on the following topics**


- on asylum and residence
- on social law and social benefits
- on accommodation and housing
- questions about work permits
- there is support in contacting the hardship commission
- for personal conflicts and problems
- for questions about health and health problems

### **The advice centre also helps you to find contacts:**


- to language courses
- to lawyers and solicitors
- to therapists
- to other counselling centres
- For women, there are group programmes to help with psychological and social problems.

## **Counselling for refugees through Caritas**

### **Susanne Rieper | Fachberatungsdienst für Asylsuchende**

 [Südstraße 1, 03046 Cottbus](#)

 [@susanne.riepe@caritas-goerlitz.de](mailto:susanne.riepe@caritas-goerlitz.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 03553800370](tel:+49(0)03553800370)

 <https://www.caritas-brandenburg.de/beratung-hilfe...>

## **Look and act - what to do in the event of a right-wing attack**

### **Tips for witnesses**

## 1. observe the situation

Are you witnessing a right-wing attack? Try to stay calm and not panic. Get an overview.

- Who and how many people are involved? Is anyone injured?
- Who and how many are the attackers? Who else might be with them? Are they visibly armed?
- Where are the exits and routes to safety? (e.g. neighbouring shops)
- Who can I approach to deal with me? (e.g. passers-by, drivers)

## 2. approach bystanders

Don't put yourself in danger! It is safer to act from within a group. Make other people aware of the situation and get help.

- Address those present directly and assign tasks: "You with the red jacket! Come with me. Help me to intervene." "Please call the police." "Please let the driver know."
- Call the police on 110: 5-W rule: Where is the incident. Who is calling. What has happened. How many people involved/perpetrators. Wait for further enquiries.
- Speak to the person responsible on site, e.g. the driver on the bus or train: "Can you please stop/come along immediately. A person is being attacked."

## 3 Act together

Show the person concerned that you want to support them. Offer your help.

- Speak to the victim: "What can I do for you?"
- Move the victim to safety/out of sight. Continue to observe the attackers.
- If this is not possible: Speak loudly and clearly to the attackers from a safe distance: "Stop that! We've called the police!"
- Memorise the perpetrator's characteristics. Only film the attackers without putting yourself in danger.
- If the person is injured: give first aid. Accompany them to hospital if necessary. All injuries should be certified.
- Offer yourself as a witness and exchange contact details.
- Write a memory log (what exactly happened when and where).

## 4. counselling

There are various counselling centres in Cottbus and the surrounding area for victims, relatives and witnesses of right-wing, racist and anti-Semitic violence:

Opferperspektive e.V.

[www.opferperspektive.de](http://www.opferperspektive.de)

0331 8170000

info@opferperspektive.de

Services: Monitoring, counselling & support

Monitoring Centre of the BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg

[www.b-tu.de/monitoring-gegen-rechts/vorfall-mitte...](http://www.b-tu.de/monitoring-gegen-rechts/vorfall-mitte...)

monitoring-gegen-rechts@b-tu.de

Services: Monitoring & provision of counselling services for BTU students and in the event of

incidents on campus

Victim Support Brandenburg

[www.opferhilfe-brandenburg.de/](http://www.opferhilfe-brandenburg.de/)

cottbus@opferhilfe-brandenburg.de

0355 729 6052

Offer: Counselling & support

### **Youth Migration Service Lower Lusatia (JMD NL)**

The Youth Migration Service (JMD NL) helps young people with a migration background. These people live in Cottbus and have the right to stay. They are aged between 12 and 26.

The JMD NL provides support in these areas:

- School, training, studies and work
- language acquisition
- Personal and family issues
- family reunification
- Social, financial and residence law issues

### **Lower Lusatia Youth Migration Service (JMD NL) in Cottbus**

#### **Corinna Jaunich | Jugendmigrationsdienst - Diakonisches Werk Niederlausitz gGmbH**

 [Straße der Jugend 33, 03050 Cottbus](#)

 [@info.jmd@diakonie-niederlausitz.de](mailto:info.jmd@diakonie-niederlausitz.de)

 [+493554889988](tel:+493554889988)

 <https://www.jugendmigrationsdienste.de/jmd/nieder...>

### **Migration advice centres for adult immigrants (aged 27 and over)**

Language, housing, work and culture are important topics for life in Germany. If you or your family are new to Germany and are 27 years old or older, you can get advice on this. You must be authorised to live in Germany and have a residence permit. Counselling is free of charge.

#### **Help, support, information and clarification are available on these topics:**


- Right of residence
- Social benefits
- Housing
- Family reunification
- Contracts and cancellations
- School and work
- Education and childcare

- Health and severe disability
- Care services
- Recognition of foreign professional qualifications
- Arranging integration courses
- Applications and forms

Counselling is provided in German and many other languages. Support is offered regardless of your origin, religion or nationality.

## **Migration advice centre of the AWO**

### **Migrationssozialarbeit für Erwachsene**


 [Straße der Jugend 33, 03050 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@msa-cottbus@awo-bb-sued.de](mailto:msa-cottbus@awo-bb-sued.de)


 [+49 \(0\) 035548646300](tel:+49(0)035548646300)

 <https://www.awo-bb-sued.de/de/topic/56.einrichtun...>

### **Migrationsberatung für erwachsene Zugewanderte**

 [Straße der Jugend 33, 03050 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@migrationsberatung@awo-bb-sued.de](mailto:migrationsberatung@awo-bb-sued.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 03554837394](tel:+49(0)03554837394)

## **Migration advice centre of the Central Welfare Office of Jews in Germany (ZWST)**

Counselling hours:

Monday: 10:00 - 12:00 and 13:00 - 16:00

Tuesday: 10:00 - 12:00 and 13:00 - 16:00


Thursday: 10:00 - 12:00 and 13:00 - 16:00

Appointments are by prior arrangement only.

### **Valerie Vorkul | Migrationsberatung**

 [Spremberger Str. 29, 03046 Cottbus](#)

 [@vorkul@zwst.org](mailto:vorkul@zwst.org)

 [+49 \(0\) 35535541966](tel:+49(0)35535541966)

 <https://zwst.org/de/angebote/migrationsberatung-m...>

## Online counselling

### mbeon - Multilingual counselling in the chat

There are many local counselling centres in Germany. If the counselling centre is closed or far away from where you live, digital chat counselling can help.

With mbeon, you can easily find information online. You can also get counselling via chat.

mbeon enables counselling via chat. All counsellors are qualified specialists from the Migration Counselling Service for Adult Immigrants (MBE). They are guaranteed to respond within 48 hours. They help with all questions and problems that come with living in a new environment. Counselling is anonymous, data-secure and free of charge.

The app also contains extensive information on topics such as work and career. You will also find information on the topics of health and learning German. Housing, family and residence are further topics. In addition, mbeon puts you in touch with migration advice centres and other important contact points.

The app is available in German, English, Russian and Arabic. You can receive counselling in more than 19 different languages.

The app has many advantages:

- The app is flexible. It can be used anywhere and at any time.
- Counselling is provided in your native language.
- The app is data secure. Documents can be sent quickly and securely.
- The app and counselling are free of charge.
- Counselling is anonymous.

The free app can be downloaded from the Google Play Store and the AppStore.

 [mbeon im Google Play Store](#)

 [mbeon im AppStore](#)

Further information is available on the [multilingual website](#) and the [Facebook page](#).

## Psychosocial counselling for people with a migration background

### Social Psychiatric Service of the Cottbus City Council

The social psychiatric service offers personal counselling and support. Counselling can also be anonymous on request. It advises family members and the social environment. It helps with crises and tries to prevent new illnesses or social problems. After an acute illness, it supports people until they are well again. It also helps people to return to social life and become financially secure. The service also organises inpatient stays in hospital if necessary. It can also initiate care proceedings, provide social law advice and make home visits.

 [Karl-Marx-Straße 69, 03044 Cottbus](#)

[@gesundheitsamt@cottbus.de](mailto:@gesundheitsamt@cottbus.de)

<https://cottbus.de/verwaltung/gb-3/dz-3-1/fb-53-g...>


 The [opening hours of the Cottbus/Chósebus city administration](#)


## **The Caritas psychosocial centre**

Psychosocial counselling is help that can be obtained outside of hospital. It is for people with mental illnesses or bad experiences. Families and friends of these people can also receive this help.

### **Herr Jens Leuner | Projektleitung Psychosoziales Zentrum der Caritas**

[@jens.leuner@caritas-goerlitz.de](mailto:@jens.leuner@caritas-goerlitz.de)

 [+4935538003770](tel:+4935538003770)

 [+49 \(0\) 15257281069](tel:+49(0)15257281069)

 <https://www.caritas.de/onlineberatung>

## **Albatros Counselling Centre Brandenburg**


The counselling is open and free of charge. It is for all refugees aged 14 and over. However, you must still be in the asylum process. Or you have already been recognised as a refugee.

We can help you with these issues:


- Counselling for mental or emotional problems
- Diagnostics of the psyche
- Counselling on health

We speak these languages: Arabic, Farsi/Dari, Pashto, French, Maninka, Pular, Susu, Bemba, Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, English

## **Beratung Albatros**

 [Am Altmarkt 21, 03046 Cottbus](#)

[@j.lauer@albatrosggmbh.de](mailto:@j.lauer@albatrosggmbh.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 15780513508](tel:+49(0)15780513508)

 <https://albatros-bz.de/de>


Please make an appointment with us before your visit.

## **KommMit**


The organisation helps people with mental health problems. It also helps with social problems. You can get counselling in various languages.

 Please always make an appointment.

### **Psychosocial counselling:**

 [Lutherstr. 16, 03050 Cottbus](#)

 [@psz-cottbus@kommit.eu](mailto:psz-cottbus@kommit.eu)

 [+49035512110404](tel:+49035512110404)

 <https://www.kommit.eu/de>


Here is the flyer for the project Hürden nehmen. It is available in different languages:

 [Projekt "Hürden nehmen"](#)

### **Return and voluntary departure**

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) has not yet decided on your asylum application? Do you still want to return to your home country? But you don't know how to get your passport back? Do you need financial help for your return journey? The counselling is open-ended. You decide for yourself after the counselling. You can leave voluntarily. Or you can stay on. If you have any questions, please contact the

### **Foreigners' Registration Office Cottbus**

 [Karl-Marx-Straße 67, 03044 Cottbus](#)

 [@auslaenderbehoerde@cottbus.de](mailto:auslaenderbehoerde@cottbus.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556123390](tel:+49(0)3556123390)


 <https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschäfts...>

 [Online appointment allocation](#)

### **Self-help groups**

#### **SHIA e.V. Brandenburg State Association of Self-Help Groups**

SHIA stands for the self-help groups for single parents. SHIA is committed to empowerment, equality and equal opportunities for single parents and their children. You can find information here on many questions relating to the topic of "alone with a child or children".

 [Bahnhofstraße 4, 15711 Königs Wusterhausen](#)

 [@post@shia-brandenburg.de](mailto:post@shia-brandenburg.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 3375294752](tel:+49(0)3375294752)

 <http://shia-brandenburg.de/>

### **Ukrainian aid in Cottbus**

We offer general counselling for war refugees from Ukraine on these topics:

- Language learning
- integration courses
- School and work
- Recognition of qualifications
- Residence in Germany
- Social benefits
- Health and disability
- Care services
- Marriage and family
- Education and childcare
- Housing
- Leisure time
- Help in crises
- Support with applications
- Interpreting services
- Courses and workshops
- Cooperation with schools
- Holiday programmes for children and young people

Information for Ukrainians in Cottbus is also available in the Telegram group. There you can also receive information on various topics at short notice. You can find the channel and subscribe to it here: <https://t.me/+5NwRcm8ueaYxY2My>

We are part of the Ukraine network in Cottbus. It has many permanent partners. Other partners are also helping there. They help with donations and counselling.

We work closely with the Welcome Centre Cottbus.

Consultation hours are only possible by appointment.

## **Julia Herkt / Roman Efimenco | Ukraine-Hilfe**

 [Berliner Straße 6, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@ukrainehilfe@cottbus.de](mailto:@ukrainehilfe@cottbus.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556123422](tel:+49(0)3556123422)

### **Health office and health education for migrants**

#### **Health office project**

The project helps people with prospects of staying in Germany. It explains the German healthcare system. The project is based in the city of Cottbus.

The project receives money from the Asylum and Migration Fund and from the state of Brandenburg.

### **We offer:**

We accompany you to doctors.

We speak Arabic, Ukrainian, Russian and Persian.

We advise you on health.

We provide information and help with prevention.

We have open consultation hours and are easy to reach.

We also provide referral counselling. This means we tell you where else you can get help.

**Please bring your identity documents with you.**

**Please also bring your health documents.**

### **Open consultation hours** (from 17.02.2026)

Tuesday 9.00 - 12.00 and

Wednesday 13.00 - 15.00

in Petersilienstraße 22, 03044 Cottbus

**Appointments** for counselling and native speaker support:

[gesundheitsbuero@cottbus.de](mailto:gesundheitsbuero@cottbus.de)

### **Project staff**

Julia Herkt

[@julia.herkt@cottbus.de](mailto:@julia.herkt@cottbus.de)

☎0171 5443995

Josefine Buder

[@josefine.buder@cottbus.de](mailto:@josefine.buder@cottbus.de)

☎0151 6106 7708

### **Project management**

Elisabeth Bichler

[@elisabeth.bichler@cottbus.de](mailto:@elisabeth.bichler@cottbus.de)

☎0151 2404 6226

## **Everyday life and leisure**

## Banks

Would you like to pay money via a bank? Then you need a current account. Your money is always available in your current account. Would you like to withdraw money from your account? Or would you like to make cashless payments? Then you need to have enough money in your account. Otherwise you will have to pay interest to the bank.

With a current account you can:

- Make transfers
- Receive cashless payments (payments from public offices / authorities / social benefits are often only transferred to a current account)
- Set up standing orders
- Participate in direct debits
- Cashing cheques, making cashless payments with an EC or Maestro card
- Withdraw cash at bank counters or ATMs
- Print out your account statements

## Opening an account

Decide which bank you would like to have an account with. Make an appointment to open an account. Please bring one of your legitimisation documents with you. This includes your proof of arrival, residence permit or identity card. If no current address is noted on the legitimisation document, please also bring a registration certificate or a comparable document.

You have opened the account. You will then receive an EC card with a four-digit PIN code by post. Sign the back of the EC card and memorise the PIN code. You will need the PIN code for cashless payments. You will need the PIN code for cash withdrawals at ATMs. Always keep your card and PIN code separate!

Withdraw money from your bank's ATMs. Then the withdrawal costs nothing. If you enter the PIN code incorrectly three times, the bank will withdraw your card and block it. In this case, you must ask your bank.

Have you lost your EC card? Has your EC card been stolen? Then block your EC card immediately by calling this number: ☎ 116116. Tell them your sort code and account number. Then ask your bank for a new debit card.

Different banks offer current accounts with different conditions. Find out exactly how much a current account costs each month. Compare the services offered by the bank.

## Libraries

In a library or bookshop you can borrow books, CDs, DVDs, learning materials and learning aids for use at home. There you will also find many dictionaries and learning materials for learning German. You will need a library card for this. You can get this from your local library for a small annual fee. It is also possible to study or read there in peace and quiet and usually also use the WLAN.

There are these libraries in Cottbus:

[City and regional library](#)

[Sandow library](#)

[Cottbus-Senftenberg University Library](#)

## **Bus, train and bike**

### **Bus and train**

To get to your destination in Cottbus, you can use public transport such as buses and trains. Please note:

- You must buy a ticket to use them.
- Tickets are valid in different fare zones.
- Some tickets must be additionally validated after purchase. Please also note the time and area restrictions on your ticket.
- Travelling without a ticket is punishable by a fine.

Journey times and routes can be found on the [Cottbusverkehr](#) website.

Does your child have to use the bus or train to get to school? Then these costs can be partially covered by the school transport.

### **Bicycle**

Important traffic rules for cyclists (selection):

- Always ride on the right-hand side of the carriageway.
- Do not ride next to each other, but behind each other.
- If there is a cycle path, you must ride on the cycle path (always on the right-hand side of the road in the direction of travel).
- Children up to the age of 11 may use the footpaths on bicycles.
- It is forbidden to use a mobile phone on a bicycle.

Your bicycle must be equipped as follows to ensure that it is roadworthy. Otherwise you will have to pay a fine if you are stopped by the police.

- Front and rear lights
- Reflector front and rear
- Reflectors in the spokes (2 per wheel)
- Reflectors on the pedals
- Bell
- Two independent brakes

### **Shopping**

In Germany, shops are open from Monday to Saturday. They are closed on Sundays and public holidays (with a few exceptions throughout the year). The opening hours of the shops may vary. You can find out about them on the Internet or at the entrance to the respective shops. Restaurants, cafés and leisure facilities (e.g. swimming pools, museums, cinemas) are often also open on Sundays and public holidays.

### **You can shop here:**

- **Discounters**  
You can buy cheaper food in discount stores. The range of goods is relatively limited and simply presented. There are discount stores in almost every town.
- **Supermarket**  
In supermarkets, you can mainly buy slightly more expensive food. You will also find many branded products here. The presentation of the goods is more important than in the discounters.
- **Weekly market**  
At the weekly markets, you can mainly buy regional foods (e.g. fruit, vegetables, eggs, bread). The weekly markets only take place on certain days of the week and usually in the mornings. However, there is not a weekly market in every town.
- **Speciality shop**  
Speciality shops are shops where you can buy goods in a particular category. These are, for example, bakeries, butchers, sports and shoe shops and DIY stores.
- **Retail shop with foreign products**  
There are also shops in Cottbus where you can buy foreign products. For example, there are Arabic, Polish and Asian shops.
- **Drugstore**  
Drugstores are specialised shops with a wide range of products. You can mainly buy hygiene products (e.g. shampoo) or cleaning products (e.g. washing powder, washing-up liquid) here.

### **Good to know:**

- Products almost always have fixed prices. Haggling is not common in Germany.
- New goods often come with a guarantee. The guarantee allows you to demand a new appliance or a repair from the manufacturer if it breaks or is faulty.
- Goods purchased online or in larger shops and department stores can usually be exchanged or returned. There are time limits (14 days, 2 years, ...) that you must observe.
- Cheap food is usually at the bottom of the shelf.
- Look out for special offers. Take a look at the special offer leaflets that you find in your letterbox.

### **Driving licence, driving and parking**

#### **Is your driving licence valid in Germany?**

Would you like to drive in Germany yourself? Then you need a driving licence from Germany or another EU country. Driving licences from non-EU countries are only valid for 6 months in Germany. You may only drive in Germany with a driving licence from your home country for the first 6 months. The 6 months begin with your first police registration in Germany. You must

always have your driving licence with you when you drive. You must also have a translation of your driving licence into German with you. Germany only waives the requirement for a translation in a few countries. The international driving licence is also not valid indefinitely. It also loses its validity after 6 months. It must then be exchanged for a German driving licence.

