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Welcome to

Welcome to the district of Emsland

Greeting

**Dear new citizen,
dear new citizen,**

Welcome to the district of Emsland!

You have chosen the district of Emsland as your new home and we would like to help you get off to the best possible start.

It is certainly not easy to leave your familiar home and settle into a new place. After your arrival, you may have questions about housing, schools, work and leisure activities. The district of Emsland has introduced the Integreat app to make it easier to arrive and find your way around Emsland. Integreat offers a digital contact point for new immigrants. The app is designed to help you better understand and familiarise yourself with life in Emsland. Here you will find important local addresses, language courses, general points of contact and offers of help in special life situations.

A particular advantage of the app is that you can access information in different languages. You can also use the app offline if you do not have access to the internet. As soon as you are online again, the app updates itself automatically.

We hope that the Integreat app will help you to find your way around Emsland and settle in quickly. We look forward to welcoming you as new residents here in the district of Emsland.

**Marc-André Burgdorf
District Administrator**

Interesting facts about the district of Emsland

The district of Emsland stretches over 2,880 square kilometres from Rheine to Papenburg. This makes it the largest district in Lower Saxony in terms of area. Emsland is one of the largest districts in Germany and is larger in total than the federal state of Saarland.

Emsland is around 95 kilometres long from north to south and 56 kilometres wide from east to west. It borders the Netherlands to the west. To the east it borders the districts of Cloppenburg and Osnabrück, and to the south-west it borders the district of Grafschaft Bentheim.

There are 19 different administrative units in Emsland, including towns, municipalities and joint municipalities. These administrative units vary greatly in size.

The district of Emsland offers all citizens good services in the areas of education, culture and shopping. Emsland is also a great place for cycling trips. There are many different routes that are well signposted so that you can cycle safely. If you would like to find out more about excursions in the city, cycle tours and restaurants, you can contact our [tourist information](#) centre or [click here](#).



Cities and municipalities

The district of Emsland comprises 19 administrative units, including 5 towns, 5 single municipalities and 9 joint municipalities. You can find the contact details for the administrative units [here](#).

Further information can be found on the [official websites](#) of the towns and municipalities in

the district of Emsland.

Dörpen

📍 [Hauptstraße 25, 26892 Dörpen](#)
 ☎ [04963/4020](#)
 🌐 <https://www.doerpen.de/>

Emsbüren

📍 [Magistratstraße 5, 48488 Emsbüren](#)
 ☎ [05903/93050](#)
 🌐 <https://www.emsbueren.de/>

Freren

📍 [Markt 1, 49832 Freren](#)
 ☎ [05902/9500](#)
 🌐 <https://www.freren.de/>

Geeste

📍 [Am Rathaus 3, 49744 Geeste-Dalum](#)
 ☎ [05937/690](#)
 🌐 <https://www.geeste.de/>

Haren (Ems)

📍 [Neuer Markt 1, 49733 Haren \(Ems\)](#)
 ☎ [05932/80](#)
 🌐 <https://www.haren.de/>

Haselünne

📍 [Rathausplatz 1, 49740 Haselünne](#)
 ☎ [05961/5090](#)
 🌐 <https://www.haseluenne.de/>




Herzlake

📍 [Neuer Markt 4, 49770 Herzlake](#)
 ☎ [05962/880](#)
 🌐 <https://www.herzlake.de/>




Lathen

📍 [Erna-de-Vries-Platz 7, 49762 Lathen](#)
 ☎ [05933/660](#)
 🌐 <https://sg-lathen.de/gemeinden/lathen/>




Lengerich

 [Mittelstraße 15, 49838 Lengerich](#)
 [05904/93280](tel:0590493280)
 <https://www.lengerich-emsland.de/index/>




Lingen (Ems)

 [Elisabethstraße 14-16, 49808 Lingen \(Ems\)](#)
 [0591/91440](tel:059191440)
 <https://www.lingen.de/>




Meppen

 [Markt 43, 49716 Meppen](#)
 [05931/1530](tel:059311530)
 <https://www.meppen.de/>




Nordhümmling

 [Poststraße 13, 26897 Esterwegen](#)
 [05955/2000](tel:059552000)
 <https://sg-nordhuemmling.de/>




Papenburg

 [Hauptkanal rechts 68-69, 26871 Papenburg](#)
 [04961/820](tel:04961820)
 <https://www.papenburg.de/>


Rhede (Ems)

 [Gerhardyweg 1, 26899 Rhede \(Ems\)](#)
 [04964/91820](tel:0496491820)
 <https://rhede-ems.de/>




Salzbergen

 [Franz-Schratz-Straße 12, 48499 Salzbergen](#)
 [05976/94790](tel:0597694790)
 <https://www.salzbergen.de/>




Sögel

 [Ludmillenhof, 49751 Sögel](#)
 [05952/2060](tel:059522060)
 <https://www.soegel.de/>




Spelle

 [Hauptstraße 43, 48480 Spelle](#)
 [05977/9370](tel:05977/9370)
 <https://www.spelle.de/>

Twist

 [Flensburgstraße 7, 49767 Twist](#)
 [05936/93300](tel:05936/93300)
 <https://www.twist-emsland.de/>

Werlte

 [Marktstraße 1, 49757 Werlte](#)
 [05951/2010](tel:05951/2010)
 <https://www.sgwerlte.de/>





Coordination centre for migration and participation

The **Koordinierungsstelle für Migration und Teilhabe** helps people who have moved to Germany to settle in. It works to ensure that all people can find their feet in the society and culture of their new country. It is closely networked with all those involved in the topic of migration. And it is committed to ensuring that people with a migrant background have equal opportunities in society.

Here you can find the flyer "[Wegweiser Integration](#)" with contact details of the administration, migration advice centres and language training providers.

Koordinierungsstelle für Migration und Teilhabe im Landkreis

Emsland

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)
 **Frau Abdel-Naby**
 [05931/442214](tel:05931/442214)
 @stephanie.abdel-naby@emsland.de

Gefördert durch:



Niedersächsisches Ministerium
für Soziales, Gesundheit
und Gleichstellung

Important offices

Employment Agency

The Federal Employment Agency is responsible for everything to do with employment. Are you looking for a job? Do you need help choosing a career? Would you like to have your

qualifications recognised? Then contact the Employment Agency.

👥 Is your asylum procedure still ongoing? Or are you tolerated? Then the Employment Agency is your point of contact. They will help you with questions about the transition between school and work (careers advice). They will place you in work. And they will advise you on further vocational training.

Contact us in [Meppen](#), [Lingen](#) or [Papenburg](#)!

👥 Are you recognised? Then the [job centre](#) is your point of contact. They will advise and place you in the labour market.

Job centre

The job centre pays financial benefits. It also places you in work and training. This depends on your individual needs. Among other things, the job centre will enable you to take part in a [language course](#). It will refer you to a careers counselling service. Or it can help you get your certificates [recognised](#). Would you like to work? Then you will find information and advice here: [Access to the labour market](#).

💡 [The employees of the Job Centre](#) are not permitted to pass on any information about customers. Do you have a voluntary companion? Then you must give them a power of attorney. This must be completed in full and signed by both parties.

👥 Is your asylum application still pending? Or your application has been rejected? Then the [Federal Employment Agency](#) is responsible for matters relating to employment promotion.

👥 Steps after a positive decision

You have received a positive decision from the BAMF. This means that the asylum procedure has been successfully completed.

Have you been recognised as entitled to asylum or have you been granted refugee protection? Then you can apply for a [citizen's allowance \(job centre\)](#).

👥 Case management

- You can find the contact details of your case manager [here](#).
- **Important:** There is no counselling without an appointment.
- Have you already attended an [integration course](#)? Bring your certificate with you! Otherwise, take a look [here](#) to find out how you can take part in an integration course free of charge.
- Do you have documents about [school attendance](#) or [training](#)? Do you have job references? [Have](#) your [foreign qualifications been](#) recognised? Please bring these with you.
- Tell us about any special skills you have (e.g. crafts or [language skills](#)).
- Think about which area of work you are interested in before the appointment.

👥 Contact details

📍 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)
☎ [05931441448](#)

@arbeit@emsland.de

💡 You can also find us at [Instagram!](#)

Immigration office

The authority regulates the residence of residents without German citizenship. Do you live in the town of Lingen? Then contact the Lingen Foreigners' Registration Office.

What you can do at this authority:

- Clarify questions about entry. This concerns, for example, family reunification. Or invitations to visit.
- Questions about residence after entry. For example, applying for a residence permit.
- Naturalisation

Please make **an appointment before your visit**. A spontaneous visit **without an appointment is not possible!**

Please only contact the Foreigners' Registration Office by telephone or e-mail. You will then receive a suggested appointment.

Further information for **foreign skilled workers** can be found on the following two pages: [Make it in Germany](#) and [Recognition in Germany](#).

Responsible for the whole of Emsland (except residents of the town of Lingen)

District of Emsland

Department of Security and Order

Ausländerwesen

📍 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

☎ [05931/440](#)

@ auslaenderbehoerde@emsland.de

For matters relating to **naturalisation**, please send an email to: einbuergerung@emsland.de

For matters relating to **invitations to visit**, please contact by email: besucher@emsland.de

Responsible only for residents of the city of Lingen

Ausländerbehörde

📍 Elisabethstraße 14-16, 49808 Lingen

☎ [0591/91440](#)

@ auslaenderbehoerde@lingen.de

Free advice on various topics such as help with filling out applications and forms, education, family life, housing, work and job search, health can be obtained from the [migration advice centres](#) in the district of Emsland.

Youth welfare office

Support from the youth welfare office

The Youth Welfare Office supports parents and children

The Youth Welfare Office supports parents and guardians in the upbringing, care and education of children and young people. It is the point of contact for all related questions, uncertainties and problems. Better too early than too late!

Talk to us. Our specialists will be happy to help and support you and your family!

The task of the Youth Welfare Office is also to protect children and young people. After all, children and young people have a **right** to grow up in a safe and healthy environment ([children have rights](#)). The staff will therefore follow up any information that a **child may** be in danger.

Who can contact the Youth Welfare Office?

- Parents
- Children and young people
- People who realise that a child or family needs support

What issues can I contact the Youth Welfare Office about?

- Counselling on parenting issues
- Support for single parents
- Paternity, maintenance and parental care
- Counselling on partnership, separation and divorce issues
- Counselling and services for young people
- Counselling and support for children and young people in difficult situations
- Support with the transition from school to work
- Counselling for young people and adolescents against whom criminal proceedings have been initiated
- Integration assistance for children and young people with (impending) mental disabilities
- Accommodation, care and support for unaccompanied refugee minors
- Child and youth protection

Contact and opening hours


Despite the internet, correspondence and telephone - some matters are best dealt with in a personal meeting with us. Please make an appointment.

Jugendamt

📍 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

☎ [05931/440](#)

@ info@emsland.de

 Monday - Friday: 8:30 - 12:30 and Monday - Thursday: 14:30 - 16:00
Appointments are also possible at other times by prior arrangement.

Department of Social Affairs

Department of Social Affairs


The Social Services Department offers a wide range of services for the citizens of Emsland.


- Basic income support in old age and in the event of reduced earning capacity
- Care assistance
- Assistance with living expenses
- Integration assistance for disabled people
- Help to overcome particular social difficulties
- Assistance with health
- Assistance in other life situations


Do you have any questions on these topics? Then please contact us:

Landkreis Emsland

Fachbereich Soziales

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

 [05931/440](tel:05931/440)

 If you need cash benefits, housing or medical treatment (Leistungen nach SGB II, SGB XII und AsylbLG)), please contact your [local authority](#).

Health department


The public health department is part of the healthcare system in Germany. For example, it is responsible for protecting the population from infectious diseases. Or it deals with hygiene in companies. These can be hospitals and care centres. Or restaurants and cafés. Would you like to work in a restaurant? Then you need an instruction on infection protection. The public health department also has other tasks. The health authority has a social psychiatric service and also a medical service. The medical service carries out assessments on request. The paediatric service carries out school entry examinations and provides information about illnesses. In general, it informs the population about health risks.

Landkreis Emsland

Health Department

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

 [@gesundheit@emsland.de](mailto:gesundheit@emsland.de)

 [05931/441197](tel:05931/441197)

Equal Opportunities Officer

The Basic Law places men and women on an equal footing. Nevertheless, women and men often do not have equal rights in everyday life. The Equal Opportunities Officers in the district of Emsland are people who want to ensure that women and men are treated equally. They work both inside and outside the local administrations.

Goals and tasks of equal opportunities work

- Equal opportunities for all genders in the family, at work and in society
- Elimination and prevention of gender-based discrimination
- Reduction of structural disadvantages for women

The Equal Opportunities Officer endeavours to achieve these goals by disseminating information, carrying out projects and participating in committees. She is the point of contact for all citizens of the district, for groups, clubs, associations, organisations and institutions. It plays an important role as an interface between administration, politics and the public.

The most important topics are both within the authority and in the public sphere:

- Education and careers,
- compatibility and care work,
- role models and diversity,
- positions of power and decision-making,
- Participation in politics
- Safety and health

💡 Do you have any questions or need help? Then get in touch. You can find your local equal opportunities officer [here](#).

Image film "Agents of change"

"Agents of change" track down disadvantages and fight for equality. A new film for local work! Here is the Youtube link: [Agents of Change Youtube Video](#)

Residents' Registration Office

In principle, all people who come to Germany and wish to stay for longer than three months must register their residential address with the authorities after two weeks at the latest. Are you moving within Germany? Then you must inform the authorities of your new address.

💡 This registration has nothing to do with registering as an asylum seeker or registering with the [immigration authorities](#). You must do this in addition. You can find out how to register as a refugee in the chapter on [asylum and refugees](#).

Who has to register and when?

All people who move to Germany or move within Germany must register or re-register at the Residents' Registration Office (often also called the Citizens' Registration Office or Citizens' Office). Registration within two weeks is mandatory. Are you registering too late or not at all? Then you may have to pay a fine.

When you register, you will receive an "official confirmation of registration". Keep this document in a safe place. You can use it to prove - even without your ID - that you are registered in a municipality or city in Germany. This means that you are resident there.

What do I need to bring with me to register?

You must register in person at the Residents' Registration Office or Citizens' Registration Office. You can find the address of your residents' registration office or citizens' registration office at the bottom of this page.

You must bring your ID (identity card, residence permit, residence document, etc.) with you when registering. Do you have a passport? Or passport replacement documents? Then bring these with you too. You must also fill in a registration form. You can obtain the form directly from the residents' registration office.

In some cities / municipalities, you will also need a so-called "landlord's confirmation of moving in" for the registration. This is a document in which your landlord or landlady confirms that you are renting his or her flat. Sometimes your birth certificate or marriage certificate is also required for registration. If you have these documents, bring them with you to the registration office as a precaution.

Address of the residents' registration office

Please contact the [local authority](#) in your place of residence.

💡 Important: You will only find general information on this topic here. Please enquire about your personal situation at your local authority in your place of residence.

Registry office

The registry office has several tasks. Have you had a child? Then you must report the birth to the registry office. The registry office will then notarise the birth. Would you like to get married? Then the registry office will register your marriage.

The tasks at a glance

- Notarising births and deaths
- Concluding marriages and partnerships
- Receiving resignations from the church
- Changing names
- Issuing certificates (birth certificate, death certificate, marriage certificate)

Please contact the registry office in your [place of residence](#).

Counselling and help

Migration counselling

Have you only recently arrived in Germany? Do you need help finding your way around Germany?

Have you been here for a while but still feel unsure and unfamiliar?

Then migration counselling is the right place for you. This counselling service is aimed at all adult immigrants with a permanent or uncertain right of residence.

You will receive counselling on the following topics:

- Where can I learn German?
- How do I apply for a German course?
- How do I find a flat?
- Where can I apply for financial aid?
- Who can help me find a job?
- Can my degree be recognised in Germany?
- Which doctor can I go to?
- Who will help me during my pregnancy?
- If necessary, accompaniment to offices and authorities by volunteers
- Information on migration and integration measures

Counselling is available in German and many other languages. It is free of charge. And support is provided regardless of your origin, religion or nationality. You are free to choose which counselling centre and which provider you go to. However, you may also decide according to the counselling languages available.

💡 Are you between 12 and 27 years old? Then there is a separate counselling service for you: [Youth Migration Services](#)

💡 The [asylum counselling](#) service primarily supports you in the local shared accommodation centres.

Contact details for the migration service:**SKM Lingen e.V. - Migrationsberatung | Frau Johanning**

📍 [Lindenstraße 13, 49808 Lingen](#)

@christina.johanning@skm-lingen.de

☎ [+495919124664](tel:+495919124664)

SKM Meppen e.V. - Migrationsberatung | Frau Jager

📍 [Kolpingstraße 4, 49716 Meppen](#)


@n.jager@skm-meppen.de


☎ [+495931931112](tel:+495931931112)

AWO Bezirksverband Weser-Ems e.V. - Migrationsberatung | Herr Migura


📍 [Schützenstraße 17, 49716 Meppen](#)

@raphael.migura@awo-ol.de

 [+4959315988173](tel:+4959315988173)

 [+49 \(0\) 15151308199](tel:+49(0)15151308199)


Caritasverband für den Landkreis Emsland - Migrationsberatung | Frau Galster

 [Am Markt 9, 49751 Sögel](#)


[@mgalster@caritas-os.de](mailto:mgalster@caritas-os.de)

 [+49595293700](tel:+49595293700)


DRK- Kreisverband Emsland e.V. - Migrationsberatung Papenburg

 [Rathausstraße 11, 26871 Papenburg](#)


[@migration@drk-emsland.de](mailto:migration@drk-emsland.de)

 [+49496191232025](tel:+49496191232025)

DRK- Kreisverband Emsland e.V. - Migrationsberatung Meppen

 [Dalumer Straße 17, 49716 Meppen](#)

[@migration@drk-emsland.de](mailto:migration@drk-emsland.de)

 [+49593180063019](tel:+49593180063019)

DRK- Kreisverband Emsland e.V. - Migrationsberatung Lingen

 [Jahnstraße 2-4, 49808 Lingen \(Ems\)](#)

[@migration@drk-emsland.de](mailto:migration@drk-emsland.de)


 [+49591800331012](tel:+49591800331012)

DRK- Kreisverband Emsland e.V. | Migrationsberatung Haren

 [Emsstr. 29-31, 49733 Haren/Ems](#)

[@migration@drk-emsland.de](mailto:migration@drk-emsland.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 593180063019](tel:+49(0)593180063019)

 Tuesdays from 14:00 - 16:00
With prior appointment

Kolping Bildungswerk DV Osnabrück e.V. - Sögel Migrationsberatung | Herr Jung

 [Am Pohlkamp 7, 49751 Sögel](#)

@migrationsberatung@kolping-web.de

[☎ +491751852039](tel:+491751852039)

Kolping Bildungswerk DV Osnabrück e.V. - Salzbergen Migrationsberatung | Herr Jung

[📍 Franz-Schratz-Straße 8, 48499 Salzbergen](#)

@migrationsberatung@kolping-web.de

[☎ +491751852039](tel:+491751852039)

Youth migration services

Are you **between 12 and 27 years** old? Do you have a **migrant background** and a **perspective for permanent residence**? Then this service is aimed at you.

Counselling is offered in all matters of everyday life as well as in problem situations. If necessary, you can also be accompanied to the authorities.

For example, if you have the following questions

- What happens with my right of residence/asylum procedure?
- Which type of school is right for me?
- How do I find an apprenticeship?
- What do I do if I have problems with the authorities (job centre, social welfare office)?
- Information about group and leisure activities

There are various providers in the district of Emsland. You are free to choose which provider you would like to visit.

Contact details

AWO Bezirksverband Weser-Ems e.V. - Jugendmigrationsdienst | Frau Hübscher

[📍 Schützenstraße 17, 49716 Meppen](#)

@lilia.huebscher@awo-ol.de

[☎ +49 \(0\) 593120834](tel:+49(0)593120834)

[🌐 https://www.awo-ol.de/Beratungsangebote/MBE/JMD-M...](https://www.awo-ol.de/Beratungsangebote/MBE/JMD-M...)

Kolping Bildungswerk DV Osnabrück e.V. - Jugendmigrationsdienst Emsland-Nord | Frau Kreuzhermes

[📍 Am Pohlkamp 7, 49751 Sögel](#)

@kreuzhermes@kolping-web.de

[+49 \(0\) 5952990627](tel:+49(0)5952990627)

<https://kolping-web.de/jugendsozialarbeit/jugendm...>

Kolping Bildungswerk DV Osnabrück e.V. - Jugendmigrationsdienst Emsland-Süd | Frau Lammering

[Franz-Schratz-Straße 8, 48499 Salzbergen](#)

@jmd@kolping-web.de

[+49 \(0\) 5976947314](tel:+49(0)5976947314)

<https://kolping-web.de/jugendsozialarbeit/jugendm...>

Jmd4you Online counselling for your life in Germany

This is the name of a digital counselling service offered by the Youth Migration Services. First you have to register. Then you will receive professional and individual counselling. The counselling takes place in a protected virtual space. You can choose between email counselling and chat. You can remain anonymous during the counselling. The counselling is about school, professional and social integration in Germany. You can find more information [here](#).

Asylum procedure counselling

Do you feel well prepared for your asylum interview? Do you still have any uncertainties? Do you have questions about the asylum procedure? Would you like independent advice that explains the procedure step by step? Do you need support during the asylum procedure? Your application for asylum has been rejected and you want to lodge an appeal? In this free counselling session you will receive individual support. The aim is to guide you through the asylum procedure in the best possible way.