## How do you convert your driving licence?

Contact your local driving licence authority or driving licence office. Contact the relevant office before your 6-month driving licence expires. You must go to the driving licence office in person. You will need to present various documents there:

- ID card or passport
- Confirmation of registration (police registration)
- Biometric passport photo
- Certificate of an eye test (from an optician or ophthalmologist)
- Confirmation of participation in a first aid course
- Your original foreign driving licence (an international driving licence is not sufficient). As a rule, you must also submit a certified German translation.
- A declaration that your foreign driving licence is still valid.

The driving licence office will then decide whether your driving licence can be converted without a test. Otherwise, you must first take the theory and practical test. This depends on the country in which you obtained your driving licence.

It is a good idea to attend a driving school before taking the test. Germany has a lot of traffic rules and signs. However, unlike those who are getting their driving licence for the first time, you do not have to take driving lessons.

Questions about your driving licence can be answered by the [driving licence authority](#).

## How can you get a German driving licence?

To get a driving licence for the first time, proceed as follows:

- Enrol at a driving school.
- Take part in a first aid course.
- Have an eye test at an optician or an ophthalmologist.
- Have a biometric passport photo taken.

You must pay for your driving licence yourself. You may drive a car alone from the age of 18. Young people can obtain a driving licence from the age of 17. However, they may only drive with an adult. This is called "accompanied driving".

If you buy your own car to drive, you will need motor vehicle insurance.

## Can your driving licence be revoked?

If you disregard important traffic rules, you can lose your driving licence. A distinction is made here between a driving ban and the withdrawal of your driving licence.

If you are banned from driving, you must surrender your driving licence to the fines office for several months. During this time, you are not allowed to drive yourself. After the period has expired, you can collect your driving licence again.

If your driving licence is revoked, it loses its validity. This means that you are no longer allowed to drive yourself and may not obtain a new driving licence for a certain period of time (suspension period).

Have you endangered road traffic? Have you been driving drunk? Have you collected 8 penalty points? These are reasons to revoke your driving licence.

You receive penalty points for various offences, for example if you drive too fast. Penalty points are also known colloquially as "points in Flensburg".

Have you just obtained your new car driving licence? Then you are two years into your probationary period. Did you break the traffic rules during your probationary period? Then you must attend an advanced training seminar during your probationary period. In certain cases, you may also have to undergo psychological counselling. Your probationary period will also be extended by a further two years. You do not take part in the advanced training seminar? Then your driving licence will be revoked. Examples of a traffic offence are: running red lights, driving at night without lights, driving drunk. Wrong parking is not a traffic offence. In this case, you only have to pay the fine.

## Parking

As a resident, you can apply for a resident parking permit for your car or motorbike or a vehicle that you use permanently. This permit allows you to park your car near your place of residence, even if parking is normally prohibited there or parking spaces are only available for certain times.

The resident parking permit is only valid for a specially designated zone (resident parking area). You can apply for a resident's parking permit in person at the road traffic authority during office hours.

### Opening hours:

Tuesday: 9:00 to 12:00

Thursday: 13:00 to 18:00

### Address:

Lower road traffic authority

Berliner Str. 6

03046

Cottbus

Tel: 0355 612-4710

Fax: 0355 612-13 4749

strassenverkehrsbehoerde@cottbus.de

### **Postal address**

Neumarkt 5

03046 Cottbus/Chósebus

(Department of Order and Safety/ Service Department Lower Road Traffic Authority)

<https://www.cottbus.de/strassenverkehr>

Under the link you can also fill out the online form for the application for a resident parking permit and get all the most important information about the procedure:

<https://cottbus.de/leistungen/bewohnerparkausweis...>

### **Family offers**

Cottbus has many offers for families. There is an overview on the [Cottbus family page](#).

Tips can also be found on the [Cottbus Service](#) website.

### **A selection of family centres can be found here:**

- [Ströbitz Family Centre](#)
- [SOS family centre 'Punkt'](#)
- [SOS Family Centre B.i.S.S.](#)
- [Hopfengarten Family Centre](#)
- [Parent-child meeting point at the family centre](#)
- [Caritas Family Centre Cottbus](#)
- [Community Centre of the GPWO](#)
- [Bus stop](#)

### **Youth centres**

Young people have different interests. There are various opportunities to meet up. The youth centres are spread throughout the city. They have different programmes.

An overview of the options in Cottbus [can be found here](#).

There is also an overview of youth work in the city of Cottbus. [This page can be found here](#).

### **Cinema, culture, museums, art, theatre**

Cottbus has a very large cultural programme. A good overview of almost all events can be found at [Cottbus-Service](#) and in the [calendar of the city of Cottbus](#). The current dates of these cultural venues can also be found there:

### **Cinemas:**

[UCI Kinowelt](#)  
[Weltspiegel](#)  
[Obenkino](#)

### **Museums:**

[City Museum](#)  
[Wendish Museum](#)  
[Pharmacy Museum](#)  
[Airfield Museum](#)  
[Gallinchen Museum](#)  
[Museum of Modern Art \(BLMK\)](#)  
[Prince Pückler Museum](#)

### **Galleries:**

[Gallery HAUS 23](#)  
[Gallery Fango](#)  
[Brandenburg Gallery](#)

### **Concerts:**

[GLADHOUSE](#)  
[Cottbus City Hall](#)

### **Theatre:**

[Cottbus State Theatre](#)  
[piccolo theatre](#)  
[TheatreNative C](#)  
[Stage 8](#)

There is often a discount for people on low incomes. This also applies to children and pensioners. You should ask about this before buying your ticket.

### **Neighbourhood meetings**

In Cottbus, there is one neighbourhood meeting place in the south and one in the north. These are called socio-cultural centres. They have various programmes for children, young people and adults. The centres are open to all people, regardless of their social, cultural or religious background.

[Socio-cultural centre](#)  
Zielona-Gora-Str.16  
03048 Cottbus

Cultural and meeting centre Schmellwitz 7512  
Am Fließ 10  
03044 Cottbus

## Parks

Cottbus is a paradise for park lovers. Since the Federal Garden Show in 1995, the new Spreepark, the zoo and the world-famous Branitz Landscape Park of Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau have come together at the gates of the city. The old and new parks, which extend right into the city centre, have become the town's trademark.

- [Branitz Park](#)
- [Carl Blechen Park](#)
- [Goethe Park](#)
- [Elias Park](#)
- [Spree meadow park](#)
- [Zoo](#)

## Religion

### Freedom of religion applies in Germany

This is guaranteed by the Basic Law. You can practise your faith as you see fit. One rule applies: you may not violate the Basic Law in doing so. You may not be discriminated against on the basis of your religion, for example when looking for work. Religious freedom also means accepting the beliefs of others. Germany does not have a state church. State and religion are separate.

This means, for example:

- All people are free to choose and practise their religion and beliefs.
- All people have the freedom not to be religious - anyone who does not believe in God is allowed to say so publicly.
- People of different religions and beliefs are allowed to marry each other.
- Marriage only counts as a legally binding marriage before the registry office. Marriages entered into exclusively within the framework of a religion are not legally binding in Germany.
- Religious laws do not determine the legal system in Germany.

### Practice of religion

There are many different religions in Germany. Many people follow a particular religion. They organise themselves in their own communities. For example, in a church, mosque or synagogue.

## Sport

Sport has long been important in Cottbus/Chósebus. It brings many successes and makes the lives of people and visitors more beautiful. In the past, Cottbus has had many European champions, world champions and Olympic champions in various sports.

The [Cottbus City Sports Association](#) is an organisation that connects many sports clubs. It organises many sporting events. The programme is very diverse. For example, there are courses ranging from aerobics to yoga.

There are many opportunities to do sport in Cottbus. There are fitness studios, a public and free fitness trail on the River Spree, as well as various football pitches and basketball courts. There are also two BMX facilities and a large swimming pool: the [Cottbus lagoon](#).

## University sports

The B-TU Cottbus-Senftenberg has many university sports courses. These cost money, but there are discounts for students, trainees, senior citizens and people going to school.

[www.b-tu.de/sport](http://www.b-tu.de/sport)

## Playgrounds

The city of Cottbus operates 73 playgrounds and 20 football pitches. It ensures that these can be used safely.

Information, photos and reviews of some of Cottbus's playgrounds can be found on [spielplatznet.de](http://spielplatznet.de) and [www.spielplatztreff.de](http://www.spielplatztreff.de).

Cottbus also has an [indoor playground](#) and a [trampoline park](#).

## City information

### Cottbus Service

Cottbus Service offers tips for excursions, personal recommendations and lots of information about Cottbus and the surrounding area. You can also buy tickets for events here. You can find out about the Cottbus Baltic Sea and the Cottbus post coachman. It also explains why the street signs in Cottbus are bilingual.

[www.cottbus-tourismus.de](http://www.cottbus-tourismus.de)

### Neighbourhood management

The neighbourhood management in Cottbus is an important institution. This institution takes care of the development and improvement of neighbourhoods. The aim is to make people feel at home. The district management helps to strengthen neighbourhoods and make the districts more attractive.

The employees work together with the people who live in the neighbourhoods. They also talk to associations, businesses and other groups. Together they plan projects and ideas, for example on urban design, the environment, culture or social interaction.

If you are new to Cottbus, the neighbourhood management is a good place to start. You can get information there, meet new people and get involved. There are often events, meetings or workshops. You can ask questions and exchange ideas there.

## **SANDOW NEIGHBOURHOOD**

The neighbourhood shop is the central meeting point for people in Sandow.

Important decision-making bodies such as the Citizens' Advisory Council and the Steering Committee meet here. Citizens' initiatives, associations and organisations can make suggestions for the future urban, cultural and social development of Sandow in the district shop. Quick solutions are sought for problems and contacts are arranged. Information on current plans and projects is available here.

Sadow neighbourhood shop  
Hermannstraße 13  
03042 Cottbus

Events and offers in the Sandow neighbourhood are announced in the "neighbourhood window".

Opening hours:

Monday: 14:00 - 18:00

Tuesday: 9:00 - 14:00

Wednesday: 9:00 - 14:00

Thursday: 9:00 - 14:00

Friday: 14:00 - 18:00

Contact:

Phone: 0355 75579931

Mobile: 015205115482

info@sovi-cottbus.de

[www.sovi-cottbus.de](http://www.sovi-cottbus.de)

## **SCHMELLWITZ NEIGHBOURHOOD**

There is a central contact point in Schmellwitz at Zuschka 27.  
It is barrier-free and therefore easily accessible for people with disabilities.

Here you can get

- personal counselling,
- Information about changes in the neighbourhood,
- help with problems,
- contact with other people and groups.

This is a contact point not only for citizens. It is also a meeting point for networks and players active in the neighbourhood. The Bürgerverein e.V. Schmellwitz and the Offene Netzwerk Schmellwitz provide advice here.

Neighbourhood manager:  
Stefan Schurmann

Telephone: 03 55 - 86 69 50 9  
Mobile phone: 01 52 - 52 31 25 43  
Fax: 03 55 - 52 71 93 4  
Mail: [stm@regionalwerkstatt-brandenburg.de](mailto:stm@regionalwerkstatt-brandenburg.de)

## **MADLOW-SACHSENDORF NEIGHBOURHOOD**

The neighbourhood management works closely with the citizens' association.

Both help with

- Questions,
- counselling,
- co-determination,
- new ideas for the neighbourhood.

The neighbourhood shop at Heinrich-Mann-Str. 11 on the Gelsenkirchener Allee boulevard serves as a contact point.

Citizens' association and neighbourhood shop

Sachsendorf-Madlow neighbourhood shop

Heinrich-Mann-Str. 11  
(access via Gelsenkirchener Allee)

03050 Cottbus  
Telephone: 0355 58507955  
Mobile: 0176 12606826

E-mail: [kontakt@sachsendorf-madlow.de](mailto:kontakt@sachsendorf-madlow.de)


## **Consumer protection**

### **Consumer advice centre**

The Consumer Advice Centre is an independent organisation. It helps people when they have problems with companies. The employees advise people, give tips and provide information. They help with questions about contracts, insurance, housing, electricity, heating, money, loans, food and nutrition.

The consumer advice centre has an advice centre in Cottbus:

 [Rosenstraße 1, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [+49 \(0\) 33198229995](tel:+49(0)33198229995)

 <https://www.verbraucherzentrale-brandenburg.de/be...>

Counselling by appointment only: <https://www.verbraucherzentrale-brandenburg.de/te...>


Counselling costs from EUR 25.

## **Cottbus Tenants' Association**

This organisation provides advice on all questions relating to rent and can be contacted here in Cottbus:

 [Oberkirchplatz 9, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@0355702204@t-online.de](mailto:0355702204@t-online.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 355702204](tel:+49(0)355702204)

 <https://www.mieterbund-cottbus.de/index.php/start...>

## **Living**

### **Information on living**

#### **Viewing and furnishing the flat**

You view the flat together with the landlord or landlady. Or you view the flat with the estate agent.

In Germany, it is customary to rent the flat empty. This means that there is no furniture in the flat.

Do you receive benefits from the job centre? Then you can apply for an initial allowance for furniture and furnishings. You will receive a lump sum for this. This depends on the number of people, the size of the home and the equipment required. Initial furnishings include, for example, furniture, mattresses and household items. Household effects include, for example, kitchen appliances and crockery. If not available in the flat, this also includes electrical appliances. These are, for example, cooker, fridge and washing machine. It is important that the application is submitted to the job centre before the furniture is purchased.

Information for refugees: If you move out of shared accommodation (GU), you are not allowed to take your furniture with you. You will therefore need new furniture for your first home of your own. You can submit an application for initial furnishings to the job centre.

Please note: It may take some time before the money for the initial furnishings is paid out. The Job Centre may inspect the flat. This allows the Job Centre to check whether initial furnishings are necessary. Job Centre staff will come to your home for this inspection. Do you already have furniture in your home that is not demonstrably borrowed (in writing!) (for example an emergency bed)? Then you are not entitled to financial support for these items (initial furnishings).

## Contact points for the purchase of furniture and furnishings

Furniture and other furnishings can be bought in furniture stores. Buy second-hand items. This can be furniture. It can also be clothes, toys or other useful items. Second-hand items are often of good quality. They are cheaper than new items.

Would you like to furnish your new home? But you don't have the tools? You can also borrow tools.

### [KostenNixLaden](#)

 Karlstraße 69  
03044 Cottbus

### Opening hours

Tuesdays 11-14 h  
Thursdays 3-6 p.m.  
Saturdays 11-14 h

Please drop off items up to 30 minutes before closing time.

Here you will find free clothes, crockery and furniture.

## Furniture exchange


You can get furniture free of charge at a furniture exchange. This furniture is used and has been donated. You can only get items from a furniture exchange if you receive money from the job centre or social welfare office.

### [Regional workshop](#)

## Energy and environment

You need gas and electricity for your home. You use these to operate various appliances. You probably cook with electricity or gas. Your washing machine also needs electricity. And your mobile phone anyway. Some appliances consume more than others. That's why you should always pay attention to energy consumption when buying a new appliance. Many appliances draw power in standby mode even though they are actually switched off. The best antidote is a switchable power strip. With just one click, several appliances can be disconnected from the power supply.

In many houses, the heating works with gas. You often pay your supplier monthly in advance. Then the bill is recalculated once a year. Sometimes you have to pay extra. Sometimes you get money back. If electricity and gas are expensive, it's worth saving money every month. Then you will have enough money if you have to pay extra.

 If you use energy sparingly, you will save money. It's also good for the environment. You can also read about how to heat, ventilate and save energy properly [here](#).

You mainly need water in the bathroom. But also in the kitchen, for cooking and washing up. Saving water pays off in several ways. You will pay less for water, waste water and the energy used to heat the water.

💡 Tips for saving water: Install an energy-saving shower head. Take a shower instead of a bath. Repair dripping taps. Install a flush stop button in the toilet.

You can find more tips and useful information at the [consumer advice centre](#).

## Buying new appliances

Always pay attention to the energy label when buying new appliances. This shows you how efficient the new appliance is. The energy label can be found on a wide variety of products. For example, on light bulbs, washing machines, televisions and heaters. Energy efficiency classes and information on product features such as electricity and water consumption or volume make it easy to compare different appliances. Energy-efficient appliances can save several hundred euros per year.

💡 There is an app for the energy label. It helps to compare energy-relevant information on selected products. The app provides further information on the efficient use of appliances. The app is available free of charge in German and English in [Google Play](#) and the [Apple App Store](#).

## House rules

Many people living together in one house require consideration and tolerance. It is important that everyone is considerate. The landlord may lay down certain rules for tenants living together in a block of flats. These rules can be found in the house rules (Hausordnung).

What are the house rules?

- Quiet times are particularly important in Germany. No noise is allowed during these times. (For example, from 22:00 or on Sundays)
- Information on waste separation and waste disposal.
- How you can use communal areas (e.g. stairwell, garden...).
- What you must observe when ventilating.

It is best to translate the house rules into your language using translation software.

If the house rules are violated, you can contact the landlord.

## Pets

If you want to keep a pet, there are a few things to bear in mind in Germany. The most important information is summarised here.

### 1. consent of the landlord

#### Flats and pets:

If you live in a rented flat, it is important to check the tenancy agreement. Many tenancy agreements stipulate whether and which pets may be kept. If you are unsure, you should definitely inform the landlord or property management company and obtain written authorisation, especially in the case of dogs and cats.

Check your tenancy agreement or contact your property management company.

General information on tenancy law can be found [here](#).

## 2. registration and tax

### Dog tax:

In Cottbus, dog owners are required to pay dog tax. Every dog must be registered with the city tax office within two weeks of purchase or after moving to Cottbus. The amount of dog tax varies, usually around 72 euros per year for the first dog. For the second and each additional dog, 108 euros are charged. Higher tax rates may apply for certain dog breeds. As of 2022, the tax rate for dangerous dogs is 270 euros.

[Registration forms](#) for dog tax can be found on the official website of the city of Cottbus.

### Cats and other pets:

There is no tax for cats and other small animals (e.g. hamsters, rabbits). However, exotic or dangerous animals may have to be registered with the relevant authorities.

### Obligation to report reptiles: regulations of the federal states

The information you have to report can be found in the form provided for this purpose. The following points are generally requested:

- Number
- Animal species with German and scientific name
- sex
- age
- licence plate number
- Place of keeping
- Date of acquisition
- Name and full address of the previous or new owner (depending on whether you are giving up or taking in the animal)
- CITES certificate, EC certificate, proof of purchase, breeder's certificate (proof of origin)
- In the event of loss, information on whether the animal has died or escaped
- A change of address must also be notified

The whole thing is called a change of ownership notification. Information on the responsible authority and forms for the individual federal states can be found [here](#).