You can find more information here: [Asylum procedure counselling](#)

DRK-Kreisverband Emsland e.V. - Asylverfahrensberatung Papenburg | Frau Lott

[Rathausstraße 11, 26871 Papenburg](#)

@karina.lott@drk-emsland.de

[+49 \(0\) 496191232036](tel:+49(0)496191232036)

DRK-Kreisverband Emsland e.V. - Asylverfahrensberatung Meppen | Frau Möhle

[Dalumer Straße 17, 49716 Meppen](#)

@katja.moehle@drk-emsland.de

+49 (0) 593180063039

DRK- Kreisverband Emsland e.V. | Asylverfahrensberatung Haren

Emsstr. 29-31, 49733 Haren/Ems

@katja.moehle@drk-emsland.de

+49 (0) 593180063039

+49 (0) 593180063019

Tuesdays from 14:00 - 16:00
With prior appointment

International search for family members

Have you lost contact with a relative and don't know where they are? The German Red Cross searches worldwide for people who have been separated from their families or have gone missing and clarifies their fates.

German Red Cross District Association Emsland e.V.

Katharina Trouw

+4961/91232024

@k [atharin a.trouw@drk-emsland.de](mailto:atharin.a.trouw@drk-emsland.de)

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

Central return counselling

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 Central Return Counselling Service (ZRB) will advise you on ways to voluntarily return to your home country. The counselling is open-ended. You decide for yourself after the counselling. You can leave voluntarily. Or you can stay on.

Caritasverband für den Landkreis Emsland - Rückkehrberatung | Frau Galster

Am Markt 9, 49751 Sögel

@mgalster@caritas-os.de

+49 (0) 15172213356

SKM Meppen e.V. - Rückkehrberatung | Frau Jäger

📍 [Kolpingstraße 4, 49716 Meppen](#)

@ n.jager@skm-meppen.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 5931931112](tel:+49(0)5931931112)

Integration projects

JuMP Youth and Migration in Papenburg

JuMP is a youth project of the city of Papenburg and the DRK migration counselling centre. The aim is to empower young people, enable participation and create sustainable structures.

Current offers:

- Counselling on professional orientation
- Thematisation of the topic of "flight and migration"
- School information event
- "Kulturtalk" workshops for children and young people
- Creating leisure and meeting opportunities, such as holiday activities at the [DRK Haus Global](#)

Deutsches Rotes Kreuz

Kreisverband Emsland e.V.

📍 Rathausstr. 11, 26871 Papenburg

👤 Alina Rodríguez Sánchez

☎ [+49 \(0\) 496191232026](tel:+49(0)496191232026) und ☎ [+49 \(0\) 1725192315](tel:+49(0)1725192315)

@ alina.rodriquez-sanchez@drk-emsland.de

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

Start Guide

The Start Guide in northern Emsland or "Hand in Hand" in central and southern Emsland will advise you on the subject of work and training. You will have the opportunity to get to know local employers. You can find out about your career opportunities. Interested jobseekers and suitable employers are introduced to each other.

Hand in Hand (Mitte und Süd)

VHS Meppen gGmbH

📍 Freiherr-vom-Stein-Str. 1, 49716 Meppen

👤 Ziedonis Stutins

☎ [+49 \(0\) 5931937350](tel:+49(0)5931937350)

@ ziedonis.stutins@vhs-meppen.de

🔄 [Hand in Hand](#)

Start Guide im nördlichen Emsland

Historisch-Ökologische Bildungsstätte (HÖB) Emsland in Papenburg e.V.

📍 Spillmannsweg 30, 26871 Papenburg

👤 Stefanie Book

☎ +49 (0) 4961978836

@stefanie.book@hoeb.de

🌐 [Start Guide im nördlichen Emsland](#)

NetwinPlus

Are you finding it difficult to find work in Germany? Are you encountering various obstacles in accessing the German labour market? You can get help and support here:

Historisch-Ökologische Bildungsstätte (HÖB) Emsland in Papenburg e.V.

📍 Spillmannsweg 30, 26871 Papenburg

👤 Katharina Meyer

☎ [04961/978833](tel:04961978833)

@katharina.meyer@hoeb.de

🌐 <https://www.hoeb.de/projekte/netwin-plus/>

SKM Lingen e.V.

📍 Lindenstraße 13, 49808 Lingen

👤 Lena Waterkamp und Natalie Bartolomej

☎ [0591/9124654](tel:05919124654) und ☎ [0591/9124659](tel:05919124659)

@lena.waterkamp@skm-lingen.de und @ natalie.bartolomej@skm-lingen.de

My Turn

Women find their way!

My Turn supports women in Emsland on their way to successful integration in the labour market.

Counselling and workshops are offered. The offer is from women for women. Individual counselling sessions as well as participation in workshops and discussion cafés are free of charge and voluntary. It is possible to join at any time.

MY TURN EMSLAND (Süd)

📍 Riedemannstr. 1, 49716 Meppen



[05931/937379](tel:05931937379)

@galnar.hanhoun@vhs-meppen.de

MY TURN EMSLAND (Nord)

📍 Hauptkanal rechts 72, 26871 Papenburg



[04961/922321](tel:04961922321)

@anne.sonntagdacruz@vhs-papenburg.de


Current dates, counselling times in the municipalities and more can be found [here](#).

JES - Young Emslanders start with the LernBar

The project is for young men between the ages of 18 and 35 who receive money from the job centre or employment agency. They receive free and uncomplicated support in their search for an apprenticeship or a job. Help is also provided in dealing with everyday problems or completing applications. There is currently a literacy workshop in Meppen and two computer workshops in Meppen and Haren. There are regular meetings to exchange ideas.

JES

VHS Meppen gGmbH

 An der Feuerwache 7, 49716 Meppen

 [+49 \(0\) 5931937371](tel:+49(0)5931937371)

@

jes@vhs-meppen.de

 www.junge-emslaender.de/

Family Live - Out into life

Family Live is a counselling service for single parents and low-income families. The counselling deals with topics relating to family and work. For example, you will be supported in preparing application documents or clarifying your financial situation. You will receive help in finding childcare options for your children. Family events and workshops are organised so that you can meet and exchange ideas. Counselling is free of charge.

Family Live Nord

VHS Papenburg gGmbH

Hauptkanal rechts 72, 26871 Papenburg

 [+49 \(0\) 4961922346](tel:+49(0)4961922346)

@FamilyLive@vhs-papenburg.de

Family Live Süd

VHS Meppen gGmbH

An der Feuerwache 7, 49716 Meppen

 [+49 \(0\) 5931937375](tel:+49(0)5931937375)

@FamilyLive@vhs-meppen.de

You can find a flyer about the project here: [Family Live](#)

Comeback4you - Your way into the job

Planning your return to work

Many women want to return to work after taking a break to look after their family. But sometimes it's not so easy to find your way back into a job after this phase. This project helps women to find the right way back to work. Each participant receives support from an expert who helps to plan the next steps.

There is an extensive network with local training organisations and companies. They also receive support on how to reconcile work and family life.

Comeback4you consists of a seminar and individual coaching:

The seminar deals with these topics:

- How to find out your own skills
- What jobs are available in the region
- How to apply for a job correctly
- How to balance work and family life
- How to work well in a team
- How to talk to each other properly and resolve conflicts
- How to work with a computer
- Which qualifications are needed in companies


The seminar always takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8.30 to 11.30 am.


The **one-to-one coaching** helps individuals to find the right way back to work step by step.

Costs:

If you are interested, please contact your case manager at the Aschendorf Job Centre.

Historisch-Ökologische Bildungsstätte (HÖB) e.V.

 [Spillmannsweg 30, 26871 Papenburg](#)

 [+49 \(0\) 496197880](tel:+49(0)496197880)

 <https://www.hoeb.de/>

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 in the Google Play Store](#)

 [mbeon in the AppStore](#)

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

Further online counselling services can be found here:

Get online counselling from Caritas experts. Counselling is free, anonymous and secure.

Select a topic for counselling [here](#).

Educational counselling

Education Compass Emsland

Looking for your dream job? Time for something new? Plans for the future? Ready for professional success?

The Bildungskompass team will support you in your professional orientation and in finding suitable further education programmes - regardless of age, background, etc.

Plan your future with us and turn your idea into a clear goal.

Counselling is


- for all ages
- in every life situation
- for every professional group
- in all career phases
- in voluntary work
- for everyone

Contact:

Bildungskompass Emsland

 [Gymnasialstraße 8, 49716 Meppen](#)

 [@info@bildungskompass-emsland.de](mailto:info@bildungskompass-emsland.de)

 [+49 \(0\) 5931153404](tel:+49(0)5931153404)

 <https://www.bildungskompass-emsland.de/>

The educational compass is a co-operation project of the city of Meppen, the adult education centre Meppen gGmbH and the catholic adult education Meppen.

Everyday life

Living


Important terms and costs

You can search for flats in the local newspapers or on the Internet.

You will find an e-mail address or telephone number in the adverts. You need to call them and make an appointment to view the flat. You will then view the flat with the landlord or landlady. If you do not yet speak German well, take a friend or acquaintance with you.

When viewing the flat, you can ask the following questions:

- How much does the rent cost per month?
- How much does electricity, heating, gas and water cost?
- Does the flat use a lot of energy?

 After the appointment, you should let the landlord or landlady know quickly whether you would like the flat.

If the landlord wants to let you the flat, he or she should give you an overview of the rental and ancillary costs or a rental agreement. This must show the size of the flat, the rent and the costs that make up the rent.

Where can I search for flats?

Here is a selection of websites to search for rental flats:

- <https://www.immowelt.de/>
- <https://www.immonet.de/>
- <https://www.immobilienscout24.de/wohnen/mietwohnungen.html>
- <https://www.kleinanzeigen.de/s-wohnung-mieten/c203>

Important terms and costs

Explanation of important abbreviations in flat adverts:

Whg. = flat; App. = flat; WG = shared flat; Zi. = room; ZKB = room-kitchen-bathroom; EG = ground floor; 1. OG = 1st floor; Wohnfl. = living space; EBK = fitted kitchen; teilmbf. = partly furnished; incl. = inclusive; MM = rent per month; NK = service charges; HK = heating costs; Kaut. = deposit

Tenancy agreement

A commitment for a flat only becomes binding with a tenancy agreement. The tenancy agreement clarifies both the rights and obligations of the landlord and the rights and obligations of the tenant. The tenancy agreement also contains many other important details that you should read carefully (billing of heating and operating costs, notice periods, keeping pets, subletting and much more).

Read the tenancy agreement carefully before you sign it. Have the tenancy agreement read through by a friend with a good knowledge of German or get professional support, for example from the Tenants' Protection Association. This organisation supports tenants with legal issues relating to rent.

House rules

The house rules describe the rules for living together in the building. These include, for example, quiet hours in the house from 10 pm to 8 am, clearing snow in winter, regular cleaning of the stairwell and much more. Read the regulations in the house rules carefully.

Landlord's certificate

Your landlord or landlady must complete this form. You need this certificate for your re-registration (change of address) in your municipality or at the residents' registration office.

💡 You must re-register in your new municipality as soon as possible, at the latest after 2 weeks.

Basic rent

The basic rent refers to the cost of the flat excluding ancillary costs such as water, heating, water heating, caretaker and property tax. The cold rent is always lower than the warm rent.

Warm rent

The warm rent refers to the total costs for the flat, i.e. the cold rent plus ancillary costs. However, sometimes there are additional costs on top of the warm rent, such as electricity, [radio](#), television and waste disposal.

When looking for a flat, you should always check whether the advert states the basic rent or the warm rent. Without details of the ancillary costs, some flat offers appear deceptively cheap. You should therefore clarify in advance which costs are included in the rent.

Deposit

The deposit serves as financial security for the landlord or landlady in case something breaks in the flat. The deposit usually amounts to 2-3 basic rents.

At the end of the tenancy, the deposit is returned if the flat is handed over to the landlord or the next tenant clean and without any defects.

It is best to take photos of the condition of the flat when you move in or hand it over. This way, you can later prove which defects were already present when you moved in.

Tenant self-disclosure

The tenant self-disclosure is a type of questionnaire that is requested by the landlord. The landlord or landlady primarily wants to check whether the tenant is able to pay the rent. You can draw up the tenant self-disclosure form yourself. It contains the following information:

- First name and surname
- Date of birth
- Current address
- Contact details (telephone and e-mail)
- Current profession and employer
- Monthly income
- Schufa information

A Schufa-Auskunft provides information about your solvency. You can apply online at Schufa-Auskunft. Take care of this early on so that it arrives in time for your flat search. The free version of Schufa-Auskunft is called "[Datenkopie nach Art. 15 DS-GVO](#)". This is sufficient for landlords.

Housing counselling

Young families with children, people in their prime, people with disabilities or older people: They all have special requirements for their home and neighbourhood. There are many ways to respond to this.

💡 Be sure to take advantage of free housing counselling if you want to stay in your home. Even small changes can often make a home age-appropriate. In this way, you can avoid having to move to another home or a care home.

Housing counselling is for people of all ages.

Advice on adapting your home normally takes place in your home. The counsellors will take a close look at your home. Together you will find out where there are problems and look for solutions. The counsellors will help you decide and plan the measures. You can also use the housing counselling service if you want to build a new home.

You can find more information [here](#).

Waste separation, bulky waste and deposits

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?

Waste bins in Germany have different colours. The colours show you which waste is allowed 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 can 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 "[Abfallkalender](#)", which you can find in your letterbox every year or collect from the town hall. There is also an [app](#) that regularly reminds you when which rubbish is collected.

💡 **Only certain rubbish may be thrown into each bin!** [International sorting aid overview](#)

Sperrmüll

Sperrmüll Bulky waste is large items that do not fit in bins, such as **furniture**, **mattresses** or **carpets**. You can request a free collection date for bulky waste twice a year in the district of Emsland. You can apply for a collection date [here](#).

Do I have to separate my waste?

Yes, waste separation is mandatory in Germany. Everyone must separate their waste correctly and put it in the right bins. If you do not comply with 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 administrative 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 do I need to know about "deposits"?

In Germany, there is a so-called "deposit obligation" for certain beverage containers. 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.

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 [Verbraucherzentrale](#).

Buying new appliances

When buying new appliances, always check the energy label. 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](#).

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 euros 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. Or if you have health restrictions. An application must be submitted for exemption from the licence fee.

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

Food, clothing, furniture

Food (food bank)

The Tafel helps people who don't have much money. The Tafel provides cheap food and hygiene articles that are no longer sold in the shops. These are, for example:

- Food whose best-before date is about to expire
- Baked goods from the previous day
- Damaged or dented packaging
- Fruit and vegetables with minor blemishes.

By giving people affected by poverty the opportunity to save money when shopping, the food banks give them a little financial leeway. At the same time, they create space for encounters and thus promote social participation. The food banks are financed by donations and are themselves dependent on support.

Who is the service for?

People on low incomes can buy food from the food banks at a reduced price.

How do I take part in the food bank?

Please call your local food bank during opening hours and make an appointment for a means test. We will need your identity card and all proof of income and assets. If you belong to the group of people in need, you will receive a customer card. You can use this card to obtain food from the food banks.

Food bank distribution centres in Emsland

Tafel Lingen

📍 Langschmidtsweg 17a, 49808 Lingen (Ems)

☎ [0591/831666](tel:0591831666)

🕒 [Opening hours](#)

Abenteuerspielplatz der AWO

📍 Ruth-West-Platz 1, 49809 Lingen (Ems)

☎ [0591/74647](tel:059174647)

🕒 [Opening hours](#)

Stadtteiltreff Stroot

📍 Ludwigstraße 44b, 49809 Lingen (Ems)

☎ [0152/21455577](tel:015221455577)

🕒 [Opening hours](#)

Tafel Freren

📍 Markt 4, 49832 Freren

☎ [05902/9491560](tel:059029491560)

🕒 [Opening hours](#)

Tafel Twist

📍 Georg-Klasman-Strasse 24a, 49767 Twist

☎ [0173/2543935](tel:01732543935)

🕒 [Opening hours](#)

Tafel Meppen

📍 Heideweg 21, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931/8480181](tel:059318480181)

🕒 [Opening hours](#)

Tafel Haren

📍 Werftstraße 22a, 49733 Haren (Ems)

☎ [05932/1815](tel:059321815) oder [01520/9036547](tel:015209036547)

🕒 [Opening hours](#)

Tafel Lathen

📍 Molkereistraße 14, 49762 Lathen

☎ [0152/09036550](tel:015209036550)

🕒 [Opening hours](#)

Tafeln nördliches Emsland

📍 Grader Weg 58, 26871 **Papenburg**

📍 Poststr. 9, 26871 **Aschendorf**

📍 Hauptstr. 88, 26892 **Dörpen**

📍 Alte Schulstr. 15, 26897 **Esterwegen**

📍 Kompaniestr. 7, 49757 **Werlte**

📍 Kolpingstr. 6, 49751 **Sögel**

🕒 [Opening hours](#)

Social department stores and clothing stores

What is the Social Department Store?

The Social Department Store is a second-hand shop where you can buy clothes, shoes, household goods, children's furniture, prams, toys, books, records, CDs and much more. Many items are donations in kind and are new or as good as new. All items are checked and cleaned by our volunteers before they are sold.

Who is the offer for?

Anyone can shop at the social department stores'. Customers receive a customer card if they can prove that they have a low income. This allows them to buy the Social Department Store's low-priced goods at a reduced price. Don't have a customer card yet?

Please contact the Soziales Kaufhaus during opening hours and make an appointment. Please remember to bring your identity card and proof of income and assets.

Where can I find social department stores in Emsland?

Soziales Kaufhaus Papenburg SKFM (nördliches Emsland)

📍 Grader Weg 60, 26871 **Papenburg**

☎ [04961/66078-160](tel:0496166078160)

📍 Poststr. 9, 26871 **Aschendorf**

☎ [04962/9073661](tel:049629073661)

📍 Hauptstr. 73, 49757 **Werlte**

☎ [05951/4619040](tel:059514619040)

📍 Hauptstr. 88, 26892 **Dörpen**

☎ [04963/9098497](tel:049639098497)

📅 You can find the opening hours [here](#).

Kolping Werkstätten Papenburg

Bahnhofstraße 27, 26871 Papenburg

☎ [04961/9217070](tel:049619217070)

📅 Monday - Thursday 8.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. and Friday 8.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m.

SoKa - Das Soziale Kaufhaus Meppen

📍 Obergerichtsstraße 3, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931/8836323](tel:059318836323)

📅 Monday to Friday 9.30 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. and 2.00 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

Saturday 9.30 am - 1.00 pm

Glücksfall e.V. Haren

📍 Ankerstraße 20, 49733 Haren (Ems)

☎ [05932/7353730](tel:059327353730)

📅 Wednesday 3.00 pm - 6.00 pm

Thursday and Friday 10.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Saturday 10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.

Skf fashion Lingen

📍 Alter Pferdemarkt 3-5, 49808 Lingen (Ems)

☎ [0591/80062-201](tel:059180062201)

📅 Monday to Friday 9.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.

Skf Marktplatz Freren

📍 Markt 4, 49832 Freren

☎ [05902/503469](tel:05902503469)

🕒 Monday to Friday 9.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Reholand Lingen

📍 Greiwehof 1-2, 49811 Lingen (Ems)

☎ [0591/912480](tel:0591912480)

🕒 Monday to Friday 09.30 - 18.00

Saturday 09.30 - 14.00

Mobility

Bus, train and bike

You can reach many places around your home by public transport. You can also cycle. Exercise is healthy. Cycling is inexpensive. Cycling is also environmentally friendly.

Public transport

To get to your destination in the Emsland district, you can use public transport. These are bus and train connections.

💡 **Travelling without a ticket will be penalised!** You must have a valid ticket for every journey. Otherwise you will pay a **heavy fine**.

Bus connections:

- [VBN Verkehrsbund Bremen/Lower Saxony](#)
- [VGE Verkehrsgemeinschaft Emsland-Süd](#)

Rail connections:

- [Westfalenbahn](#)
- [German railway \(DB\)](#)

By bike

Are you going to be living in Emsland for a while? Then it's worth buying a bicycle. It's cheaper than travelling by public transport.

💡 Important traffic rules for cyclists:

- 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 10 may use footpaths on bicycles.
- It is forbidden to use a mobile phone on a bicycle.

💡 Purchase and repairs: Pay attention when buying. Your bike must be equipped as follows. This means 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

You can find cheap bikes here:

- [Ebay classifieds](#)

Is your bike damaged or no longer roadworthy?

You can contact the [volunteer agency](#) in your local community. They will refer you to a repair café. The bike can be repaired free of charge / at low cost.

Driving licence and driving a car

Driving licence and driving a car

Would you like to drive a car in Germany? Then you must have a **valid** driving licence. Driving a car without a valid driving licence is a punishable offence. The driving licence serves as proof of possession of a valid driving licence. You must always have your **driving licence** with you.

If you have any questions about driving licences, the driving licence office in the district of Emsland is responsible.

Contact us

Landkreis Emsland

Führerscheinstelle

📍 Ordeniederung 2, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931/444011](tel:05931/444011), [05931/444012](tel:05931/444012)

@fuehrerschein@emsland.de

Would you like to visit us in person? Please make an appointment [online](#) beforehand.

💡 **Important:** You will only find general information about driving licences here. Please contact the driving licence office in the district of Emsland for information about your personal situation.

In Germany, you can drive a car from the age of 18 with a valid driving licence.

It is possible to obtain a driving licence at the age of 17.

This is called „Begleitetes Fahren ab 17 Jahre“. However, you may only drive with certain accompanying persons. These people give you confidence when driving and help with any questions. The accompanying persons must fulfil certain requirements.

You can find information on "Begleiteten Fahren ab 17 Jahre" [here](#).

Would you like to get your driving licence?

If you want to get your driving licence, choose a driving school. Getting your driving licence costs money. Ask in advance how much it will cost. The driving school can tell you what documents you need and what you have to do.

To get a German driving licence, you must pass the theory and practical tests. You can take the theory test in German or in the following languages: English, French, Greek, High Arabic, Italian, Croatian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish and Turkish. Speak to your driving instructor.

You must also take part in a first aid course. There you will learn how to provide assistance in an emergency situation. For example, in the event of accidents, burns, poisoning and so on. Organisations such as the German Red Cross (DRK) or Malteser Hilfsdienst offer these courses.

You can find more information [here](#).

Do you already have a foreign driving licence?

Do you have a foreign driving licence and live in Germany?

In this case, your foreign driving licence is only valid for 6 months after you move to Germany. After these 6 months, you must have your driving licence converted into a German driving licence. You must also take a theoretical and practical test .

Persons from EU/EEA countries with a valid driving licence do not need to have their foreign driving licence converted.

You can find information on transferring your driving licence [here](#).

Information on the validity of your foreign driving licence in Germany can be found [here](#).

Please note: There are many rules to ensure that road traffic is safe for you and others. You must observe these rules when driving. The rules are set out in Straßenverkehrs-Ordnung (StVO). If you do not follow the rules, you will be fined. Penalties can be A fine, a driving ban or [points in Flensburg](#).

Register your car

Vehicles may only be used on public roads if they are registered and have an official licence plate. You can re-register or re-register a vehicle at the registration office (if you bought it in Germany or imported it from abroad).

Find out [here](#) which documents you need.

You must present the registration certificate and your identity card, passport or residence permit, provide proof of motor vehicle liability insurance (EVB number) and issue a SEPA mandate for the regular collection of motor vehicle tax.

Contact us

Landkreis Emsland

Zulassungsstelle **Meppen**

📍 Ordeniederung 2, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931/44-4004](tel:05931/44-4004)

@zulassung@emsland.de

Landkreis Emsland

Zulassungsstelle **Lingen**

📍 Am Wall-Süd 21, 49808 Lingen (Ems)

☎ [0591/84-3306](tel:0591843306)

@zulassung@emsland.de

Landkreis Emsland

Zulassungsstelle **Aschendorf**

📍 Große Straße 32, 26871 Aschendorf

☎ [04962/501-3232](tel:049625013232)

@zulassung@emsland.de

Would you like to visit us in person? Please make an appointment [online](#) in advance.

💡 **Important:** You will only find general information on the subject of registration here. Please contact the Emsland district registration office for information on your personal situation.

Emsland Youth Ticket

Who is the Emsland Youth Ticket for?

- School pupils resident in Emsland (free of charge)
- Trainees or people doing a voluntary social year (FSJler) (subject to a charge)

Where can I get the Emsland Youth Ticket?

- For school pupils: You apply for the ticket at [Emsland-Jugendticket](#) and your school will give you the ticket.
- For trainees or FSJL: You apply for the ticket from your [bus company](#), which will also give you the ticket.

Which journeys can the ticket be used for?

The Emsland Youth Ticket is valid every day of the week, including holidays, around the clock, 365 days a year. It can be used both for travelling to school and for leisure activities. The ticket is also valid on [all buses](#) in the entire district of Emsland.

Is the offer also valid on the train?

No, the Emsland Youth Ticket is initially only valid on all bus routes in the district of Emsland.

Where can I find information about the bus connections?

At [fahrplaner](#) or [efa](#) you will find all bus connections in Emsland.

Financial matters and contracts

Basic information on contracts

Particularly important: You have not understood something? You can't read the document? Then don't sign anything. A signed contract often obliges you to pay money. It is sometimes very difficult to cancel this. Always check and compare several offers. Take your time to decide. Don't let anyone pressure you into signing a contract.

Insurances

In Germany, everyone has to pay for the damage they cause to others. Even if it happened unintentionally. Everyone is legally obliged to pay compensation. This applies to injuries, damaged property or financial losses, such as in the event of a car accident or if your child breaks a window pane with a ball.

It is possible to take out private Haftpflichtversicherung insurance. Such damage is then covered for you and your family. This is not compulsory, but highly recommended. Otherwise you may incur high costs in the event of damage. Many landlords and landladies expect you to take out this insurance.

💡 You can obtain more information on insurance from the [consumer advice centre](#).

Contracts and mobile phones

Mobile phone

There are basically two different mobile phone contracts in Germany: Prepaid contracts and fixed-term contracts. The prepaid contract has no fixed contract term, whereas a fixed-term contract has a minimum contract term. This contract is automatically renewed if you do not cancel it. Cancellation must be made in writing and in due time. In contrast to a fixed-term contract, there is no basic fee for a prepaid contract.

10 important questions for concluding a contract:

- How high is the basic fee? Does the fee increase after a certain period of time?
- Is there a minimum monthly turnover (minimum costs per month)?
- How long is the contract for (e.g. 12 or 24 months)?
- If I do not cancel the contract, it will be automatically renewed.
- When do I have to cancel if I don't want to extend the contract?
- How much does it cost to set up, switch and deactivate?
- How much does a minute cost (external/own network)?
- How much does a mobile phone with a contract cost and how much does a mobile phone without a contract cost?
- How much does Internet cost?
- How much do international calls cost?

Contracts

Contracts are concluded in Germany, for example, when starting work, moving into a new home, buying a car or mobile phone or for a gym membership. Be sure to pay attention to the content of a contract: How is the total price made up? Are there any other monthly costs in

addition to a one-off payment? Contracts are binding and must be honoured. They can only be cancelled within the applicable notice period.

Children and young people under the age of 18 cannot conclude contracts. In any case, make sure that your children cannot access your account details.

If you are not sure whether you can pay the running costs or whether you have understood everything correctly, do not sign the contract!

Once you have signed the contract, it is binding. It is therefore always a good idea to read through a contract at your leisure and have it explained to you in detail before you sign anything.

This is particularly important:

Never sign anything that you have not understood or cannot read. Otherwise you may end up signing a contract or agreement under which you have to pay something. It is sometimes very difficult to undo this. Always check and compare several offers and take your time to decide.

Don't let anyone pressure you into signing anything. Anyone who puts you under pressure is not an honest salesperson.

Do not sign any contracts on the phone, on the street, in front of a supermarket or on your doorstep!

Never give out your bank details over the phone!

Beware of "Schufa-free" credit offers!

There are many dubious offers for Schufa-free loans or gold Mastercards on the Internet. The offers are advertised on the websites as "fair", "transparent" or "allocation-proof", but often have false ratings and seals of approval. You are often promised a quick and unbureaucratic payout.

However, instead of the advertised loan, you only receive a prepaid card, which is also associated with high costs.

Even if you need money urgently, never sign such a contract and never enter your personal details on these websites.

Further information can be found on the website of the [consumer advice centre](#).

Bank account

A current account is an account for people who want to make payments via the bank. Your money is available in your current account at all times. Make sure that you have enough money in your account for all withdrawals and payments.

With a current account you can

- Make transfers
- Receive cashless payments (payments from public offices / authorities / social benefits are often made cashless, i.e. transferred to a personal current account)
- Set up standing orders
- Participate in direct debits
- Cashing cheques
- Making cashless payments with an EC card
- Withdraw or deposit 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 identification documents with you: Proof of arrival, residence permit, identity card. If no current address is noted on the legitimisation document, please also bring a registration certificate or a comparable document.

- After opening the account, you will receive an EC card with a four-digit PIN code. Sign the back of the EC card and memorise the PIN code. You will need the PIN code for cashless payments and for withdrawing money from ATMs. **Be sure to keep your card and PIN code separate!**
- If you want to withdraw cash, it is best to use the ATMs of the bank where you have your account. Then the withdrawal costs nothing. If the PIN code is entered incorrectly three times at the ATM, the debit card will be cancelled and blocked. In this case, you must ask your bank.
- If your debit card is lost or stolen, have it blocked immediately. State your sort code and account number. Then ask your bank for a new EC card.

 [116116](tel:116116)

 Around the clock.

Different banks offer current accounts with different conditions. Find out exactly how much a current account costs each month and what services the bank offers in return.

If you do not speak German or English, please bring an interpreter with you.

Online banking

With online banking, you can carry out your banking transactions from your PC, tablet or smartphone. You can view your accounts at any time and are independent of a branch. High security standards and modern TAN procedures apply.

Offers for children, young people, adults and senior citizens

Leisure activities for children, young people, adults and senior citizens

Enjoying exercise is one thing. But sport offers you another opportunity: sport makes it easier to settle into a new environment and socialise. The rules of sport recognise no cultural or national boundaries. People usually understand each other even without a common language. Sport offers a good and informal way of socialising with locals through personal contacts.

Would you like to learn to ride a bike?

Learn to ride a bike as an adult? Yes, it's possible and very relaxed: Take a look here! [Learn to ride a bike](#)

Would you like to learn to swim?

Unfortunately, the first attempts at swimming are usually much more difficult. But with the right support, it can be done! Anyone can learn to swim safely! Would you like to learn to swim in a swimming course? The DLRG offers swimming courses for children and adults. You can find all swimming [courses](#) here.

Football, swimming, dancing, climbing, chess - there's something for everyone

Here you will find information on the courses on offer and can click directly to the homepage of the **clubs** and get the contact details of the respective contact persons. Take a look here: [Indus KreisSportbund Emsland](#) or at [Sportangebotsfinder](#).

Would you like information, guidance and an introduction to the world of sport in Emsland?

Then find out more at [KreisSportbund Emsland](#). You will find the following offers here:

- Information on participating in sports clubs and sporting events
- Help with finding suitable club programmes and sports
- Support in making contact and registering
- Offers for further training and getting involved

Further information on leisure activities can be found here:

- [Cultural facilities and leisure activities](#)
- [Sports programmes in Emsland](#).

Senior centre

Senior citizens in Emsland

The Lower Saxony Senior Citizens and Care Support Centre with Dementia Service Centre in the Emsland district (SPN) Contact point for older people

Older people with questions about life in old age or dealing with everyday life can turn to the **Lower Saxony Seniors' Support Centre of the Emsland district (SPN)**. Providers of support services can also contact the senior citizens' support centre. The SPN is a central point of contact and offers information and support options or refers people to the right organisation. This saves older people a lot of time and effort.

The **aim** is to support the independence and autonomy of older people. It also aims to strengthen the knowledge and skills of older people. The focus is on the personal resources of the individual. There is also the opportunity to get involved through voluntary work.

You can find the **flyer for the senior citizens' support centre** [here](#).

Housing counselling in the district of Emsland - Comfortable living in all situations

Take advantage of the non-binding and free counselling service. You can find more information and public consultation hours on site [here](#).

DUO - volunteer senior citizen support


The proportion of elderly people in the population is increasing. Many of them live alone. To enable them to lead a self-determined life for as long as possible, we are looking for committed people who would like to dedicate some of their free time to senior citizens. If you would like to volunteer, you can find out more about the project and the qualification courses [here](#).




Media and technology guides

Volunteer "media and technology guides" enable the digital participation of older people in Emsland. The volunteers are also happy to come to your home. Further information is available [here](#).


Contact senior citizens' support centre (SPN)

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

 Kerstin Knoll

 [05931/441267](tel:05931441267) oder [05931/442211](tel:05931442211)

 @seniorenstuetzpunkt@emsland.de

 Monday to Thursday 08:30 - 12:30, 14:30 - 16:00
Friday 08:30 am - 12:30 pm



Language

Find a language course

In order to find your feet in Germany, it is very important to learn the German language both privately and professionally.

There are various options for this in the Emsland district. The following educational institutions can help you find a suitable language course for you. Make an appointment or go there directly during opening hours.

LEB in Niedersachsen e.V.

Bildungszentrum Emsland/Grafschaft Bentheim

 [Jägerstraße 6a, 49808 Lingen \(Ems\)](#)

☎ [0591 1405030](tel:05911405030)
 @ emsland@leb.de
 @ biz-lingen@leb.de

Volkshochschule Papenburg gGmbH

📍 [Hauptkanal rechts 72, 26871 Papenburg](#)
 👤 Frau Morasch
 ☎ [04961 922339](tel:04961922339)
 🌐 www.vhs-papenburg.de

Volkshochschule Meppen gGmbH

📍 [Freiherr-vom-Stein- Straße 1, 49716 Meppen](#)
 👤 Frau Lemmen
 ☎ [05931 937324](tel:05931937324)
 🌐 www.vhs-meppen.de

Volkshochschule Lingen gGmbH

📍 [Elsterstraße 1, 49808 Lingen \(Ems\)](#)
 👤 Frau Dr. Lonnemann
 ☎ [0591 91202840](tel:059191202840)
 🌐 www.vhs-lingen.de

Language courses

Initial orientation courses

The German courses for initial language orientation are for language beginners. Here you will learn elementary German. You will discover life in Germany. The course is designed to make your life in Germany easier. You will learn how to orientate yourself in everyday life. A course comprises 300 units of 45 minutes each. Various topics are discussed in the course. You will learn about "Health and medical care", "Work", "Kindergarten and school", "Housing", "Local orientation and transport/mobility". The focus is on speaking. The course is open to all interested parties.

Have you been offered a place on an [integration course](#)? Then you can switch to this course.

💡 German is spoken in the course - interpreters are not present in the course.

Contact details:

LEB Bildungszentrum Emsland

📍 Jägerstraße 6a, 49808 Lingen
 ☎ [0591/14050316](tel:059114050316)
 @ michael.berning@leb.de
 🌐 <https://www.leb-emsland.de>

VHS Meppen

👤 Daria Tkachenko
 ☎ [05931937327](tel:05931937327)
 @ daria.tkachenko@vhs-meppen.de
 🌐 <https://www.vhs-meppen.de>

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

💡 You can also contact a [migration advice centre](#). They will help you to find a suitable course.

Integration courses

In this course you will learn German. You will learn more than just the basics. Before the language course, you will be tested to see which course you need.

In the language course you will learn [German up to language level B1](#) in 600 lessons.

The orientation course will give you an insight into the [culture, politics and social](#) customs in Germany.

The integration course concludes with the examinations "Deutschtest für Zuwanderer" (DTZ) and "Leben in Deutschland" (LiD).

What does the integration course cost?

You have to pay 2.29 euros for each teaching unit (cost contribution).

Integration courses are often free of charge for recipients of social benefits.

Do you receive [income support](#)? Then contact [your case manager!](#) They will authorise you to take part in the course.

The [foreigners authority](#) can also authorise or oblige you to take part in the integration course.

You have not been authorised? But you would like to take part in a course?

Then you can [apply](#) for the integration course at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

Do you need help with the application?

Then get in touch with an [educational organisation!](#) They will also help you choose an integration course.

💡 **Important:** You will only find general information here. Please contact the relevant authority ([job centre](#), BAMF or [immigration office](#)) for information on your personal situation.

Vocational language courses (DeuFöV)

Are you already working? Are you still doing an apprenticeship? Do you want to start working soon?

In this course you will improve your German language skills. The courses are designed to improve your vocabulary. You will learn job-related words.

The vocational language course builds on the integration course. In the integration course you will learn everyday German. The vocational language course prepares you for the labour market.

Basic courses:

- Language level B1 to B2
- Language level B2 to C1
- Language level C1 to C2

Specialised courses

- For people who wish to have professions in the fields of nursing and medicine recognised.
- For people who require specialised knowledge in the technical or commercial field.
- For people who have not reached language level B1 after the integration course. They can attend courses with language level A2 to B1 or A1 to A2.
- For people who want to improve their [job-related language](#) skills alongside their work.

You need an authorisation or obligation to take part in a job-related German course.

You can obtain this authorisation from the [job centre](#) or the [employment agency](#).

However, you can also submit an application to the [Federal Office for Migration and Refugees](#).

💡 The basic requirement for participation is a [language level of at least B1](#).

💡 You can find information on current vocational language courses in your area on [KURSNET](#).

💡 **Important:** You will only find general information here. Please contact the relevant authority ([job centre](#), [employment agency](#) or the BAMF) for information on your personal situation.

Voluntary language courses

In addition to the official German courses, there are other opportunities to practise German in Emsland. Anyone can come to these groups, regardless of their residence status. In the so-called language cafés (or Sprachtreffs) there are many volunteers who will support you in learning German. In the language cafés you can meet other people and speak German with them. 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.


Where do language courses take place?

Café International Meppen | Herr Migura

📍 [Kirchstraße 5-6, 49716 Meppen](#)


✉ @raphael.migura@awo-ol.de

☎ [+4959315988173](tel:+4959315988173)


 [+49 \(0\) 15151308199](tel:+49(0)15151308199)

 Mondays - Saturdays 15:00 - 18:00

Willkommensbüro Lingen

 [Große Straße 19, 49808 Lingen](#)

 willkommen@lingen.de

 [+495919144734](tel:+495919144734)

 <https://tinyurl.com/willkommensbuero-lingen>

 Tuesdays 3 - 5 p.m., further dates and detailed advice on request


Haus Global Papenburg

 [Kirchstraße 48, 26871 Papenburg](#)

 Migration@drk-emsland.de

 [+49 \(0\) 496191232025](tel:+49(0)496191232025)

 <https://tinyurl.com/haus-global>


 Mondays and Thursdays 14:30 - 16:00 Counselling and further information


You can also find **other low-threshold language centres** near your place of residence.
Enquire at your [local authority](#).


Online language courses and online study

Online language courses

You can learn German on your smartphone or computer (also free of charge). Take advantage of the great offers to learn German quickly and make good use of the waiting time for a language course. These offers can also be useful during a language course. You can find more information about the language levels (A1-C2) [here](#).

 [Lunes App](#): The app helps you at school. And in training. And at work. The app has lots of information about words from different professions. There is a picture for every word. So you learn the German words. And there is a read-aloud function. Various exercises make learning fun. You can learn and memorise the vocabulary.

 [Serlo ABC](#): A free alphabetisation app for self-study or as a supplement to a language course. The app is approved as a textbook for integration courses.

 [Mein Deutschbuch](#): Comprehensive offer for learning the German language. The website is aimed at learners and teachers, A1-B2.

 [Deutsch-Uni Online \(DUO\)](#): Language learning programmes for A1 to C2.

🌐 [Basic language course from Deutsche Welle](#): This online language course contains modules on literacy and job-related language skills. There is also a placement test.

🌐 ["The City of Words"](#): App and website for playful vocabulary learning without prior knowledge in German, English, French and other languages.

🌐 [VHS learning portal](#): Free German courses. You can also learn to read, write and do maths. There is also help for preparing for school-leaving exams in German, maths and English.

🌐 [Language placement test](#): onSET-online language placement test for refugees and for language categorisation for full-time and voluntary workers.

Online study

Many refugees and asylum seekers want to go to university. But it is difficult for them. Because they have to pay a lot of money for university. And they often need good certificates and papers. Kiron Higher Education offers a good solution: Tuition fees are not important for refugees and asylum seekers. And they don't need good certificates and papers. The university offers places for everyone. The first 2 years go to university online. You can watch the courses in English. You can also add subtitles in any language. In the third year you go to the university on site. You can learn German while studying. You also get other help and counselling.

🌐 [Website Kiron](#)

Language level

You can attend a German course. There are six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 und C2. You start with A1. You have C2 in your native language.

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.

Training and work

In short

In order to find a good job in Germany, [German language skills](#) and completed [vocational training](#) or a [degree](#) are important.

On the following pages you will find information and contact persons for [language acquisition, training](#) and [entry into working life](#).

Information portal for professions

There are over 400 different professions in Germany. Would you like to learn a profession? Then find out more about the various professions on [the Berufenet website of the Federal Employment Agency](#). Also take a look at [career paths in Lower Saxony](#)!

Recognition of foreign educational qualifications

Have you already obtained a qualification abroad? For example, a school-leaving qualification or a vocational qualification? Then you must have the qualification recognised here in Germany. You can find more information [here](#).

Search portals for jobs, training and [internships](#)

Are you looking for a job? Then look for vacancies on [the job exchange of the Employment Agency](#) or [the Emsachse job portal](#).

You can get advice from the [job centre](#) or the [employment agency](#). You can find out more [here](#). You can also obtain further support from the [integration projects](#).

Work permit

The conditions under which you are allowed to work in Germany depend on your residence status. You can find information on this [here](#).

Language acquisition

You don't speak German? Then you can attend an [integration course](#)!
Do you want to complete an apprenticeship but don't speak enough German yet? Then attending a [vocational language course](#) (e.g. B2 language course) is an option for you. You can also improve your German while working([Job-BSK](#)).

School

[Teenagers and young adults](#) must attend a [vocational school \(BBS\)](#). This applies if you are doing vocational training, but also otherwise. [The vocational schools in the district of Emsland](#) also offer various educational programmes that prepare you for [vocational training](#) or for starting a career.

Take advantage of the counselling services offered by the [vocational schools in the district](#)! The [youth employment agencies](#) and the [youth migration service](#) can also advise you.

You can find more **migration advice centres** [here](#)!

Education and participation

[Leisure activities](#), a school trip or club membership. It all costs money.

It is therefore often difficult for children and young people from low-income families to realise full participation in social life. Take a look at the [education and participation package](#)!

Studying

Do you want to study? Then you can find **information about [studying](#)** here.

Find a job

Counselling and help

Are you looking for a job?

Then look for job vacancies on the [job exchange of the Employment Agency](#) or the [Emsachse job portal](#).

Do you need support?

Do you receive [citizen's allowance \(job centre\)](#)?

Then get in touch with [your case manager](#).

📍 Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931441448](tel:05931441448)

@arbeit@emsland.de

You can also find the job centre on [Instagram](#)!

In other cases, the [employment agency](#) is responsible for you.

Information for employers - Employer Service

In the district of Emsland, the Employer Service of the Employment Agency and the Job Centre are there to support you as an **employer**.

They will help you in your search for personnel, advise you on subsidies and much more. The service is free of charge for you!

[Here you](#) will find the contact persons of the **Job Centre** and [here](#) the contact persons of the **Employment Agency**. Feel free to get in touch!

Regulations on access to the labour market

👤 Are you 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 any restrictions.

👤 Have you fled to Germany?

Then your residence status is important. It determines whether you are allowed to work. We explain below what applies to you:

- **Asylum seekers with proof of arrival or authorisation to stay**

The immigration [authority](#) decides whether you are allowed to work. You must therefore submit an application to the foreigners authority.

- **Refugees with a residence permit**

Have you been recognised by the BAMF as a person entitled to asylum, refugee status or subsidiary protection? Then the immigration 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.

💡 **Important:** You will only find general information here. Please enquire about your personal situation at the [Foreigners'](#) Registration Office.

Internship

What is an internship?

An internship is a temporary position. This means that interns work in a company or organisation for a limited period of time. An internship can be done in almost any profession.