### Rent and rental agreement

You have found a flat. Congratulations.

Your landlord will sign a tenancy agreement with you. You will receive a key for the flat. You will now receive important information about moving in. You will receive further information on various contracts.

## Tenancy agreement

A tenancy agreement is only valid when signed (by the tenant AND the landlord). The tenancy agreement contains all the important information, such as :

- Name and address of the landlord
- Name and address of the tenant + your tenancy agreement number
- Location, size and equipment of the flat (how many rooms, square metres, any furniture and electrical appliances)
- Start of tenancy (and for fixed-term contracts: end of tenancy)
- Amount of rent (net cold rent + ancillary costs = total rent)

## Handover protocol

The handover protocol is drawn up jointly by the landlord and the future tenant. Both look at the flat very carefully and record the condition of the flat. Pay attention to the following, among other things:

- Walls (wallpaper, paint, drill holes)
- Floor (scratches, marks, damage)
- Doors (undamaged? complete?)
- Windows (tight? Mould?)
- Heating (are all heaters consistently warm?)
- Sockets and light switches (damaged?)
- Meter reading (where is your electricity meter? Correct meter reading?)

Ask about this: Are there any fixtures in the flat that are not original and need to be removed when you move out? (ceiling panels, tiles, hatch...)

## Landlord's certificate

The landlord's certificate is an important document. It confirms that you have moved into a flat.

- You receive the certificate from the landlord or landlady.
- You will receive it when you move into a new flat.
- The landlord fills out the form and gives it to you.
- You will need the certificate to register with the Bürgeramt. Without the document, you cannot officially register your residence.
- Every person moving into the flat must be named on the certificate, including children.

## What you should definitely look out for in a tenancy agreement!

**There are many different tenancy agreements. Here is an overview of the most important ones:**

Open-ended tenancy agreement:

The contract has no end date. You can live there for as long as you like.

Fixed-term tenancy agreement:

The contract has a fixed end date, for example for the duration of an apprenticeship or for a specific period of time.

Permanent tenancy agreement:

Here you are allowed to use the flat for the long term. This type of contract is often found in co-operatives.

Subtenancy agreement:

When the main tenant sublets part of the flat to someone else.

Graduated tenancy agreement:

The rent is increased in fixed increments over a period of years. In most cases, the rent may not increase by more than 20% in three years.

Index-linked tenancy agreement:

The rent can be adjusted each year in line with the price index set by the Federal Statistical Office.

## Important points in the tenancy agreement

A tenancy agreement must contain at least these points:

- Who the **tenant** and the **landlord** are
- Which **flat** or **house** is being rented
- The **start** of the tenancy
- The **rent amount**
- Who is responsible for the **operating costs** and how these are billed
- Who is responsible for **cosmetic repairs** and tasks such as **clearing snow**

There may be many other things in the contract. [Deposits](#), [cancellation rights](#) or the [house rules](#). But beware: not all clauses are permitted!

## Furniture and furnishings

If you receive social benefits, you have the option of receiving money to furnish your flat. Please check your entitlement with the relevant authorities.

If you don't have a lot of money, you can also buy furniture and furnishings [in department stores for purchase and sale](#). The prices here are not so high. [Classified ad portals](#) are also a very good option.

## Waste separation and deposit

Waste separation means that different types of waste are collected and recycled separately. In Germany, waste separation starts directly with the consumer. This means that every household has to sort its own waste and throw it into different bins and containers. The majority of waste in Germany is recycled and composted, which conserves resources and protects the environment. Basically, avoiding waste is still the easiest way to do something about the growing mountains of rubbish.

If you throw something in the wrong bin, the employees or sorting facilities at the recycling centres have to sort it again. If we all sort correctly, we can avoid this effort, reduce costs and do something for the environment.

## What goes in which bin?

The waste bins in Germany have different colours. The colours show you which waste can go in which bin. In large cities, the bins are often located right next to the house. In the countryside, you may have to drive to a recycling centre to find all the bins. Or you may have to wait for the next collection date for certain rubbish. In the meantime, you can store the rubbish in your garage or cellar, for example. You can find out when which waste is collected in the so-called "waste calendar", which you can find in your letterbox every year or collect from the town hall.

 Only certain rubbish may be thrown into each bin!

 [Waste calendar Cottbus](#)

 [Material depots](#)

## Do I have to separate my rubbish?

Yes, waste separation is compulsory in Germany. Everyone must separate their waste correctly and put it in the right bins. If you do not adhere to the rules on waste separation, your landlord or landlady can give you a warning. If you do not change your behaviour, you may even lose your flat. Your landlord or landlady will also charge you for the costs incurred as a result of incorrect waste separation. If you own your own home, incorrect waste separation will increase your waste disposal bill. Incorrect waste separation is also an offence. If you are caught, you will have to pay a fine. If you repeatedly fail to separate waste or separate it incorrectly, this fine can even amount to several hundred or thousand euros.

 [What belongs in which bin](#)

## Together for a clean cityscape

We have all been dealing with the issue of illegal waste disposal and the desire for an even better, cleaner townscape for a long time. Let's work on this together. Let's all take a look and make an active contribution.

### BULKY WASTE

The free collection of bulky waste, scrap metal and old electrical and electronic equipment is organised by ALBA GmbH, subject to prior notification by telephone (0355/ 7508-700).

### CONTAINER SITES

There are numerous recycling containers available in Cottbus for the disposal of paper, packaging and used glass.

### RECYCLING YARDS

Residents of Cottbus/Chósebus have the opportunity to dispose of waste from private households free of charge at the [recycling centres](#). free of charge.

## OFFENCES AND ILLEGAL WASTE DISPOSAL

Dumping bulky waste, household waste or building rubble on pavements, green spaces or in the countryside spoils our cityscape, endangers the environment and incurs high disposal fees - at the expense of the general public.

Illegal waste disposal is an administrative offence. The public order office carries out regular checks - especially at known problem areas and in sensitive areas of the city.

Anyone who violates the regulations must expect a fine. Depending on the type and extent of the littering, this can be up to several hundred euros.

## MAERKER REPORTING PORTAL

Discovered littering? Report illegal waste dumping quickly and easily via the [MAERKER-Portal](#).

## What do I need to know about "deposits"?

In Germany there is a so-called "Pfandpflicht" ("[Pfandpflicht](#)") for certain drinks packaging. If you buy plastic and glass bottles or drinks cans in the supermarket, you pay a few cents more for them. If you return them empty later to the empties collection point in a supermarket (usually a vending machine), you get this money back. This is called a "deposit". There are two different types of these special bottles:

On **disposable bottles** (which are recycled) you will find a square sign with a can and a bottle surrounded by an arrow. This is the logo of Deutsche Pfand-System GmbH. You will receive a 25 cent deposit back on bottles or cans with this symbol.

On **returnable bottles** (which are washed and refilled) you will either find no labelling at all, a "blue angel" or the words "returnable (bottle)", "returnable bottle" or "deposit bottle". You get a 15 cent deposit back for returnable bottles. For beer bottles it is 8 cents.

💡 Beverage cartons are deposit-free.

💡 If you don't have the time or inclination to return your returnable bottles yourself, you can also place them in a clearly visible place next to a rubbish bin on the street. There are many people in Germany who collect these bottles to earn a little extra money.

## Broadcasting fees

Independent reporting is very important. Germany has independent radio, television and online programmes. ARD, ZDF and Deutschlandradio offer this. They report free from economic and political influences. Everyone pays money for this. This is called the licence fee.

The law stipulates that a licence fee must be paid for every home in Germany. However, only one person per home has to pay the licence fee. This costs €18.36 per month. The money must be paid to the ARD, ZDF and Deutschlandradio contribution service. Further information can be found in the following [information sheet](#). Here in [plain language](#). Alternatively on the [broadcasting licence fee website](#). The website is available in several languages.

Some people can be exempted from paying the licence fee. For example, if you receive benefits under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act or other social benefits. An application must be submitted for exemption from the licence fee.

You can find the application for exemption [here](#).

## Insurances

Two types of insurance are mandatory in Germany: health insurance and third-party liability insurance for car owners. In addition, there is a wide range of other types of insurance. These are voluntary. If you are renting a flat, these insurances make sense:

### Household contents insurance

Household contents insurance protects you in the event of damage to your home: the front door is broken into, your bike is stolen, a fire breaks out or a water pipe bursts. However, as everywhere, it is important to look at the small print. For example, not every insurance policy pays out if a bicycle is stolen at night.

### Private liability insurance

This covers damage that you accidentally cause to another person. In other words, the insurance pays out if your child smashes a window with a ball or your father hits a pedestrian on his bike on the way to work and the pedestrian can no longer walk after a fall.

### Housing benefit

You can find information on housing benefit [here](#).

You earn little money. Everyone in your household earns little money. Then you can get subsidised housing. To do this, you need a [certificate of eligibility for subsidised housing \(WBS\)](#). Under certain conditions, you are also entitled to housing benefit. You and your family receive money from the state. In this case, you do not usually need to apply for housing benefit.

You must apply for a certificate of eligibility for housing in the federal state or city (municipal administration, housing office) in which you are looking for social housing.


You have a notice of recognition from the [Federal Office for Migration and Refugees \(BAMF\)](#). Then you can generally obtain a WBS. Even if you have not yet been issued a residence permit.

## Stadtverwaltung Cottbus

 [Karl-Marx-Straße 67, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 <https://cottbus.de/leistungen/wohngeld-erstmalig-...>

 [wohngeldstelle@cottbus.de](mailto:wohngeldstelle@cottbus.de)

 We recommend that you make an [appointment](#) in advance.

### House hunting

Are you looking for your own flat? It can be difficult to find your own flat. It can take several months to find a suitable flat.

Ask yourself the following questions before you start your search:

- What exactly are you looking for?

- Do you want your own flat or would you prefer a room in a shared flat?
- What requirements does the flat need to fulfil?
- How many rooms do you need?
- Where should the flat be?
- Does the flat have to be accessible for the disabled?
- How high can the rent be?

Please also note the information on possible benefits from the Job Centre. This [list helps you to understand abbreviations](#).

You can search for a flat here:

#### Newspaper

Many landlords and landladies advertise flats in daily newspapers.

#### Internet

Most listings can be found on the Internet. You will need an account with many platforms. This gives you access to contact details. You will receive important information. You can find property listings on the following popular online portals, for example:

- [ImmobilienScout 24](#)
- [Housing exchange](#)
- [Immowelt](#)
- [Immonet](#)
- [WG-gesucht](#)
- [Classifieds](#)
- Facebook (There are various groups with housing offers in Cottbus.)

Housing associations and [housing co-operatives](#) GWC. Use the [contact form](#).

Housing associations and housing co-operatives offer private accommodation. Register your requirements. You can request a reservation.

## Language

### Interpreting and language mediation

In Brandenburg, many areas such as nurseries, schools, health, authorities and advice centres can use a telephone and [video interpreting tool](#). Simply ask the department if you need it.

Some authorities also have their own interpreters. They can help you during conversations. Always ask whether the interpreters are free of charge.

### Community interpreting service

Interpreters can be arranged for local assignments via the ISA e.V. [placement centre](#). The assignment costs money. The costs can be found on the website.

### Language courses

## Integration courses

If you want to live in Germany, you should learn German. This is important if you are looking for work, need to fill out applications, support your children at school or want to meet new people.

How do you find an integration course?

Once you have received your authorisation certificate, you can choose a course provider. In the BAMF-NAVI you will find an up-to-date overview of all authorised course providers. [Here you will find the contact details of the course providers in the city of Cottbus.](#)

As soon as you have found a course provider, you should go to them. You give the course provider the authorisation to participate or the obligation to participate. You register with the course organiser. The course organiser will help you choose a suitable course. They will also tell you when the next course starts.

You can also [check the BAMF-NAVI](#). It also tells you where and when integration courses are offered in Cottbus. It also tells you whether there are any places available.

What is the aim?

The integration course teaches you German language skills. You will also learn about everyday life in Germany and the legal system. You will learn about the culture and history of Germany. You will learn about democracy, equal rights and religious freedom.

At the end of the integration course, you will have sufficient knowledge of the German language (oral and written). This corresponds to level B1. The course objective of the literacy courses is different. There the minimum target is level A2.

Who issues an authorisation to participate or an obligation to participate?

The Job Centre or the Social Welfare Office or the Foreigners' Registration Office issues the entitlement or obligation to participate. You have not been authorised? But you would like to take part in a course? Then you can [apply](#) for an [integration course at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees \(BAMF\)](#). Late repatriates receive authorisation to participate from the Federal Office of Administration.

How much does the integration course cost?

You have to pay a fee to take part in the integration course. Do you receive social benefits, for example citizen's allowance or social welfare? Then you can apply for exemption from the costs. If you are exempt from the costs, a subsidy towards the travelling costs is also possible.

How is the course organised?

The integration course consists of a basic and an advanced language course. This is followed by an orientation course.

The literacy course is structured differently. The course consists of 2 advanced courses.

Which exams have to be taken?

The integration course concludes with the "Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer" (DTZ) exam and the "Leben in Deutschland" (LiD) exam.

The website "[Integration courses in detail](#)" is provided by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). Here you will find information on the content, procedure and final examinations. You will also find frequently asked questions and answers. The site is multilingual.

## **Vocational language courses (DeuFöV)**

In this language course you can improve your German language skills. You will expand your vocabulary in the course. You will learn words that you will need in your job. The courses teach you about specific professions and sectors. There are basic courses. And there are specialised courses with different focuses. Attend this course with a language level of B1. Attend this course, for example, after you have attended an integration course.

The vocational language course concludes with a certificate examination.

You need authorisation to take part in a vocational language course. You can obtain this either from the job centre or the employment agency. Or you can apply to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) for authorisation to attend.

Ask your advisor at the job centre or employment agency. They will be able to help you. Because they know which language schools offer courses. And they know whether you should do a specialised course.

You can find more information on vocational language courses on the [website of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees \(BAMF\)](#). Here you can find out how the courses are organised. You can also find out who can take part.

You can search for vocational language courses in your area on the [Federal Employment Agency's KURSNET](#).

## **Speech cafés and reading clubs**

### **Speaking cafés and reading clubs**

There are many volunteers in speaking cafés who can help you learn German. You can meet other people and speak German with them in the speaking cafés. This allows you to practise your German and learn new words. And maybe even make new friends along the way. In the language cafés, it doesn't matter whether you have previous knowledge or not. Everyone sits together in small groups and just talks.

## **Language café at the Regenbogenkombinat Cottbus**

The language café always takes place on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 17:00 to 19:00. We speak German with each other, have a good time and get to know each other. At small tables we discuss topics of our own choice. With this programme, we want to make the cultural diversity in the city visible and support it. We are complementing the already existing cafés in Cottbus. The meeting is open to everyone and free of charge.

Further information can be [found here](#).


You can find an overview of some of the cafés and reading clubs in Cottbus on the [website of the volunteer agency](#).

The dates of the language cafés are also listed in the [event overview](#) in the app.


### **Dictionaries and learning materials**

In the [Cottbus City and Regional Library](#) you will find many dictionaries and learning materials for learning German. You can also study there in peace and quiet and use the WLAN. Use is either free or very cheap.

### **Stadtverwaltung Cottbus**

 [Berliner Straße 13/14, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@info@bibliothek-cottbus.de](mailto:info@bibliothek-cottbus.de)

 [+49355380600](tel:+49355380600)

 <https://www.bibliothek-cottbus.de/>

### **Online language courses**

You can learn German either with your mobile phone or on your computer. Here are free offers:

[Deutsche Welle Basis-Kurs](#): An online course that helps with the alphabet and professional language. There is also a test to see how well you already know German.

["The City of Words"](#): An app and website from the GOETHE Institute. It helps you learn new words in a fun way. It is for beginners and in several languages, e.g. English and French.

[VHS learning portal](#): There are free German courses here. You can also learn writing, reading and maths. There is also help for school-leaving exams in German, maths and English.

### **Foreign languages**

Foreign language courses are held here in Cottbus:

[Adult Education Centre Cottbus](#)

[Urania Cottbus](#) (English only)

[Sorbian-Wendish language school](#) (only Sorbian/Wendish and Polish)

Fees are payable for these courses.

A tip for people who are learning a language:

Foreign languages can be tried out at speak-dating. Here, native speakers meet native speakers and teach each other the other language. Speak-Dating takes place every Tuesday from 16.30-18.00 in the Cottbus City Museum on the third floor. Access is barrier-free.

## Basic education

### Basic education courses

#### What are basic education courses?

Basic education courses are aimed at people who want to improve their reading, writing and maths skills. These courses are free of charge. In the courses, you learn in small groups and at your own pace. There is plenty of time for questions and repetition.

#### Prerequisites for the courses

Participants must have a good understanding of the German language and be able to speak it fluently. Participants must also be at least 16 years old and live in the state of Brandenburg. A counselling interview is required before the course.

The course topics for basic education courses are: Maths; Computers and digital media and communication; Learning to learn; Family, health and social issues; Career, working life and finance; Orientation knowledge of politics, society, environment, sustainable development and law; and Basic English.

#### New courses start in Cottbus in September:

- Work and Finance
- Career, family and social affairs
- Reading, writing and talking to each other
- Learning to learn

### Personal registration until 22.08.2025.

#### Counselling hours

Monday: 08:00 - 12:00

Visitor address: Berliner Straße 6, 03046 Cottbus

#### Contact person:

Daisy Gutsche

Educational assistant in the basic education courses project

Phone: +49 355 6123410

Mobile: 0151 19437892

Email: Daisy.Gutsche@cottbus.de

Funded by the European Union and the State of Brandenburg.



Kofinanziert von der  
Europäischen Union

### Learn the language yourself in everyday life

Here are a few tips on how you can learn German for free in everyday life.

#### Websites:

- <https://www.goethe.de/de/spr/ueb.html>
- <https://www.vhs-lernportal.de/wws/9.php#/wws/home...>
- <https://learngerman.dw.com/de/deutsch-lernen/s-90...>
- <https://www.deutschakademie.de/online-deutschkurs/>
- <https://sprachekulturkommunikation.com/>
- <https://www.deutsch-perfekt.com/#feature-16015382...>
- <https://deutschtraining.org/deutschkurs-online/de...>

### **Courses for pupils (from 6 years) from A1 to B1 (online on Zoom)**

<https://www.lern-fair.de/schueler/deutsch-kurse?g...>

### **Learn language in chat with AI**

You can use AI (e.g. Chat GPT) to work out a detailed plan of exercises for yourself, develop communication skills in dialogues, do written exercises with a focus on grammar, expand your vocabulary.

### **Films and series in German, e.g:**

A1 "Nicos Weg", as well as children's films or simple animated films such as "Der kleine Drache Kokosnuss" or "Biene Maja"

A2 "Nico's Way", "Heidi", "The Little Ghost", "Vicky the Viking"

B1- "Run Lola Run", "Good Bye, Lenin" (2003), "The Miracle of Bern"

B2 - "Turkish for Beginners", "Tschick", "Sun and Concrete" (2023)

C1 - "Downfall", "Inglourious Basterds" (with German sound and subtitles)

### **Free APPS:**

- Duolingo
- Hello German
- Memrise
- Babbel
- FluentU

### **Library:**

- City and Regional Library (Berliner Str. 13/14, 03046)
- IKMZ - BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg (Platz der Deutschen Einheit 2, 03044)

## Test language level

There are six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. In your mother tongue you have C2. The six levels mean in detail:

### A1: Beginner

You can understand and use simple words and sentences.

You can introduce yourself and others.

You can ask questions about yourself.

You can answer questions.

A person speaks slowly and clearly. You can converse with them.

### A2: Basic knowledge

You can understand sentences and frequently used words.

You can communicate in simple, everyday situations. You can describe your background, education and environment.

### B1: Advanced use of language

You can understand a lot. You can say something about familiar topics and personal interests.

You can talk about experiences and events, dreams, hopes and goals. You can give brief reasons or explanations for plans and opinions.

### B2: Independent use of language

You can understand the most important content of complex texts on concrete and abstract topics. You can also understand specialised discussions in your field of specialisation.

You can communicate fluently and spontaneously. You can justify a point of view on a topical issue with advantages and disadvantages.

### C1: Specialised language skills

You can understand a lot of demanding, longer texts. You can also grasp implicit meanings.

You can express yourself clearly, in a structured and detailed manner on complex issues.

### C2: (Almost) native speaker level

You can understand practically everything you read or hear with ease.

You can summarise information from different written and oral sources. You can give reasons and explanations in a coherent presentation. You can express yourself spontaneously, very fluently, precisely and with nuance.

You can test your level in German, English, French, Spanish and Italian free of charge here:

[www.sprachtest.de](http://www.sprachtest.de)

## Children, youth and family

### Education and participation package

#### What is meant by benefits for education and participation?

This is money for children and young people from low-income families. The parents receive the money for certain services that help the children and young people. Especially for events at daycare centres and schools.

Benefits from the education package are usually cash benefits or benefits in kind (in the form of vouchers). You will receive these from your town or municipality.

## Who can receive benefits for education and participation?

Parents can apply for benefits for education and participation. They can do this for all children living in the household. To qualify, parents must receive one of the following benefits:

- Housing benefit
- child supplement
- citizen's allowance
- social assistance
- Asylum seeker benefits

You do not receive any of the above benefits? Are you unable to cover your child's specific education and participation needs? Then you may be entitled to benefits from the education package in accordance with SGB II. You can enquire at the relevant [Cottbus job centre](#).

Pupils in need of assistance up to the age of 25 receive benefits for education. These pupils must attend a general school or vocational school. They should also not receive a training allowance.

Children in need of assistance in day care centres and childminders also receive part of the educational benefits.

Children and young people up to the age of 18 receive benefits for participation. Support for infants is also possible.

## What benefits are involved?

### Benefits for education

#### School trips and school excursions

The actual costs of one-day excursions at school or daycare centres. It is possible to collect statements via schools for one-day trips. The actual costs of multi-day trips for classes and daycare centres. For school trips, the money can be paid directly to the children or their parents.

💡 Apply in advance to the Office for Social Affairs and Participation ([Amt für Soziales und Teilhabe](#)) or the Cottbus Job Centre to have the costs of a school trip or excursion covered.

**Personal school supplies** Personal school supplies totalling 174 euros per calendar year are recognised, namely 116 euros for the first half of the school year and 58 euros for the second half of the school year, up to the 10th school year. School supplies include, for example, a school bag, sports kit, materials for writing, maths and drawing. If you have several schoolchildren, you will receive the money for each child. **School transport**

The actual cost of travelling to school for pupils.

This benefit is provided as a cash benefit unless the local transport company is billed directly.

#### Learning grants

The actual costs of learning support, such as tutoring  
However, you should first speak to your child's teacher. They must certify the need for support.

### **Lunch for school, daycare centre and after-school care**

Lunch at all-day schools, after-school care centres or daycare centres at no extra cost to parents

### **Benefits for participation**

Parents can receive money for their children's participation in cultural, sports and leisure activities; for example, if the children:

- Take music lessons,
- are members of a sports club,
- attend courses at adult education centres,
- go to a museum, theatre or musical.

Parents can receive 15 euros per month for each child.

### **Where and how can the benefits for education and participation be applied for?**

There are two ways to apply for education and participation benefits:

1. Do you receive social assistance, child supplement or housing benefit? Then you must apply to the local authority. Application forms [are available here](#).
2. Do you receive citizen's allowance? Then you must submit the application to the City of Rostock - Hanse Job Centre at your place of residence.

### **Possibility of counselling**

If you have any questions about the application process, the "Education and Participation" counselling team will be happy to help.

You can contact the BuT counselling service here:

📍 Department of Social Affairs Thiemstraße 37  
03050 Cottbus

📍 Karl-Marx Straße 69 03046 Cottbus

☎️ 0355 612 48 00

Counselling is free of charge. Counselling is also available in English, Arabic, Russian and Turkish.

### **Overview for children, young people and families**

## **Children, young people and families are under special protection in Germany.**

To ensure that young people grow up safe and healthy, they must be protected from danger, violence and harmful influences. That is why there are clear rules in Germany.

### **The Youth Protection Act ensures that:**

- Children may not be beaten or abused. Violence is prohibited.
- Films, games and websites must be suitable for children. Dangerous content is not permitted.
- Alcohol and cigarettes may only be purchased from a certain age.
- Children are not allowed to be alone in certain places in the evening.

These rules apply everywhere: at home, at school, in the city or on the internet. They help to ensure that children grow up safely.

### **School and health - what is important?**

- Children have a right to education. In Germany, all children must go to school from the age of 6. Education is important for the future.
- Children's health is also important. Parents must take their children to the doctor regularly for certain check-ups. Their health and development are checked there.

### **Who looks after the children?**

Parents are responsible for their children. They are responsible for their safety and upbringing. If a child is not doing well at home, the state helps and protects the child. Various authorities can provide support in the event of difficulties.

### **All families are equal**

In Germany, all family forms are legally protected. It doesn't matter whether a family consists of a mother, father and child, whether there are two mothers, two fathers or adoptive parents. It is also possible for one parent to bring up a child alone. All families are valuable and have the same rights.

### **Childcare for children up to 6 years**

#### **What is a daycare centre?**

A daycare centre is a place for children who do not yet go to school. Your child can go to the daycare centre from the age of 1. Some centres also accept children under the age of one. They are looked after there, play and learn lots of new things.

#### **Why is the daycare centre important?**

- Your child learns the German language.
- It is prepared for school.

- They can play and learn with other children.

## **Who can go to the daycare centre?**

All children can go to the daycare centre - regardless of their language, origin or religion. Children with disabilities or special needs are also welcome.

## **How long is the daycare centre open?**

Daycare centres are open from Monday to Friday. Sometimes the daycare centres have closing times. These are always communicated in good time.

## **Are there different daycare centres?**

Yes!

- There are municipal daycare centres run by the city of Cottbus.
- There are private daycare centres run by other providers.

After primary school, children can also go to the after-school care centre. The after-school care centre is part of the daycare centre and looks after children after school.

## **How do I get a place at a daycare centre?**

You can choose the daycare centre yourself and must register your child there yourself.

## **When should I enrol?**

Early on! Preferably during pregnancy or directly after the move. At least 6 months in advance.

## **How do I enrol my child?**

Look for a daycare centre that you like. [You can find](#) a list of all daycare centres in Cottbus and lots of important information on how to apply to the city of Cottbus [here](#). Have a look at the website of the daycare centre. Enrolment forms and information are often available there.

Call the daycare centre or visit them in person.

## **What to do if there are no places available?**

Ask several daycare centres - put yourself on several waiting lists.

If you already have a child in a daycare centre, ask there first for a place for your second child.

Enquire regularly, especially before the start of school in late summer (end of August).

If you cannot find a place, you can contact the Youth Welfare Office and register your child's needs: [Click here to register](#)

## **Do you need help?**

Filling out the forms? [Migration advice centres](#) can help you with this.

Do you need help organising care? Then get in touch with the childcare advice centre: Ewa Zadrozna - Phone: 0355 6123414

Take advantage of this opportunity - the childcare centre will help your child for a good future!

## **Costs & important information about the daycare centre**

### **What does daycare cost?**

From the age of 3, childcare in Brandenburg is free of charge. For children under 3 years of age, the costs depend on the time spent at the childcare centre and income. The management of the daycare centre will answer any questions you may have.

Parents pay for food, i.e. breakfast, lunch and snacks. Support is possible. There are subsidies for meals, excursions and leisure activities via "Bildung & Teilhabe". The daycare centre management or the migration advice centres can help with the application.

### **Important rules for the daycare centre:**

A health check and immunisations are required. Before starting at the daycare centre, a doctor must check the child's state of health. The measles vaccination is compulsory from the age of 1. You need proof of this. You are not allowed to go to daycare without a vaccination.

## **Familiarisation - the first days at the daycare centre**

- The first time at the daycare centre is called settling in.
- Parents should allow enough time for this - a gentle familiarisation is important
- Parent information on settling in can be [found here](#)

## **Expectations of daycare centre parents**

### **Cooperation & communication**

- Regular discussions about the child's development
- Feedback at parents' evenings & development talks
- Being available for emergencies
- Punctuality

### **Drop off & pick up at the agreed times**

- Giving information in case of illness or delay

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## **Commitment**

- Help with parties, excursions & projects
- Optional: Take over parent representation

## **Health & hygiene**

- No attendance at daycare centre in case of infectious diseases
- Bring clean clothes & hygiene articles (nappies, toothpaste, etc.)

## **Equipment & materials**

- Weather-appropriate clothing, slippers, change of clothes
- If necessary: Bring breakfast/snacks

## **Finances**

- Punctual payment of daycare centre fees (if not free of charge)
- Additional costs for excursions or special events

## **Respect & support**

- Respect daycare centre rules
- Friendly interaction with teachers & other parents
- Encourage the child at home (e.g. reading, handicrafts, teaching values)

## **Crèche, kindergarten or day care centre**

### **What is the crèche?**

The crèche is for children aged 0 to 3 years. Here they are looked after in small groups by specially trained staff. The nursery teachers pay special attention to the development, affection and encouragement of the children.

### **What is the kindergarten?**

The kindergarten is for children from the age of 3 until they start school.

Here children can

- play, paint and do handicrafts with others
- learn new things
- take part in pre-school in their final year to prepare for school

### **What is child day care?**

Child day care is an alternative to day care centres for children under the age of 3.

- Care in small groups (maximum 5 children)
- By a childminder or child minder
- Usually in a family environment (e.g. in the carer's household)

### **Are you worried about placing your child in a day care centre?**

Discuss this with the childminder Mrs Zadrozna.

### **Ewa Zadrozna | Stadtverwaltung Cottbus**

 [Berliner Straße 6, 03044 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

[@ewa.zadrozna@cottbus.de](mailto:ewa.zadrozna@cottbus.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556123414](tel:+49(0)3556123414)

### **My child has a disability**

Important contact person:

Your paediatrician is the first point of contact for questions about your child's disability.

### **Childcare options:**

Children with disabilities can, depending on their needs

- attend a normal daycare centre nearby
- attend an integration daycare centre (children with and without disabilities are cared for together)
- use a day care centre (e.g. with a childminder)

**i** Further information on support options can be found here:

[□ Early support in Cottbus](#)

### **Right to childcare**

#### **From 1 year to 4th grade**

In Germany, every child can go to daycare or after-school care from their first birthday. This right applies until the child reaches the 5th grade.

#### **Before school (daycare centre):**

Your child can be looked after for at least 6 hours a day.

#### **At primary school (after-school care centre):**

Your child can be looked after for at least 4 hours after school.

If you work longer, the childcare hours can be extended. You must submit an application for this.

## **Children under 1 year old or in the 5th and 6th grade**

Childcare is also available for children under the age of one or in years 5 and 6. This is possible if your family needs support.

### **For refugee families**

If you are a refugee family living in Cottbus (after initial reception), you can apply for a place in the daycare centre.

## **Childcare for children aged 6 and over**

### **Registration for the school**

#### **When does my child have to go to school?**

All children who turn 6 years old by 30 September of any given year must go to school.

#### **Which school does my child attend?**

Your child will be allocated a state school. Which school this is depends on your home address. Each address belongs to a school district. The school districts are listed here:

 [School districts in Cottbus](#)

#### **When and how do I enrol my child?**

- Enrolment takes place at the beginning of the year.
- Ask the responsible school when exactly the enrolment days are.
- You should also register your child for after-school care if he/she is to go there.

#### **What is the language assessment?**

- Before your child starts school, teachers at the daycare centre will check how well your child speaks German.
- Does your child not attend a daycare centre? Then the language test must be taken at the public health department. Please find out more here:  
[Language assessment in Cottbus](#)

#### **What is the school entrance examination?**

- In the spring before your child starts school, you will receive an invitation to an examination at the public health department.

- Your child will be examined there to determine whether he or she is ready for school.
- You must go to this appointment with your child.

#### Department 53 - Health

📍 Technical Town Hall, Karl-Marx-Str. 67  
03044 Cottbus/Chósebus

📍 0355 612-3215

Fax +49 355 612-3504

@gesundheitsamt@cottbus.de

🌐 <https://www.cottbus.de/gesundheit>

### **Can my child start school a year later?**

Yes, in certain cases your child can start school a year later. This is called deferment.

- You must still register with the relevant school.
- You must notify your decision in writing.

### **Where can I get help with enrolment?**

- In your shared accommodation
- At advice centres for migration and integration

You can find more information here:

🌐 [School enrolment in Brandenburg](#)

### **Hoarding**

The after-school care centre is for children aged 6 to 12 and takes place after school in the afternoon.

### **What happens at the after-school care centre?**

- Support with homework
- Playing and taking part in various activities

### **Important:**

An after-school care place is not automatically allocated when the child starts school. Parents should look for an after-school care place before starting school.

### **Compulsory education and the school system**

### **School attendance is compulsory in Germany.**

School attendance is compulsory for 12 years.

Children must attend a primary school (1st to 6th grade) and a secondary school for at least 9 years.

Secondary schools (from year 7) are

- Comprehensive schools,
- secondary schools
- or grammar schools

Vocational school can be attended after year 9. If no further school is to be attended, the compulsory schooling period is 10 years. Compulsory schooling ends at the age of 18.

### **Parents are obliged to send their children to school.**

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, they must be deregistered from school.

School attendance at state and municipal schools is free of charge.

Attendance at independent and public schools may cost school fees.

You can find an overview of all schools in Cottbus [here](#).

### **School in Brandenburg**

The state of Brandenburg has divided responsibilities for schools:

- internal school matters are regulated by the education authority (ministry)
- external school matters are regulated by the school authority (City of Cottbus)

### **Education in Germany is regulated differently by the federal states.**

If you move to a different federal state, you will need to find out about the respective federal state's regulations on schools separately.

You can find an overview of the different types of schools in Brandenburg [here](#).

### **Change of school from 6th to 7th grade (Ü7 procedure)**

#### **What is the Ü7 procedure?**

The change to Year 7 is called the Ü7 procedure. Here is a brief explanation of the process.

#### **What happens after Year 6?**

After Year 6, your child moves from primary school to a secondary school. This can be

- Secondary school
- comprehensive school

- grammar school

## How is it decided which school your child attends?

The decision depends on

- Your wishes as parents
- Your child's abilities and grades
- The primary school report and the 6th grade report card

You can find more information and support here:

 [Ü7 procedure in Brandenburg](#)

## Duties of the parents

### What obligations do parents have for school?

School attendance is compulsory in Germany. This means that

- Your child must go to school.
- Your child must attend lessons punctually and regularly.
- If your child is ill, you must inform the school.

### Other important duties for parents

- Parents must read and sign important information.  
→ For example: report cards, invitations to parents' evenings or authorisations for excursions.
- Attendance at important school events.  
→ Parents should come to parents' evenings or meetings with teachers.
- Support with homework and learning.  
→ Parents should support their child in learning, but not do the work for the child.
- Inform the school about changes.  
→ If you have a new address or telephone number, you must inform the school.
- Arrange medical appointments outside school hours if possible.  
→ If an appointment is necessary during school hours, parents must inform the school in advance.

### What else you should know

### What do children learn at school?

In addition to maths, German and other subjects, there are also:

- **Physical education**  
Your child does sport at school.

- **Swimming lessons**  
Many children learn to swim.
- **Bike training**  
Children learn to ride a bike safely at school.

In Germany, it is a matter of course that all children learn these things - **boys and girls**.

It is therefore important that parents support their children and enable them to take part in lessons.

School trips and school excursions are also an important part of learning. They help children to gain new experiences and develop a sense of community. Parents should see these activities as an opportunity and encourage their children to take part.

### **What happens if a child is injured at school?**

- There is accident insurance at school.
- Your child is insured if they have an accident at school or on the way to school.
- The school will inform you if something happens.
- **Important:** Parents should not go straight to the paediatrician after an accident. Instead, an accident insurance doctor (D-Arzt) must be consulted. These doctors specialise in accidents at school and at work. The school can name a suitable doctor for you.

### **School social work - support for children and parents**

Many schools have school social workers. They are contact persons for **children and parents**.

School social workers help with problems at school or at home. They offer

- Counselling and support when there are difficulties,
- group work and projects with the classes,
- a sympathetic ear for children and parents - the consultations are **voluntary, free of charge and confidential**.

School social workers work at the school, but are **not teachers**. They help when children have worries or parents need support.

Here you will find an overview of the schools with school social workers:

 [Schools with school social workers](#)

### **Family reunification**

Family reunification means that family members are allowed to come to Germany.

This is possible if someone with protection is already living in Germany. Family members include: Spouse, own children, parents of underage children. Persons entitled to protection can apply for family reunification. Persons entitled to protection are: People who have been granted asylum, refugees under the Geneva Convention, people with subsidiary protection and

recognised unaccompanied minors. For family reunification, family members must apply for a visa at the German embassy or a German consulate.

It is important to seek advice and get help with the application.

You can contact these advice centres:

Link to the [refugee and integration counselling](#) service

Link to the [youth migration service](#)

Link to the [migration counselling](#) service

## Find family members

Are you looking for family members, relatives or friends?