An internship is there to...

- familiarise yourself with a new profession,
- get to know a working environment in practice,
- and / or to deepen theoretical knowledge through practical (professional) experience.

What are the advantages of an internship?

An internship is very helpful before entering working life.

- Interns get to know professions and fields of activity. They can see which profession is right for them.

- Interns get to know companies and organisations. They see whether they want to work there.
- Interns make contacts that can be helpful when entering working life.
- The company or organisation gets to know the interns. This may result in a job or apprenticeship after the internship.

For whom is an internship useful?

An internship can be useful for anyone. When hiring new employees, for example, employers look at where the applicant has already completed an internship.

Internships are particularly useful for

- Pupils,
- students,
- People about to enter working life (to gain professional experience),
- People who want to change careers,
- people who have been out of work for a while.

The most important types of internships

Compulsory internship

- Pupil internship: Pupils often have to do an internship at school. The pupil internship often only lasts one to two weeks. The aim is to familiarise pupils with working life and give them an initial career orientation.
- Internship during studies: In order to complete a degree programme, students often have to complete an internship. The procedure and duration are regulated by the study regulations. Compulsory work placements provide initial work experience.

Voluntary internship

Anyone can do a voluntary internship - whether they are school pupils, students or adults. The duration is determined together with the company or organisation.

Payment

Interns sometimes receive money during their internship. But not always. This depends on several factors. For example, on the type of internship, the duration or even the sector.

Interns are entitled to payment if

- the internship lasts longer than three months
- and is voluntary.

This rule does not apply to compulsory internships as part of a degree programme. The rule also does not apply to interns under the age of 18.

Ten tips for interns

1. Find out about the internship company before the internship (e.g. on the internet).
2. Be polite, punctual and reliable.
3. Show interest and motivation.
4. Ask questions if you want to know something or if something is unclear.
5. Address problems directly. Remain friendly.
6. Accept criticism and learn from it.
7. Private is private: for example, avoid private phone calls or constantly looking at your mobile phone.
8. Dress appropriately.
9. Make new contacts. These contacts can be helpful when looking for a job later on.
10. Apply for an internship certificate. The internship certificate can be helpful when looking for a job later on.

Do you receive income support ([job centre](#))? Then let the case management know before you start your internship!

Applications and job interviews

Many companies place job adverts. Either in the newspaper or on the Internet. The company is 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 (in writing, by e-mail, in person or by telephone).

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 will 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.

🌐 Information and templates for cover letters can be found 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.

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 usually 40 hours per week.

You are entitled to breaks:

- From 6 hours you must take at least a 30-minute break.
- If you work 9 hours or more, you are entitled to a break of at least 45 minutes.

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 538 euros and are exempt from tax and social security contributions.

Only the employer pays a lump sum. If desired, the employee can pay into the pension scheme.

However, if you become unemployed, you are not entitled to unemployment benefit 1.

Part-time

The number of hours usually comprises between 20 and 30 hours per week and is subject to tax and social security contributions.

The salary is adjusted compared to full-time positions.

At least the statutory minimum wage applies.

Full-time

The number of hours usually comprises 39 or 40 hours per week and is subject to tax and social security contributions.

You receive the full salary.

At least the statutory minimum wage applies.

You are entitled to at least 20 days paid holiday per year.

Temporary work

The employment contract is concluded with the temporary employment agency and is subject to tax and social security contributions.

The temporary employment agency assigns you to customers on a temporary basis for a maximum of 18 months.

At least the statutory minimum wage applies.

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 tax office 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 (Bürgeramt). Or by filling in a form 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, employment agency or job centre? That is also **illegal**. You are wrongly receiving state benefits even though you are in paid work.

Payroll accounting or payroll accounting

Are you an employee?

Then you will receive a statement after the first month of work.
Some employers will also issue you with a monthly statement thereafter.
Others only do so if something is different in the month in question (e.g. Christmas bonus).

Mandatory details in the statement are

- Name and address of the employer
- Name, address and date of birth of the employee
- Insurance number of the employer

- Date of the start of employment
- Tax class and tax identification number
- Payroll period
- Gross salary (salary without deductions)
- Type and amount of supplements or allowances
- Type and amount of deductions
- Net amount (after all deductions) and is usually the amount paid out

💡 Keep your payslips in a safe place! You can then present them to the authorities (e.g. immigration office).

Labour exploitation and illegal work

Labour exploitation

This is the case if you (have to) work under unfair conditions or without your consent.

It is a criminal offence:

- Not paying money even though work has been done.
- Working longer hours than contractually agreed for the same pay (working around the minimum wage).
- Human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation or forced sex work.
- Slavery and forced labour.

Illegal labour

This is when you earn money without paying taxes.

You also do not pay [social security contributions](#). This is illegal and will be prosecuted and penalised.

You are obliged to notify the authorities if you take up work.

The money is then usually paid out in cash and not transferred to your account. There is no [employment contract](#), no receipts or [payslips](#).

The skilled trades are particularly affected. This is why customs often inspect construction sites. There they ask for employment contracts and residence permits. They also check tax liability.

If you receive social benefits and are caught working illegally, you can go to prison. In addition, benefits are significantly reduced or cancelled.

Your rights as an employee; Fair Integration Lower Saxony

Here you will find all the information you need about your rights as an employee in Germany. If you know your rights, you can protect yourself from exploitation and discrimination.

Refugees and migrants from third countries who have a job, are doing an apprenticeship or an internship can get advice here. They will advise you if you want to work and have questions.

Topics include

- Labour market and employment contracts
- Payment and minimum wage
- Working hours, holidays or dismissal
- Incapacity for work and accidents at work
- Health, long-term care and pension insurance
- Unfair treatment by bosses
- Compliance with employee rights
- Counselling is free and confidential.

The [FAIRE INTEGRATION advice centre in Oldenburg](#) is responsible for Emsland. They can advise you by telephone, online or in person.

You can find more information in the flyer!

[Flyer Fair Integration Flyer July 24.pdf](#)

Recognition of foreign educational qualifications

Certificates in Germany

Certificates are very important in Germany. You receive them at school, at university or at work. At work, they are called job references. Certificates show what you have learnt and achieved. They are an important prerequisite for getting a job. You also need certificates to gain admission to a school or university.

Have you already obtained certificates abroad? Then you can have them recognised in Germany. Your certificates will be checked to determine what qualifications you have in Germany. It is like a "translation" of your achievements. If you have lost your certificates, you can try to have your professional skills and experience recognised through tests.

Specialist advice on the recognition of certificates

Do you have a [school-leaving certificate](#) from abroad and would like to start training or work in Lower Saxony? Then you can find out how your qualification is recognised in Germany.

If you have a [vocational qualification](#), there is also an option to have this recognised.

Would you like to study or do academic work? Then contact the relevant university offices to have your qualifications recognised.

BUS-GmbH offers counselling on the recognition of foreign academic and professional qualifications.

Who can seek counselling?

Anyone can seek counselling, regardless of their residence status. Simply make an appointment! Counselling is confidential and free of charge.

Please bring the following documents with you:


- Curriculum vitae
- school reports
- Subject and grade overviews
- Identity card or passport
- Further information on the required documents can be found on the [website](#).

Do you receive money from the job centre?

If so, [your case manager](#) can help you arrange a counselling appointment.


If you are unable to pay for the translation of your documents yourself, it may be possible for the job centre to cover the costs if you receive benefits under SGB II. Please enquire with your case manager before having your documents translated.

Contact & registration

 You can register for a counselling session [here](#).

BUS-GmbH | Frau Blümke


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 [+495416929622](tel:+495416929622)

 <https://www.bus-gmbh.de/projekte/iq-netzwerk-nied...>

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 <https://www.bus-gmbh.de/projekte/iq-netzwerk-nied...>

Official certification of certificates

You have a document, for example a certificate. The authorities want to know whether the document is genuine?

Then you need to have it officially notarised! This is also important for enrolment at a university. All copies of certificates must be officially notarised. You can have them notarised at the [citizens' office of your municipality](#) or at the district of Emsland. Please remember that the documents must first be translated into German.

You can find more information on the [service portal of the state of Lower Saxony](#).

Apply for a certificate of good conduct

Applying for a certificate of good conduct

Some employers want you to provide a certificate of good conduct. Certificates of good conduct serve as proof that someone has no criminal record. The certificate of good conduct is sometimes also called a "police certificate of good conduct". For example, you will need one if you want to work in the security sector, with children or in the public sector.

There are different types of certificate of good conduct:

- for private purposes
- for a public authority
- Extended
- European

Ask the authority for which you need it which type is required.

Who do I need to contact?

The responsibility lies with the municipality, the joint municipality and the city. You can find more information on the website of your [local authority](#).

Instructions for persons handling food

Food instruction

Do you come into contact with open food at work? Do you produce food?

Then you must undergo an instruction!

The instruction is called food instruction and is mandatory according to § 43 of the Infection Protection Act (IfSG) before starting work.

The aim is to enable employees to take responsibility for ensuring that the handling of food does not pose a risk in terms of the spread of pathogens.

Further information can be found [here](#). You can also register for the online seminar there.

Do you receive money from the job centre? If so, it may cover the costs. Get in touch [with your contact person](#) before registering!

Young adults

Youth Employment Agency (JBA)

Are you about to start your career?

With so many options, the decision is not always easy. The good news is that you're not alone!


The Youth Employment Agency (JBA) will support you with career guidance and take plenty of time for you and your questions. Regardless of whether you want to start an apprenticeship or a degree programme - or maybe you have completely different plans? Or none at all?


Whatever is on your mind, you are in good hands at the JBA. Of course, you will also find a sympathetic ear if things are simply not going well for you at the moment.

JBA Emsland advises and supports young people up to the age of 25 in finding the right [apprenticeship](#) or suitable [course of study](#).

Follow the JBA on Instagram [@jba_emsland](#)

 www.jba-emsland.de

 [05931442711](tel:05931442711)

 info@jba-emsland.de

Entry qualification

Do you know what you want to be? But you haven't found a [training place](#) by 30 September?

Then you can do a longer work placement under certain conditions. This prepares you for [vocational training](#). It is called entry qualification (EQ) and lasts between 4 and 12 months.

The introductory qualification usually starts on 1 October.

If you are interested, ask [your case](#) manager if you receive [citizen's allowance](#)! Otherwise contact the [Employment Agency](#)!

You may also need authorisation from the [immigration office](#).

Are you not yet 18 years old? Then you must have a medical examination before taking up employment! This is called an **initial examination**. Your doctor will then issue you with a certificate which you must present to your employer. You can find more information [here](#).

Please note: you cannot apply for a tolerated stay for training with an EQ!

Voluntary Social Year (FSJ)

Voluntary Social Year (FSJ)

What is a Voluntary Social Year (FSJ)?

The Voluntary Social Year (FSJ) is a good alternative to an internship. If you have completed compulsory schooling and are under 27 years old, you can do an FSJ. Here you can gain valuable experience at a social or cultural organisation.

Where can you do an FSJ?

- Hospital
- Kindergarten
- School
- Youth welfare centre
- Parish
- Cultural institution
- Facilities for older people or people with disabilities

Where can you find offers?

[Here](#) you will find further information and a list of recognised organisations that offer a Voluntary Social Year.

To find a place in your desired area of work for a social year, you should apply early for an FSJ. Ideally six months in advance. Sometimes it is also possible to start a FSJ at short notice within four weeks.

What benefits do you receive?

- You receive pocket money per month
- You will receive a catering allowance per month
- If necessary, you may be provided with accommodation (a furnished room)
- You have at least 26 days holiday if your voluntary service lasts 12 months
- You are insured in the event of illness, accident and damage to third parties
- You will be reimbursed for the cost of travelling to and from the seminars
- Under certain conditions, you may be offered financial support for a language course
- You must organise and pay for your travel to and from the volunteer placement yourself

💡 Ask the organisation what specific benefits you are entitled to during the FSJ!

Do I get a certificate?

At the end of your voluntary service, you will receive a certificate for your work at the placement centre. You will also receive a certificate for the training days.

What are the benefits of an FSJ?

- Social commitment and doing good
- Personal development, broadening your horizons and experiencing new things
- Professional orientation in the FSJ - not only in the social sector
- Gain practical experience
- FSJ can be recognised for university, pre-study internship, year of recognition
- Take time out and gain more time

💡 **Please note:** An FSJ must be authorised by the foreigners authority if you do not have an unrestricted work permit!

Assisted training (AsA)

Are you completing an in-company [training programme](#) or an [introductory qualification](#)?

Then **AsA** might be something for you!

Tutoring or socio-educational support or both?

Together with your contact person, you will determine your individual needs.

Please get in touch with us!

👤 [Job centre](#)

👤 [Employment agency](#)

Unemployment and social benefits

Unemployment benefit at the employment agency

Entitlement to unemployment benefit from the employment agency

You are unemployed if you are able to work but are not in employment. This means you do not earn any money to live on. As Germany is a welfare state, it helps people who are unable to earn their own living, or can only do so in part.

However, in principle, everyone should earn their own living by working.

You will receive unemployment benefit if you lose your job. To do so, you must have worked in Germany for at least 12 months in the last 30 months and be subject to compulsory insurance. There are other conditions under certain circumstances.




The Federal Employment Agency will decide whether you receive unemployment benefit.

1. register as a jobseeker!

You have been made redundant, you have given notice or your temporary employment contract is coming to an end. The Employment Agency will support you in your search for new employment. They will also work with you to determine whether you are entitled to financial support.

It is important that you register as a jobseeker immediately. Register as a jobseeker at least 3 months before the end of your employment relationship. If you only find out later, register as a jobseeker no later than 3 days later.

You can do this in various ways:

-  [On site at your local employment agency](#)
-  by telephone on [0800/4555500](tel:08004555500) (free of charge)
-  [online](#) at the employment agency


2. register as unemployed in person!

You must register as unemployed in person or online at your local employment agency on your first day without work at the latest. This is one of the prerequisites for receiving unemployment benefit.

3. complete the application for unemployment benefit!

Apply for unemployment benefit [online](#). Alternatively, you can obtain an application form from your local employment agency to submit the application in writing.

You can obtain further information here.

 **Important:** You will only find general information here. Please contact your local [employment agency](#) for information on your personal situation.

FAQ: Application for citizen's allowance (job centre)

Who is entitled to citizen's allowance?

All persons in need of assistance who are capable of work and have reached the age of 15 and have not yet reached the age of 65 to 67 can receive citizen's allowance. People who live with you in a community of need (e.g. children) also receive benefits.

Where do I have to apply for citizen's allowance?

In the district of Emsland, the specialist labour and social services of the [towns and municipalities](#) are responsible for granting benefits.

How much is the citizen's allowance? How is it made up?

The standard subsistence needs include in particular the costs of food, clothing, personal hygiene, household effects and everyday necessities. It also covers the costs of appropriate accommodation and heating.

Standard requirements from 01.01.2024

for single persons, single parents or beneficiaries,

- whose partner is a minor 563 euros
- 506 euros for adult partners in the benefit community
- 451 euros for other adult members of the benefit community who are capable of earning

for young people in a benefit community from the age

- from the age of 15 to the age of 18 471 euros

- for children from the age of seven to the age of 14 390 euros
- 357 euros for children up to the age of six

My fridge is broken. Will I get a new one?

No, such costs are already included in the standard requirement.

However, you may be eligible for a loan. You can also apply for a loan if you do not receive benefits because you are not in need of assistance, but your income and assets are not sufficient to cover the cost of the purchase.

How do I find out whether I will receive money?

You will be notified of the decision on your application in writing. The decision will tell you whether you are entitled to benefits, for how long and in what amount.

When and how are the cash benefits paid out?

The benefits will be transferred to your account on the 1st of the month in which you are entitled to them.

Further information can be found on the [website](#) of the Emsland District Job Centre.

 **Important:** You will only find general information here. Please contact your local authority for information on your personal situation.

Entitlement to benefits under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act

You will receive benefits under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act if you:

- are an asylum seeker in Germany or
- are a foreigner with a tolerated stay permit or
- are obliged to leave the country and
- have no income or assets or
- earn too little in your job and need support to cover your living costs.

You will receive:

- Pocket money and a further amount for food, clothing and healthcare.
- Cover in the event of illness.
- Housing and heating costs.
- [Benefits for education and participation.](#)

You are not entitled to benefits under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act if:

- Your disposable income or assets are sufficient to live on,
- you already receive benefits under the Social Security Code.

Making an application:

- In the district of Emsland, the specialist labour and social services of the [towns and municipalities](#) are responsible for granting benefits.

💡 **Important:** You will only find general information here. Please contact your local authority for information on your personal situation.

Children, youth and family

Basic information on children, youth and family

Children, young people and families enjoy special protection in Germany. This protection begins during pregnancy and continues until the child reaches the age of 18.

The Youth Welfare Office supports parents and guardians in the upbringing, care and education of children and young people. It is the point of contact for all related questions, uncertainties and problems.

💡 The following applies: Better too early than too late!

Pregnancy and birth

Pregnant women are under special protection in Germany. They are allowed to seek counselling. You will be cared for by a doctor. If you are pregnant, you must first go to a gynaecologist (gynaecologist). Have the check-ups carried out there. You will then receive a maternity pass. The maternity pass is a document containing important information about your pregnancy. It also contains information about your health. And that of your child. Always take your maternity record with you in case of emergencies.

Pregnancy counselling

Diakonisches Werk

📍 Bahnhofstraße 29, 49716 Meppen

☎ +49 (0) 593198150

@dw-meppen@diakonie-emsland.de

🌐 www.diakonie.de

📍 Bögenstraße 7, 49808 Lingen

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Sozialdienst kath. Frauen e.V. Meppen - Emsland Mitte


📍 Nagelshof 21 b, 49716 Meppen


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 www.skf-meppen.de

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 Hauptstraße 50, 26897 Esterwegen


 [05955/2871](tel:05955/2871)

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Caritasverband für den Landkreis Emsland


Kirchstraße 16, 26871 Papenburg


 [04961/94410](tel:04961/94410)

 inoormann@caritas-os.de oder vbrinker@caritas-os.de


 www.caritas-os.de


 Am Markt, 49751 Sögel

 [05952/93700](tel:05952/93700)

 mrohjans@caritas-os.de


Außensprechstunde Werlte

 Hauptstraße 73, 49757 Werlte

 [05952/93700](tel:05952/93700) (Terminabsprache über Sögel)

pro familia Lingen

Lookenstraße 26, 49808 Lingen

 [0591/12078437](tel:0591/12078437)

 lingen@profamilia.de

 www.profamilia.de/lingen


Pregnancy counselling


donum vitae emsland e.V.

 <https://emsland.donumvitae.org/>

 Monday to Friday from 8.30 - 11.30 a.m. and Monday to Wednesday from 3.00 - 5.00 p.m.


Beratungsstelle Lingen


 Am Wall-Süd 21, 49808 Lingen

 [0591/8079820](tel:0591/8079820)

 lingen@emsland.donumvitae.org

Beratungsstelle Meppen

 Margaretenstraße 25, 49716 Meppen

 [05931/599324](tel:05931/599324)

 meppen@emsland.donumvitae.org

Beratungsstelle Papenburg

📍 Kirchstraße 29, 26871 **Papenburg**

☎ [04961/779990](tel:04961779990)

@ papenburg@emsland.donumvitae.org

Beratungsstelle Werlte

📍 Am Markt 7, 49757 **Werlte**

☎ [04961/779990](tel:04961779990)

@

werlte@emsland.donumvitae.org

📅 Every Monday and Thursday (appointments can be made via Papenburg)

Diakonisches Werk

📍 Bahnhofstraße 29, 49716 **Meppen**

☎ [05931/98150](tel:0593198150)

@ dw-meppen@diakonie-emsland.de

🌐 www.diakonie.de

📍 Bögenstraße 7, 49808 **Lingen**

☎ [0591/800410](tel:0591800410)

@ dw-lingen@diakonie-emsland.de

📍 Landsbergstraße 9, 26871 **Papenburg**

☎ [04961/98880](tel:0496198880)

@ dw-papenburg@diakonie-emsland.de

The help hotline for pregnant women in need: ☎ [08004040020](tel:08004040020)

Midwife

Midwives support women and their families from the beginning of pregnancy to the end of breastfeeding. Midwives provide counselling during pregnancy. They can help with the birth. After the birth, they introduce breastfeeding. They also take care of the woman's physical and psychological recovery. Every woman can call on the help of a midwife. Most services are covered by health insurance.

The [Hebammenzentrale Emsland](#) helps with the search for a midwife. The work of the midwife centre is free of charge.

Delivery and aftercare

Your gynaecologist will refer you to a maternity clinic. After the birth, ask there for a midwife or obstetric nurse for aftercare. You will receive a birth certificate from the clinic.

You can find help after the birth here: [Welcome - Practical help for families after the birth](#)

Evangelisches Dorfhelferinnenwerk Niedersachsen e.V.:

[Village helpers](#) support you in the household and look after your family if you are unable to do so due to health reasons. They provide your children with everything they need: Nappy changing, dressing, feeding, comforting and much more. You will take them to kindergarten and school, pick them up, eat and play with them and supervise their homework.

Notification to the registry office

Newborn children must be registered with the [registry office](#). Do you live in accommodation? Then the birth must be reported to the management. The maternity clinic will register the birth with the registry office. There you will receive the (provisional) birth certificate for your child. Bring your identity card with you. You will also need the birth certificate from the clinic. Are you married? Bring your marriage certificate with you.

💡 Please only present original documents. If your documents are in a foreign language, an officially certified German translation is required.

👥 Do you live in shared accommodation? Give your accommodation manager a copy of your birth certificate. Your child will then be registered.

Paediatricians

There are ten early detection examinations (U1-U9 and J1). This means that your child will be examined regularly until the age of 6. The paediatrician monitors your child's development. The U1 (examination after birth) and U2 examinations usually take place in the clinic. For further examinations, you must make an appointment with [your paediatrician](#).

💡 At Kita-Anmeldung you may be asked to provide proof of complete early detection examinations.