You have lost contact due to


- armed conflicts
- disasters
- flight
- or other humanitarian emergencies


lost?

The Tracing Service of the German Red Cross will help you in your search.

## DRK District Association Cottbus-Spree-Neiße-West e.V.

 Mrs Susann Lebelt

 Ostrower Damm 2, 03046 Cottbus

 0355 715061

 @suchdienst@drk-cottbus.de

## Trace the Face- Restoring Family Links:

[Here](#) you can search photos online yourself.

## Training, further education and study

### Education

#### Dual education

#### Dual training

In Germany, it is a great advantage to have a **vocational qualification**.

People with a vocational qualification

- earn more money over the course of their lives,
- are less likely to become unemployed,
- are less likely to have fixed-term contracts than people who are looking for work without a vocational qualification.







## There are two types of training in Germany

School-based training at a vocational college (school-based training):  
Trainees only attend school and learn everything there.

Dual system:  
Trainees learn

- 1/3 of the time at a **vocational school**
- 2/3 of the time in a **training company**
- Theory and practice are combined

You earn a fixed monthly salary during your apprenticeship.

This video provides a clear explanation of dual training:  [Dual training](#).  
Click here for the video in  [Arabic](#),  [Dari](#),  [Tigrinya](#),  [Ukrainian](#).  
Click here for the  [video in sign language](#).

Dual training is usually found in commercial professions and industrial/technical occupations. Depending on the type of profession you would like to learn, you should contact the appropriate organisation:

## Careers and study counselling at the Cottbus Employment Agency

Finding the right career is not always easy. There are many options for the time after school. But which career really suits me? The careers and study counselling service in South Brandenburg provides advice, support and placement.

Further information:

<https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/vor-ort/cottbus/ber...>

## Cottbus Chamber of Crafts (HWK)

The HWK is responsible for skilled trades such as baking, bricklaying, painting and hairdressing. It provides support in the search for an apprenticeship or an introductory qualification, which can precede an apprenticeship. There is a special programme for young people with a migration background who would like to start an apprenticeship in a skilled trade. Further information can be found [here](#).

 [Altmarkt 17, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [hwk@hwk-cottbus.de](mailto:hwk@hwk-cottbus.de)

 [+493557835444](tel:+493557835444)

 <https://www.hwk-cottbus.de/>

## Cottbus Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK)

The IHK is responsible for commercial and technical professions. The IHK supports people before, during and after their training.

The team advises on all questions relating to training: for example, challenges at vocational school or in the company, exam preparation, rights and obligations during training.

The individual counselling sessions are free of charge.

You can find more information [here](#).

 [Goethestraße 1, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [@ihkcb@cottbus.ihk.de](mailto:ihkcb@cottbus.ihk.de)

 [+493553650](tel:+493553650)

 <https://www.ihk.de/cottbus/>

Are you looking for further counselling? The [Youth Migration Service](#) can advise you.

## Corinna Jaunich | Jugendmigrationsdienst - Diakonisches Werk Niederlausitz gGmbH

 [Straße der Jugend 33, 03050 Cottbus](#)

 [@info.jmd@diakonie-niederlausitz.de](mailto:info.jmd@diakonie-niederlausitz.de)

 [+493554889988](tel:+493554889988)

 <https://www.jugendmigrationsdienste.de/jmd/nieder...>

### KAUSA regional office Brandenburg:


Informing, educating, motivating and supporting young people with experience of flight and migration for vocational training.


You can find more information [here](#)

## Andrea Behrends | KAUSA-Landesstelle Brandenburg: Ausbildung und Migration

 [Sandower Straße 6, 03044 Cottbus](#)

 [@behrends@berlin.arbeitundleben.de](mailto:behrends@berlin.arbeitundleben.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 355301085](tel:+49(0)355301085)

 [+49 \(0\) 1622036776](tel:+49(0)1622036776)

 <https://kausa-brandenburg.de/>

### Vocational training at school

## Training at the vocational school

There are two types of training programmes in Germany:

Dual system (dual training):

Trainees learn both at a vocational school and in a training company.

School-based training at a vocational college

Trainees only attend school and learn everything there.

School-based training usually lasts 1 - 3 years.

Depending on the school, there are different training programmes and admission requirements. You can obtain detailed information directly from the school.

School-based training is usually found in professions in the fields of technology, healthcare and social services, art and foreign languages.

 [Find out more](#)

Depending on your personal situation, it is possible to receive state support from the government. One example of this is "BAföG". You can obtain information on this from the Office for Training Assistance.

## Further training


### My Now

The [online portal](#) for professional development offers all information on one platform. No matter why you want to develop yourself further. The platform provides support. There are many possibilities. For example

- with information on further training
- with information on and retraining
- with the search for suitable further training programmes
- with online tests
- with advice on funding opportunities
- with advice centres

## Employment Agency

Further training, retraining or re-entry: The Federal Employment Agency supports you in your next career step. With counselling and financial support. You can find more information [here](#). For example, about acquiring new skills. Or how to obtain a new qualification. How you can advance your career.

 [Bahnhofstraße 10, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [+49 \(0\) 8004555500](#)

 <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/vor-ort/cottbus>

## Study

### Studying in Germany

Everyone has the opportunity to study in Germany, even if you obtained your school-leaving certificate abroad. However, you must fulfil the same requirements as German students.

- 1) You need a special certificate. This certificate is called [Hochschulzugangsberechtigung \(HZB\)](#).
- 2) As a rule, you must have a very good <https://www.study-in-germany.de/de/studium-planen...> (usually C1, at least B2). However, there are also English-language degree programmes.
- 3) In addition, there are also programmes that prepare you for your studies and support you during your studies.

If you do not have a German Abitur, it must be checked whether you can study in Germany with the school-leaving certificate from your home country. You can research this yourself on the information portals "Recognition in Germany" ([anabin](#)) or [uni assist](#). General information on the requirements for studying can be [found here](#).

There are many different degree programmes and [types of higher education institutions](#) in Germany.

- Universities: academically orientated, suitable for doctoral studies
- Universities of applied sciences: practice-orientated
- Dual universities: combine study and work
- Art, film and music colleges: artistically orientated: Fine arts, drama, dance, industrial and fashion design, graphics, instrumental music or singing as well as modern media

There are state and private universities. Private universities often cost more money. Enquire directly at the university where you would like to study. Most universities offer counselling services. Please note the deadlines by which you can apply for a degree programme!

You can obtain more information about studying at the

### **Careers and study counselling service at the Cottbus Employment Agency**

Choosing the right degree programme is not always easy. But which degree programme and which university/college is right for me? The careers and study counselling service in South Brandenburg provides advice and support.

Further information: <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/vor-ort/cottbus/stu...>

Further links:

- You can find all degree programmes in Germany [here](#).
- You can find an overview of study programmes in Brandenburg [here](#).
- You can find information for refugees [here](#).
- You can find information on study orientation [here](#).

Important information at a glance:

- The colleges and universities will check whether you fulfil the requirements.
- The German test can take place at the university/college.
- Certificates from telc and the Goethe Institute are also accepted as proof of language level.
- Residence status is not relevant for studying.

Keywords: study, doctorate, college, university

## Funding and scholarship

### Bafög

BAfög is the abbreviation for "Federal Training Assistance Act". It is money from the state to support students. You have to submit an application and fulfil certain conditions. The money is paid every month and is intended to finance your studies. Half of the money has to be paid back after graduation. The rules for BAfög sometimes change, so you should check regularly. Further information can be found here:

[Website BAfög for refugees and migrants](#)  
[BAfög website - all information at a glance](#)

### Scholarship

A scholarship is also financial support for students. You do not have to pay the money back. Scholarships are often awarded for special achievements. Good grades and voluntary work are important. In principle, anyone who receives BAfög can also apply for a scholarship. Organisations that offer scholarships:

- [Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung \(FES\) - Scholarships for Refugees](#)
- [Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung \(KAS\) - Scholarships for Refugees](#)
- [Villigst - Our scholarship for refugees](#)
- [Bread for the World - Refugee Scholarship Programme](#)
- [University Guarantee Fund of the Otto Benecke Foundation in Bonn](#)
- [Hans Böckler Foundation](#)
- [Deutschlandstipendium: Become a scholarship holder](#)
- [German University Foundation](#)
- [Heinrich Böll Foundation](#)

Further information can be found on the website of the [Higher Education Campaign for Refugees](#) and in the database of the [German Academic Exchange Service \(DAAD\)](#).

## No university entrance qualification for studying in Germany?

Don't have permission to study in Germany? A preparatory college can help international students. There you will learn important subjects and improve your German. This way you will be better prepared for studying in Germany.

There is no preparatory college in Brandenburg. But there is the [ESiSt](#) programme. The programme helps international students to prepare for studying in Brandenburg. It is offered

together with the University of Potsdam. It prepares students for studying at the University of Potsdam, the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, the Brandenburg University of Applied Sciences and the Technical University of Applied Sciences Wildau. You can find more information [here](#).

If you would like to know more about preparatory colleges in other federal states, you can look [here](#).

## Brandenburg University of Technology


The Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg (BTU C-S) offers a wide range of degree programmes. You can find out more about the university on the BTU [C-S](#) website. You can find an overview of the degree programmes [here](#).

The BTU C-S offers counselling services for interested persons.

## Zentrale Studienberatung

 [Platz der deutschen Einheit 1, 03046 Cottbus](#)

 [@studium@b-tu.de](mailto:@studium@b-tu.de)

 [+490355693800](tel:+490355693800)

 <https://www.b-tu.de/studium/informationen-beratun...>


## International Relations Office

International students can contact the [International Relations Office](#).

## International Relations Office

 [Platz der deutschen Einheit 1, 03046 Cottbus](#)

 [@internationaladmission@b-tu.de](mailto:@internationaladmission@b-tu.de)

 [+490355692105](tel:+490355692105)

 <https://www.b-tu.de/international>

Further information [can be found here](#).

## Study Preparation Programme

BTU C-S offers various intensive German courses in the [Bridge to Studies programme](#).

If you would like to study at BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg, but your school-leaving certificate is not sufficient, there is a solution. You can take a course in the [ESiSt](#) programme. You will learn the specialised knowledge and improve your language skills. At the end of the programme, you will receive a permit to study in Germany. You can then apply directly for a Bachelor's degree programme.

## Cottbus job centre

### Welcometo the Jobcenter Cottbus

#### We are herefor you if you are looking for work or need support.

The Jobcenter helps people who currently have no work or not enough money to live on. We will advise you personally and work with you to find ways into work, training or further education.

If you have any questions or need support, we are here for you. Find out more about our services here or visit us in person.

#### Our opening hours:

Monday: 08:00 - 13:00

Tuesday: 08:00 - 13:00 and 14:00 - 16:00

Wednesday: no consultation hours

Thursday: 08:00 - 13:00 and 14:00 - 18:00

Friday: 08:00 - 12:30

You are also welcome to use our telephone service from the comfort of your own home at a local rate.

#### What can you clarify?

- General and individual information
- Information on applications
- Arrange or cancel appointments
- Acceptance of changes (e.g. part-time job, taking up employment)
- Calling in sick
- Requesting forms or applications
- Questions about the payment of the Bürgergeldes

You can reach us daily by telephone from Monday to Friday on the hotline

**0355 619-3100.**

You are also welcome to use the direct dial numbers on all notifications from Jobcenters Cottbus.



### Jobcenter.digital

#### Jobcenter.digital - Your online services

#### With jobcenter.digital you can easily take care of many matters online.

You don't have to come to Jobcenter to do this. For example, you can renew your application for Bürgergeld or inform Jobcenter if something has changed - for example, if you have moved house, have a new job or your account number has changed. You can also simply upload

important documents there. If you have any questions, you can write a message to the job centre via this page.

All you need is a mobile phone, a computer or a tablet with internet and your access data from Jobcenter, which you can assign yourself. Then you can use the service around the clock - from the comfort of your own home. It's easy and secure to use.

### **What is possible?**

- Submit applications (for example the application for Bürgergeld)
- Communicate changes
- Upload documents
- Write messages

[Use it directly now!](#)

All you need is a user account. Registration is free and secure. You can find step-by-step instructions for successful registration [here](#).

### **Job centre app**

**With Jobcenter App, you can conveniently and easily access information, applications, news and appointments from anywhere.**

You can download the app directly here in the app stores for [Android](#) or [iOS](#)!

The app makes it easier for you to communicate with your Jobcenter. You can conveniently access your user account at jobcenter.digital via your smartphone. For regional information, enter your postcode.

Requirements for the registered area:

- You have submitted an application for Bürgergeld
- You have a personal contact person at the job centre
- You have access data (e-mail address and password) for jobcenter.digital

These are the advantages of the app:

- Submit applications directly via the app
- Upload documents from your smartphone
- Communicate changes
- Exchange messages

Feel free to try out the app. If you have any questions, please contact us.

## **Overview: Working in Germany**

### **Working in Germany - A first overview**

Germany has a strong economy and offers many job opportunities. Here is an overview of what you need to know.

In Cottbus, people are particularly needed in the following areas:

- Healthcare: Specialists in nursing or in the medical field
- Trades: professions such as electricians, carpenters or plumbers
- various services: Employees in sales, tourism and catering

## **Work permit and visa**

People from the EU can work in Germany without a visa.

Are you not from the EU? Then you usually need a visa or work permit to work in Germany. Find out in advance from the German embassy or consulate in your home country.

## **Job search**

Vacancies are published in Germany. This gives many people access. You can apply for these jobs. Sometimes it takes several weeks for an employer to reply.

Popular online job exchanges are: StepStone, Indeed or the [job exchange of the Federal Employment Agency](#).

Networks such as LinkedIn or personal contacts can also help. Vacancies can also often be found in daily newspapers or on social media platforms.

## **Employment contract and conditions**

You will receive an employment contract before you start work. The foreigners authority will check whether a work permit can be issued.

The employment contract contains all the important information:

- how much money you earn
- how many hours you have to work
- how many days of holiday you are allowed to take
- how long the contract is valid for
- what deadlines must be met for cancellation

Companies must pay a statutory minimum wage. Working hours are usually 35 to 40 hours per week, depending on the industry.

## **Social security and taxes**

There are social insurance schemes in Germany. This supports people in the event of illness or unemployment. These include

- Health insurance
- pension insurance

- Unemployment insurance
- nursing care insurance

If you work here, you automatically pay for these insurances. Part of your money is deducted for this. Taxes must also be paid. Every employee receives a tax identification number from the tax office for this purpose.

## Culture and working life

There are often clear rules and hierarchies in the workplace. It is important to be punctual and stick to agreements. This makes it possible to work well together. Respect and polite behaviour are a matter of course.

## Conclusion

Working in Germany offers many opportunities for a good future.

Work is important:

- to earn your own money
- for good integration
- to improve your language skills

## Finding work - counselling and help

There are various organisations in Cottbus that can help you find a job.




💡 If you are in the asylum process and have a permit or tolerated stay, the [employment agency](#) will help you.

💡 If you have a residence permit, the [Cottbus Job Centre](#) is usually responsible for you.

They will help you find work and training depending on your individual needs. It will also support you in obtaining career counselling or the recognition of certificates. Further information on counselling and placement in the labour market can be found here:

- [KAUSA-Landesstelle Brandenburg](#)
- [BIWAQ](#)

There are other job portals on the internet where you can search for vacancies:

-  [Jobsuche bei der Agentur für Arbeit](#)
-  [StepStone](#)
-  [Jobware](#)

## Internship

An internship is a particularly good way of gaining initial experience and entering the world of work. This involves working in a company or organisation for a limited period of time.

An internship offers the opportunity to familiarise yourself with a particular profession, acquire new knowledge or gain a practical insight into a specific area of work. It is therefore particularly suitable for career starters after leaving school or university, or for people looking for a career change.

You sometimes receive money during an internship. However, this is not always the case and depends on

- the type
- the duration
- the sector of the internship.

Just as with a regular job, interns are always entitled to a reference and should request one promptly if required.

### **What needs to be considered?**

Your residence permit determines whether you are eligible for an internship or whether you need to obtain prior authorisation from the authorities. It is essential that you first speak to your advisor at the [employment agency](#) or [job centre in Cottbus](#) and ask the [foreigners authority](#) before you start.

💡 If you receive cash benefits from the job centre, you must register your internship. An internship that has not been registered and approved is generally considered "illegal work" and is a criminal offence. This applies regardless of whether remuneration is paid. If remuneration is paid, it must be declared to the local job centre as income.

Pay particular attention to the duration of an unpaid internship. If the duration is long, you may suspect that the internship no longer serves to determine aptitude or acquire new skills under the guidance of a skilled worker, but only to provide free labour. This makes it immoral (so-called sham internship).

Please note that there is no accident insurance for unregistered internships.

### **Where can you find an internship?**

- Ask at a company of your choice
- Ask at the employment agency or job centre
  - [Internship Lausitz](#) (for school pupils)
  - [Employment agency](#)
  - [IHK internship exchange](#)

### **Recognition of certificates**

#### **Recognition of foreign educational qualifications**

School reports are very important in Germany. You get them at school. Or at university. Or at work. At work, they are called job references. Certificates are proof of what you have already learnt and achieved. Certificates are the decisive prerequisite for getting a job. You also need a certificate to be admitted to a school or university.

Have you already obtained certificates abroad? Have these certificates recognised in Germany. They will check what you are qualified for in Germany based on your certificates. Your achievements will be translated, so to speak. It may be that you no longer have your certificates. In this case, you can try to have your work experience and professional skills recognised through tests.

## Specialist advice centre for recognition

The [Cottbus State Education Authority](#) is responsible for recognising school-leaving certificates and vocational qualifications acquired at school.

The [IHK Projektgesellschaft mbH Ostbrandenburg](#) offers recognition and qualification counselling for vocational qualifications. You can make an appointment there and get advice.

## Study and science

If you wish to study or work in science, please contact the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg to have your certificates recognised. The [International Relations Office](#) there can advise you on the options available to you.

## Official certification of certificates

You have a document. For example, a certificate. The authorities want to know whether the document is genuine. To do this, you must have it officially notarised. This is also important for enrolment at a university. All copies of certificates must be officially notarised.

You can find more information [on this page](#).

## Attention!

Foreign documents, certificates or professional qualifications can only be notarised if they are accompanied by a translation in German. The translation must be provided by an officially recognised translator in Germany.

## Immigration of skilled labour

### The basics of skilled labour immigration

There is a law in Germany. The law is intended to make it easier for skilled workers to come to Germany. The skilled workers either have a vocational qualification or a university degree. The law is called § 18a+b AufenthG. This allows skilled workers to obtain a residence permit for Germany. With this residence permit, they can work in Germany in any qualified occupation.

💡 Would you like to obtain an [EU Blue Card](#)? Then your new profession must match your qualifications. This means that you can only work in a profession that you have learnt.

🌐 You can also find this and further information on the [Make it in Germany](#) page

🌐 You can also take a [quick test](#) of your options here!

## For professionals

**💡 Definition of specialist:** Do you have a university degree? Or have you completed vocational training? Did your training last at least two years? Does it qualify you for a profession? Then you are a skilled worker. Do you want to be officially recognised as a skilled worker? Then you must apply for this. Your qualifications must be recognised by the competent authority in Germany.

## Job search

### Entering the labour market:

Entering the labour market is made easier: As a skilled worker, you must provide three things. You need an employment contract. You must have a concrete job offer. And you need a qualification that is recognised in Germany. It is no longer checked whether there is a German person for the job. The Federal Employment Agency will continue to check the working conditions.

### Skilled workers with a university degree:

Skilled workers with a university degree can work in any qualified profession. This means that skilled workers must work in a profession that requires training/studies. For the EU Blue Card, you need a job that corresponds to your qualifications.

### Skilled workers with vocational training:

Skilled workers with vocational training can work in any qualified profession. This means that skilled workers must work in an occupation that requires training/studies.

## Rules for entry

### Entry to seek employment:

Skilled workers with vocational training can enter Germany. You can enter the country to find a job here. You will receive a residence permit for up to six months. Their qualifications must be recognised in Germany. You must be able to support yourself during your stay. You must already speak German well enough to be able to work in your profession. German language skills at level B1 or better are normally required. Would you like to try out a job first? Then you can work up to 10 hours a week. This way you can find out whether you like the job. Your employer can get to know you. Skilled workers with a recognised academic qualification can also do trial work. You can find more information at [Make-It-In-Germany](#).

### Stay for qualification measures:

You will be given more opportunities so that you can gain qualifications in Germany. Have you tried to have your qualifications recognised? The authorities have identified problems? Your qualifications do not match the German ones? Then you need sufficient knowledge of German. This is knowledge at level A2. Then you can apply for a visa. With this visa you can come to Germany for 18 months. You can gain qualifications during this time. The authorities can extend the visa once for 6 months. After that, you can apply for another visa. For example, for an apprenticeship. Or for studying. Or for work. You can find more information at [Make-It-In-Germany](#).

### Settlement permit for skilled workers from abroad:

Foreign skilled workers can obtain a settlement permit in Germany after just four years. You can find more information [here](#). There are sometimes different conditions for skilled workers

and EU Blue Card holders.

## For employers

The Federal Employment Agency supports employers in their search for labour and skilled workers from abroad. The service for employers is well networked in Europe. You can also find out here what you need to bear in mind when recruiting.

Here you will find [important information...](#)


## Arbeitgeber-Service

 [Bahnhofstraße 10, 03046 Cottbus - Chósebus](#)

 [+49 \(0\) 8004555520](#)

 <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/unternehmen/fachkra...>

If you have any questions about work permits, please contact the Foreigners' Registration Office.

 [Karl-Marx-Straße 67, 03044 Cottbus](#)

 [@auslaenderbehoerde@cottbus.de](mailto:auslaenderbehoerde@cottbus.de)

 [+493556123390](#)

 <https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschäfts...>

## EU Blue Card

The EU Blue Card is a residence permit for people with a university degree who do not come from the EU and wish to work in Germany. This requires a university degree and an employment contract with a certain minimum salary.

- For bottleneck professions and career starters: at least €45,934.20 per year (2026).
- For all other professions: at least €50,700 per year (2026).

## Who can get the EU Blue Card?

### Do you have a recognised university degree?

If you studied abroad, the degree must be recognised or equivalent in Germany.

**Tip:** You can check whether your degree is recognised on the "[anabin](#)" website.

### You don't have a university degree?

Then you need to have completed at least three years of training after leaving school. This must correspond to at least level 6 of the German or European education system - for example as a master craftsman/master craftswoman or educator.

### Employment contract or binding job offer in Germany:

- The job must last at least six months.
- The work must match your degree.
- The salary must be at least €50,700 per year (2026).

For shortage occupations, a salary of €45,934.20 (2026) is also sufficient if the Federal Employment Agency agrees. You can find a list of these professions [here](#).

### **Special case for career starters**

If your degree is less than three years old, you can obtain the EU Blue Card with a salary of €45,934.20 (2026) - regardless of the profession. Here, too, you need the approval of the Federal Employment Agency.

### **Special case of IT specialists without training**

Are you an IT specialist or IT manager without an official qualification? Then you can still get the EU Blue Card if:

- You have a concrete job offer in IT in Germany (at least 6 months).
- You earn at least €45,934.20 per year (2026).
- you have had at least 3 years of high-level professional experience in IT in the last 7 years.

### **Prospects with the EU Blue Card**

The EU Blue Card is valid for as long as your employment contract plus three months - for a maximum of four years. It can be extended. After 27 months of working in Germany, you can apply for a permanent residence permit. If you speak German at level B1, this is possible after just 21 months. You can leave Germany with your family members for up to 12 months without your EU Blue Card becoming invalid. After one year with the EU Blue Card, you can also move to another EU country (except Ireland and Denmark) and apply for a new EU Blue Card there within one month.

### **Do you have an EU Blue Card and want to change jobs?**

That is possible. You can work for a new employer with your valid Blue Card. Important: If you change jobs in the first year, you must inform the Immigration Office. The authority will then check whether you still fulfil all the conditions for the new job. If not, you may receive a different residence permit.

### **For training and studies**

#### **Entering the country to find a training place:**

Would you like to do an apprenticeship? Then you can enter the country to look for a training place. You need German language skills at level B2. You also need a school-leaving certificate that authorises you to enter higher education. You must be no more than 25 years old. You must be able to pay for your own living costs in Germany.

### **Extended transfer options for international students in Germany**

International students can obtain a new residence permit before they have completed their studies. For example: You want to learn a profession after your studies. You will then receive a residence permit for this. The new law for skilled workers makes this change easier: Are you a student? And you want a job? Then you can take a job. To do so, you must fulfil special conditions. The Federal Employment Agency sets these conditions. Once everything has been checked, you will receive a new residence permit.

## Settlement permit for graduates of a training programme in Germany

Under the new law, foreign graduates who have completed vocational training in Germany can obtain a settlement permit after just two years, just like university graduates.

💡 **German language course** to prepare for training: Do you have the right visa? Then you can attend a German course. This German course will prepare you for your training.

## Independence

### Who can become self-employed in Germany?

You can be gainfully employed in Germany, unless:

- You are still in an asylum recognition procedure.
- Your application for asylum has been rejected.
- You have a tolerated stay permit.

Otherwise you have the option of setting up a company in Germany.

### Further information is available in several languages:

-  [Existenzgründerportal](#)
-  [Homepage of the IQ Centre for Migrant Economy](#)

## Residence status

### EU citizens and persons with a residence permit

💡 You come from the **EU**? Do you now live in Germany? And you would like to work? Then you can do so without any problems. As an EU citizen, anyone can work in Germany. Without restrictions.

💡 If you have been **recognised** by the BAMF as a person entitled to asylum, refugee status or subsidiary protection, the foreigners authority will issue you with a residence permit. This entitles you to pursue any gainful employment and thus grants you full access to the labour market.

📍 [Karl-Marx-Straße 67, 03044 Cottbus](#)

@[auslaenderbehoerde@cottbus.de](mailto:auslaenderbehoerde@cottbus.de)

☎ [+493556123390](tel:+493556123390)

<https://cottbus.de/verwaltungsstruktur/geschäfts...>

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## Asylum seekers or tolerated persons

Have you fled to Germany? Then your residence status is important. It determines whether you are allowed to work. We explain the differences below. You will also find the relevant advice centres below.

### Asylum seekers with proof of arrival or authorisation to stay:

Would you like to work? The foreigners authority can authorise you to do so. You must submit an application there. The Federal Employment Agency (BA) must give its approval. You must observe the following rules so that the authority can make a decision.

📍 Are you living in an initial reception centre (EAE)? Then the following applies:

- 9 months work ban (6 months if you have underage children) from the date of entry
- After that you are normally allowed to work. Submit an application to your foreigners authority.
- The BA will then check the working conditions.

💡 Has your asylum application been rejected as manifestly unfounded or inadmissible? Then you are not allowed to work.

📍 Are you living in your own home or with family? Then the following applies:

- 3 months work ban from entry
- After that you are normally allowed to work. Submit an application to your foreigners authority.
- The BA will then check the working conditions.

### Asylum seekers from safe countries of origin

Do you come from a safe country of origin? These include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Ghana, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Senegal and Serbia. Did you apply for asylum after 31 August 2015? Then you are not allowed to work.

### Tolerated people

The [foreigners authority](#) always decides whether you are allowed to work. You must therefore submit an application to the foreigners authority. The foreigners authority can impose a general work ban on you. There are certain rules that you must observe.

💡 Persons with a tolerated stay permit due to unclear identity (§ 60b AufenthG) are always prohibited from working.

📍 Are you living in an initial reception centre (EAE)? Then the following applies:

- 6 months work ban

- Your tolerated stay has already lasted 6 months? Then the foreigners authority will decide whether you are allowed to work. Submit an application to your authority.
- The Federal Employment Agency will check your working conditions.

📍 Are you living in your own home or with family? Then the following applies:

- 3 months work ban
- Has your tolerated stay permit already lasted 3 months? Then the foreigners authority will decide whether you are allowed to work. Submit an application to your authority.
- The Federal Employment Agency will check the working conditions.

## Important!

💡 Different rules apply to [self-employment](#)! The prerequisite for the above applications is ALWAYS a concrete job offer.

## Labour contract

Anyone who starts a job is given an employment contract. This regulates the most important conditions of your work. It states when you work. How much holiday you get. It states how much money you will receive. Both sides - employee and employer - must honour these agreements. The contract becomes legally binding when you sign it. Only sign it once you have fully understood the content.

## Types of contract:

### Open-ended employment contract

There is usually a probationary period of three or six months. During this period, an employment relationship can be terminated within two weeks. The employer can terminate the contract. You as an employee can also give notice. At the end of the probationary period, a permanent employment relationship begins. This has longer protection against dismissal. Working hours are normally a maximum of 40 hours per week.

### Fixed-term employment contract

The employment relationship ends at the agreed time without the need for notice of termination.

### Mini job

The maximum earnings per month are € 556 and are tax-free.

## Labour law:

There are many laws in Germany that regulate and safeguard the rights of employees. These include, for example

- Regulation of working hours
- minimum wage
- holiday entitlement
- Protection against dismissal
- Company representation of interests (works council)

- Regulation of the work of trade unions
- and some more

## **Taxes and social security contributions:**

Every employee in Germany pays a portion of their wages in taxes. The federal, state and local authorities use this to finance their expenditure. Employers, in turn, are obliged to pay social security contributions for their employees. These social security contributions finance the social security system in Germany. The system guarantees that you will receive money from the state if you are out of work.

## **Tax identification number:**

The tax ID is an 11-digit number and is used for income tax purposes. The number is valid for your entire life. The authorities can always identify you with this number. Your place of work requires this number. You do not have this number in your documents? You can obtain it in person from the registration office. Or at the [Federal Central Tax Office](#).

## **National insurance number:**

You need a national insurance number for a job. You can obtain this from your health insurance company (e.g. AOK, DAK).

## **Illegal work:**

You have a job that is paid. But this work is not registered with the tax office and health insurance fund. You therefore do not pay taxes and social security contributions. This is **illegal**. You could face fines and imprisonment! Do you receive social benefits or unemployment benefit? But you are still working? You haven't told the social welfare office, the employment agency or the job centre? That is also **illegal**. You are wrongly receiving state benefits even though you are in paid work.

## **Application and job interviews**

Would you like to start an apprenticeship or work in Germany? Then you must apply in writing. Many companies publish job adverts. Either in the newspaper or on the Internet. The company is therefore looking for new employees. The job advert states what kind of work or training is involved. It also states what expectations the company has of the new employee. You will find information on where and how to apply.

Have you been invited to an interview? Then the company is interested in you. You can introduce yourself at the interview. Please allow enough time for the journey to the appointment. Make sure you arrive on time for the appointment. It is best to prepare in detail for the interview beforehand. You can also gather important information about the company. Visit the website and read through the company's history. Find out about the products or services. Do you want to show your interest in the job? Then ask questions during the appointment. This will show that you have done your research. You show that you are motivated.

## **An application usually consists of three parts:**

**Cover letter:** In your personal cover letter, you briefly introduce yourself. You explain why you are suitable for the vacancy. For example, describe what experience you have already gained in your home country. Find out more about the company and describe why you would like to work there. Your cover letter should fit on one page. Sign your cover letter. There are many templates and aids on the Internet. It is important that you do not simply copy and paste. Your cover letter must suit you and the position.

**Curriculum vitae:** The CV lists all your experience. It is structured like a large table. Write from when to when you worked at which company. Write where you completed your training or studies. Write where you went to school and what school-leaving qualification you obtained. You don't have to include a photo in your CV, but many companies like it if you do. You can have your CV created on the [Europass website](#). The site is available in many languages. You enter your details. You write down your experience. At the end you will receive a CV. CVs look different in every country. It is important that you use the format that is used in Germany. You can select this at Europass.

**Certificates and supporting documents:** It is important that you send copies of your certificates (no originals!). Certificates are your school leaving certificate, your degree and work references from the past. The certificates should be in German or English, otherwise they should be translated. You should also send proof of internships, further training relevant to the job or certificates from your German course.

💡 The job advert will tell you how to apply. Please read it carefully.

**In writing:** Buy a nice application folder and put your cover letter, CV and certificates in it. Then send the application to the address given in the job advert.

**E-mail:** Many applications are now sent by e-mail. Combine your cover letter, CV and references into one PDF file and send this as an attachment to the e-mail. In the e-mail, write a short text addressed to the person who will receive your application.

**Online:** Large companies have their own website where you have to apply. You have to register there with your e-mail address and can then send your application there.

🌐 You can find helpful tips for your application at [Planet Beruf](#).

🌐 [Europass](#) is a multilingual online portal (over 20 languages) that helps migrants to visualise their skills and knowledge. It offers a free online tool to create a language passport or a CV (see above). You can also find important tips for good job applications on Europass.

🌐 At [Bewerbung.net](#), [StepStone](#) and [Lebenslauf2go](#) you can have a CV and cover letter created free of charge. In some cases, you can also import your data from Xing or LinkedIn. It is also possible to write your own texts in the template or import files.

🌐 You can find information and templates for cover letters at [Bewerbung2go](#), [BewerbungsWissen](#), [Karrierebibel](#)

## Language exercises

🌐 On the [VHS learning portal "I want to learn German"](#) and the [Goethe-Institut](#) website ["Deutsch für dich"](#) you will find exercises on the subject of job applications and the world of work in general. This will help you learn about the world of work and improve your German language skills.

## Volunteering

People who work unpaid for other people or for a cause are volunteers. These people volunteer in their free time, without pay. This is also known as honorary work. Volunteering holds society together. It creates trust and solidarity. It strengthens the sense of responsibility towards society.

Volunteering in the city of Cottbus is a WIN-WIN situation. Volunteering can achieve great things. It offers fulfilment for the helping hand and creates a benefit for others from this help.

These are opportunities to get involved:

- Help older people
- Supporting people with disabilities
- Helping neighbours
- Being active in nature conservation
- Help other refugees as language mediators
- work in a sports club
- help at the animal shelter
- and many other things.

### Would you like to volunteer? Here are some opportunities:

- The [volunteer initiative of the city of Cottbus](#) (Ehrenamtsinitiative Cottbus) is always looking for new everyday heroes for various areas.
- The [Cottbus Volunteer Agency](#) (Freiwilligenagentur Cottbus) has a [database of volunteering opportunities](#). (Angebotsdatenbank)
- Volunteering with the [Maltesern in Cottbus](#) can be requested [via the form](#) (Formular).
- [Wir sind Paten](#) has an [office in Cottbus](#) and brings together people who need help and want to help.
- The [Cottbus refugee network](#) (Geflüchten Netzwerk Cottbus) is committed to helping refugees and migrants in and around Cottbus.

### Other opportunities include Freiwillige Soziale Jahr (FSJ) and Bundesfreiwilligendienst (BFD).

The FSJ and the "BFD u27" are educational and orientation years for young people between the ages of 16 and 27. Young people should already have finished school. You can get socially involved and do something for other people and society. The "BFD 27+" programme also offers new perspectives.

Anyone interested in [volunteering](#) can contact Caritas . The Caritas provides advice and also arranges placements.

You can help. Volunteering is fun.

## Health

## General information on health

Do you have an acute illness? Are you in pain? In Germany you are entitled to basic medical care. Some vaccinations are recommended by the state. You can get these vaccinations. Some examinations are recommended. They are intended to prevent illness. You can have these examinations. Some examinations are very important for your health. You can get these free of charge from doctors. See a doctor if:

- you are acutely ill or in pain
- you are pregnant
- you are chronically ill. You have diabetes, epilepsy or mental illness, for example.

💡 You still have medication? Alternatively, do you have the package leaflet for your medication? Bring these with you to your doctor's appointment.

Have you already been to a doctor or hospital because of the illness? Please also bring the findings with you.

👤 Do you have a residence permit? Then you must register with a regular health insurance company. There you will receive an insurance card. This entitles you to services from doctors. Just like all citizens in Germany.

## Health insurance

Insurance is compulsory in Germany (Versicherungspflicht). Do you have a residence permit (Aufenthaltstitel)? Then you must register with a regular health insurance company (Krankenkasse). There you will receive an insurance card. This will give you the same benefits as everyone else in Germany.

Do you have an acute illness abroad? You will also receive basic care in many foreign doctors' surgeries and hospitals. You can obtain information from your health insurance company.

You can choose a general practitioner (family doctor) of your choice. Do you need treatment from a specialist? Then you will receive a referral from your family doctor.


💡 Are you going to a hospital? Are you seeing a therapist? Are you seeing a doctor? Then take your insurance card with you.


## Versichertenkarte

The insurance card is very important. You can use it to go to the doctor. The doctor's work is paid for by your insurance. The card is also your insurance throughout Europe. It is called the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) (European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)). You can use it to see a doctor in any EU country.

💡 Are you travelling to a country outside the EU? Then you should take out additional insurance. Insurance for abroad protects you while travelling. It's called international health insurance.

Would you like to understand the German healthcare system? You can find information on this [website](#) . This information is available in German and English.

 **Here you will find** all the important information about health insurance (read chapter 1). The guide explains the German healthcare system. It is also available in [other languages](#): The "Guide to Health for Asylum Seekers in Germany" and the "Guide to Health for All" are important.