Childcare

Day care centre

Kita is a term for children's day care centre. Your child can attend a day care centre. Your child must be at least one year old. Your child will be looked after there by nursery teachers. It will learn many important things. Some centres also accept children under the age of one.

Are you looking for a place in a daycare centre? Then contact your local town or municipal administration.

Child day care

Parents are entitled to a childcare place for children from the age of one. You can choose between child day care and a day care centre for children between one and three years of age. The children are looked after by a permanent carer in a small group. The local family centres are the point of contact for finding a childcare place.

Costs

Attending a day care centre is generally free of charge for children from the age of three until they start school.

In many cases, the fees for the day care centre or child day care are paid by the city or district. In the case of day care centres, you must submit an application to the municipality; in the case of day care centres, you must submit an application to the [youth welfare office](#).

Crèche, kindergarten and after-school care are different types of daycare centres for different age groups.

💡 Your child can learn the German language and discover new things at the daycare centre. They will also socialise with other children and get to know friends and the German culture. Take advantage of this opportunity, it is important for your child's future. Attending a day care centre also helps to prepare your child for school.

💡 Unfortunately, there are not always enough places in the immediate vicinity of your home or accommodation. To find a place, ask your local authority, the [youth welfare office](#) or your accommodation service.

Crèche

The crèche is a facility for children aged 1 to 3 years. In the crèche, children are supported in their development by specially trained staff in small groups. Attention and care from the carers are particularly important here.

Kindergarten

The kindergarten is a facility for children from the age of 3 until they start school. In the kindergarten, the children can play, paint, do handicrafts and learn with other children. In the last year of kindergarten, the children also have regular pre-school lessons to prepare them for starting school. There are private and public kindergartens. Whether attending kindergarten costs you anything depends on the kindergarten and where you live.

(Primary) school children up to the age of 13

There are also after-school care options for school children up to the age of 13. There are many different childcare models, such as after-school care, lunchtime care or all-day school. In all models, children are supported in completing their homework. In addition, leisure activities are not neglected. You can find out which childcare model is available for (primary) school children in your town or municipality from your primary school, municipality or youth welfare office.

Family centres

Families should feel comfortable and valued in the Emsland district. Families sometimes need help, advice or support in their everyday lives. That's what family centers are for. They are found in every city, town and community.

What is a family center?

A family center is a place for parents and their children. They help and advise if you have any problems or questions. There are various offers for parents and children. Help and offers are combined here.

What do family centers offer?

- They help if you need care for your child.
- They find solutions for childcare. Especially during the holidays or when the daycare is closed.
- They provide parents with further education, for example about parenting and nutrition.
- They advise on problems in the family, parenting or other questions. If you have problems, they refer you to advice centers.
- There are joint meetings here, such as toddler groups (mothers with babies).
- Here there are volunteers. They provide support and help in the family or daycare center.

Where can I find a family center near me?

Here:

Bawinkel: Familienzentrum der SG Lengerich

📍 Prinzenweg 2, 49844 Bawinkel

☎ [05969981864](tel:05969981864)

@ fz-kita-bawinkel@t-online.de

Dörpen: Familienzentrum der SG Dörpen

📍 Astrid-Lindgren-Straße 1, 26892 Dörpen

☎ [049639197731](tel:049639197731)

@ familienzentrum@kita-st-elisabeth-doerpen.de

Emsbüren: Familienzentrum Emsbüren

📍 Papienstraße 15, "Alte Amtsvogtei", 48488 Emsbüren

☎ [059034809864](tel:059034809864) oder [01741717953](tel:01741717953)

@ info@familienzentrum-emsbueren.de

Esterwegen: Familienzentrum Nordhümmling

📍 Zum Dorfplatz 15, 26897 Esterwegen

☎ [05955532](tel:05955532)

@ fz@kita-esterwegen.de

Freren: Familienzentrum der SG Freren

📍 Markt 1, 49832 Freren

☎ [05902950456](tel:05902950456)

@ familienzentrum@freren.de

Geeste: Familienzentrum Geeste

📍 Huberta-Roggendorf-Straße 12, 49744 Geeste

☎ [059379189985](tel:059379189985)

@ familienzentrum.geeste@web.de

Haren: Familienzentrum Sankt Elisabeth

📍 Kirchstraße 29, 49733 Haren

☎ [0593250033441](tel:0593250033441)

@ familienzentrum@martinus-haren.de

Haselünne: Familienzentrum Sankt Vincentius

📍 Holzbaumweg 3, 49740 Haselünne

☎ [05961262](tel:05961262) oder [0596112009411](tel:0596112009411)

@ familienzentrum-haseluenne@web.de

Herzlake: Familienzentrum Sankt Nikolaus

📍 Heinrich-Kottmann-Straße 2, 49770 Herzlake

☎ [059621234](tel:059621234)

@kath.kindergarten-herzlake@ewetel.net

Lathen: Familienzentrum Purzelbaum

📍 Wahner Straße 13, 49762 Lathen

☎ [059336468245](tel:059336468245)

@familienzentrum.purzelbaum@lathen.de

Lingen: Familienzentrum Arche Noah

📍 Loosstraße 37a, 49809 Lingen

☎ [05913580](tel:05913580)

@kts.johannes.lingen@evlka.de

Lingen: Familienzentrum Sankt Bonifatius

📍 Burgstraße 21a, 49808 Lingen

☎ [05918227](tel:05918227)

@kika.bonifatius@ewetel.net

Lingen: Familienzentrum Christ König

📍 Am Reinelhof 2, 49809 Lingen

☎ [05912315](tel:05912315)

@kiga-christ-koenig@web.de

Lingen: Familienzentrum Gebrüder Grimm

📍 Elsterstraße 1, 49808 Lingen

@familienzentrum-grimm@mk-lingen.de

Lingen: Familienzentrum Sankt Josef

📍 Josefstraße 19, 49809 Lingen

☎ [05919669152](tel:05919669152)

@kita.st.josef.laxten@web.de

Meppen: Familienzentrum Sankt Margareta

📍 Damaschkering 3, 49716 Meppen

☎ [059313580](tel:059313580)

@st.margareta-kindergarten@ewetel.net

Meppen: Familienzentrum Sankt Vitus

📍 Kanalstraße 30, 49716 Meppen

☎ [059318227](tel:059318227)

@mail@st.vitus-meppen.de

Meppen: Familienzentrum Sankt Ansgar

📍 Rosenstraße 29, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931847395](tel:05931847395)

@familienzentrum-ansgar@meppen-west.de

Papenburg: Familienzentrum David

📍 Barenbergstraße 28, 26871 Papenburg

☎ [049617088](tel:049617088)

@alexandra.nee@evlka.de

Papenburg: Familienzentrum Sankt Michael

📍 Spillmannsweg 12, 26871 Papenburg

☎ [0496171339](tel:0496171339) oder [01633452143](tel:01633452143)

@familienzentrum-st.michael-papenburg@kita-bistum-os.de

Papenburg: DRK Familienzentrum Regenbogenland

📍 Am Volkspark 22, 26871 Papenburg

☎ [0496191232040](tel:0496191232040)

@familienzentrum@drk-emsland.de

Papenburg/ Aschendorf: Familienzentrum Sankt Amandus

📍 Schulstraße 31, 26871 Aschendorf

☎ [04962700](tel:04962700)

@familienzentrum-st.amandus-aschendorf@kita-bistum-os.de

Rhede: Familienzentrum Sankt Nikolaus

📍 Kolpingstraße 1, 26899 Rhede

☎ [04964958552](tel:04964958552)

@familienzentrum.st.nikolaus@ewe.net

Salzbergen: Familienzentrum Salzbergen

📍 Bahnhofstraße 3, 48499 Salzbergen

☎ [059767894943](tel:059767894943) oder [01602317160](tel:01602317160)

@beckmann@salzbergen.de

Spelle: Familienzentrum "Haus der Familie"

📍 Hauptstraße 43, 48480 Spelle

☎ [05977937190](tel:05977937190)

@familienzentrum@spelle.de

Sögel: Familienzentrum Sankt Jakobus

📍 Prinzenkamp 1, 49751 Sögel

☎ [05952969260](tel:05952969260)

@grote@kiga-jakobus.de

Twist: Familienzentrum Twist

📍 Flensbergstraße 7, 49767 Twist

☎ [05936919720](tel:05936919720)

@familienzentrum-twist@ewetel.net

Werlte: Familienzentrum Sankt Sixtus

📍 Marktstraße 23, 49757 Werlte

☎ [059519949640](tel:059519949640)

@anna@kiga-werlte.de

Language and family education programmes

Language education starts at home when children talk to their parents. It continues later in the daycare centre. There are programmes such as „**Rucksack KiTa**“, „**Griffbereit**“ und „**griffbereitMINI**“. These are programmes that support children and parents with an international history in language education. These programmes also support the daycare centres in helping the children to learn. It is recognised that it is a great skill when children and

families speak several languages.

The programmes are all free! They are presented here:

Rucksack KiTa

The programme **Rucksack KiTa** is aimed at children between the ages of 4 and 6 with an international family history as well as their parents/families and educational institutions. The aim is for children to learn German better in daycare centres, but for their family language to remain important. It is a programme for families in which parents learn how they can best support their children in their development and in learning German. The programme takes place once a week for two hours.

You can find more information about this programme here:

<https://tinyurl.com/Rucksack-Kita>

You can take advantage of the programme at these locations **Rucksack KiTa** programme at these locations:

Familienzentrum DRK Papenburg

Kita Homeric

📍 Homerichstraße 8, 26878 Papenburg

☎ [04961-91232040](tel:04961-91232040) oder [0172-4034530](tel:0172-4034530)

@familienzentrum@drk-emsland.de

Familienzentrum DRK Papenburg

Kita Regenbogenland

📍 Am Volkspark 22, 26878 Papenburg

☎ [04961-91232040](tel:04961-91232040) oder [0172-4034530](tel:0172-4034530)

@familienzentrum@drk-emsland.de

Familienzentrum Sankt Michael

📍 Spillmannsweg 12, 26871 Papenburg

☎ [04961-71339](tel:04961-71339) oder [0163-3452143](tel:0163-3452143)

@familienzentrum-st.michael-papenburg@kita-bistum-...

Familienzentrum Purzelbaum

📍 Heidswiesmoor 5, 49762 Lathen

☎ [05933-6468245](tel:05933-6468245)

@

familienzentrum.purzelbaum@lathen.de

Familienzentrum Sankt Ansgar

Gemeindehaus Maria zum Frieden

📍 Pfarrer-Orgaß-Stiege 19, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931-847395](tel:05931-847395)

@familienzentrum-ansgar@meppen-west.de

Familienzentrum Sankt Margareta

KiTa St. Josef

📍 Josefstraße 12, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931-3580](tel:05931-3580)

@ st.margareta-kindergarten@ewetel.net

Familienzentrum Sankt Vitus

📍 Holzbaumweg 3, 49740 Haselünne

☎ [05961-262](tel:05961-262) oder [05961-12009411](tel:05961-12009411)

@ familienzentrum-haseluenne@web.de

Kita Emspiraten

📍 Georgstraße 34, 49733 Haren

☎ [05932-7346011](tel:05932-7346011)

@

emspiraten-kinderland@vitus.info

Griffbereit

This is a programme for families with and without an international history. It is a multilingual and guided playgroup in which mothers and fathers play together with their children aged 1 to 3 years. The aim is to promote the children's development, improve their language skills and strengthen the togetherness of different cultures, which means understanding each other, helping each other and accepting each other for who we are. The playgroup meets once a week for 1.5 to 2 hours.

You can find more information about this programme here: [Griffbereit ANSICHT 2023.pdf](#)

The programme is available at these locations **Griffbereit:**

Familienzentrum DRK Papenburg

Kita Homeric

📍 Homerichstraße 8, 26878 Papenburg

☎ [04961-91232040](tel:04961-91232040) oder [0172-4034530](tel:0172-4034530)

@ familienzentrum@drk-emsland.de

Familienzentrum Samtgemeinde Lengerich

Evangelisches PFarrheim

📍 Hermann-Meier-Straße 3, 49838 Lengerich

☎ [05963-981864](tel:05963-981864)

@ fz-kita-bawinkel@t-online.de

Familienzentrum Sankt Vitus

📍 Rosenstraße 30, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931-8227](tel:05931-8227)

@

mail@st.vitus-meppen.de

griffbereitMINI

The programme **griffbereitMINI** is a programme for parents with small children and babies aged 0-1 years. Expectant parents can also take part in the programme. This programme is a multilingual and guided playgroup for parents with and without an international background. They play together and learn how best to talk to babies and young children. They speak in different languages, both in the language of the parents and in German. The aim is for the babies and young children to hear a lot of language while playing so that they can learn well. The playgroup meets once a week for 1.5 hours.

You can find more information about this programme here: [GriffbereitMINI ANSICHT.pdf](#)

The programme is available at this location **griffbereitMINI**:

Familienzentrum DRK Papenburg

Haus Global

📍 Am Volkspark 22, 26878 Papenburg

☎ [04961-91232040](tel:04961-91232040) oder [0172-4034530](tel:0172-4034530)

✉ @familienzentrum@drk-emsland.de

School for children from 6 to 18 years

School attendance is compulsory in Germany. The duration of compulsory schooling is twelve years. Children must attend school full-time for nine years. Afterwards, they can also attend school part-time for three years. Would your child like to attend school full-time for the whole time? Then they can do so for 12 years.

💡 After 9 years, your child does not [Berufsausbildung](#)? And doesn't attend any other school? Then your child must attend a full-time school for another year. Compulsory schooling ends at the age of 18. Unless there is a training contract.

Your child must attend school regularly. It is your responsibility to ensure this. School attendance at state and municipal schools is free of charge.

There are different types of schools in Germany. Which school your child goes to depends, among other things, on how old they are, but also on their school performance.

💡 Parents often receive written information from the school that their children bring home with them. It is important that you read this information.

You can find more information [here](#).

Parental allowance and child benefit

Parental allowance

Have you had a child and are looking after it yourself? Then you are entitled to Elterngeld. One parent receives parental allowance for a maximum of 12 months. Both parents together are entitled to a maximum of 14 months.

The Elterngeld is based on the amount of income lost and amounts to a maximum of 1,800.00 euros. Those not in gainful employment (including students) receive the minimum amount of 300.00 euros.

What is required?

You live in Germany. You live together with your child. You look after and bring up your child yourself. You do not work at all or at most 32 hours per week. And your taxable income in the last calendar year did not exceed 250,000 euros (for couples, the limit is 300,000 euros). This limit will be reduced to 200,000 euros taxable income for births from 1 April 2024 and to 175,000 euros taxable income for births from 1 April 2025 for couples and single parents.

💡 NOTE: You submit the application in the first 3 months after the birth of your child.

What documents are required?

- Birth certificate of the child (especially for applying for parental allowance)
- Pay slips for the last 12 months before the birth or before the start of the maternity protection period, if you earned income before the birth.
- Certificate of receipt of maternity benefit after the birth (available from the health insurance fund; does not apply to civil servants)
- Certificate of employer's allowance (alternatively: salary/wage slips for the month of the birth)
- Employer confirmation of parental leave and, if applicable, gainful employment while receiving parental allowance
- In the case of part-time employment during the parental allowance period: a corresponding sample statement from the employer
- Residence permit or settlement permit (if you come from a country that is not a member of the European Union)

What else should I know?

Parents of children born on or after 1 July 2015 have the choice between the previous **Elterngeld** and the new **ElterngeldPlus**. Both benefits can also be combined. As the new ElterngeldPlus offers many different options for organising parental leave, you can obtain information online or seek personal advice before applying.

You can use the online service "ElterngeldDigital" to conveniently create the application online and submit it as a PDF printout to your parental allowance office. Please do not forget to sign the application and, if applicable, the declaration(s) of income and enclose the required supporting documents.

Contact details

Elterngeldstelle des Landkreises Emsland
📍 Herzog-Arenberg-Str. 12, 49716 Meppen
☎ [05931/44-6311](tel:05931446311)
✉ info@emsland.de
🌐 [Elterngeldstelle Emsland](#)

The towns of [Lingen](#), [Meppen](#) and [Papenburg](#) have their own parental allowance office.

You can find more information here:

- [Parental allowance calculator](#)
- [Parental allowance, parental allowance plus and parental leave](#)
- [Federal Parental Allowance Act](#)

Child benefit

All parents with a settlement or residence permit in Germany are entitled to Kindergeld. You must apply for Kindergeld yourself at the Federal Employment Agency. This agency pays the Kindergeld for every child from birth until at least the age of 18. You can find more detailed information in German, English, Turkish and Russian [here](#).

Requirements for Kindergeld

You can apply for Kindergeld if:

- Your child is under the age of 18 (under certain conditions you can also apply for and receive Kindergeld for adult children),
- you look after your child regularly and they live in your household (this also applies to stepchildren, grandchildren or foster children) and
- your place of residence is in Germany, another EU country, Norway, Liechtenstein, Iceland or Switzerland. You can find out more on the page Kindergeld for people living in or from abroad.

The payment of Kindergeld is not dependent on your income. As a general rule, you are only entitled to Kindergeld for children who fulfil the requirements.

Kindergeld Only one person, usually a parent, receives the allowance. If there are several children, the individual amounts are paid out as one sum.

💡 Under certain conditions, Kindergeld can be paid directly to the child on application.
Payment of child benefit

Kindergeld from birth

If your child fulfils the requirements, you can complete the [child benefit application online](#).

Kindergeld Apply online

If you have a federal ID, you no longer need to print out the online application, but can send it directly to the family benefits office online without signing it.

[Further information](#) can be found on the website of the Federal Employment Agency.

Package for education and participation (BuT)

Leisure activities, the school trip or a club membership. All of this costs money.

It is therefore often difficult for children and young people from low-income families to realise full participation in social life.

What are 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 receive them from your [town or municipality](#).

Who can receive the benefits for education and participation?

Parents can apply for the benefits for all children living in the household. The prerequisite is receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Housing benefit
- child supplement
- [Citizen's allowance](#)
- social assistance
- [Asylum seeker benefits](#)

Anyone who does not receive any of the above benefits and cannot cover the child's specific educational and participation needs may be entitled to benefits from the education package according to SGB II and can apply to the relevant [job centre](#).

Pupils in need of assistance up to the age of 25 receive benefits for **education**. They 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 (Kitas) and in child day care 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.

- **Personal school supplies**

Personal school supplies totalling 174 euros will be recognised in the 2023 calendar year, 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 sports kit, materials for writing, maths and drawing.

If you have more than one child at school, you will receive the money for each child.

- **School transport**

The actual costs of travelling to school for pupils.

This benefit is provided as a cash benefit, unless a direct settlement is made with the local transport company.

- **Learning support (tutoring)**

The actual costs of tutoring.

However, please speak to your child's teacher first. They must certify the need for support.

- **Lunch for school, daycare centres and after-school care**

Lunch at all-day schools, after-school care centres or daycare centres at no additional 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

- 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?

Please submit the applications in good time to your [local authority](#), which will forward the applications, or directly to the district of Emsland.

Application forms are available [locally](#) or on the Emsland district [website](#).

 **Important:** You will only find general information here. Please contact your local authority for information on your personal situation.

Leisure activities for children and young people

Children like to play. Children like to learn. Children like to do sports. There are many opportunities for children in playgrounds, libraries and sports clubs. Children can spend time here with their families. They can also meet up with friends here.

In Emsland you can experience a lot for little money. Whether in or on the water, in the theatre or in the museum, in the forest or in the fields - between Salzbergen and Papenburg there are numerous activities waiting for you that cost little or nothing. Here you can find some inspiration for [family excursions](#).

There is also plenty on offer for **young people**. Here they can spend time together with friends. An overview of all **youth centres** in Emsland can be found [here](#).

You can find **sports clubs** in your neighbourhood at [Sportangebotsfinder](#).

💡 Further **leisure activities** can be found here:

- [Leisure activities for children, young people, adults and senior citizens](#)
- [Cultural facilities and leisure activities](#)

Health

General information on health

You live in Germany and have an acute illness and pain. Then you are entitled to basic medical care. Some vaccinations and check-ups are recommended by the state. They are intended to prevent illness. You are entitled to recommended immunisations and preventive check-ups.

Consult a doctor if:

- You are acutely ill or in pain
- you are pregnant
- you are chronically ill
- You need a vaccination

You still have medication? Do you still have the package leaflet for your medication? Bring them with you when you visit the doctor.

Have you already been to a doctor or hospital because of your illness? Please 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.

Refugees and asylum seekers are not yet covered by health insurance. They need a treatment voucher. You can get this from the [social welfare office of the city/municipality](#). You can then use it to go to your family doctor.

The guidebook "[Health for asylum seekers](#)" informs asylum seekers about the main features of health care in Germany and what to do if you fall ill. It provides information on how to protect your own health and on the necessary mandatory initial examination after arrival in Germany. The guide is available in 6 languages.

The guide "[Health for all](#)" provides information on health insurance and preventive medical care. It also explains what to do in an emergency. The guide is available in 15 languages.

Here you will find "[Information films on health](#)" with information on the health system, pregnancy and birth, healthy teeth, cancer prevention and much more. The films are available in 8 languages.

Health insurance

Insurance is compulsory in Germany. Do you have a residence permit? Then the social welfare office will register you with a health insurance fund. The health insurance company will issue

you with an insurance card. You can use the insurance card to see a family doctor. If necessary, the doctor will refer you to a specialist.

Insurance card

You can use your insurance card to access medical services. The work of the doctors is paid for by the insurance company. You must take the insurance card with you to your appointment with a doctor.

The European Health Insurance Card is on the back. You can use it to see a doctor in any EU country. You can obtain information on this from your health insurance company.

Are you travelling to a country outside the EU? Then you can take out additional health insurance for your trip. This is called international health insurance.

Refugees and asylum seekers are not yet covered by health insurance. They need a medical treatment voucher. You can get this from the [social welfare office of the city / municipality](#). You can then use it to go to your family doctor.

You can find a guide to health insurance here: [Health insurance guide](#)
The guide is available in different languages.