 As a refugee or asylum seeker, you are not yet covered by health insurance. You need a health insurance voucher. You can use this to go to the doctor. You can obtain these licences from the [Office for Social Affairs and Participation](#).

## Visit to the doctor

### General practitioners and specialists

Are you ill? Go to your family doctor. You can choose your own family doctor. General practitioners set their own opening hours. Do you want your family doctor to help you? Make an appointment.

General practitioners carry out important examinations. They are your first point of contact in the event of illness. They decide on the medication you need. They decide whether a specialist examination is necessary.

If necessary, your GP will refer you to a specialist. They can carry out specialised examinations.


### Appointment service of 116117

Do you have statutory health insurance and are looking for an appointment with a registered doctor or psychotherapist? With the [116117 appointment service](#), you can make appointments quickly and easily around the clock.

### CTK Polyclinic (MVZ)

The CTK Polyclinic is one of the largest medical care centres in Lusatia. With over 40 practices in 17 different specialities and around 180 employees at 7 different locations, patients from Lusatia receive the highest level of care in the outpatient sector. [You can find](#) an overview of the practices [here](#).

**If the practice is closed, the medical on-call service (  [116117](#)) can help .**

 You can search for emergency practices [here](#). These are doctors who can also help outside opening hours.

### Paediatricians and paediatricians


Paediatricians examine children. There are prescribed examinations for children. These are important for your child's health. They are intended to prevent illnesses in children. Children must also be immunised. Vaccinations are important. They prevent children from getting certain diseases. The prescribed examinations are called "U examinations" ("U-Untersuchungen"). They always take place at a certain time. They are free of charge. Please consult a paediatrician for more information.

### Dentists and dentists


If you have a toothache, go to a dentist.

## Gynaecologists (gynaecologists)

It is important that a gynaecologist examines women regularly. This enables doctors to recognise diseases early enough. This is called a check-up. You can also discuss the topic of contraception there.

 Are you looking for asylum? Are you ill? Do you need to see a doctor? Then you will receive a treatment voucher from the [Social welfare office](#). With this, the doctor's visit is free of charge for you.

 [Cottbus - Office for Social Affairs and Participation - Social counselling for refugees and asylum seekers](#)


 Do you need an operation? Is it not an emergency? Then the [Social welfare office](#) must authorise your stay in hospital. Apply for authorisation before you go to the hospital. Your doctor will issue you with a medical certificate. The [Social welfare office](#) will only cover medically necessary operations.

## Medicines and pharmacies

Do you need medication? Then go to your doctor. They will give you a prescription (Rezept). You can get your medication with this prescription at any pharmacy. Pharmacies are usually open from Monday to Saturday. The opening hours vary depending on the pharmacy. Do you urgently need medication at night or at the weekend? Every pharmacy has a sign with the name and address of the pharmacy with an emergency service. You can also find this information on the Internet.

Search for pharmacy emergency services

 [www.aponet.de](http://www.aponet.de)

 As an asylum seeker, you will receive many medications without a co-payment. You should therefore ask your doctor about this. If you do not have a prescription, you will always have to pay for the medication.

[On-call service](#)

If you need medication urgently at night or at the weekend, you will find a sign at every pharmacy with the name and address of the pharmacy that is open for the emergency service. You can also find this information on [the Internet](#).

## Emergency numbers - SOS

An emergency is an acute threat to health. Do you have an emergency? Then call an emergency doctor.

## Emergency contacts

Police  [110](#)

Fire brigade, rescue service  [112](#)

Ambulance, emergency doctor  [112](#)

💡 The emergency numbers on mobile phones always work. Don't have any credit on your mobile phone? The number still works!

## Important information for an emergency call

- **Who is** calling (your name)?
- **Where** has something happened (address)?
- **What** has happened?
- **How many** injured or sick people are there?
- **What kind** of illnesses or injuries are there?
- **Wait** for further questions!

Remain calm. Speak slowly and clearly. Then you will be better understood. Do not end the conversation. Has all the important information been communicated? The emergency call centre / police will end the call.

💡 Are you going to hospital? Don't forget your ID or proof of arrival. Are you registered with a health insurance company? Bring your insurance card with you.

👤 As an asylum seeker, you may only go to hospital in an emergency without a treatment voucher. You must show your proof of arrival at the hospital. The hospital will then recognise that you are seeking asylum. The costs will be paid by the social welfare office.

## Counselling centres and offers of help

The [Cottbus health department](#) advises all people on health issues.

### Child and youth health service

The child and youth health service is for children and young people. For example, you can find out about check-ups and immunisations there. Mothers and fathers can get help there if their child is ill or needs support.

🌐 [Child and youth health service](#)

### Advice centre for oncology patients, chronically ill and disabled people

If you or someone in your family is permanently ill, the staff at the advice centre can help. They provide support in filling out forms, with care services and health insurance companies. If necessary, the staff will also come to your home.

🌐 [Counselling centre for chronically ill and disabled people](#)

### Social psychiatric service

The Social Psychiatric Service can help with mental health problems or in a crisis. Social workers work there. They help you fill out forms and accompany you to the authorities.

🌐 [Social psychiatric service](#)

## Violence against women helpline



The violence against women helpline advises women affected throughout Germany.

 [08000116016](tel:08000116016)

 [www.hilfetelefon.de](http://www.hilfetelefon.de)

The counsellors provide advice on all forms of violence against women. Do you need help where you live? Then the counsellors will refer you to suitable local facilities. Online counselling is also possible via the website. The counselling sessions are confidential. Would you like to remain anonymous? That's no problem. You don't have to give any personal details on the phone. This also applies on the website. If you have hearing difficulties, you can book an interpreting service via the website. This costs you nothing. The conversation with the counsellors will be translated into German sign language. It can also be translated into written language. Counselling is possible in many languages via interpreters:

- Albanian
- Arabic
- Bulgarian
- Chinese
- Chinese
- French, Italian
- Italian
- Farsi/Dari
- Kurmanji
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Russian
- Spanish
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Vietnamese

## Caritas psychosocial centre

Psychosocial centre for refugees and migrants


The Caritas Psychosocial Centre is a counselling centre for refugees and migrants. Children, young people and adults can get help here. If you are mentally unwell, you can contact the centre. We offer counselling in our office, by telephone, [online](#) and in the districts around Cottbus on the following topics:

- Assessment, therapies, social counselling
- Crisis plans


- Self-help groups
- Trauma therapy
- Acute groups
- Further treatment
- Statements on asylum and residence law and social law issues
- Guidance in everyday life and living conditions


Please feel free to contact us:

## **Herr Jens Leuner | Projektleitung Psychosoziales Zentrum der Caritas**

 [Südstraße 1, 03046 Cottbus](#)

 [@jens.leuner@caritas-goerlitz.de](mailto:jens.leuner@caritas-goerlitz.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 35538003770](tel:+49(0)35538003770)

 [+49 \(0\) 15257281069](tel:+49(0)15257281069)

 <https://www.caritas.de/onlineberatung>

### **AIDS-Hilfe Lausitz e.V.**

Contact, counselling and testing

You can reach us

- in person on site (please make an appointment)
- by phone | +49 355 29065385
- by e-mail | [beratung@aids-hilfe-lausitz.de](mailto:beratung@aids-hilfe-lausitz.de)
- by video conference

For personal (also anonymous) counselling and testing for HIV, syphilis and hepatitis C, we will be happy to arrange an appointment with you.

There is also an "AIDS-Hilfe meeting point" for people with and without HIV/Aids. The doors of AIDS-Hilfe Lausitz e.V. in the Regenbogenkombinat Cottbus are open every last Wednesday of the month from 5.00 to 7.30 pm. The meeting point enables contact, exchange and information on everyday issues. There is also the possibility of anonymous counselling.

## **Care**

### **When is a person in need of care?**

If a person can no longer manage their everyday life independently and needs help, they are in need of care. There can be various reasons for this. Reasons include old age, illness or even an accident.

### **The following questions are often asked by those affected or their relatives:**

- Where do I apply for a care level?
- Which outpatient care service is suitable for me?
- Who offers home care courses?

- What aids are available?
- Who will look after me if my relatives want to go on holiday?
- Where can I find day and short-term care?
- What do I have to do if I want to move into a care home?
- What does the care insurance fund pay? Who pays the rest?

## Pflege und Sozialberatung

 [Am Turm 14, 03046 Cottbus](#)

 [@cottbus@pflugestuetzpunkte-brandenburg.de](mailto:cottbus@pflugestuetzpunkte-brandenburg.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556122511](tel:+49(0)3556122511)

 [+49 \(0\) 3556122514](tel:+49(0)3556122514)

 <https://cottbus.de/verwaltung/gb-1/dz-1-1/pfleges...>

With the [ALINA app](#), you have all the important information about care at your fingertips at all times - simple, free and up-to-date.

Now with new regional offers for Elbe-Elster, Spree-Neiße, Dahme-Spreewald and Cottbus!

Here you will find the download link to the app.

[Everyday information APP](#) on care topics.

Social issues

Severe disability

Dementia


Housing

### **Crisis hotline, telephone counselling and online advice for family carers**


Caring for someone in need of care is a huge task. It can push you to the limit. In difficult situations, you can contact the following organisations:

The Federal Ministry of Family Affairs has a carers' hotline. Here you will find counselling services. You will also find information on financial support and legal issues.

 03020179131

 [info@wege-zur-pflege.de](mailto:info@wege-zur-pflege.de)

 [www.wege-zur-pflege.de](http://www.wege-zur-pflege.de)

 Availability: Monday to Thursday: 09:00 - 18:00

### **Psychological support for relatives: Internet portal**

Do you need information or psychological support when caring for a relative? You can get help here.



[www.pfle.gen-und-leben.de](http://www.pfle.gen-und-leben.de)

## **Violence in care and crisis hotline: Internet portal**


 [www.pfle-ge-gewalt.de](http://www.pfle-ge-gewalt.de)

## **Counselling and care for dementia**

Dementia mainly affects people in old age. The symptoms are varied. Cognitive, emotional and social abilities can be affected. The most common and best-known form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease. The disease can be a stressful situation for both sufferers and their relatives.

You can find information about dementia here:

### **German Alzheimer Society e.V.**

 [www.deutsche-alzheimer.de](http://www.deutsche-alzheimer.de)

### **Alzheimer Forum**

 [www.alzheimerforum.de](http://www.alzheimerforum.de)

### **German Dementia Care Expert Group e. V.**

 [www.demenz-ded.de](http://www.demenz-ded.de)

### **Internet platform Wegweiser Demenz**


 [www.wegweiser-demenz.de](http://www.wegweiser-demenz.de)

## **People with disabilities**

People with disabilities are people who have physical, mental or psychological limitations. These limitations can affect movement, speech or learning, for example. People with disabilities and their families often have a hard time. They need special help in everyday life.

### **Early intervention**

Early intervention is for children with a disability. And for children who could develop a disability. Early intervention covers all areas of development. For example, it helps children who develop more slowly than other children in certain areas. Examples of early intervention are Speech support, vision school or occupational therapy. Early intervention is available for children from birth to school age. Early support is important. It helps to avoid or minimise disabilities.

 Further information can be found on the [website](#) of the city of Cottbus.

## **Counselling**

People with disabilities have physical, mental or psychological limitations. This can make it difficult to move, speak or learn, for example. They and their families often have difficulties in everyday life. They need special help. Some people cannot move around easily and need barrier-free homes. Others need special medical treatment. Some people need a special workplace.

There is a lot of help available in Germany and in Cottbus. They make life easier. But many people don't know about them. Or they find the help too complicated. That's why there are counselling centres in Cottbus. If you or someone in your family has a disability, you can go there. The counsellors will be happy to help you. Counselling is free and confidential.


Counselling centres in Cottbus:


### [EUTB - Supplementary independent participation counselling](#)

#### Address

Johannes-Brahms-Straße 8  
03044 Cottbus  
Brandenburg

Contact: Contact

 Phone: 0355 5842034

 Fax: 0355 5842050

 E-Mail: [EUTB.cottbus@malteser.org](mailto:EUTB.cottbus@malteser.org)

Appointments are possible by arrangement.

#### **Get going**

The association offers social services. These are services provided by professionals who help people. They solve social problems. The organisation also has facilities for people with mental illnesses and for people with disabilities.


 Tel. 0355 5832-20


 E-mail: [kontaktundberatungsstelle@machtlos-cottbus.de](mailto:kontaktundberatungsstelle@machtlos-cottbus.de)

 Further information can be found on the organisation's [website](#).

The **German Red Cross** Disability Centre

 **Contact person for outpatient assisted living is** Steffi Hassatzky

 Tel: 0355 / 24105

 Sandower Street 14  
03044 Cottbus

 [steffi.hassatzky@DRK-Cottbus.de](mailto:steffi.hassatzky@DRK-Cottbus.de)

#### **The disabled transport service**


Some cities in Brandenburg offer special transport services. The transport service makes it easier for people with a temporary or permanent disability to participate in social life. It helps to make everyday life as pleasant as possible.

 [Online services](#)

**The Johanniter transport service** takes people with limited mobility safely to their destination. Whether to the doctor, to work, to gymnastics or to meet friends. The transport service provides more mobility in everyday life.

 Contact [here](#)

#### **The "Perspective inclusive labour market 2.0" project in Brandenburg**

 Click here for the project [website](#).

#### **Further counselling services and current information**

The **Handicap International** association has an area called [Crossroads](#). It runs projects to provide better support for refugees with disabilities. Refugees with disabilities and their families can find lots of information on the website. There are [brochures](#) in nine languages. For example, a brochure entitled "The support system for people with disabilities". You can also get [counselling](#). The counselling is free of charge and available by telephone.

## Advisory board for people with disabilities

The advisory board helps disabled people to participate in life in the city. It consists of 11 members. There are also other people who support it in its work. The advisory board represents the interests of various disabled groups, for example

- People with multiple disabilities
- People with learning difficulties
- People who are deaf or hard of hearing
- People with physical disabilities
- Chronically ill people
- Blind and visually impaired people
- People with speech difficulties
- People with mental or psychological illnesses

The advisory board makes recommendations to politicians. It advises the administration. It helps to increase society's understanding of people with disabilities. It encourages disabled people to have their say. It works to ensure that places and information are accessible to everyone. And he checks whether laws and measures are being implemented correctly.

The contact to the commissioner is:

Dr Normen Franzke

☎0355 612-2017

☎0355 612-132017

 [Website](#)

[@behindertenbeauftragter@cottbus.de](mailto:@behindertenbeauftragter@cottbus.de)

## Electronic patient file (ePA)

From 15 January 2025, a new digital patient file called the electronic patient file (ePA) will be introduced in Germany. This file will store all important health data, such as what the doctor has found out about your health, what medication you are taking or what examinations you have had.

Everyone with statutory health insurance automatically receives this ePA. If you do not want this, you can object.

Doctors and patients can access health data quickly and easily via the ePA. But only people who are authorised to do so are allowed to see the data. This keeps the data secure.

How can insured persons refuse to set up an ePA? What deadlines apply?

If someone no longer wants to use the ePA at a later date, they can have it deleted. The aim is to enable doctors and patients to work together faster and better to improve health.

If someone wants to refuse the ePA, they must inform their health insurance company. If they do not do this, the EPR will be created automatically.

Important details about the EPC. What do you need to bear in mind?

Contents of the EPA:

All important information from your visits to the doctor is automatically included in the EPR if it is available in digital form. This means, for example, that findings or diagnoses that the doctor writes down are transferred to the EPR.

You can also upload information such as vital signs (e.g. your height or weight) or older medical documents to the ePA yourself.

From 2025, there will be an automatic overview of all the medication you are taking. This will later be supplemented by a special medication plan.

Access rights:

You can specify which doctors or hospitals are authorised to access your ePA. If you want to make changes, you can do this via the ePA app or contact the ombudsman's office of your health insurance company.

If your health card is read at a doctor's surgery or hospital, they will have temporary access to your ePA for 90 days unless you object.

Use and accessibility:

You can manage the ePA via a special app on your smartphone. Each statutory health insurance fund offers its own ePA app, which you can download free of charge from the App Store (for iOS) or the Google Play Store (for Android).

If you do not have a smartphone, you can get support from pharmacies or special centres to access your ePA.

Legal regulations:

The introduction of the ePA will initially begin in Hamburg and North Rhine-Westphalia. It will then be available throughout Germany from February 2025.

Privately insured persons can also use an ePA, although this depends on the insurance company in question.

Advantages:

The ePA facilitates communication between doctors, hospitals and other medical facilities. It gives you a better overview of your health data.

The ePA also increases the safety and accuracy of medication.

Challenges:

Not all documents, such as old paper medical reports, are automatically digitised. However, you can ask your health insurance provider whether they can take over digitisation.

There may be technical difficulties at the beginning because some doctors have to adapt their practice software.

Another problem is that there is no multilingual information, i.e. no translations into other languages.

The ePA is an important step towards digitalisation in the healthcare sector. It should improve medical care. It also provides a basis for research.

Would you like to find out more? You can find more information here:

[🔗 Questions and answers on the electronic patient file \(ePA\) by the KBV](#)

[🔗 Information from the consumer advice centre about the ePA](#)

## Addiction counselling

### Addiction counselling

Addicted? Addiction is stupid. Addiction is a disease. Addicts are not to blame for their addiction. And it's not a marginal problem. It has negative consequences. It needs to be dealt with properly. Who can help with this?

There are special counselling centres. They help people with addiction problems, for example with alcohol, cigarettes or drugs. They also provide support for addictive behaviour such as gambling. If necessary, addiction counselling staff can refer people to outpatient or inpatient therapy. Specialists are on hand to help. They come from fields such as social work, medicine, psychology or social education. Everything you say remains confidential. They help those affected and their families with questions about addiction. The services are free of charge.

### Addiction counselling Cottbus and Spree-Neiße

What does this centre offer?

- Here you will find information on the subject of addiction. Those affected and their relatives as well as multipliers can find support and counselling here.
- There is integrative counselling and treatment on the subject of addiction (substance-related and / or behaviour-related), which is carried out in individual and group discussions.
- Counselling takes place on site, on the phone or online.
- If necessary, the person concerned receives withdrawal therapy.
- Crisis interventions are initiated. You will find support at short notice and in a targeted manner in acute situations.
- They mediate, prepare and apply for addiction rehabilitation (outpatient/all-day and outpatient/inpatient/combined).
- This centre provides access to outpatient rehabilitation and outpatient addiction aftercare (individual and group therapy).
- If necessary, the person concerned can be referred to assisted living, transitional living and socio-therapeutic facilities.
- Psychological preparation for the MPU (medical-psychological examination) in individual and group sessions
- If necessary, you can be referred to other specialist centres and self-help services
- Preventive work is necessary. The centre offers training courses and seminars on the subject of addiction. Information and discussion groups in schools, companies and other institutions.
- The centre also cooperates with the self-help association SuchtBetreuung Cottbus e.V.

Address:

Sachsendorfer Str. 22  
03046 Cottbus, Ströbitz district

Phone: 0355 / 290 23 08 - 0

0355 / 290 23 08 - 8

On the website you will also find offers for therapy.

Email address: [suchtberatung.cb@tannenhof.de](mailto:suchtberatung.cb@tannenhof.de)

<https://www.tannenhof.de/suchthilfe/alle-einricht...>

### **Addiction counselling Caritas-Region Cottbus**

There for people with addiction problems. They support those affected and their relatives. If there are problems with:

- alcohol
- nicotine
- drugs
- medication
- Food/non-food
- everything that is addictive or related to it

then please do not hesitate.

Counselling goals

- Dealing with addiction
- Dealing with alcohol and drugs
- Ways to abstinence. Abstaining from consumption
- Ways to detoxification
- Inpatient and outpatient therapy
- Medical clarification
- Networking

Your contact person:

Alexander Lattig

Pascal Noack

Address:

Straße der Jugend 23

03046 Cottbus

+49 355 38003761

+49 355 38003746

Addiction group, Alexander Lattig

Südstraße 1

03046 Cottbus

every Wednesday 17:00 to 19:00

[suchtberatung.cottbus@caritas-goerlitz.de](mailto:suchtberatung.cottbus@caritas-goerlitz.de)

<https://www.caritas-goerlitz.de/angebote/sucht/su...>

## Pregnancy

### Pregnancy

#### Pregnancy

Are you having a baby?

Are you pregnant?

Take a pregnancy test!

Buy a pregnancy test at a pharmacy or drugstore.

Go to the gynaecologist:

The gynaecologist takes care of you and your child.



⇒ You can search for gynaecologists in Cottbus [here!](#)

You will receive a mum's passport:

The mother's passport contains the results of the examinations.

The mum's passport is important!

You must always take your Mutter-Pass with you to the gynaecologist.

The mum's passport is not an identity card.

Go for regular check-ups!

Health insurance

The health insurance fund pays for pregnancy examinations.

Go for regular check-ups!

Do you have any questions?

Ask your gynaecologist.

He will help you.

⇒ There is also a lot of information on the internet in many languages.

 Look under "[Health insurance](#)" here in the app.

Your health insurance will also pay for counselling from a midwife.

The midwife can come to your home.

Do you have questions about your pregnancy?

The midwife will help you.


Before the birth and after the baby is born.

How can the midwife help you?

⇒ Information about the work of midwives

You can use these pages to search for a midwife:

 [Midwives Association](#)

 [Search](#) and find a [midwife](#) - online


You urgently need a midwife, but you can't find one who has time for you and your baby?

 [You can get help here.](#)

Looking for more advice?


⇒ Have a look at "Who can help me? Advice on health and illness".


**Help phone "Pregnant and lots of questions":**  0800 4040020

 The "[Guide to maternity protection](#)" provides detailed information on important aspects of maternity protection.

### Recognition of paternity

Are you not married to the father of the child at the time of the birth? Then a legal acknowledgement of paternity is important. By recognising paternity, the father and child are legally related.


 The child's mother must agree to the acknowledgement of paternity.

 You should recognise paternity before the birth. However, you can also do this after the birth.

### Procedure: Recognition of paternity

**When?** Before the birth or after the birth of the child.

**Where?** At the youth welfare office, registry office, notary or local court.


 Please make an appointment with the chosen authority well in advance.

These documents are required:

Valid identity document (passport as an alternative). If the document does not show a residential address, please bring the registration certificate with you.

Birth certificates of the mother, father and child (if already born). Do you have a birth certificate that was not issued in Germany? Then the certificate must be translated into German.

### Further information

 [Familienplanung.de](#) is an **information service provided by the Federal Institute of Public Health (BIÖG)** on many important family planning topics. **The online portal** is aimed at women and men in different life situations. Depending on their interests, they can find their topics in five different topic channels: "Pregnancy and birth", "Contraception", "Desire to have children", "Pregnancy conflict" and "Counselling & help". The sixth channel, "Young and pregnant", is aimed specifically at teenagers and young adults.

More information **in many different languages** on the website:

 [www.zanzu.de](http://www.zanzu.de)

### Birth

#### Birth

You must register at a hospital in good time before the birth. Your gynaecologist or midwife can help you find a hospital. In Cottbus, the [MUL CT has a labour ward.](#)

You can view the delivery room before the birth. ⇒ [Delivery room consultation](#)

Think about who can take you to the hospital for the birth early on.  
In an emergency, call the emergency number for an ambulance: 112.

Midwives will assist you during the delivery. Doctors will give you medical help if it is necessary. Midwives will also help you after the birth. Ask at the clinic for a midwife for aftercare.

Do you want an anonymous and confidential birth? You can find more information [here](#).


### [Birth centres](#)

You can also have your baby in a birth centre. There, the birth is attended only by midwives. The care is often more personalised and individual than in a hospital. On the other hand, there is less medical care than in a hospital.

Birth in a birthing centre is covered by health insurance. The midwife is always available for you shortly before the due date ("on-call service"). Not all health insurance companies pay for this availability. You often have to pay part of it yourself.

### [Mondstein Birth Centre Cottbus](#)

 Bahnhofstraße 50 , 03046 Cottbus

 0176 /43370124

 @info@mondstein-cottbus.de

## **Pregnancy conflict counselling / abortion**

### **Termination of pregnancy and confidential birth**

In Germany, you have the right to terminate a pregnancy under certain conditions. A termination is only possible in the first twelve weeks of pregnancy. To do this, you must seek pregnancy conflict counselling. The termination may only be carried out if a doctor is present. After the first twelve weeks, an abortion is only possible in exceptional cases. For example, if your physical or mental health is at risk.

Pregnancy conflict counselling is free of charge. **It is anonymous on request.**  
During the **counselling** you will receive information about

- legal and social issues,
- options for support,
- the various forms of abortion.
- You will be put in touch with doctors who perform abortions.
- You will receive information about the costs that can arise from an abortion.

You will need a **counselling certificate** for an abortion . This will be issued to you by the pregnancy conflict counselling staff during the consultation.

You do not want to keep the child. But you don't want to abort it either. What can you do? You don't want to or can't keep your child? Then you can give it up for adoption after birth. The youth welfare office will then initially take your child into its care. Taking into care means: giving the child a place to live. And looking after the child. So that it has food and clothing.

And to live in safety. Once you have made the final decision in favour of adoption, the youth welfare office will look for a loving family. Your child can live there permanently.

You don't want anyone to know about your pregnancy? You still have the opportunity to give birth to your child with good medical care. You are not alone. There is the option of a so-called "confidential birth". With a "confidential birth", you can give birth to your child safely in a hospital. A midwife will accompany you. Apart from the counsellor, no one will know your name. The counsellor is not allowed to talk to anyone about you. You will therefore remain anonymous. However, you have the option of leaving a message for your child with the help of the pregnancy counsellor. This gives your child the chance to find out your name after 16 years. Apart from your child, nobody else has the right to do so.

🌐 On the [AWO website](#) you will find information on costs and cost coverage for counselling and abortion.

**Here you can find counselling centres and further information. The list is not exhaustive.**

💡 You can contact a local pregnancy counselling centre or **any clinic** for a personal consultation. They will know what to do.

[Counselling centres of the DRK in Cottbus:](#)

Pregnancy counselling - DRK KV Cottbus-Spree-Neiße-West e.V.

👤 Mrs Sylvia Neumann

👤 Mrs Teresa Richter

📍 Ostrower Damm 2  
03046 Cottbus

📧 pregnancy.counselling(at)drk-cottbus.de

☎ 0355 / 42 77 71

Here you can search for **local** pregnancy counselling centres throughout Germany:

🌐 [https:// www.familienplanung.de/schwangerschaftskonflikt/](https://www.familienplanung.de/schwangerschaftskonflikt/)

If you have questions about a possible termination of pregnancy, you can also contact the **help hotline** for pregnant women in need around the clock. **Counselling is free and anonymous.** The counsellors speak several languages. The helpline also provides support in other difficult situations during pregnancy.

☎ 08004040020

or

🌐 [Here](#) you will find an overview of recognised pregnancy conflict counselling centres and other pregnancy counselling centres **in the state of Brandenburg**

You can find out **more** about the various options for terminating a pregnancy in many different languages on the website:

🌐 [www.zanzu.de](http://www.zanzu.de)

On the website of Familienplanung.de you will find information on **confidential birth**:

<https://www.familienplanung.de/schwangerschaftsko...>

## Pregnancy counselling

Pregnancy changes your life. There may be many questions. Advice on pregnancy in Cottbus is available from these organisations:

### German Red Cross

#### Sylvia Neumann | DRK

[Ostrower Damm 2, 03046 Cottbus](#)

[@schwangerenberatung@drk-cottbus.de](mailto:schwangerenberatung@drk-cottbus.de)

[+49 \(0\) 355427771](tel:+490355427771)

<https://www.drk-cottbus.de/angebote/kinder-jugend...>

### Democratic Women's Association

[Am Turm 14, 03046 Cottbus](#)

[@schwangerschaft-beratung@dfb-brandenburg.de](mailto:schwangerschaft-beratung@dfb-brandenburg.de)

[+49 \(0\) 3554947991](tel:+4903554947991)

<https://www.familienplanung.de/beratung/beratungs...>

### Caritas Cottbus region

#### Schwangerschaftsberatung

[Straße der Jugend 23, 03046 Cottbus](#)

[@schwangerschaftsberatung.cottbus@caritas-goerlitz...](mailto:schwangerschaftsberatung.cottbus@caritas-goerlitz...)

[+49 \(0\) 35538003740](tel:+49035538003740)

<https://www.caritas.de/adressen/caritas-region-co...>

## SOS - Information for urgent help in emergency situations, crises and disasters

### Emergencies

An emergency is an acute danger to health. A fire is also an emergency.

You can call the police if you feel threatened. Or if you are in danger. Or if you are the victim of a criminal offence. Or if you observe a criminal offence or threat. You can also call the police in the event of an accident.

## Emergency numbers

- Police 110
- Fire brigade, rescue service 112
- Ambulance, emergency doctor 112

The emergency numbers are always available. No matter what time of day.

By the way: The emergency numbers on mobile phones always work, even if you have a prepaid card without credit.

## Important information for an emergency call

Who is calling (your name)?

Where has something happened (address)?

What has happened?

How many injured or sick people are there?

What kind of illnesses or injuries are there?

Wait for further questions!

Remain calm. Speak slowly and clearly so that you can be better understood. Do not end the call. The emergency call centre / police will end the call when all important information has been transmitted. If you are unable to speak, make yourself heard by knocking or making other noises and do not hang up for a while. The call can be traced.

## Medical on-call service 116 117

This is intended for patients who require urgent outpatient treatment outside of their GP's surgery hours, but who are not in a life-threatening situation. The 116 117 is therefore not an emergency number. The medical on-call service is the right contact if you have a high temperature at night or an acute stomach upset at the weekend, for example, when you would normally go to your GP.

## On-call dental service

Not every toothache is an emergency. Dental emergencies are accidental injuries to the teeth, mouth and jaw. The on-call service can be called from evening to morning. The contacts for the on-call service in Cottbus can be found [on this website](#).

## Emergency pharmacy

Medication is available at the pharmacy. Pharmacies have opening hours. There is always an emergency pharmacy outside opening hours. You can find out which pharmacy it is [on this website](#).

## Poison emergency number 030 - 19 240

The poison emergency call centre provides tips on first aid until the emergency services arrive or can give the all-clear for harmless substances. If nausea, cramps, vomiting, sweating, mental confusion, restlessness or drowsiness occur after contact with suspicious substances, you should

call 112 immediately.

## **The help hotline - counselling and help for women 116 016**

Available free of charge around the clock: The "Violence against women" helpline offers those affected the opportunity to receive anonymous, competent, safe and barrier-free counselling at any time. Qualified counsellors provide confidential support to those seeking help and, if necessary, refer them to local support services, such as a women's counselling centre or a women's shelter nearby. Accessibility and multilingualism ensure access for women with disabilities and little knowledge of German. The helpline is also available to relatives, friends and professionals for questions and information.

## **Energy crisis and power outage**

Sudden, serious events can occur. Is there a long and widespread power cut? What can I do? Where can I find protection and help? Where can I find information?

Cottbus has a disaster control lighthouse concept. The aim is to ensure that people can get help in an emergency.

There are 15 places in the city that are called "lighthouses". These are mostly gymnasiums. They have electricity and heat so that people can warm up for a short time.

In the lighthouses, you can bring your own food and heat it up. You can talk to other people. If you urgently need help, tell the people in the lighthouse. You can recognise them by their yellow safety waistcoats.

The power has been out for a while and your mobile phone is empty? Then you can charge it there.

## **How will I be warned?**

In Germany, there are various ways in which warnings are issued. The warnings are issued by the responsible authorities. The most important thing is to stay calm. Follow the instructions.

## **Warning apps**

[NINA](#) is the official warning app of the federal government. It sends important warning messages.

[KATWARN](#): This app warns with a push message.

Official weather warnings are available in the WarnWetter app.

## **Cell Broadcast**

Warnings are sent directly to mobile phones in a specific area. An extra app installed for this purpose is not necessary.

## **Sirens**

Sirens are used to warn the population. In Cottbus, a siren test is carried out every Wednesday at 3 pm. However, a one-minute continuous tone with two interruptions is not a warning for the population. This signal is used to call firefighters to action.

## Radio

Radio and television broadcast important information. They interrupt their programmes and pass on the warning immediately. Many large broadcasters can use emergency power generators. This allows them to broadcast even in the event of a power failure.

## Loudspeakers

The fire brigade, public order office or police often use loudspeaker vans. This allows them to reach many residents at the same time. For example, if an area needs to be evacuated. If possible, the warnings are broadcast in several languages.

## Other options

Warnings can also be issued via digital billboards. Warnings can also be displayed at railway stations and bus stops. Warnings are published on the website [www.warnung.bund.de](http://www.warnung.bund.de). New and alternative means of warning are also being developed and used.

## Emergency stock

The [Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance](#) recommends

- Water and food (there is a [supply calculator](#) here )
- Hygiene articles, for example disinfectants and cleaning agents
- A first aid kit
- Camping accessories such as a gas cooker with fuel and battery-powered lamps
- If you still have a stove or fireplace, you should stock up on coal and wood
- A crank radio

## KATS lighthouses

There are so-called [KATS lighthouses](#) in Cottbus. The word "KATS" stands for disaster control. These lighthouses help people in emergencies. For example, in the event of a long power cut or extreme weather.

The lighthouses are fixed locations in the city. They include schools, fire stations and community centres. They are easy to reach, even on foot or by bike.

People can get important information there. They can charge their mobile phones, warm up or get first aid. Sometimes there is also water or something to eat. Anyone who needs support will find help there.

People from the city or from disaster control work in the lighthouses. They help directly on site. The lighthouses also work when there is no internet, telephone or television.

These places provide security. They are important for everyone in Cottbus - even for those who have not lived here for long.

## Here are the lighthouses:

 [Clubhouse VfB Döbbrick e. V.](#)

- [!\[\]\(86e7cc2dfc7044956173b6d68f469b90\_img.jpg\) Lukti \*\*Sielow\*\* gymnasium](#)
- [!\[\]\(921ba46ea2d82625db7c1e2e43f99b06\_img.jpg\) Neu-Schmellwitzgymnasium](#)
- [!\[\]\(4120193303d0573b6465b89279fd403a\_img.jpg\) Astrid-Lindgren-Grundschule \*\*Alt-Schmellwitz\*\* gymnasium](#)
- [!\[\]\(b34ffe1f1570a69d722fa36492b2d54f\_img.jpg\) IKMZ of the BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg \*\*Centre\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(421a0807de0cb4a5e5684dac6bf1372c\_img.jpg\) \*\*Dissenchen\*\* gymnasium at the sports field](#)
- [!\[\]\(ca40b2cb8a0db6b2891fba3561c0145d\_img.jpg\) Gymnasium Christoph-Kolumbus-Grundschule \*\*Sandow\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(4ad0b918c6348209f8a09fb0df126a04\_img.jpg\) Cottbus town hall \*\*centre\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(c82ddb3fd2d6fe7035b45886820b088d\_img.jpg\) Gymnasium Bauhausschule \*\*Ströbitz\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(c73c6924162b472ca663657ebcee408b\_img.jpg\) Gymnasium Fröbel primary school \*\*Spremberger Vorstadt\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(e775e75fe83ebec5d32c3e8dbf0d64a9\_img.jpg\) Lausitzer Rundschau \*\*Spremberger Vorstadt\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(3b557945b263d791f54ff399754286c4\_img.jpg\) LEAG head office \*\*Spremberger Vorstadt\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(b0d9d84d5a27bcc14c193bbcfccb1d0a\_img.jpg\) Socio-cultural centre \*\*Sachsendorf\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(8e891f236fcaf3cbe3b5c2bc206f5bba\_img.jpg\) Inn "Zur Spreeperle" \*\*Kiekebusch\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(620fd2035900d344cfa6553032517360\_img.jpg\) Gym Reinhard-Lakomy-Grundschule \*\*Groß Gaglow\*\*](#)

### **KATS information points**

The [\*\*KATS information points\*\*](#) help the population in crisis situations. They complement the KATS lighthouses. They are not as well equipped as the KATS lighthouses. But they are helpful when other information channels no longer work.

The information points are located at fixed locations in the city districts. These locations are easily accessible and well known.

People can go there in an emergency. They can get important information about the situation there. For example, what has happened. But also how to behave. Or where to get further help.

There are also helpers there. They answer questions and give clear instructions. Anyone who needs support is not left alone.

The aim is to provide people with good care even if technical systems fail. The KATS information points function independently of electricity or the Internet.

They provide security, clarity and orientation. In an uncertain situation, they help to keep calm. That is why they are an important part of protection for everyone in Cottbus.

### **The information points are located here:**

- [!\[\]\(1af47514f04601741121f04820f4eeb5\_img.jpg\) \*\*Willmersdorf\*\*community centre](#)
- [!\[\]\(ca5977d158992082b1723b1155a6a205\_img.jpg\) \*\*Merzdorf\*\*volunteer fire station](#)

-  [Community centre \*\*Kahren\*\*](#)
-  [Gallinchen Youth Club](#)
-  [Community centre \*\*Skadow\*\*](#)
-  [Branitzclubhouse](#)
-  [Information centre at \*\*Cottbus main station\*\*](#)