Visit to the doctor

General practitioners and specialists

If you are ill, you go to a doctor's surgery (general practitioner). You can choose the doctor's surgery yourself. Doctors set their own opening hours. Do you want your family doctor to help you? Then 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.

You can search for a family doctor here: [Arztauskunft-Niedersachsen](#) (German-speaking only)

Is the doctor's surgery closed?

The medical on-call service can help you by calling: ☎ [116117](#)

You can also search for an emergency practice here: [Notdienstpraxen](#) (multilingual)

There are doctors who can also help outside opening hours.

Paediatricians and paediatricians

Children are examined by paediatricians. There are prescribed examinations. These are important for your child's health. The examinations always take place at a certain age. They are intended to prevent illnesses in children. Children must be immunised. Immunisations are important. They prevent children from getting certain diseases. They are free of charge. Please consult a paediatrician for more information.

You can also find a paediatrician in the [Arztauskunft Niedersachsen](#).

Dentists and dentists

Do you have a toothache? Then go and see a dentist.

Dentist search: [Zahnarzttauskunft-Niedersachsen](#)

Gynaecologist and gynaecologist

It is important that women are regularly examined by a gynaecologist. This allows diseases to be recognised early. This is called a check-up. You can also discuss the topic of contraception there.

Do you need help finding a suitable gynaecologist? Ask your support group or the counsellor in your accommodation. You can also find a gynaecologist in the [Arztauskunft Niedersachsen](#).

Important!

💡 When visiting a doctor, please present your health insurance card.

💡 Are you an asylum seeker? Are you ill and need to see a doctor? Then you will need a treatment voucher. You can get this from the [social welfare office of the city / municipality](#). The doctor's visit is then free of charge for you.

💡 Is an operation necessary? An operation is carried out in a hospital. If it is **not an emergency**, the social welfare office must authorise your stay in hospital beforehand. Before you go to hospital, you must apply for authorisation from the social welfare office. Your doctor will issue you with a medical certificate for this purpose. The social welfare office will only cover medically necessary interventions.

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:

-  [FAQ of the Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians](#)
-  [Questions and answers on the electronic patient file \(ePA\) by the KBV](#)
-  [Information from the consumer advice centre about the ePA](#)

Medicines and pharmacies

Do you need medication? Then go to your doctor. They will give you a prescription. You can get your medication with this prescription at any pharmacy. Pharmacies are usually open from Monday to Saturday. The opening hours of pharmacies vary. Do you urgently need medication at night or at the weekend? Every pharmacy has a sign with the name and address of the pharmacy that is open on emergency duty. You can also find this information on the Internet.

Search for pharmacies on emergency duty: www.aponet.de

 As an asylum seeker, you will receive many medications without a co-payment. You should therefore check with your doctor. If you do not have a prescription, you will always have to pay for the medication.

Emergency numbers - SOS

An emergency is an acute threat to health.

You only call an emergency doctor in the event of an emergency with an acute health threat. The emergency doctor will come with the ambulance service. If you are in pain and there is no acute threat to your health, go to a GP.

Emergency contacts

Fire brigade, rescue service, emergency doctor  [112](#)

Police  [110](#)

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. Wait for further questions. The emergency call centre / police will end the call when all the important information has been conveyed.

Are you going to hospital? Don't forget your identity card or proof of arrival. Are you registered with a health insurance company? Take 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

Social psychiatric service

Mental illness can affect anyone. They are becoming increasingly common. Early information about help and treatment options is therefore very important. The Social Psychiatric Service (SPDI) is happy to accompany, advise and support you! Counselling is free and confidential.

The service offers the following help:

- Individual counselling
- Home visits
- crisis service
- Accompanying help
- Groups for those affected and relatives

The aim is to help you to help yourself and to enable you to lead your life as independently as possible.

Do you have difficulties in everyday life due to your illness? Or do you need advice and support in dealing with someone who is ill? Then please get in touch:

Landkreis Emsland

Fachbereich Gesundheit

📍 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

☎ [05931/441188](tel:05931/441188)

@ gesundheit-spdi@emsland.de

🌐 www.emsland.de

Addiction counselling

There are counselling centres for all aspects of addiction. They offer advice and help with questions. Do you want to change the way you deal with alcohol, drugs, medication or gambling? Do you suffer from eating disorders? Are you looking for a way out of addiction? Do you need support? Then contact the addiction counselling service.

Here you will find the following counselling centres on the subject of addiction:

Caritas Beratungsstelle Papenburg

📍 Kirchstraße 16, 26871 Papenburg

☎ [04961/94410](tel:04961/94410)

@ sucht.pbg@caritas-os.de

Diakonisches Werk Meppen

📍 Bahnhofstraße 29, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931/98150](tel:05931/98150)

@ dw.meppen@diakonie-emsland.de

Caritas Beratungsstelle Meppen

📍 Kuhstraße 42, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931/984240](tel:05931/984240)

@ sucht.mep@caritas-os.de

Diakonisches Werk Emsland Bentheim

📍 Bögenstraße 7, 49808 Lingen (Ems)

☎ [0591/800410](tel:0591/800410)

@ dw-lingen@diakonie-emsland.de

Caritas Beratungsstelle Lingen

📍 Burgstraße 30, 49808 Lingen (Ems)

☎ [0591/80062300](tel:0591/80062300)

@ sucht.lin@caritas-os.de

Midwifery centre Emsland

A midwife supports the pregnant woman during pregnancy. She helps with complaints during pregnancy and offers a birth preparation course. You will be looked after by a midwife during the birth. A birth takes place in hospital, in a birthing centre or at home. After the birth, the midwife will come to your home. She will support you during the first few weeks with the baby. The services are paid for by the health insurance company.

The Emsland Midwife Centre will help you find a midwife. The work of the midwife centre is free of charge.

Landkreis Emsland

Fachbereich Gesundheit

📍 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

☎ [05931/442181](tel:05931/442181)

@ hebammenzentrale@emsland.de

🌐 www.hebammenzentrale-emsland.de

Telephone switchboard hours:

🕒 Tuesday 12:00 - 16:00

🕒 Wednesday 10:00 - 12:30

🕒 Thursday 10:00 - 12:30


Children's network Emsland


Kindernetz Emsland is a counselling service for families with children. The children's network is a team of doctors, midwives and paediatric nurses. The service is aimed at families with children aged 0 to 3.

Are you in a stressful situation after the birth? Do you feel insecure and overwhelmed? You can't ask anyone for advice? Then contact us. We provide help and support.

Landkreis Emsland

Fachbereich Gesundheit

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

 [05931/441181](tel:05931/441181)


 @kindernetz@emsland.de

 www.kindernetz-emsland.de

Violence against women helpline

The violence against women helpline advises women affected throughout Germany. 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.

Violence against women helpline

 [116016](tel:116016)

 www.hilfetelefon.de

Further counselling and support options can be found under [Domestic violence](#).

Helpline for pregnant women in need

The helpline advises pregnant women in need. Pregnant women and their immediate environment can contact the counsellors before and after the birth. They are available around the clock. The counsellors will support you. They know suitable offers of help. They help regardless of gender, origin, faith and sexual identity. If necessary, they will also advise you on the possibility of a confidential birth.

Helpline for pregnant women in need

 [0800/404002](tel:0800/404002)

 www.hilfetelefon-schwangere.de (multilingual)

The family guide

Family guide for people with disabilities

Aktion Mensch is publishing a family guide. The family guide is aimed at people with disabilities. And their families. It provides information and addresses. There is also a website. There you will find important information about living with a disability. You will also find local contacts. This information is available in simple and easy-to-understand German. It covers topics such as school, work, leisure, rights, housing, counselling and much more.

Family guide

 [@info@aktion-mensch.de](mailto:info@aktion-mensch.de)

 www.familienratgeber.de

breastcare app

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer worldwide. In Europe, one in eight women will develop breast cancer in the course of her life. In Germany alone, around 70,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer every year. The earlier the disease is recognised, the greater the chance of a cure. 25% of cases can be prevented by adopting a healthy lifestyle. The breastcare app is science-based. It explains everything you need to know about breast cancer and early detection in an easy-to-understand way. You learn how important a healthy lifestyle is. The app is currently available in seven languages: Arabic, German, English, Farsi, French, Spanish and Turkish.

The breastcare app

- reminds you to palpate your own breasts with a cycle calendar
- explains self-examination step by step with illustrated instructions
- explains risk factors and symptoms and provides specific tips for a healthy lifestyle
- answers questions about medical screening examinations in Germany
- links to numerous contact points such as breast centres, integration officers or support services that women can turn to with questions
- tells stories of affected women that are encouraging

You can download the app from the Apple and Google app stores. The app is free of charge. The app can be used without collecting personal data. It is free of advertising and designed for the long term. Further information in seven languages at: www.breastcare.app

Care support centre

The Lower Saxony Care Support Centre with Dementia Service Centre

The care support centre advises people who need help or care. The following people also receive advice: Relatives, carers and employees from the care sector.

Help is available here on these topics:

- outpatient, partial and full inpatient care services
- Provision of aids
- Offers to relieve the burden on family carers
- Dementia and prevention
- Benefits for care or severe disability
- Care insurance benefits and other social benefits

Counselling is free of charge. It is independent and personalised. Counselling takes place by telephone or on site. A home visit is also possible. The support centre offers consultation hours [in your area](#). Further information can be found on the [flyer](#).

Here are the contact details for the care support centre

📍 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

☎ [05931/442211](tel:05931442211)

@pflegestuetzpunkt@emsland.de

[!\[\]\(e4c4cd482ba19efd6ff9d7711c1e1a8a_img.jpg\) Internetseite Pflegestützpunkt](#)

The Dementia Service Centre

Are you caring for someone with dementia? Or is one of your relatives suffering from dementia? You can get help and support at the Dementia Service Centre. You can find more information on the Dementia Service [Centre website](#). The dementia guide for the district of Emsland is also available there. It answers the most important questions about dementia. It also provides information on where you can find further help and support.

Here are the contact details for the Dementia Service Centre

[!\[\]\(6565f0d593b8525ef53527b3c0b1cbe7_img.jpg\) Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

[!\[\]\(3e59b7f9ba8dd3129623cb4c714b7d8a_img.jpg\) 05931/441210](#)

@pflegestuetzpunkt@emsland.de

[!\[\]\(6e4b84f7cd4113db90dbd29ce1e47793_img.jpg\) Internetseite Demenz Servicezentrum](#)



Education and culture

Compulsory schooling and education system

Education

Education is understood to mean formal education from nursery to university, training and work, and informal education.

Informal education is a lifelong learning process in which people

- attitudes,
- values,
- skills and
- knowledge

through influences and sources from their own environment, e.g. in cultural education.

In the district of Emsland, there is an [education region](#) that is responsible for many areas of education within the framework of lifelong learning.

Compulsory schooling

School attendance is compulsory in Germany. This means that all children generally have to go to school between the ages of 6 and 18. The parents or guardians of the children have a duty to ensure that the children attend school. The school monitors school attendance.

Compulsory school attendance includes

- regular attendance at lessons
- regular attendance at compulsory school events
- compliance with the school rules
- Further information can be found here: [Compulsory school attendance](#)

Compulsory schooling for children of refugees only begins once they have taken up permanent residence in Germany.

Compulsory schooling is divided into compulsory general schooling (at least 9 years) and/or compulsory vocational schooling (3 years in the dual system or 1 year of full-time schooling).

Education system

Primary school:

- Grade 1 to grade 4 (6 to 10 years)

Secondary school:

- Grade 5 to grade 9 or up to grade 10
- followed by an apprenticeship in the dual system (3 years of school and company with training salary) at a vocational school (BBS)
- or full-time school (1 year at a BBS)
- or secondary school grammar school from year 5 to year 13

There are various secondary schools:

- Special school,
- Hauptschule,
- Realschule,
- secondary school,
- comprehensive school or
- grammar school.

Important!

When compulsory schooling ends, the right to attend school also ends. If a pupil did not do well at school, he/she does not have to attend another school.

It is **therefore important to be a good pupil.**

Vocational schools general information

Vocational schools in Emsland

Are you over 15 years old? Are you no longer attending a general school? Then you have many options at a vocational school. You can prepare for a career or you can obtain a general school-leaving certificate. In Germany, pupils must attend school until the age of 18 ([compulsory schooling](#)).

There are the following types of vocational schools:

Berufseinstiegsschule (BES) grades 1 and 2:

Vocational schools have programmes for pupils with or without a secondary school leaving certificate. You have not yet received a contract for an apprenticeship? You don't yet have a concrete idea of where you want to work? Here you can gain an insight into various professional fields. You can build on your secondary school leaving certificate. Or you can obtain your secondary school leaving certificate. Language and integration are also promoted here.

Vocational school:

This is where training takes place in a [dual system](#). You learn part of your training at school. The other part you learn in a company.

Vocational school (BFS):

You can prepare for the profession at vocational schools. The courses last 1 to 3 years. You receive basic vocational training. Or vocational preparation. Or even a vocational qualification. Do you already have a school-leaving qualification? Then you can obtain your next qualification here. Vocational schools are generally divided into the following occupational fields:

- commercial field
- Home economics, social pedagogy or care sector
- industrial-technical field

specialised secondary school (FOS):

Successful attendance leads to a general qualification for university entrance. This entitles

- to take up a bachelor's degree programme at a university
- to attend any school at upper secondary level
- to attend the introductory phase of the vocational grammar school (year 11)
- to attend the vocational upper secondary school in year 13 if you have completed vocational training

The specialised upper secondary schools are divided into the following subject areas:

- Business and administration

- Technology
- Health and social affairs
- Design
- Nutrition and Home Economics
- Agriculture, biotechnology and environmental technology

Vocational secondary school (BOS):

Have you already completed an apprenticeship? Do you have a secondary school leaving certificate? Then you can go to the Berufsoberschule. You go there for two years. This school prepares you for the general higher education entrance qualification. To do this, you must learn a second foreign language. Without a foreign language, you will receive a subject-specific higher education entrance qualification. This means that you are only allowed to study certain subjects. The vocational upper secondary school is available in the following specialisations:

- Technical vocational secondary school
- Business vocational secondary school
- Vocational secondary school for social services

Vocational grammar school:

Would you like to study at a university? Then you need the Abitur. You can catch up on your Abitur at a vocational grammar school. To do this, you need an intermediate qualification in your education. Your average grades must be 3.0 or better. You can then attend a vocational grammar school for three years. After the three years, you will complete your Abitur. It is also divided into corresponding specialisations:

- Technical specialisation
- Economics specialisation
- Social and healthcare sciences
- Agricultural science specialisation
- Biotechnological direction
- Nutritional sciences

Technical college

The Fachschule provides further vocational training. The Fachschule is a type of school that generally requires initial vocational training and, as a rule, corresponding practical work experience.

It leads to a higher vocational qualification in various forms, either full-time or part-time. This qualifies you to take on management tasks. In addition, the two-year technical college usually leads to the entrance qualification for universities of applied sciences.

Training "full-time school form" or "dual system"

Full-time school form - training at a vocational school

In Germany, there is also full-time training at a vocational school. Vocational schools provide completed vocational training in theory and practice outside the dual training system (without an apprenticeship in a company). It usually lasts two to three and a half years. Lessons take place full-time. In addition to vocational subjects, it also includes general education subjects. The vocational schools differ greatly in terms of their training programmes, admission requirements, duration of training and further education options. You should therefore speak to the school you are interested in.

Vocational schools in Emsland

"Dual system"

Dual vocational training is a speciality in Germany. You work in a company. At the same time you go to school. This is how you learn theory and practice. You spend two thirds of your time working. You spend one third of your time at school. An apprenticeship lasts 3 years. Depending on the profession, it may take a little longer. If you have an Abitur, you can complete the apprenticeship more quickly.

Depending on the type of occupation you would like to learn in a dual training programme, contact the appropriate office:

Chamber of Crafts (HWK)

The Chamber of Crafts (HWK) is responsible for skilled trades. This covers professions such as baker, bricklayer or painter.

Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK)

The Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK) is responsible for professions in industrial production, trade and services. This includes, for example, plant mechanics or wholesale and foreign trade clerks.

Chamber of Agriculture (LWK)

For professions specialising in agriculture, such as agricultural services, forestry, horticulture, farming and housekeeping.

Important:

In Germany, a vocational qualification is very advantageous. People with a vocational qualification earn more money on average over the course of their lives. They are less likely to be unemployed. They are less likely to have fixed-term employment contracts.

Studying at a university - dual study programme

General information

There are many different degree programmes in Germany. There are also different types of higher education institutions:

- Universities (academically orientated)
- Universities of Applied Sciences (practice-orientated)
- Dual universities (very practice-orientated)

- Art, film and music colleges (for artistic subjects)

There are state universities and private universities. The quality of private universities is not always better. However, you have to pay high tuition fees.

Helpful websites

- [University Compass](#) (all degree programmes and universities in Germany)
- [Study in Germany](#) (information for refugees)
- [Employment Agency](#) (study orientation)
- [German Academic Exchange Service](#) (DAAD - All study programmes in Germany)

Prerequisites

Would you like to study in Germany? Then you need a university entrance qualification. This can be an Abitur. It can also be an entrance qualification for universities of applied sciences. Have you passed the Abitur in your home country? You may be able to use it to study in Germany. You can have this checked.

You can find more information on the [Anabin](#) website. Go to the information portal "Recognition in Germany". You can also contact the [German Academic Exchange Service DAAD](#).

You must also provide proof that you have good German language skills (language level C1). This can be the "German as a foreign language" test. Or the German language test for university entrance. Or telc Deutsch C1 Hochschule.

There is also the possibility of funding from the Bildungsberatung Garantiefonds Hochschule. Some universities also offer preparatory semesters. You will also learn German there.

Find out more at the university where you would like to study. Most universities offer counselling services. There are application deadlines for applying to a university. Please note these deadlines.

Dual study programme

The difference to the traditional degree programme is the combination of theory and practice. Students gain valuable practical experience for their career while studying at the university. You can apply and implement this directly in the company.

At the end, you will have gained a Bachelor's degree. There are also models where you can obtain both a Bachelor's degree and a completed vocational training programme.

Visit the [BIB Emsland](#) and you will get to know many companies that offer dual study programmes.

Information on financing your studies and scholarships can be found [here](#).

No university entrance qualification

Can you study in your home country with your school-leaving certificate? But not in Germany? You can catch up on your university entrance qualification at a preparatory college. Studienkollegs are specially designed for foreign applicants. They prepare you for studying in Germany.

Study: Funding and scholarship

As a student in Germany, you can receive financial support. This is possible via the Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG for short). The BAföG is paid out monthly by the authorities. In the best case scenario, you will receive money for the entire duration of your studies. The monthly amount of BAföG can be between 399 and 735 euros. You have to pay back half of the BAföG amount after your studies. The exact conditions for BAföG change regularly. You can find detailed information under the following link:

- [Website BAföG for refugees and migrants](#)

As an alternative to BAföG, you can apply for a scholarship. As a rule, you do not have to pay back a scholarship. Good grades are important in order to receive a scholarship. Scholarship donors also assess your voluntary work. You will normally receive the same amount of money as BAföG. In addition, there is a so-called "book allowance". This is a monthly payment of up to 300 euros.

Certain organisations award scholarships. Scholarships are awarded to people with great potential. That is why these organisations are called Begabten-Förderungs-Werke. The following Begabten-Förderungs-Werke offer programmes specifically for refugees, among others. You can find out how to apply on their websites. They also tell you what the organisations require of you.

- [Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung \(FES\) - Scholarships for Refugees](#)
- [Böckler-Aktion Bildung of the Hans Böckler Foundation](#)
- [Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung \(KAS\) - Scholarships for Refugees](#)
- [Villigst - Our scholarship for refugees](#)
- [Bread for the World - Refugee Scholarship Programme](#)

The Otto Benecke Foundation's Guarantee Fund is an exception to this rule. The programme is aimed at young new immigrants. Do you want to gain your higher education entrance qualification in Germany? Do you want to study in Germany? Do you want to work in the academic field? Then you can apply for the scholarship programme. There is also the Germany Scholarship. It provides financial support of 300 euros per month. The Germany Scholarships are awarded by the respective universities.

- [University Guarantee Fund of the Otto Benecke Foundation in Bonn](#)
- [Germany Scholarship: Become a scholarship holder](#)

Cultural education

Emsland is a rural region and there are numerous cultural venues and institutions everywhere. All of them are easily accessible for everyone. The cultural providers are a mixture of professionals and volunteers.

Regional culture is shaped and constantly re-examined by those involved:

- What is typical of our region?
- Which traditions are handed down?
- Which aspects of our regional history should be remembered and in what form?

The task of culture is to

- to accompany these processes,
- to revitalise the cultural landscape and
- to promote exchange, co-operation and networking between the various cultural providers,
- to safeguard the region's cultural heritage and contribute to its dissemination.

The [preservation of historical monuments](#) plays an important role here.

To find out more about the cultural venues and events, see the [cultural map](#) and the [calendar of events](#).

Cultural facilities and leisure

Cultural institutions

Emsland offers numerous events and cultural institutions. Further offers for leisure, sport or voluntary work can be found at the bottom of the page. Here you will only find a few examples in the cultural area, as it is not possible to list all the facilities. However, you will find corresponding offers in every town.

Some organisations in the field of art that you can visit or in which you or your children can participate:

- [Lingen Art School](#)
- [Kunsthalle Lingen](#)
- [Kunstschule Koppelschleuse Meppen](#)
- Meppener [Kunstkreis](#) + [Artothek](#)
- Töpfermarkt
- [Art school Zinnober Papenburg](#)
- Spiel und Kunst ([SpuK](#)) Freren
- [Kunstkreis Haren](#)
- [Exhibition centre Gut Altenkamp Aschendorf](#)
- [Emslandmuseum Schloss Clemenswerth](#)
- ParkArt Clemenswerth

Some organisations in the field of music that you can visit. There are also many choirs, bands and orchestras in almost every town where you or your children can join in.

- [Klangkultur Haren](#)
- Harener Klassiknacht
- [Musikschule des Emslandes](#)

- [EmslandArena](#)
- Emsbürener Musiktage
- Musikfest Bremen (Konzertorte in Papenburg, Sögel, Rhede)
- NDR 2 Papenburg Festival
- LAUTFEUER Festival Lingen
- Kleinstadtfestival Meppen

Some theatre facilities that you can visit. There are also many local amateur theatre groups and dance groups that would be delighted to welcome new members.

- [Clemenswerth Cultural](#) Circle
- Kulturkreis [Impulse Freren](#)
- [Twist home theatre](#)
- [Meppen theatre community](#)
- [Theatre at the Wilhelmshöhe Lingen](#)
- [Forum Alte Werft / Alte Kesselschmiede Papenburg](#)
- [Meppen open-air theatre](#)
- [Forest theatre Ahmsen](#)
- [Theatre education centre of the Emsländische Landschaft Lingen](#)
- Festival of puppets
- World Children's Theatre Festival (WKT)

Cultural history museums, company museums, collections, places of remembrance that you can visit. All the institutions also offer special events that you can visit with your children.

- [Emsland Moor Museum Geeste](#)
- [Emsland Archaeology Museum Meppen](#)
- [Meppen Town Museum](#)
- Emsland [Museum Lingen](#)
- [Emsland Museum Clemenswerth Castle](#)
- [Mill Museum Haren](#)
- [Twist Natural Gas Museum](#)
- [Haselünne open-air and local history museum](#)
- [Distillery Museum Haselünne](#)
- [Von-Velen plant Papenburg](#)
- [Maritime Adventure World Papenburg](#)
- [MEYER WERFT visitor centre Papenburg](#)
- [Salzbergen Fire Brigade Museum](#)
- [KRONE Museum Spelle](#)
- [Esterwegen Memorial](#)
- ["Camp XII Dalum" memorial site](#)

Building culture and archaeological heritage

The Route of the Megalithic Culture is well worth a hike. On it you can discover stone artefacts that are over 5000 years old. They explain everyday life, nature and concepts of the afterlife from that time. There are 33 stations from Osnabrück via Emsland to Oldenburg.

- [Road of the Megalithkultur](#)

The Mühlenstraße is a road that shows visitors the mills of Lower Saxony, such as water mills and windmills. Some mills are now residential buildings, while other mills can be viewed from the outside and inside. Nearby, you can also visit horse mills in the Cloppenburg museum village. Together with other existing mill routes, it forms the core of the "European Cultural Route (Via Molina)".

- [Lower Saxony Mill Road](#)

Regional studies and preservation of customs

- [Emsland](#) Heritage Association

The Emsland Heritage Association is the umbrella organisation for the heritage associations. It has 14,000 publications in its library in Meppen. It specialises in archaeology, regional studies, regional history and much more. This year there is a new [Emsland yearbook](#).

There is an active local history association in almost every municipality, which is happy to welcome new members. You can always find them on the [local authority's homepage](#).

- [Emsland landscape for the district of Emsland](#)
- Kivelingsfixen Lingen

The members of a bachelors' association from Lingen (Ems) in Emsland, Lower Saxony, dating back to 1372, are known as Kivelinge.

- Buckwheat blossom festival organised by the Geeste local history association (Emsland Moormuseum)
- Platt-Satt-Festival (decentralised)
- Haselünne corn and Hanseatic market

There are also numerous sports programmes. The [Emsland District Sports Association](#) has a good overview of which sports are on offer where.

There are also many beautiful [cycle routes](#) in Emsland. If you don't know how to ride a bike yet, you can learn [here](#). Swimming is also great fun and good for your health.

You can find out where there are swimming courses for children from the [district sports association](#). Adults can and should also learn to swim, as there are many beautiful pools and lakes in Emsland. You can find all further [information](#) here.

Visiting cultural institutions and events or joining a cultural group or sports club makes it easier to settle in and you will quickly get to know new local people. This makes it easier to learn the language and familiarise yourself with life in Germany. This makes you feel at home in Germany more quickly.

Volunteering is also a meaningful task. People who work for other people or for a cause in their free time without being paid do voluntary work. For example, you can get involved with elderly people, neighbours or refugees. You can also help out at a sports club or animal shelter and many other things.

Adult education

Would you like to learn something new?

Adult education providers are institutions that offer educational programmes for adults. These are, for example, adult education centres or private companies. They also include non-profit organisations. These organisations offer courses, seminars and lectures, for example. Their aim is to help adults expand their knowledge and improve their skills. Participation can cost money or be free of charge.

Historical-Ecological Education Centre (HÖB) Emsland in Papenburg e.V.

📍 Spillmannsweg 30, 26871 Papenburg

☎ [04961/97880](tel:0496197880)

@ info@hoeb.de

🌐 <https://www.hoeb.de/>

Ludwig Windthorst House (LWH)

Katholisch-Soziale Akademie

📍 Gerhard-Kues-Str. 16, 49808 Lingen (Ems)

☎ [0591/61020](tel:059161020)

@ info@lwh.de

Catholic Adult Education Centre (KEB)

📍 Am Markt 5, 49751 Sögel

☎ [05952/1556](tel:059521556)

@ soegel@keb-emsland.de

Further locations of the KEB can be found in [Meppen](#) and [Lingen](#).

LEB in Niedersachsen e.V.

Bildungszentrum Emsland/Grafschaft Bentheim

📍 [Jägerstraße 6a, 49808 Lingen \(Ems\)](#)

☎ [0591/1405030](tel:05911405030)

@ emsland@leb.de

@ biz-lingen@leb.de

Volkshochschule Papenburg gGmbH

📍 [Hauptkanal rechts 72, 26871 Papenburg](#)


👤 Frau Morasch

☎ [04961/922339](tel:04961922339)

 www.vhs-papenburg.de

Volkshochschule Meppen gGmbH

 [Freiherr-vom-Stein- Straße 1, 49716 Meppen](#)


 Frau Lemmen

 [05931/937324](tel:05931937324)

 www.vhs-meppen.de

Volkshochschule Lingen gGmbH

 [Elsterstraße 1, 49808 Lingen \(Ems\)](#)

 Frau Dr. Lonnemann

 [0591/91202840](tel:059191202840)

 www.vhs-lingen.de

Legal matters and rights

Basic Law and human rights

All people living in Germany must abide by the central principles of the political and legal order.

The most important legal basis for life in Germany is the **Basic Law**. It is the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany.

According to the Basic Law, every person is a **free and self-determined individual**.

No distinctions may be made **on the basis of gender, origin (descent, language, homeland), skin colour, religion, faith or ideology, disability, age or sexual orientation**.

Germany is a federal state consisting of **16 federal states**.

Germany is a democratic state, which means that all state power emanates from the people.

Catalogue of fundamental rights

Protection of human dignity

Article 1

(1) Human dignity is inviolable. It is the duty of all state authority to respect and protect it.
(...)

Right to liberty of the person

Article 2

(1) Everyone has the right to the free development of his personality insofar as he does not violate the rights of others and does not offend against the constitutional order or the moral law.
(...)

This also includes the right to sexual self-determination. This means that every person may decide for themselves which sexual acts they want to participate in and no one may be forced to do something they do not want to do.

Equality before the law

Article 3

(1) All persons are equal before the law.

(2) Men and women shall have equal rights. The state shall promote the effective realisation of equal rights for women and men and shall work towards the elimination of existing disadvantages.

(3) No person shall be discriminated against or favoured on grounds of sex, descent, race, language, homeland and origin, creed, religious or political opinion. No one may be discriminated against because of their disability.

Freedom of faith, conscience and creed

Article 4

(1) Freedom of faith, conscience and religious and philosophical belief shall be inviolable.

(...)

Freedom of opinion, art and science

Article 5

(1) Everyone shall have the right freely to express and disseminate his opinions in speech, writing and pictures and to inform himself without hindrance from generally accessible sources. Freedom of the press and freedom of reporting by radio and film shall be guaranteed. There shall be no censorship.


(...)


Protection of marriage and the family and of children of unmarried parents

Article 6

(1) Marriage and the family shall be under the special protection of the state.

(...)

 Here you can find the Basic Law in 11 languages: [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Italian](#), [Persian](#), [Polish](#), [Russian](#), [Serbian](#), [Spanish](#), [Turkish](#) and [German](#).

 This film clearly shows how the German constitutional state works: [German](#), [Dari](#), [Arabic](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Pashto](#), [Urdu](#).

Children have rights

Protection of children and young people

Children, young people and families enjoy special protection in Germany. This protection begins during pregnancy and continues until the child reaches the age of 18. In Germany, for example, it is forbidden to beat children: in Germany, children must be brought up without the use of violence. Every child must go to school.

Children have rights

In detail, this means

- Parental care and non-violent upbringing: every child has the right to grow up with their parents and be brought up by them. Without violence.
- Equality: All children are equally important. No child should be treated less favourably because they have a different skin colour, a different religion or come from a different country.
- Freedom of expression and participation: Girls and boys must be asked if decisions are to be made about them. Children are allowed to express their opinions without being penalised. Whether at home, at school, at a public authority or in court.
- Education: Girls and boys should be able to learn on an equal footing and receive an education that meets their needs and abilities.
- Health: Children should be able to live healthy lives, receive good medical care and be protected from illness, addiction and drugs.
- Protection from violence and sexual exploitation: Children have the right to be protected from violence, abuse and exploitation. Nobody is allowed to touch a child if the child does not want it.

Help with conflicts

When conflicts arise in the family, it can be useful to seek outside help. Especially if children are involved and if violence is being used. Please get in touch:

District of Emsland - Youth Welfare Office

Hauptstelle **Meppen**

📍 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

☎ [05931/441401](#)

Außenstelle **Lingen**

📍 [Am Wall-Süd 21, 49808 Lingen](#)

☎ [0591/843343](#)

Außenstelle **Aschendorf**

📍 [Große Str. 32, 26871 Papenburg](#)

☎ [04962/5013139](#)

🕒 Monday - Friday: 8:30 - 12:30 and Monday - Thursday 14:30 - 16:00

💡 In urgent cases, the Youth Welfare Office can be contacted outside office hours via the emergency call centre ☎ ([112](#)).

Marriage, family, life and educational counselling

Ehe-, Familien-, Lebens- und Erziehungsberatung im Bistum Osnabrück

📍 Versener Str. 30, 49716 **Meppen**

☎ [05931/12050](#)

@ meppen@efle-bistum-os.de

Ehe-, Familien-, Lebens- und Erziehungsberater im Bistum Osnabrück

📍 Hauptkanal rechts 75a, 26871 **Papenburg**

☎ [04961/3456](tel:049613456)

@ papenburg@efle-bistum-os.de

Psychologisches Beratungszentrum für Eltern, Kinder und Jugendliche; Ehe-, Familien- und Lebensberatung

📍 Bernd-Rosemeyer-Straße 5, 49808 **Lingen**

☎ [0591/4021](tel:05914021)

@ lingen@efle-bistum-os.de

🕒 Please refer to the respective locations for opening hours

Counselling centre for violence against children and young people

Deutscher Kinderschutzbund

Ortsverband Emsland Mitte

📍 Emsstraße 1-3, 49716 **Meppen**

☎ [05931/876580](tel:05931876580)

@ info@kinderschutzbund-emsland-mitte.de

🌐 <https://www.kinderschutzbund-emsland-mitte.de/>

🕒 Monday - Friday: 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Der Kinderschutzbund OV Lingen e.V.

Beratungsstelle LOGO - Kinderschutz-Zentrum

📍 Wilhelmstr. 40a, 49808 **Lingen**

☎ [0591/2262](tel:05912262)

@ info@logolingen.de

🌐 <https://www.logolingen.de/>

🕒 Monday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Number against grief for children and young people

Whether you have worries and problems in the family or at school, with friends or your partner: talking about it can help. Trained counsellors at the nationwide **children's and young people's helpline "Nummer gegen Kummer"** will take time for you, listen to you and show you ways out - anonymously, confidentially and free of charge.

☎ [116111](tel:116111)

🕒 Monday - Saturday: 14:00 - 20:00

Parents' helpline

☎ [08001110550](tel:08001110550) anonymous and free of charge

🕒 Monday - Friday: 9:00 - 17:00 and Tuesday and Thursday: 17:00 - 19:00

Women's rights

Labour and wages

On average, women in Germany earn less than men. They often work in areas that are paid less. But women also often earn less than their male colleagues for the same job. Politicians have been discussing various proposals for years to achieve greater pay equality. So far, however, not much has changed.

Many women's jobs are not perceived as work. They do the housework. They bring up the children. Or they care for sick or elderly family members. These jobs are unpaid. But they are still work. It is often not recognised.

Would you like to find well-paid work in Germany?

Then the first thing you should do is learn German. The BAMF offers courses especially for parents and women. Here you can also get information about childcare and the school system. Where you live, you can obtain information from [migration advice centres](#), [immigration authorities](#), employment agencies, [job centres](#) or directly from the [educational institutions](#) that offer integration courses.

Would you like to return to work after a career break? Perhaps reorient yourself professionally or refresh your skills?


The [Coordination Centre for Women and Business](#) is a place where women, especially those who want to return to work after a break, can find support. It offers help with all career-related questions and helps you to prepare for your return to work. The coordination centre is also the office of the Unternehmensverbund [vereinbar e.V.](#), which means that it is part of a network that is committed to reconciling work and family life.

FGM - female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is prohibited in Germany. Since September 2013, FGM has been punishable by imprisonment. Parents are also not allowed to leave the country to have their daughter circumcised abroad. This is also prosecuted under German criminal law. Girls and young women can apply for asylum if they are threatened with being circumcised.

Many girls die during the mutilation or as a result of it. There are many dangerous after-effects of the mutilation:

- Incontinence,
- pain,
- heavy bleeding,
- complications during sexual intercourse and childbirth,
- infertility,
- Risk of HIV and hepatitis infection,
- blood poisoning and tetanus,
- states of shock,
- psychological trauma,
- depression.

If you are affected or threatened by genital mutilation, contact the helpline at  [08000116016](tel:08000116016). The helpline staff are available day and night and in various languages.

In Germany, it is possible to reconstruct the clitoris. This reconstructive operation can be performed by plastic surgeons. Ask a gynaecologist for advice. A "[Centre for Victims of Genital Mutilation](#)" has been founded in Berlin. Here, not only the physical but also the psychological consequences are treated anonymously and free of charge. You do not need health insurance for this.

Contact point:

baobab - zusammensein e.V.

📍 Georgswall 3, 30159 Hannover

☎ [0511/47262677](tel:051147262677)

@info@baobab-zs.de

Throughout Lower Saxony and in neighbouring Bremen, various self-help groups have been formed over the years in which health issues are discussed. There are currently the following self-help groups [here](#).

Domestic violence

Your family and friends should support and protect you. However, this is not always the case. Sometimes these people can also hurt you. They can inflict violence on you. This violence can take different forms. It can be sexual. Or physical, such as punches or kicks. But it can also be psychological. If someone you know is violent towards you, this is called "domestic violence".

Domestic violence usually takes place in the home, but can also happen in other places. Many people think of domestic violence in terms of physical violence, i.e. sexual abuse or beatings. But domestic violence also takes other forms: If you are insulted, abused, threatened, locked up or controlled, this is also domestic violence. Stalking, i.e. when you are followed and watched, can also be a form of domestic violence. **All forms of violence are punishable in Germany.** You have the **right to a life without violence**. Domestic violence is not a private matter, but a violation of every person's right to physical integrity.

There are numerous contact centres in Germany for victims of domestic violence. Make use of the help centres.

Emergency card in Emsland

[Emergency](#) card for domestic violence with relevant advice centres in the district of Emsland

Violence against women helpline

☎ [08000/116016](tel:08000116016) (free of charge and anonymous)

🌐 www.hilfetelefon.de

Sexual abuse helpline

☎ [0800/2255530](tel:08002255530)

🌐 www.hilfetelefon-missbrauch.de

Counselling and support services on site

Sozialdienst katholischer Frauen e.V. Meppen - Emsland Mitte

📍 Nagelshof 21 b, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931/98410](tel:05931/98410)

✉ info@skf-meppen.de

🌐 www.skf-meppen.de

🕒 Mondays - Thursdays 08:00 - 12:00 and 14:00 - 16:00

Fridays 08:00 - 12:30

Sozialdienst katholischer Frauen e.V. Lingen

📍 Burgstraße 30, 49808 Lingen

☎ [0591/800620](tel:0591/800620)

✉ info@skf-lingen.de

🌐 www.skf-lingen.de

🕒 Mondays - Thursdays 08:30 - 12:30 and 13:30 - 16:30

Sozialdienst katholischer Frauen Esterwegen e.V.

📍 Hauptstraße 50, 26897 Esterwegen

☎ [05955/2871](tel:05955/2871)

✉ info@skf-esterwegen.de

🌐 www.skf-esterwegen.de

🕒 Closed on Wednesdays

Caritasverband für den Landkreis Emsland

📍 Kirchstraße 16, 26871 Papenburg

☎ [04961/94410](tel:04961/94410)

✉ LK-Emsland@caritas-os.de

🌐 www.caritas.de

🕒 Mondays - Fridays 08:30 - 12:00

Tuesdays and Wednesdays 14:00 - 16:30

Further information can be found here:

🌐 www.gewaltlos.de

🌐 [ProBeweis network](#) (multilingual) with partner clinics Krankenhaus [Ludmillenstift Meppen](#) and [Marienhospital Papenburg-Aschendorf](#)

Women's and child protection centres

There are ways out of violence and opportunities for a future without violence. Women's shelters are facilities for women and their children who are acutely affected by violence or threatened by violence - regardless of age, income, residence status, sexual orientation or origin. The women's shelters are available 24 hours a day, including weekends and public holidays.

Frauen- und Kinderschutzhaus SKF Meppen

☎ [05931/7737](tel:05931/7737) (24 Stunden erreichbar!)

✉ frauen-undkinderschutzhaus@skf-meppen.de

Frauen- und Kinderschutzhaus SKF Lingen

☎ [0591/4129](tel:0591/4129)

✉ frauenhaus@skf-lingen.de

Die Adressen der Frauenhäuser bleiben zum Schutz der Betroffenen geheim.

Forced marriage

Advice, support and assistance in the event of (imminent) forced marriage and violence in the name of honour

Do you have to get married even though you don't want to? This is called forced marriage.

The Lower Saxony crisis hotline against forced marriage offers free, multilingual and anonymous counselling. You can reach the counselling service at: ☎ [0800-0667888](tel:0800-0667888).

Further information can be found in the flyer "**I decide whether and who I marry**". The flyer is available in various languages:


- [Forced marriage flyer in Albanian](#)
- [Forced marriage flyer in Arabic](#)
- [Forced marriage flyer in Bulgarian](#)
- [Forced marriage flyer in German](#)
- [Forced marriage flyer in English](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Kurdish](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Persian](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Romanian](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Serbian](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Turkish](#)

The [TERRE DES FEMMES](#) organisation has published a brochure for parents in eight languages. It is called: "**Strong families have strong daughters**". The brochure explains what happens when girls are forced or forced to marry at an early age. It also talks about what laws are in place and where you can get help. The brochure says that no religion allows forced marriage. The brochure is available in Arabic, German, English, Farsi, French, Kurdish, Romanian and Turkish:

- [Brochure Arabic](#)
- [Brochure German](#)
- [Brochure English](#)
- [Brochure Farsi](#)
- [Brochure French](#)
- [Brochure Kurdish](#)
- [Brochure Romanian](#)
- [Brochure Turkish](#)

Papatya helps girls who experience violence in the family, forced marriage or abduction. It offers protection, counselling and help and is aimed at affected girls and those around them, such as their friends. They help on the phone or online : 🌐 <https://papatya.org/>

The nationwide help hotline "Violence against women" helps women who experience violence. You can call ☎ 116016 or get counselling online at: 🌐 <https://www.hilfetelefon.de/>

Men can also be affected by violence or forced marriage. The "Violence against men" helpline helps men. You can call ☎ 0800-1239900 or seek counselling online at:  <https://www.maennerhilfetelefon.de/>

Are you affected by the threat of forced marriage, abduction or violence and need a safe place where you can stay anonymously?

In Lower Saxony, there are places where young people can stay anonymously if they are affected by forced marriage, abduction or violence. The **Ada shelter** offers anonymous accommodation for girls and young women aged 13 to 21. Further information can be found here: [Ada shelter](#)

For young people between the ages of 16 and 27, there is the **Hayat - Anonymous Mobile Care** programme. Young men, couples, siblings and people from the LGBTQIA+ community can also find protection here. Further information can be found here: [Hayat Protection](#)

Anti-discrimination and inclusion

Equal rights for men and women

Equal rights for men and women

Women and men have the same rights. This is reflected in the law and in everyday life.

This means, for example:

- Girls and boys go to school together and receive the same lessons. They take part in sports lessons together.
- Women and men are allowed to study or learn a trade. In principle, all professions are open to all genders.
- Women also take on responsibility in society, for example in the police, in the health sector, in schools or in public offices and authorities. Their instructions must be followed.
- Women and men decide for themselves what work they want to do. They can dispose of the money they earn themselves.
- Women do not have to ask their husbands, parents or other family members for permission to work, open an account or conclude contracts.
- Women and men are allowed to dress as they wish.
- Women and men decide for themselves whether, when and whom they want to marry.
- Mothers are particularly protected. They must and may not work for six weeks before and eight weeks after giving birth. They may not be dismissed because of their maternity.
- The tasks and roles in the family are not prescribed.
- Women and men take part in public life. They attend cultural, political or sporting events, restaurants and bars.
- Women and men can vote and be elected to political office
- Women and men are equal in inheritance rights, daughters as well as sons.
- Sexual touching, comments or requests are only permitted if everyone involved agrees. A "stop" or "no" must always be respected.

This is not permitted in Germany, for example:

- Any form of violence in marriage.
- No one may be sexually harassed.
- Rape, even within marriage, is penalised.
- No one may be forced to marry. Coercion into marriage through violence or threats is punished.

Experiences with discrimination

Treating people unequally because of certain characteristics is prohibited in Germany. But it is still widespread. Whether when looking for accommodation, at work, in authorities, schools, doctors' surgeries, in leisure time or with the police. Discrimination can happen in all areas of life. Am I not allowed into the club because I have a disability? Did I not get the job because I wear a headscarf? Are my children treated less favourably at school because they speak little German? Do the police only check me on the long-distance bus because I have a different skin colour? Does the taxi driver refuse to give me a lift because I am transgender? Experiences like these lead to anger, powerlessness and a feeling of helplessness. But you don't have to simply accept discrimination. You have the right to defend yourself against it.

All people in Germany have this right. Regardless of their origin or residence status. It is enshrined in the German constitution as one of the human rights. You can take legal action against discrimination.

Have I been discriminated against?

Sometimes you don't know exactly whether you have been discriminated against. You are unsure because other people don't see a problem with an action or don't think the discrimination is bad. This is where counselling can help. The staff at the counselling centre will take your experiences seriously. They can tell you whether your experience is also legally considered discrimination and what legal options you now have. But even if your experience is not legally considered discrimination, the counselling centre can help you. The staff can help you to come to terms with what you have experienced and develop strategies for the future.

The **anti-discrimination counselling centres** support all people who have experienced discrimination and would like advice.

Counselling for those affected in Lower Saxony

The Lower Saxony Discrimination Counselling Centre is there to help if you need support. They listen to you, understand your point of view and take the time to talk to you in detail.

It helps if you

- have been the victim of right-wing, racist or anti-Semitic violence.
- are a family member, friend or acquaintance of a victim
- have witnessed such an attack.
- want to help combat right-wing extremism, racism and anti-Semitism.

Counselling is confidential and free of charge. It is offered in several languages.

Contact details:

Region Nordwest - Niedersachsen

Exil e.V.

📍 Möserstraße 34, 49074 Osnabrück

☎ [0541/38069923](tel:054138069923)

☎ [0157/37967272](tel:015737967272)

✉ nordwest@betroffenenberatung.de

🌐 www.betroffenenberatung.de

You can obtain advice directly from the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency, for example, by calling [030185551855](tel:030185551855). The advice centre is available at 🕒 on Mondays from 1 - 3 pm and 🕒 on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 am - 12 pm. The staff speak German. Counselling is free of charge and anonymous if you wish. You will have to pay the usual telephone charges for the call.

Alternatively, you can also contact a [migration counselling service for adults](#) or the [youth migration service](#). The staff often speak many languages and can help you with all problems relating to life in Germany.

What do I do if I have been discriminated against by the police?

You can also experience discrimination at the hands of the police. One experience that many people in Germany have, for example, is so-called racial profiling. If a person is stopped, questioned, searched or even arrested by the police simply because they appear suspicious because of their skin colour or similar characteristics, this is discrimination. "Racial Profiling". But discriminatory insults, abuse or assaults can also happen. Victims of police brutality or police violence can report police officers.

Police officers are not above the law. What they may and may not do is regulated in the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and police law. You can find out more [here](#).

💡 Important: You have the right to ask for the police officer's identity card and to write down their details. This is important if you want to file a criminal complaint later. It is also always helpful to ask passers-by to observe the situation. Then you also have witnesses. Please note: You must file a criminal complaint within three months of the incident. You can do this directly at the public prosecutor's office. You do not have to go to the police.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans* and inter* (LGBTI)

Many different people live together in Germany. They have different religions. They are of different genders. They come from different countries. They have different political views. They have the same rights.

This also applies to people of different sexual orientations or gender identities: these include lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender and intersex people. In short, they are called LSTBI. They have the same rights in Germany as all other people.

There are three genders in Germany. These are "male", "female" and "diverse". People can change their gender in Germany. They can also have their name changed. Women are allowed to love and marry other women in Germany. Men are allowed to love and marry other men in Germany.

👥 Many LGBTI people have fled to Germany because they were persecuted in their home country. Are you a refugee and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex? Then you can contact one of the many LGBTI organisations in Germany. You will find support there. You can find their contact details at the LSVD project "Queer Refugees Deutschland". You will also find further information:

Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany (LSVD)

Queer Refugees Germany" project

🌐 www.queer-refugees.de

@ queer-refugees@lsvd.de

Trans*Beratung Weser-Ems offers accepting, independent and professional counselling on all issues relating to trans*gender and gender identity.

They provide counselling:

- trans* (transgender, transsexual, transidentical) people
- People who wonder whether they might be trans*
- Relatives and associated persons
- People who are professionally involved with the topic

Trans*Beratung Weser-Ems

☎ [0160/5889070](tel:01605889070)

@ weser-ems@trans-recht.de

🌐 <https://transberatung-weser-ems.de/>

Individual counselling appointments can be arranged in Lingen and Meppen.

People with disabilities

In Germany, almost one in ten people has a severe disability. Many more people have health impairments. Or they are chronically ill. For example, there are people who cannot see. They are blind. There are people who cannot hear. They are deaf. Some people's bodies are smaller than others. Some things are not so easy for them. You can't walk by yourself. Or it is more difficult to do a certain job. But they should also be able to participate in society. There are inclusion measures for this. For example, they get help at work. Or children receive special support even before they start kindergarten. It's called early intervention.

Early intervention

Early intervention is for young children who have a disability or could develop a disability. It also helps children who develop more slowly than other children in certain areas. Examples of early intervention are Speech support, vision school or movement therapy. Early intervention is available for children from birth to school age. Early support is important in order to avoid disabilities or to minimise the consequences of disabilities.

Your [paediatrician](#) can help you to find early intervention. You can also contact the local [health authority](#).

Severely disabled people

People with a degree of disability of 50 or more can obtain a severely disabled person's pass. There are a number of advantages associated with this card. For example, tax reductions. And reduced or free use of buses and trains. The benefits a person receives depend on the type of disability and the degree of disability. You can apply for a disabled person's pass from the pension office.

The family guide provides valuable information [here](#). You can find out what the degree of disability is. You will learn who determines the degree of disability. And what you can do if you do not agree with your degree of disability.

[Kontaktdaten des lokalen Versorgungsamtes einstellen]

Probleme bei der Inklusion

However, there are still many problems with the integration of people with disabilities. Because people are not disabled - they are disabled: The ATM that is too high prevents them from being able to collect money without any problems. The stairs are off-limits for wheelchairs. And the small font is a problem for visually impaired people. Do you see someone who might need help? Then ask if you can help.

The family guide provides valuable information [here](#).

Religious freedom

Freedom of religion applies in Germany. This is guaranteed by the Basic Law. You can practise your faith as you see fit, as long as you do not violate the Basic Law. You may also 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 own 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 may marry each other.
- Marriage only counts as a legally valid 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.

Asylum and refugees

This is just basic information on various topics. There are special rules and situations that must be observed. It is still important to seek advice from experts.

Residence status as an asylum seeker

Everyone in Germany has an ID card. This ID helps to identify people. As an asylum seeker, you also need an ID card. This allows the authorities to recognise your status. Your status

determines whether you are allowed to work or not.

There are 5 different documents:

1. proof of arrival

Status: Asylum seeker

Background: You have told the authorities that you need asylum. The authorities have registered you in the system. However, you have not yet applied for asylum. This card is valid until you submit your application. You submit the application to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF).



2. residence permit

Status: Asylum seeker

Background: You have applied for asylum. A group of people will decide on your application. This often takes a very long time. This permit is valid until the decision is made. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) decides on the asylum application. Has your application been rejected as unfounded? Then you can appeal against it. You can do this at the administrative court. You are generally allowed to stay in Germany until the administrative court has made a decision.

This permit says whether you are allowed to work. The permit says where you can live.

- Would you like to work? Do you need a permit for this? You can obtain this from the [Foreigners' Registration Office](#). Your employer or you as an employee can apply for this.
- Would you like to find work? Contact the [migration advice centres](#)
- Do you need financial help? Go to the social welfare office in the [municipality where you live](#)



3. fictitious certificate

Status: Recognised refugees

Background: You have submitted an application to the foreigners authority. This application is intended to extend your right to stay. The authority then often issues a certificate. This certificate authorises you to stay. This is important because your application has not yet been processed.



4. residence permit

Status: Recognised refugees

Background: Your application for asylum has been accepted

The residence permit is a temporary residence title. It is issued for a specific purpose.

- You can later obtain an unlimited right of residence (settlement permit)
- You have unrestricted access to the labour market
- The [job centre](#) can find you work
- The [local authority](#) can arrange social benefits for you



5. tolerated stay

Status: Tolerated person

Background: Your application for asylum has been rejected

Tolerated stay is granted for a certain period of time. It is granted because deportation is temporarily impossible.

- An employment permit is generally required. You apply for this at the [Foreigners' Registration Office](#).
- Would you like to find work? Go to the [migration advice centres](#)
- Do you need financial help? Go to the social welfare office of your [local authority](#)



Application for asylum

If you are registered in Germany and live in shared accommodation, these are the next steps for you.

1. personal application for asylum

- You apply for asylum at the **Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)**
- Asylum procedure counselling can provide you with important information for the asylum procedure. The Refugee and Integration Counselling Service is responsible for this.
- **Important:** You can only submit your application in person. You cannot send this application by post.
- You will receive the appointment and the responsible BAMF office with your proof of arrival. If you have not been given an appointment, ask your accommodation manager

2. first interview appointment (asylum application)

3. personal interview

The second interview appointment is the actual interview. The BAMF will then decide on your asylum application. They will send you a decision. The decision will be explained in detail.

a) The decision is negative

- If the decision is negative and you wish to contest it (i.e. you do not agree with it), go to your [migration advice centre](#) immediately. They will discuss with you what you can do and can put you in touch with specialised lawyers. For example, you can take legal action against the decision.
- Would you prefer to leave the country voluntarily? Then you can receive financial support for your new start in your country of origin. Go to the [return counselling](#) service or the [foreigners authority](#).

b) The decision is positive, i.e. you are recognised as entitled to protection. The next steps are

Residence permit: You have received the positive BAMF decision. You must then apply for a residence permit immediately. You can obtain this from the [immigration office](#).

Family asylum and international protection for family members

You have been granted asylum in Germany. A member of your family also needs asylum. You can submit an application to the [BAMF](#). The member of your family will be granted the status of a person entitled to protection.

For the purposes of family asylum, family members include

- Spouses or registered partners,
- unmarried children who are minors,
- the parents of unmarried minor children,
- other adults who have custody of unmarried minor children,
- unmarried minor siblings of minors.

💡 Parents must have custody of their children. They must therefore be able to look after their children.

Do you want to bring your husband or wife to Germany? You must already be married in your country of origin. Then your husband or wife can also be granted asylum. The marriage must be recognised by Germany. The application for asylum must be submitted before or at the same time as your application. You must be entitled to protection.

Born in Germany:

You have already applied for asylum? Have you subsequently had a child in Germany? A separate asylum application can be made for your child. Inform the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees about the birth. You can also inform the Foreigners' Registration Office. The asylum application is then automatically deemed to have been submitted. The parents can submit their own grounds for asylum for their child. If they do not do so, the same reasons apply as for the parents. An appeal is also possible in the event of a negative decision by the Federal Office.

Likewise, and for the protection of the child, underage children will not and must not be returned separately from their parents in the event of a negative decision.

Further information can be found directly at the BAMF.

 [Website family reunification \(BAMF\)](#)

Asylum counselling

The asylum counselling service advises people who have applied for asylum. You can also go to the counselling service if you are a new immigrant with permanent residence status.

Asylum seekers and refugees can seek advice on everyday matters. The counsellors help with the following topics:

- Asylum procedure - providing information and answering questions
- Information about German law
- Help and advice with questions about authorities
- Finding local services
- Orientation on site

- Advise and help with everyday problems
- Advice on integration programmes (such as language courses)
- Advice on questions about family reunification
- Refer people to other specialised services
- You are the contact person for volunteers. They answer specialised questions about the asylum procedure

👥 Would you like advice before your personal interview? Do you have questions about the asylum procedure? You can get advice [here](#).

👥 Do you have a secure right of residence? Then the [migration counselling](#) service can help you. It advises adults aged 27 and over. Families can also seek help there.

👥 Are you under the age of 27? Then the [Youth Migration Service](#) is the right place to go.

Volunteering

What is voluntary work

What does it mean to volunteer?

Volunteering means working for other people or for a cause. These people volunteer in their free time. As a rule, you don't get paid for this. This is called auch: bürgerschaftliches Engagement or honorary office. Voluntary work is important for the community. It builds trust and solidarity. It promotes the feeling of taking responsibility for society.

What can I do?

- Help older people
- Support people with disabilities
- Helping neighbours
- Help people who have experienced flight
- Work in an association
- help at an animal shelter

Many people do voluntary work in associations and Verbände. Associations and Verbände are very important in Germany. They bring together people with the same interests and hobbies. They offer people the opportunity to develop common goals.

These goals can be of different kinds:

- Leisure activities
- Commitment to the needy and disadvantaged
- Protection of nature
- Contact with like-minded people

There are Sportvereine, Musikvereine, Heimatvereine, Schützenvereine, Tierschutzvereine, Kulturvereine, kirchliche Verbände and many more. You can get to know people through voluntary work, e.g. in clubs. This helps you to integrate well in your new home. Do you have questions about volunteering in Emsland? You can find contact persons [here](#).

Why take on voluntary work?

People who volunteer often have different reasons for doing so.

- Helping is fun and makes you happy.
- Volunteering creates a sense of community.
- You can do something good for society.
- Contacts can be made and even friendships can develop.
- It strengthens self-confidence.
- Volunteering will improve your own social skills.
- You can gain knowledge and experience and pass it on to others.
- Volunteering can also benefit you professionally.
- If you do something good for people, you get a lot in return.

Contact persons

Volunteer Service District of Emsland

Would you like to do voluntary work?

This means work or assistance that you do on a voluntary basis. The work is not-for-profit. As a rule, you do not receive any money for it. This activity can be equated with volunteer work. It can also be equated with civic engagement. There are over 30 million people in Germany who do this kind of work.

What does the volunteer service of the district of Emsland do?





The volunteer service offers various forms of support:

- It is there to answer questions about volunteering.
- It offers [further training and funding](#) for volunteers.
- It offers [association checks](#).
- It plans and helps with [projects](#).
- It awards the Lower Saxony [volunteer card](#).
- It is active in various [networks](#).

The Volunteer Service aims to encourage people to volunteer. Its services are designed to improve conditions and support the interests of volunteers.

Contact person:

 Sandra Rickermann

 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)
 [05931/441215](tel:05931/441215)
 @ehrenamt@emsland.de
 www.ehrenamt-emsland.de

Volunteer agencies in the district of Emsland

There are people everywhere in Emsland who can help you find the right volunteer position. These people can be found in the volunteer agencies and volunteer centres.

You can find the contact persons [here](#):

Contact persons close to home

Most town halls have people who can provide information on volunteering.

You can find the contact persons [here](#).

Volunteering with the district of Emsland

Here are some examples of how you can get involved as a volunteer in the Emsland district:

Housing counselling


Commitment to a home in which everyone can cope well.

Housing counsellors show what a home can look like where there are no steps or thresholds. They explain what changes can be made to make it easier and safer to live there. For example, ramps or grab rails can help people to feel safer. This is particularly important as you get older and need support. The housing advisors come to your home in person and help you find out how your home can be made better and safer. They also provide information on how everything can be financed and help with the application process. Multilingual housing counsellors help to break down language barriers in communication. They support people with and without a migration background in solving housing problems.

In order to become a volunteer housing counsellor, the volunteers must first undergo online training to become housing counsellors. This training is free of charge for the volunteers and lasts five months. This corresponds to fifty teaching units. In a homework assignment, they carry out a housing counselling session of their choice. This is followed by a practical phase. During this phase, the volunteers are accompanied by experienced housing counsellors and receive further training in housing counselling.

Are you interested in this voluntary work? If you are multilingual, you are very welcome. Then get in touch with:

Seniorenstützpunkt Landkreis Emsland

 05931 44-1267

@

seniorenstuetzpunkt@emsland.de



<https://www.emsland.de/wohnberatung>

Media and technology guides


Accompanying senior citizens on their way into the digital world

Media and technology guides are volunteers who help older people get to know the digital world better and use it safely. For example, they help senior citizens to operate a mobile phone or tablet. They provide support in using social media or searching for information on the internet. They come to the elderly person's home or care home and offer simple and friendly advice and support. They help older people to use technology well and safely.

The volunteer media and technology guides initially receive training. This lasts a total of 27 hours and is free of charge for them. Here they learn about useful everyday apps for older people. They also learn what older people need for learning and in life, how to use the internet safely and how to protect their personal data. With this knowledge, media and technology guides can help older people, regardless of whether they have a migration background or not.

Would you also like to get involved and show older people the digital world on a voluntary basis? It is also very advantageous in this voluntary work if you are multilingual. Then get in touch with:

Seniorenstützpunkt Landkreis Emsland

 05931 44-2263



seniorenstuetzpunkt@emsland.de

 <https://tinyurl.com/53mf5ujf>

DUO - Senior Citizen Support

Commitment to work with senior citizens

Multilingual volunteers accompany older people with and without a migration background in their native language. For example, as senior companions. They help older people in their everyday lives, for example with visits to the doctor or shopping. They spend time with them and organise leisure activities together for older people with and without a migration background.

In a course of 30 hours of lessons and 20 hours of practical work, the volunteers learn everything that is important when accompanying older people. This course is free of charge for the volunteers. Here they learn things like: How do you talk to older people? What changes in old age? How do you organise the everyday lives of older people? What are the tax and

insurance implications of volunteering?

Would you like to become active in this voluntary work? It is an advantage if you speak several languages. Then get in touch with the:

Seniorenstützpunkt Landkreis Emsland

☎05931 44-2263 oder 1267

@seniorenstuetzpunkt@emsland.de

🌐<https://www.emsland.de/duo-seniorenbegleitung>

Sprachmittlerpool

By people with a history of migration - for people with a history of migration

Some immigrants are afraid to take advantage of the services offered by institutions because they have difficulties with the German language. The district of Emsland has set up Sprachmittlerpool to give them access to services provided by the district administration. Volunteer language mediators who themselves have experience of migration work here. They accompany the conversations in their native language. They help to bridge linguistic and cultural barriers and avoid misunderstandings. Through their commitment, they contribute to equal opportunities and strengthen the personal responsibility of immigrants.

For this voluntary position, you need very good knowledge of your native language and also very good knowledge of German (at least B2 level). It is also important that you are reliable, discreet and patient. There are regular training courses and meetings for exchange in which you can participate.

For your voluntary work as a language mediator, you will receive an expense allowance and reimbursement of travel costs to your assignments.

Are you interested in supporting people with a migrant background whose language you speak and understand well with your translations when dealing with authorities and counselling? Then get in touch:

Koordinierungsstelle für Migration und Teilhabe - Landkreis Emsland

☎05931 44-2214 oder 05931 44-1214

@stephanie.abdel-naby@emsland.de oder anita.kloster@emsland.de

Integration guides

Accompany and support immigrants on their journey in Germany

Integration guides are women and men from different countries who volunteer to help new immigrants. They have often experienced moving to a new country themselves and know how difficult it can be. With their experiences, they are good counsellors and supporters. They support people with a history of migration in their linguistic, professional and social integration in Germany. They help people to find their feet in their new environment. They explain everything on site and show them, for example, where they can go shopping, where they can find important public offices or how to get to the doctor. They also help them find a job. In this way, they help people who have recently arrived in Germany on their way to an independent

and active life and to feel at home here.

To be able to volunteer as an integration guide, you first attend a course totalling 30 hours. The course is free of charge. Here you will learn important basics for your voluntary work, such as how to speak to each other well, how to adapt to other cultures and how to reflect on yourself. You will then receive a certificate. Placements are organised by clubs, associations or local authorities. There are also regular meetings where everyone can exchange ideas and workshops are offered.

Do you also enjoy communication and social diversity? Would you like to help and support people with a history of migration during their initial period of arrival in Germany? Do you have your own experiences of migration, do you feel well integrated and would you like to share your own experiences with others? Then get in touch:

Koordinierungsstelle für Migration und Teilhabe - Landkreis Emsland

☎ 05931 44-2214 oder 05931 44-1214

@stephanie.abdel-naby@emsland.de oder anita.kloster@emsland.de

Making initial contacts

Meeting places are for all newcomers - for people from all cultures and generations. The transition phase after a move is a challenge for everyone. In order to get on well in a new place, you need contacts and networks. Meeting places are places that can offer initial guidance during this first period of arrival.

Where can I find meeting places?

Café International Meppen

📍 [Kirchstraße 5-6, 49716 Meppen](#)

@raphael.migura@awo-ol.de

☎ [+4959315988173](tel:+4959315988173)

☎ [+49 \(0\) 15151308199](tel:+49(0)15151308199)

🕒 Mondays - Saturdays 15:00 - 18:00


Willkommensbüro Lingen

📍 [Große Straße 19, 49808 Lingen](#)


@willkommen@lingen.de

☎ [+495919144734](tel:+495919144734)


 <https://tinyurl.com/willkommensbuero-lingen>

 Tuesdays 15:00 - 17:00 and Wednesdays 11:00 - 13:00, further appointments and detailed counselling on request


Haus Global Papenburg

 [Kirchstraße 48, 26871 Papenburg](#)

 Migration@drk-emsland.de

 [+49 \(0\) 496191232025](tel:+49(0)496191232025)

 <https://tinyurl.com/haus-global>

 Mondays and Thursdays 14:30 - 16:00 Counselling and further information

Storytelling café MY Turn Emsland

You can practise your German language skills in the storytelling cafés. Here you can chat with other women over a cup of coffee or tea.

The storytelling cafés take place on selected dates at a different location in Emsland and are free of charge. It is not a language course and is voluntary. You do not have to register, but can simply drop in and bring friends.

[Here](#) you can find out when and where the next storytelling café will take place.

You can also find **other meeting places** near where you live. Enquire at your [local municipality](#).